



## **Ahmed Abukhater, PHD, GISP, AICP**

**Year of Initial GISP Certification: 2008**

### **Education / Other professional licenses or certifications:**

- Ph.D. in Community and Regional Planning, University of Texas at Austin
- Dual Master's of Urban and Regional Planning (MUP), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- B.Sc., Professional Architectural Engineering
- AICP Certification, American Planning Association
- GISP certification

### **Professional Experience**

- 2024 – present CEO, Digital Cities, Seattle, WA
- 2024 – present Commissioner, Parks and Recreation, City of Kent, WA
- 2024 – present Professor, School of Urban Studies, University of Washington, Tacoma, WA
- 2022 – 2023 Global Director, Product Management, Pitney Bowes Software
- 2015 – 2022 Senior Product Management Leadership, Boeing, Renton, WA
- 2014 – 2015 Senior Director, Mapping and Geospatial Solutions, Trimble Navigation, CO
- 2011 – 2014 Global Director, Product Management, Pitney Bowes (MapInfo), Troy, NY
- 2008 – 2011 Global Director, Community & Economic Development Industry, Esri, Redlands, CA
- 2005 – 2008 Senior Technical Advisor, NASA, GIS Director, ITS-Networking, University of Texas, Austin, TX
- 2000 – 2004 City Planner, The City of Champaign Planning Dept., Champaign, IL

### **Professional Organizations / Activities**

- *Advisory Board*, United Nations Committee of Experts On Global Geospatial Information Management
- *Representative* to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) National Governing Board
- *Advisory Board*, Informed Infrastructure

- *Advisory Committee, Urban Systems Symposium, IBM*
- *Intelligent Cities Advisory Committee, National Building Museum, Washington, DC*
- *Economic Development Research Partners Committee, International Economic Development Council*

**Statement of Interest:**

I am honored to seek nomination as a GISP-elected member of the Board of Directors for the GIS Certification Institute to help strengthen the rigor, relevance, and evolution of the GISP credential.

I bring nearly 30 years of GIS experience across government, aviation, infrastructure, and advanced digital ecosystems, working for Esri, Trimble, Pitney Bowes (MapInfo), Boeing and NASA. I have led the modernization of GIS platforms across local, county, and state agencies, enhancing data integration, operational excellence and decision-making at scale. In aviation, I led development of real-time flight planning and execution applications integrating GIS technology, weather, and operational data to support safer and more efficient aviation operations. I have also applied geospatial and sensor fusion technologies in smart manufacturing to enable indoor digital space orchestration and optimize just-in-time supply chains.

Earlier in my career, while serving as Global Community Development Industry Director at Esri, I helped advance GIS as a standard, enterprise technology across various industries, contributing to adoption and operational use at global scale across diverse sectors and user communities.

My work has been recognized with the Geospatial World Excellence Award for disaster response that saved thousands of lives during Hurricane Harvey and the Cactus Goodfellow Award from the University of Texas at Austin for leading one of North America's first campus-scale WiFi triangulation systems.

Beyond technical delivery, I bring experience influencing strategy, standards, and cross-organizational decision-making. Having worked with various stakeholders, I developed expertise that enables me to balance and navigate different competing priorities, making trade-off decisions across technical, operational, and policy constraints.

I view the GISP certification as a crucial tool for maintaining professional rigor and advancing the geospatial field at large. I strongly believe that with the recent convergence of GIS with emerging technology such as AI, real-time analytics, and digital systems, the certification has a critical role to play in retooling its members with necessary credentials reflecting both foundational expertise and these emerging capabilities.

If elected, I will focus on representing the diverse perspectives of GIS professionals in a way that ensures relevance and rigor, fostering ubiquitous recognition of the GISP credential across industries as a competitive advantage and differentiating capability.

I bring a combination of technical depth, cross-sector leadership, and a governance mindset grounded in accountability and forward-looking decision-making. I am committed to representing my fellow GISPs with integrity and helping position GISCI for the future.

Thank you for your consideration.