

# Year End Detailed Status Report

## MetroGIS Activities and Accomplishments

### - 2007 -

#### I. Regional Information Need/Data Solutions – Data Component:

##### a. Address Points

Made significant progress to realize the vision of a Regional Address Points Dataset. Completed a Web Application Viability Assessment and concluded that sufficient interest exists among local government address producers to proceed. Authorized a partnership with Carver County to develop a data synchronization mechanism. Continued to make progress to align proposed regional address standards with emerging national standards and demonstrated they are achievable

##### b. Census Geography

No effort in 2007

##### c. Emergency Preparedness

Work was focused on direct participation in the Governor's Council on Geographic Information (GCGI) Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC). Significant activity developed during the summer resulting in the re-activation of the MetroGIS Emergency Preparedness Workgroup to coordinate data development in the metro area as a starting point for statewide efforts in 2008. The collaborative data custodian model, documented in the 2005 project report, is being adopted by the GCGI EPC for statewide implementation.

##### d. Existing Land Use:

No effort in 2007

##### e. Highways and Roads:

- Public-sector managed, E911 -compatible street centerline dataset. No progress made by MetroGIS workgroup on development of a public-sector managed, E911 -compatible street centerline dataset. The Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) operationalized specialized software to ensure Master Street Address Guide (MSAG) data records can be fully synchronized with associated street centerline data managed in a GIS environment. As such renewal of the agreement to access with The Lawrence Group's (TLG) street centerline data was secured. The current agreement with TLG authorizes one additional renewal (2009). Agreement was also reached with TLG in a separate agreement that authorizes licensed users to incorporate the TLG street centerline dataset into web-based applications their host provided access by non-licensed users is restricted to view-only. This "view-only" access provision is the first of its kind and represents a major step forward toward policy innovations which balance of intellectual property rights with the desire to utilize licensed data in web-based applications. At the time of this writing, the new agreement was proceeding through legal review.
- Anchor/segment database model. No substantive progress was made on a second collaborative initiative for which MnDOT is the lead organization. The project involves operationalizing an anchor/segment database model under development by MnDOT with consultant assistance. The software needed to support this initiative failed to meet design requirements and the project was ceased.

##### f. Hydrology

No effort in 2007.

##### g. Jurisdictional Boundaries

- Watershed District Boundaries. The results of Washington County pilot project were conveyed in October 2006 to representatives of the Mn Board on Soil and Water Resources BSWR. A recommendation of the Washington County pilot was that BWSR is the most logical entity to serve in the roles of Regional Custodian. As of this writing, BWSR had not yet responded to the proposal.
- School District Boundaries. No work was initiated to identify an appropriate regional custodian due to budget cuts and reorganization of LMIC. LMIC had earlier been identified as the most logical custodial option given their as contractor relationship with the Department of Education.

h. Land Cover (MLCCS)

The extent of coverage exceeds 95 percent. A map of the coverage status can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/data/datasets/land\\_cover/mlccs\\_metro\\_progress\\_planned.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/data/datasets/land_cover/mlccs_metro_progress_planned.pdf). A meeting of users/content experts was hosted on December 6th by DNR Metro, the custodian, to review and improve the MLCCS QA/QC process. Topics covered included: 1) processes to identify interpretation errors including field errors vs. aerial photo errors, or level 4/5 errors vs. level 1/2/3 errors, 2) review guidelines to determine acceptable levels of subjective natural community interpretation and/or quality ranking interpretation, 3) methods for scoring quality and differences for various attributes, and 4) method preferences for accomplishing quality checking. In addition to the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, a MLCCS user group / review meeting is being planned for this coming winter as funding has been secured and the lead support staff, Bart Richardson, has received permission to dedicate some time to updating the MLCCS. The current manual was produced 4 years ago and according to Mr. Richardson, changes are long overdue.

i. Parcels:

▪ Government and Academic Interests

No changes were made to the data standards or custodial roles and responsibilities. Metropolitan Mosquito Control District pioneered approval to host a public-access web application that “runs on” the Regional Parcel Dataset. See <http://mmcd.mapmorph.net/mmcd/mmcd.html>. The key to approval is that the application does not permit the user to gain access to the source database (“view-only” access).

▪ Non-Profit and For-Profit Access

No progress beyond that achieved in 2007 via the County Data Producers Workgroup that resulted in each county accepting a practice of permitting non-government access to parcel data, without fee, by specified non-profit interests on a county-by-county basis subject to licensure.

▪ There were **117** government and academic licensees at the time of this writing.

j. Socioeconomic Characteristics of Areas

No substantive changes from the resource that existed in 2006. The MetroGIS Socioeconomic Resources Page can be viewed at [http://www.datafinder.org/mg/socioeconomic\\_resources/index.asp](http://www.datafinder.org/mg/socioeconomic_resources/index.asp).

k. Street Centerlines with Address Ranges.

▪ The term of the agreement between the Metropolitan Council and The Lawrence Group to provide access to this dataset without charge to government and academic interests was extended to include all of 2008.

▪ Agreement was also reached with TLG to permit “view-only” access to their TLG Street Centerline Dataset via web-based applications hosted by organizations licensed to access and use the source data. The formal agreement is expected to be finalized in early 2008.

▪ There were **193** government and academic licensees at the time of this writing.

**II. Regional Information Need/Data Solutions –Application Component:**

a) Shared Application Needs: With the adoption of the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan in October (see III-b), addressing shared application needs was defined as the top priority for MetroGIS’s efforts in 2008. By year end, a Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup was created to oversee development of a recommendation, a contract was entered into with PlanGraphics, Inc. to assist the workgroup, and a forum was set for January 24, 2008. The January 24<sup>th</sup> forum is to serve as the principle vehicle through which the MetroGIS community will define MetroGIS’s role(s) related to addressing shared application needs.

b) Mailing Label Application: This application became fully operational in May 2005 as a pilot to illustrate the concept of a regional application solution to the Policy Board. It was deactivated in January 2007 for lack of activity required to justify allocation of staff resources for necessary security upgrades.

c) Emergency Preparedness: A prototype application was launched in April 2005 for testing and refinement. No substantive changes made since that time awaiting approval of a comprehensive policy for MetroGIS’s role related to emergency planning needs. This application is password

protected and has been used exclusively as a training and outreach tool to educate the emergency services community on resources available from the GIS community.

### **III. Special Studies/Projects –Leveraging Investments**

- a) MetroGIS Strategic Directions Workshop. This Workshop was held on February 8, 2007. It was facilitated by Professor John Bryson and provided the foundation from which the strategies and policies set forth in the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business plan evolved. A summary can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/about/business\\_planning/sdw/workshop\\_summary\\_07\\_0626.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/sdw/workshop_summary_07_0626.pdf) .
- b) MetroGIS Business Plan Update: A comprehensive update of MetroGIS’s policy foundation and objectives was accomplished with adoption of the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan. Components of this accomplishment include corroboration of the need to: sustain current practices, pursue three major scope expansions (applications, interoperability with adjoining jurisdictions, and partnering with non-government interests), and secure additional technical leadership/coordination resources to achieve desired scope expansions.
- c) Conservation Easement Data Capture and Mapping– Washington County used its \$4,000 payment from the MetroGIS Parcel Data Sharing Agreement to hire an intern to write a conservation report, entitled “Open Space Interests in Property - Cataloging and Mapping Conservation and Scenic Easements in Washington County, Minnesota”. (The report can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/07\\_1218/finalreport\\_washingtoncounty.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/07_1218/finalreport_washingtoncounty.pdf) .)
- d) Promote of DataFinder As A Common Tool – Leveraging the Investment: Washington County continued its use of the web server that supports Café to provide external Internet access to the county’s parcel query application activity. Use of the Café server is saving the county approximately \$10,000 annually in Application Service Provider (ASP) fees plus the cost of hardware and software and related licensing expenses.
- e) Work Launched on Top Two Priorities: A Workgroup formed immediately following the October Policy Board adoption of the 2008-2011 Business plan and a consultant team was secured in November to begin the process of addressing the top two priorities defined in the Business Plan: 1) define MetroGIS’s role related to addressing shared application needs and 2) define a strategy to secure additional technical leadership/coordination resources.
- f) Regional GIS Projects:
  - ApplicationFinder Concept: Mn LMIC (Land Management Information Center) and Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) worked in a “Service Broker” pilot project, funded by MetroGIS in 2006 that builds upon the ApplicationFinder preliminary concept endorsed by the Coordinating Committee at its December 2004 meeting. The goal is to aid stakeholders discover existing applications that would be helpful to achieving various business needs. At the time of this writing, the final project report was expected to be submitted in early January 2008.
  - Regional Geocoder: Partnered with the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District to oversee development of a regional geocoding services.
  - Data Synchronization Mechanism: Defined the need for and partnered with Carver County to develop a “data synchronization” mechanism which is needed to effectively manage processing of data received from numerous sources, as part of the proposed Regional Address Points Dataset (see Item XX)

### **IV. Data and Information Discovery and Acquisition – Other than Topical Applications**

- a) Support MetroGIS DataFinder
  - DataFinder: Roles and responsibilities were carried out in support of DataFinder. No modifications made to the software. Realized continued growth in data distribution activity
  - Data User Information. At the time of this writing, no option had been defined to achieve the product that Quova, Inc previously provided to document the geographic location of the entities that download data from DataFinder. The manner in which the Council processes log files for its web server is not compatible with the methodology used by Quova.
  - In addition to the Metropolitan Council, 9 organizations are utilizing MetroGIS to distribute geospatial data they maintain and 17 are using DataFinder as a search tool for discovery of their data.

## **V. Outreach**

- a) **Annual Report:**  
The 2006 Annual Report was distributed to over 1,900 persons and handed out at several conferences and forums. A copy can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/about/annual\\_reports/index.shtml](http://www.metrogis.org/about/annual_reports/index.shtml).
- b) **Newsletter Articles:**  
Articles about MetroGIS's activities and accomplishments were submitted for publication in each of the quarterly issues of the statewide GIS/LIS newsletter.
- c) **General Information Web site - [www.metrogis.org](http://www.metrogis.org):**  
This website serves as MetroGIS's institutional memory and main vehicle for keeping participants informed. This site is averaged over 6,900 visits per month.
- d) **County GIS User Groups:**  
Quarterly updates of MetroGIS's activities are provided to each user group. Staff attended as many user group meetings as possible to encourage use of adopted best practices and answer questions about MetroGIS's activities.
- e) **Special Events:**  
February 8<sup>th</sup> Strategic Directions Workshop (See [http://www.metrogis.org/about/business\\_planning/sdw/workshop\\_summary\\_07\\_0626.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/sdw/workshop_summary_07_0626.pdf)).
- f) **Coordination with Geospatial Activities Beyond the Metro Area:**  
In 2001 in response to the federal I-Team initiative and adoption of the initial regional parcel data, MetroGIS leadership has encouraged the Governor's Council (GCGI) to foster collaborative efforts throughout the state through which MetroGIS's stakeholders could achieve interoperability with adjoining jurisdictions. Two GCGI efforts in 2007 that directly involved MetroGIS added energy to that effort:
  - May 2007 – St. Cloud, Mn: The Governor's Council on Geographic Information hosted a forum entitled Models for Regional Collaboration. The Staff Coordinator shared information about MetroGIS's accomplishments, objectives, organizational structure and stakeholders, challenges, etc.
  - July 2007: The Staff Coordinator and David Claypool, member of the Coordinating Committee each were recommended for selection to the proposed National Geospatial Advisory Committee. As of this writing, member selection had not occurred.
  - October 2007 – Rochester, MN (State GIS/LIS Conference): The Staff Coordinator participated on a panel hosted by Bill Swing with the GCGI as an extension of the Models for Regional Collaboration event held earlier in St. Cloud.
  - Staff and Coordinating Committee members served as liaisons to Governor's Council on Geographic Information (GCGI) committees and workgroups: Strategic Planning, Emergency Preparedness, Hydrographic Data and Standards, Geospatial Infrastructure Workgroups and served on the Council itself. In addition, Rick Gelbmann, a Coordinating Committee member, was appointed to his third term as GCGI Chair.

## **VI. Project Management/Administration**

- a) Administered Performance Measures Program. Quarterly reports to the Coordinating Committee were produced in addition to an annual report. Efforts were made to prepare for a project in 2008 to update the Performance Measures to coincide with the policies set forth in the new Business plan.
- b) Maintained currency of content on MetroGIS's general information website ([www.metrogis.org](http://www.metrogis.org)) - the primary source of a wide variety of information about MetroGIS's mission, accomplishments, benefits, participants, meeting schedules, projects and lessons learned, and endorsed policies.
- c) Maintained currency of metadata and postings of data accessible via [www.datafinder.org](http://www.datafinder.org) - MetroGIS's primary data distribution mechanism.
- d) Maintained licensing records for access to street centerline data (193) and parcel data (117).
- e) Managed the bid proposal process for the two pilot Regional GIS Projects which received authorizations totaling \$24,000 and a bid process to a secure a facilitator for the proposed January 2008 forum to set the policy framework for MetroGIS's role related to addressing shared application needs.

- f) Significant documents produced:
- 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan (It can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/about/business\\_planning/2008-2011\\_businessplan.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/2008-2011_businessplan.pdf) )
  - 2006 Annual Report ([www.metrogis.org/about/annual\\_reports/index.shtml](http://www.metrogis.org/about/annual_reports/index.shtml))
  - Summary report for the February 8<sup>th</sup> Strategic Directions Workshop”. (It can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/about/business\\_planning/sdw/workshop\\_summary\\_07\\_0626.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/sdw/workshop_summary_07_0626.pdf).)
  - 2007 Performance Measurement Annual Report. (It can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/07\\_1218/performance\\_measures\\_report\\_2007\\_cc.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/07_1218/performance_measures_report_2007_cc.pdf) .)
- g) Meetings supported by MetroGIS staff support team:
- Policy Board (4)
  - Coordinating Committee (4)
  - Technical Advisory Team (3)
  - Business Information Needs - Workgroups, Data User Forums, Training, etc.:
    - ✓ Address /Web Assessment Workgroup (3)
    - ✓ Strategic Directions Workshop Planning Team (2)
    - ✓ Business Planning Oversight Team (10)
    - ✓ Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup (2)
    - ✓ County Data Producers Workgroup (0 supported by MetroGIS staff)
  - Special Events: (1)
    - ✓ February 8, Strategic Directions Workshop (*see item VI “f” above*)

## **VII. Recognitions**

October 2007: The Mn State GIS/LIS Consortium presented its Polaris Award to MetroGIS Staff Coordinator in recognition of MetroGIS accomplishments. In the words of Will Craig, member of the GIS/LIS and Governor’s Council on Geographic Information Boards “I admit it is an award to you as a person, but the award also honors MetroGIS by implication. Put another way, it is because of your accomplishments at MetroGIS that GIS/LIS honored you.”