



# InterPARES 2 Project

International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems

## Domain 1 Research Questions

### Case Study 24:

### City of Vancouver Geographic Information System (VanMap)

Natalie Catto, UBC

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**1.1** What types of documents are traditionally made or received and set aside (that is, created) in the course of artistic, scientific, and governmental activities that are expected to be carried out on-line? For what purposes? What types of electronic documents are currently being created to accomplish those same activities? Have the purposes for which these documents are created changed?

- Traditional types of documents specified in the case study are maps
- VanMap has been created with the purpose of providing access to interactive and graphical representations of various features of the City of Vancouver in order that the user may see how they relate to one another, thus supporting civic governmental functions
  - It is primarily used as a reference tool, not one upon which decisions are made
- Digital documents include:
  - Interactive maps (map window files)
  - Reports
  - Data sheets
  - Web pages
  - Spatial geometry layers in Oracle9i Spatial database
  - Orthophotos
- The purposes for which these documents are created has not changed, as VanMap makes it possible for City of Vancouver staff to carry out activities and functions more efficiently than was previously possible

**1.2** What are the nature and the characteristics of the traditional process of document creation in each activity? Have they been altered by the use of digital technology and, if yes, how?

- Traditional document creation processes are not mentioned in the final report

- There is no formal process regarding data inclusion into VanMap:
  - Decisions are based on verbal negotiations between VanMap Team and departments
  - Decisions are based on perceptions of how work processes can be enhanced by the inclusion of certain data
- Administrative processes include:
  - deciding which data to include
  - deciding how to group and present data
  - deciding which technical processes to use

**1.3** What are the formal elements and attributes of the documents generated by these processes in both a traditional and a digital environment? What is the function of each element and the significance of each attribute? Specifically, what is the manifestation of authorship in the records of each activity and its implications for the exercise of intellectual property rights and the attribution of responsibilities?

- VanMap digital entity elements and attributes consist of the following:
  - VanMap Homepage and data sheets
    - Header and title
    - Clickable icons
    - Sidebar with links to data sheets and other pages
    - Text that includes links to other pages
  - Maps
    - Coloured lines
    - Numbers
    - Text labels
    - Points
    - Symbols
    - Superimposed colour photographs
  - Reports
    - Headers with report name, links to other reports, and print date field indicating when report opened
    - Sidebar with links to other reports and department web pages
- Authorship is evidenced in a number of ways:
  - URL's that indicate the corporate domain
  - Visual cues such as the City of Vancouver logo
  - While the diplomatic analysis identifies the City of Vancouver as the author of VanMap, individual departments and external agencies are responsible for the quality of data that they provide, which is signified for external agencies by disclaimers

**1.4** Does the definition of a record adopted by InterPARES 1 apply to all or part of the documents generated by these processes? If yes, given the different manifestations of the record's nature in such documents, how do we recognize and demonstrate the necessary components that the definition identifies? If not, is it possible to change the definition maintaining theoretical consistency in the identification of documents as records across the spectrum of human activities? In other words, should we be looking at other factors that make of a document a record than those that diplomatics and archival science have considered so far?

- VanMap is not a record according to the definition established by InterPARES 1
  - As stated in the diplomatic analysis, VanMap must be artificially closed and set aside for it to be considered a record
- For this case study, the characteristics developed by the diplomatic tradition are apt criteria for classifying a document as a record

**1.5** As government and businesses deliver services electronically and enter into transactions based on more dynamic web-based presentations and exchanges of information, are they neglecting to capture adequate documentary evidence of the occurrence of these transactions?

- Documentary evidence does not track how information is used, but it does track what information is used and when:
  - Use of the data is tracked by unique client IDs randomly generated when users download the MapGuide ActiveX Viewer to their workstations
  - Transactions result in a log file record containing user IDs, the date and time of access, and strings of numbers representing specific data layers used
  - This enables the VanMap Team to generate user statistics reports and determine patterns of use

**1.6** Is the move to more dynamic and open-ended exchanges of information blurring the responsibilities and altering the legal liabilities of the participants in electronic transactions?

- Legal liabilities of participants in transactions are blurred in the electronic environment:
  - No corporate standard has been implemented to guide data inclusion
    - A policy is being developed to define data deemed to be sensitive to the public
  - While formal written agreements between the City and external agencies is required, many are still in the process of being reached
  - Legal and moral obligations in the preservation and publication of external data still needs to be researched

**1.7** How do record creators traditionally determine the retention of their records and implement this determination in the context of each activity? How do record retention decisions and practices differ for individual and institutional creators? How has the use of digital technology affected their decisions and practices?

- No retention has been determined for VanMap, nor does any recordkeeping system govern its lifecycle
  - Data is overwritten and previous versions are not consistently captured
  - Some data from other recordkeeping systems in the City of Vancouver, such as the Tax and License systems, are merely copied into VanMap