

# ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION OF GEOMATICS AND PLANNING

A P R I L 2 0 2 5

## LOOKING BACK - MOVING FORWARD

Official Newsletter of the AAGP

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the AAGP

2025 is a significant milestone for the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning. This year marks 50 years of the AAGP as an organization.

This special edition of the AAGP newsletter takes an opportunity to look back on 50 years of the AAGP, as well as look ahead to our annual workshop / conference planned for June.

Since forming in 1975 as the Atlantic Association of Planning Technicians (AAPT), many changes have taken place throughout our industry. We collectively continue to embrace the challenges ahead and confidently move forward while not forgetting to look back at how far we have come.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of those responsible for forming the association, those who administer the association, those who make our annual workshops possible, and those who continue to support the association through membership. Thank you and congratulations!



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## 50 Years of Excellence in GIS & Planning in the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning – 1975-2025

When the late 'father of GIS' Dr. Roger F. Tomlinson first coined the term geographic information system (GIS) in the 1960's, it must have been hard to imagine what the future had in store for the world of Geography and related disciplines. The importance of GIS to planning and development was to hold particular significance. The geographic database that resulted when Tomlinson created the first computerized GIS while working with the Canadian Government is still used today by municipalities across Canada for land planning.

By the 1970's, it became apparent that an organization was needed to better the education and skills of the technician, meet the changing needs of the technician as well as employer, and provide a helping hand through encouragement to students in Atlantic Canada's Planning Technician programs. In September 1975, the Atlantic Association of Planning Technicians (AAPT) was formed with the main objective to promote and advance the interests, education, and experience of the Planning Technician.

In 1983, a new approach to skill upgrading was developed in conjunction with the Training Section of the Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs. This involved the joint, three-day workshops that are today a strong part of the Association.

The 1999 workshop held at Holland College's Charlottetown Campus embraced new horizons – "The Internet as a Planning Tool". With retirement of technical pens and colour markers once used for rezoning maps on the horizon, the then AAPT helped to prepare for a new age of GIS and digital mapping. From ArcView to ArcMap and now ArcGIS Pro – our members have remained at the forefront of the technical challenges we encounter over the years.

Like the technology we fondly use in our day to day work, the industry too has also changed significantly. In January of 2020, the Atlantic Association of Planning Technicians (AAPT) was officially renamed to the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning (AAGP) in recognition of the ever-evolving industry.



1999 AAPT Workshop – Holland College (Charlottetown Campus)

"The Internet as a Planning Tool"

Curt Speight of the NS Geomatics Centre (L) and Eric Melanson of Esri (R)

## **50 Years of Excellence in GIS & Planning in the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning – 1975-2025**

With a new name and expanded membership – we continue to strive to grow as a network. The last several years have been challenging, and we continue to endeavor to build back the association following the challenges during Covid-19. Last year, we found our footing as everyone adjusted to a post-covid world more self-aware and sensitive to public health considerations, we were able to come together in person once again in June 2024 with a massively successful workshop titled “Resiliency Rising: Spatial Strategies for Stronger, Safer Communities”.

The education committee is excited to be working on another workshop / conference planned for June 2025 at the NSCC Ivany (Waterfront) campus in Halifax.



The involvement of all our members is critical in shaping our future course as an association in order for us to continue forward. Whether you have a question, a complaint, a suggestion, or even a bit of trivia, the Council wants to hear from you! We welcome opportunities to engage our membership and all input and participation is fundamentally important. We look forward to working together with everyone to continue to chart a new course forward for the AAGP.

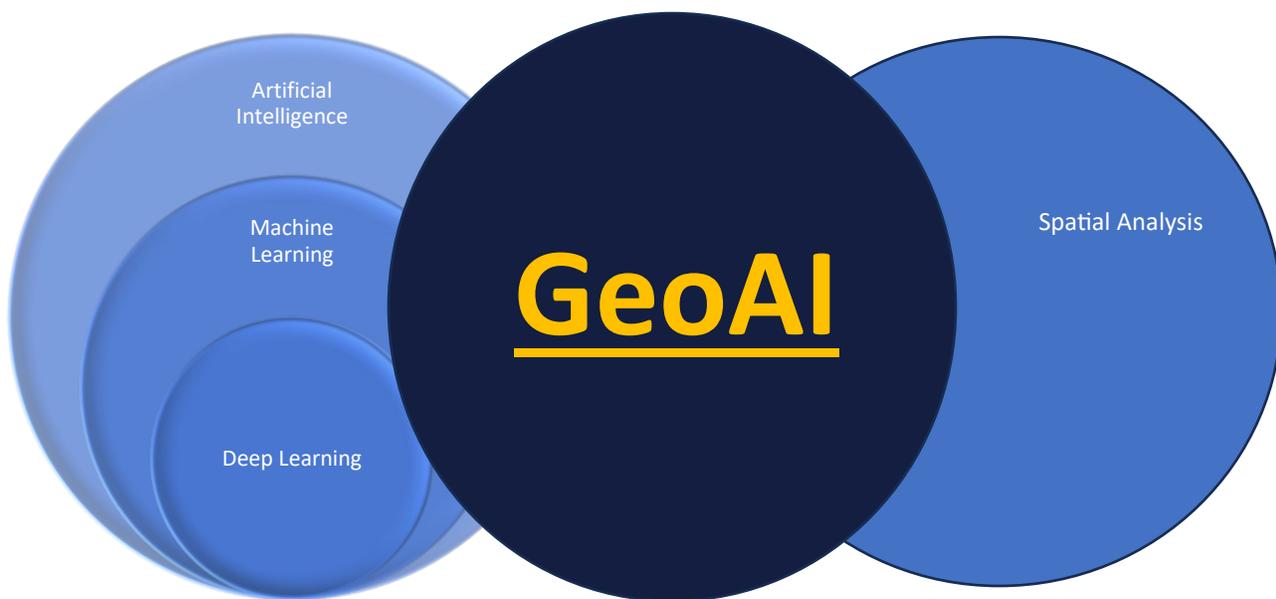
## AAGP Conference / Workshop 2025 – AI in GIS

With the growing prominence of Artificial Intelligence, the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning (AAGP) is looking at AI in GIS as the theme for this year’s workshop June 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. It was felt that this was a pertinent theme as we look to move forward as an association and as an industry. GeoAI and Location Intelligence like any form of AI is a powerful combination that has the potential to change how we operate and there are many technical and ethical challenges that need to be addressed as this new chapter in GIS and Planning emerges. What will we be doing in 5 to 10 years, who will be doing it, and will it be for the good or bad?

Confirmed Sessions will include:

Presenter	Topic
Kelsey Green, FEC, P.Eng, Vice President Municipal, Eagle Engineering & Consulting	Transforming Asset Management: Leveraging the Power of AI and Reality Capture Technology
Yan Chen, Interdisciplinary Ph.D, Master of Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University	AI Powered Spatial Analysis: Urban Tree Canopy Detection
Robert Newcombe, P.Eng, MBA, President, AI-First Consulting	Integrating AI: Workflows, Strategies, and Best Practices
Kelly Bates	AI for Improved Workflows
Alfred Parks, COGS	The role of Remotely Piloted Aircraft in Emergency Planning / What to Look for When Buying
Amin Zribi, Digital Nova Scotia	Emerging Wireless Technologies, IoT, and the Future of Smart Cities: A GeoAI Perspective
Ashley Wu, Chief Data Scientist Jeff Caddell, Director of Valuation Standards Property Valuation Services Corporation	How PVSC Revolutionized Valuation with AI

There is going to be a lot to unpack at this year’s conference. With 50 years of collective experiences and history to reflect back on and new technologies on the horizon that we need to better understand, this will be a moment to remember. We look forward to reminiscing and learning together this June. Please stay tuned for more details as they arise.



## ArcGIS Web AppBuilder Retiring in 2025

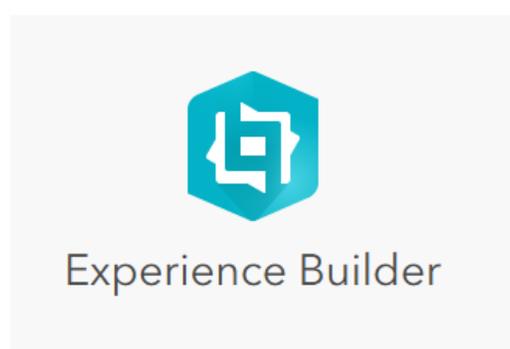
As many of you may already know, Esri announced in 2023 that they would be retiring Web AppBuilder. The retirement of Web AppBuilder takes place in the second quarter of 2025 in ArcGIS Enterprise, followed in ArcGIS Online (AGOL) in the fourth quarter of this year. Map Viewer Classic will also be replaced with the New Map Viewer in AGOL in Q1 of 2026, with the Map Viewer Classic being removed at that time. While your existing web apps will continue to function for the time being after retirement of Web AppBuilder in AGOL (and depending on what version of ArcGIS Enterprise you are using), browser updates could introduce issues which Esri has indicated it will not be providing security, functionality, or technical support for moving forward.

If you have not already, members are encouraged to explore [ArcGIS Experience Builder](#) to upgrade and migrate their applications to this new solution for configurable web mapping applications and creating custom widgets. You will not be able to build any new applications in Web AppBuilder after its retirement, so all the more reason to investigate solutions in Experience Builder.

There are a number of great resources listed by Esri and as always, we encourage you to start a discussion by posting any questions and insights you might have for your peers to our listserv: [aagp@lists.gov.ns.ca](mailto:aagp@lists.gov.ns.ca) .

### *Web AppBuilder to Experience Builder Migration Resources Suggested by Esri:*

- [ArcGIS Experience Builder 2023 Roadmap](#)
- [Functionality Matrix between Web AppBuilder and Experience Builder](#)
- [Modernize Your ArcGIS Web AppBuilder Apps Using Experience Builder](#)
- [Migrating from Web AppBuilder](#)
- [A full list of helpful resources to get you started on Experience Builder](#)



## Website Statistics

March 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025

Sessions	Sessions per user	Engaged sessions
189	0.8	76
↑ 75.0%	↑ 86.2%	↑ 58.3%
Total users	New users	Engagement rate
236	233	40.21%
↓ -5.6%	↓ -7.9%	↓ -9.5%

## Map Gallery

Members may submit maps or web map applications to have displayed on this section of the aagp.ca website to showcase their talents and share ideas amongst our association members. Please contact us at [info@aagp.ca](mailto:info@aagp.ca) if you would like to contribute to the gallery.

<https://aagp.ca/resources/map-gallery>

### AAGP Fees

Invoices will be issued in April and membership dues for 2025 are to be paid no later than the first day of June each year. Any member whose membership has lapsed and is no longer in good standing by June 30th will be removed from the list-server and lose related member benefits. Thank you for your continued support of the AAGP through membership and our workshops.

#### Membership Dues:

Full: \$75

Associate: \$50

#### Workshop Fees:

Member: \$200

Non-member: \$320



Note: Membership Fees Collected in June

# Newsletter of the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning

## Looking Back – Moving Forward

Looking Back - Moving Forward is published by the Atlantic Association of Geomatics and Planning as resources permit.

Share Your Voice! [Submit Articles for a Future Newsletter](#)

We invite you to contribute your ideas, stories, and expertise to our next newsletter. Whether you have an insightful article, helpful tips, or an inspiring technical resource, we would be glad to include it (subject to editorial review). This is a great opportunity to showcase your knowledge and share valuable content with our community.

### AAGP Contacts

“Meet the Executive, Council, and Education Committee of the AAGP. If you are looking for more information on a specific issue, start here. We endeavor to have a representative in each of the Atlantic provinces to help answer your questions or voice your comments..”

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