Geog 572

Term Project – Proposal 1

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1. I’d like to map a “what could have been” series of maps/map story for the planned and later cancelled high speed rail for Wisconsin. Maybe it’s petty, but one of the things I hate about Wisconsin is how we had something really cool going, on the cusp of breaking ground, then 1 guy without a brain cell to his name can just say “no thanks” and can years of work. I’d like to make a series of maps which show A) the proposed train lines, as well as a timeline paired with it to give context of the process of planning the rail line, B) a story map isolating how the GOP and Walker isolated the narrative to exclude Wisconsinites outside of Madison and Milwaukee with, ideally, links to different articles/polls from the 2012 gubernatorial election to give more context, and C) where the funds intended for Wisconsin ended up and how ‘well’ they’re being used. I’d like to also partially adapt the “Derailed” Podcast by PBS into this map as a ‘roadmap’ for establishing the series of events and why things happened when they did.
2. I’d like to retell the story of Wisconsin’s history of high-speed rail and why I can’t ride a train to Milwaukee right now even though I would be very close to being able to do so at this point. This story is inherently politically charged, but I’d like to steer away from having this story very far to one side of the political aisle.
3. Since this plan was never put into place, a lot of the data will come from the preliminary plans from the WDOT, including their financial plan (viewable here: <https://dailyreporter.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2010/02/rail-grant.pdf>). Current plans and data from the Hiawatha line and supporting systems will come from the Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 (<https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/rail/plan-chap6.pdf>)
4. Mostly static maps which are grouped together to mimic dynamic maps. 1 map for one period in time, a second map for the next period, etc. Line charts for visualizing trends in ridership for the current railway through Wisconsin.
5. I don’t think ArcGIS Story Maps can do what I want to do with this project (a fair amount of animation, transitions between maps), but there aren’t many alternatives so I think I will be using it to a degree. ArcGIS Pro will definitely be used to create/modify existing shapefiles and feature layers to use in maps on ArcGIS Online to host for the story map. Illustrator may be needed to make certain maps appear animated but are just embedded in the scrolly map (not sure how I’d do this yet but I have a few ideas).
6. I haven’t 100% figured out my career trajectory as of yet, and am flip-flopping between geology- or public service/government- focused work. This map could potentially boost my personal portfolio as an

example of working with multiple utilities of the ArcGIS suite of tools. I see this project more as an exercise with the ESRI suite of tools, but could potentially support future career development.

Diagram

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