



TO: Policy Board

FROM: Business Planning Oversight Team
Co-Chairs: Nancy Read (MMCD) and Randy Knippel (Dakota County)
Staff Contact: Randall Johnson (651-602-1638)

SUBJECT: MetroGIS Business Plan Update – Suggested Next-Generation Policy Foundation

DATE: April 18, 2007
(For the Apr. 25 meeting)

INTRODUCTION

The MetroGIS Business Planning Oversight Team is requesting Policy Board comment on a working draft policy foundation to guide MetroGIS's efforts during the next 3-5 years.

The components of the draft policy foundation are:

- Vision (destination) statement
- Mission (general organizational purpose) statement and component major desired outcomes
- Principles to guide decision making and operations
- Major activities to achieve desired outcomes

The Oversight Team is asking for the Policy Board's initial reaction to this material so that those messages can be passed along to the Coordinating Committee when it reviews the materials. Final Policy Board approval of a next-generation policy foundation is proposed to occur as part of the adoption of a complete next-generation Business Plan for MetroGIS. In other words, the policies suggested herein are proposed to remain designated as "works in progress" until adopted as part of a complete Plan. (See Item 4c Reference Section for more information.)

Policy Board consideration of major components of a draft Next-Generation Business Plan is anticipated at its July meeting. Final approval is expected to be requested at the Board's October meeting.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WORKSHOP - SOURCE OF SUGGESTED POLICY FOUNDATION

On February 8, 2007, thirty-two individuals, each of whom possesses insight important to MetroGIS's continued success, including five members of the Policy Board, participated in the day-long MetroGIS Strategic Directions Workshop event. The purpose of the Workshop was to solicit input on the direction MetroGIS should take over the next 3-5 years. According to the participant evaluations, the Workshop successively achieved this purpose. The participants' ratings of the effectiveness of the workshop activities ranged from 4.25 to 4.72, with an overall average of 4.44 on a scale of 1 to 5, with a 5 meaning "outstanding". Chairperson Reinhardt and others have stated that they realized a sense of empowerment and that substantive direction was agreed upon.

In addition to identifying desired major outcomes and activities for MetroGIS to pursue over the next 3 to 5 years, and changes desired to guiding principles, the participants also concluded that:

- 1) MetroGIS is serving a valuable public purpose,
- 2) The collaborative solutions and best practices that have been achieved through MetroGIS's efforts should be sustained,
- 3) The scope of MetroGIS's activities should focus on "shared" as opposed to "common" information needs thereby enabling work on shared needs recognized to be critical to the region but which do not directly impact all core stakeholders.
- 4) Efforts should be made to broaden participation – users, contributors, and jurisdictions adjoining the Twin City Metropolitan Area.
- 5) The range of existing activities should be expanded to include:
 - Addressing shared application needs related to solutions to shared information needs,

- Fostering development of technology advancements and infrastructure improvements needed to achieve MetroGIS’s desired outcomes,
 - Expanding outreach efforts to include benefits of using GIS technology, itself, in addition to the current focus on fostering collaboration and data sharing to address shared information needs.
- 6) The next step should be to obtain agreement on a policy foundation which reflects the direction provided at the Workshop (subject of this report).

(See Item 4 in the Reference Section for more information about the Workshop, direction provided and, follow-up work to refine that direction into the suggested policies presented in this report.)

DRAFT NEXT-GENERATION METROGIS POLICY FOUNDATION

1. Suggested Vision (destination) Statement: *“Organizations serving the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area are successfully collaborating to use geographic information technology to solve real world problems.”*

This statement is intended to describe the benefit to society or the public value created through MetroGIS’s efforts. High level, “community-focused” outcomes are achieved through the result of stakeholder actions as they carry out their particular responsibilities. MetroGIS’s role is that of enhancing stakeholder capacities and, therefore, is not directly accountable for these outcomes.

Desired “community-focused” outcomes from MetroGIS’s efforts identified at the Workshop were:

- Solve Real World Problems
- Better Decisions Being Made
- Stronger Local Economy
- More Informed Citizens
- Achieve Community Goals
- Improve Quality Of Life

A vision statement has not previously been formally adopted by MetroGIS but the intent of MetroGIS serving as a capacity builder for its stakeholders has been understood, although not specifically articulated.

2. Suggested New Mission Statement: *“The mission of MetroGIS is to address shared geographic information technology needs, through a collaboration of organizations that serve the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area, especially regional and local governments.”*

The suggested mission statement, or statement of operational purpose, is intended to work in concert with the vision statement and guiding principles (below). Its substance is also intended to embody the following five major outcomes for which the MetroGIS organization is proposed to be directly accountable for achieving (no order of priority is intended):

- Expanded Resource Availability Through Partnering
- Cost Avoidance
- More Efficient/Effective Core Stakeholders
- Enhanced (Broadened) Understanding of Our Region
- Broadened Participation (users, producers and extent)

This new version of the mission statement does not incorporate the specificity that was included the current mission statement (Reference Section). Consensus at the workshop was that MetroGIS has evolved into an organization with more breadth than what was originally envisioned. There was strong consensus that MetroGIS has outgrown its current mission statement and a new one is needed. The specificity of the past mission statement is now proposed to be included in the guiding principles.

3. Guiding Principles - Operating Framework (MetroGIS “should”):

Several statements of operational policy have become defacto guiding principles as MetroGIS’s operations and purpose matured. Most have also guided MetroGIS’s efforts for some time.

The existing principles were discussed for some time at the workshop. (See the Reference Section for the direction received regarding each statement). The agreed upon changes have been incorporated into the

statements below. The most significant changes from past policy and practice are shaded and represent expansions of current practice. The key ideas expressed in each statement are underlined. These revised guiding principles are intended to work in concert with the new vision and mission statements to guide MetroGIS's decision making and operations over the next 3 to 5 years:

- A. Pursue collaborative efficient solutions that provide greatest public good when choosing among options.
- B. Have active involvement of policy makers to set policy direction
- C. Seek comprehensive and sustainable solutions to shared information needs (*data, applications, custodial responsibilities, and infrastructure*)
- D. Pursue solutions that coordinate and leverage resources (*build once, make available for use by many*).
 - Leverage the Internet and related technology capabilities.
 - Value knowledge sharing as an activity that is as important as data sharing.
 - Pursue interoperability with adjoining jurisdictions and alignment with related state and national efforts.
- E. When appropriate, seek cross-sector (public, non-profit, academic, utility and for-profit) solutions, including data enhancements from many sources, to shared geographic information needs.
- F. Acknowledge that the term "stakeholder" has multiple participation characteristics: contributor of resources, consumer of the services, active and prospective, continuous and infrequent.
- G. Acknowledge participant contributions in multiple forms (funding, people, infrastructure, and data)
- H. Rely upon voluntary compliance for all aspects of participation.
- I. Rely upon consensus-based decision making for decisions critical to sustainability.
- J. Have all relevant and affected perspectives involved in the exploration of needs and options.
- K. Have many champions from diverse perspectives for MetroGIS's policies and activities.

4. Major Business Functions (Next 3 to 5 Years)

MetroGIS's work program for the next 3 to 5 years would be focused on the following major activity or business function areas. These functions are strategically related to the MetroGIS's ability to achieve the major outcomes identified above. Successfully carrying out each of these functions is essential to achieving at least two major outcomes. These functions are not intended to be listed in any order of importance, as setting of priorities will occur during development of the Next Generation Business Plan:

- Sustain stakeholder satisfaction with MetroGIS's accomplishments and products to date.
 - Regional data solutions to shared information needs
 - One-stop, Internet-based tool for data discovery and access (MetroGIS DataFinder)
 - Adopted standards and best practices
 - Data sharing policies and agreements
 - Forum for knowledge sharing and spirit of working together
- Facilitate better data sharing (*more data available, more users, improved processes*)
- Expand regional solutions (*to shared information needs*) to include applications and foster infrastructure enhancements needed to fully leverage the capabilities of regional solutions.
- Expand MetroGIS stakeholders:
 - Interoperability with jurisdictions adjoining the Metropolitan Area.
 - Municipal government participating as producers of data for regional solutions (e.g., *addresses*)
 - Partnerships with non-government entities to secure resources needed to address shared needs.
 - More users of MetroGIS's services.
- Build advocacy and awareness (*of the benefits of collaborative solutions to shared needs*)
 - Improve understanding among government leadership that use of GIS technology is a cost of effectively doing business in today's high-tech world and that cross-organization collaboration is necessary to fully realize these capabilities.
 - Coordinate with the State of Minnesota's Spatial Technology Infrastructure planning to seek alignment between state policies and MetroGIS's solutions to shared information needs and distribution architecture.
- Optimize MetroGIS organization
 - Sustain a broadly supported stakeholder-governed organizational structure consistent with guiding principles and capabilities required to achieve major desired outcomes.
 - Have funding policies that result in the most efficient and effective use of taxpayers' money
 - Sustain and enhance core and distinctive competencies

NEXT STEPS – SPECIAL MEETING OF THE POLICY BOARD

Assuming the Policy Board is comfortable with the suggested material offered herein, the next step for the Policy Board in the Business Planning process would be to begin to consider recommendations for more concrete strategies, projects and activities to move the organization's work forward and sustain agreed upon business functions.

Workgroups of the Coordinating Committee will be formed to develop recommendations. Each will have responsibility for not only recommending solutions for their respective topic area but they will also be responsible for relating their recommended solutions to key performance measures. To insure the workgroups have the direction needed to proceed in a time effective manner, a special meeting of the Policy Board (mid-May to early June) is suggested to review and comment on suggested key performance measures. Comment and direction from the Policy Board in this regard is desired before the Workgroups begin to finalize their recommendations. If the Policy Board so chooses, it could delegate this responsibility to its Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Policy Board:

- 1) Offer any desired additions or modifications to the suggested components of the next-generation policy foundation for MetroGIS that is presented in this report.
- 2) Decide how it wants to provide direction (special meeting, Executive Committee, other.) regarding key performance measures.
- 3) Authorize development of modified 2007 MetroGIS budget and associated workplan for Policy Board approval that realigns preliminary allocations to be consistent with the priorities decided as a result of the February 8th Strategic Directions Workshop.

REFERENCE SECTION

1) Policy Foundation ENTERING INTO the February 8th Workshop

- a) Mission statement: *"To provide an ongoing, stakeholder-governed, metro-wide mechanism through which participants easily and equitably share geographically referenced data that are accurate, current, secure, of common benefit and readily usable. The desired outcomes of MetroGIS include:*
- *Improve participant operations.*
 - *Minimize stakeholder expense and duplication of effort.*
 - *Support cross-jurisdictional decision making."*

This statement, which was adopted in February 1996, has guided MetroGIS's efforts since that time and is exactly as originally adopted.

b) Guiding Principles (Excerpt from Workshop Summary Document)

Item 3, Main Body of Report	Principle/Operating Standard (Short Name)	Direction Received February 8, 2007 Strategic Directions Workshop
A	Focus on Stakeholder Benefits	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholder interests have a common motivation to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness. • Sharing/collaboration is fundamental to maximizing effectiveness and efficiencies. • The benefit focus should migrate from the individual organization to the common good (benefits to taxpayer /(society) as a whole). That is, organizations need to be introspective when it comes to electing to provide support. • Some stakeholders get little direct benefit from participation but do so because they believe participation is the "right" thing to do and accept the notion of independency is the current reality. • An expectation should be that all interests will do what they can – that the concept of a balance sheet gets in the way.
A	Pursue collaborative solutions when more efficient option	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each organization participating in the support of a MetroGIS endorsed collaborative solution(s) should not be concerned about MetroGIS addressing needs beyond their individual needs as long as they obtain what they need from MetroGIS's efforts and are satisfied that their investment is cost effective relative to their internal needs. (E.g. Councilmember Pistilli used the example that it will not be an issue for the Metropolitan Council if MetroGIS pursues policies that involve geography/jurisdictions beyond the seven-county, Metropolitan Area, as long as the Council continues to receive what it needs from MetroGIS's efforts.) • Change the phrase to "pursue collaborative efficient solutions".
B	Have active involvement of policy makers to set policy direction	Concurred acceptable as stated.
C	Focus on common needs	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limiting focus to "common needs" should be revisited and that means to provide flexibility should be investigated to permit solutions that are critical to society but not necessarily common or critical to all individual stakeholders. • Use of the term "commonly-recognized need" or "shared" need appears to provide the flexibility desired.

C	Voluntary compliance with standards	<p>Agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary compliance was necessary to launch MetroGIS but standards and dominance by others are not longer viewed as threat. Offered as an escape clause. • MetroGIS is not a “legal entity” so voluntary was the only option. Worked well to build to credibility and demonstrate with “willing participants” the value of standards and collaborative solutions. • Widespread adherence to standards will be necessary to achieve expectations for application/service sharing and technology interdependencies. Voluntary compliance is counter intuitive in the current environment which is demanding interoperability. • Need to investigate is possible to pursue “mandatory” implementations with regressing in support. • Need to investigate the implications of mandatory requirements in terms of a broader stakeholder community.
D	Build once, share many times	<p>Concern was raised that the term “sharing” does not communicate the core concept of increasing inter-organizational cooperation. Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given to changing “share” to “use”. • This topic takes on broader implications if the stakeholder community is broadened.
E,F	Encourage data enhancements from many sources	Concurred acceptable as stated.
G	Acknowledge fair-share contribution in several forms	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to recognize that stakeholder contributions come in a variety of forms (i.e. funding, data, expertise, etc) and that all contributions are helpful. • The ramifications of “expecting” stakeholders to bring something to the table should be investigated. What are the implications if the stakeholder community broadens?
H	Align regional solutions with willing custodian organizations	<p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well if an organization(s) has a perceived need to support a regional solution (component). If not, the voluntary model may need to be modified to include encouragement (incentives) to support a regional solution. • To consider dropping the term “regional” solution. Instead consider referring to as simply “collaborative” solution?.
I	Have consensus-based decision making	<p>Agree that <i>consensus</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should remain an important component of the way MetroGIS decides issues important to long-term success. • Is attained when all parties are either in favor of or can tolerate particular outcomes or decisions.
J	Have all relevant and affected perspectives	Concurred that involvement by diverse perspectives will result in the ability to serve many purposes/users which will strengthen base of support.
K	Have broad support of vision and objectives	Concurred and reinforced that support is necessary by many champions to sustain efforts.
K	Have many champions with diverse perspectives	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change “with” to “from” (e.g., Have many champions from diverse perspectives). (This change addresses a concern had been raised that continued inclusion of the term “with” would have resulted in problems agreeing on collective courses of action via a consensus based decision model if the stakeholder community is broadened.) • That “champion” is synonymous with “advocacy” and includes individuals and organizations. It does not imply a vote/decision focus.

2) Business Planning Oversight Team Consideration

On April 11, the Business Planning Oversight Team met and concurred on the content of this report to the Policy Board. Assuming the Board concurs with suggested policy foundation, the Team's next steps in the formulation of a policy foundation for MetroGIS will involve seeking Board direction on key performance measures, also known as critical success factors (CFS), and identification of competencies that MetroGIS must possess to effectively carry out activities critical to achieving desired outcomes. Workgroups will also be launched to begin the work of defining strategies to carry out each of the major activity focuses.

Preliminary work to identify key performance measures and identification of organization competencies has been initiated. Board corroboration of desired outcomes is needed before further work can pursue. Key performance measures or critical success factors are generally depicted on the "causal map" as the statement in red below the major desired outcomes shown in red boxes.

3) Coordinating Committee – Project Update and Direction Sought

On March 14th the Business Planning Oversight Team met to agree on the content for recommendation to the Coordinating Committee at its March 28th meeting concerning next steps following the Strategic Directions Workshop. The substance of the Team's recommendations to the Coordinating Committee is listed below for information. The Committee concurred that agreement on a next-generation policy foundation should be reached before launching any other initiatives and as such deferred consideration of the Team's suggested actions. The Committee concluded that agreement on policy foundation would expedite subsequent activities. The Business Planning Oversight Team accepted responsibility to lead the effort to achieve agreement on the next-generation policy foundation (the subject of this report).

Note that the guiding principles suggested in the main body of this report incorporate the concepts set forth below in the key cross-cutting policy issues outlined in Item A, below.

- a) The **direction** received during the Workshop concerning several **key cross-cutting policy issues** is sufficient to **move forward**.
- **Information Needs – Direction Received:** Broaden the current scoping policy of pursuing only those needs which are common to the core stakeholder community to also encourage efforts involving collaborative solutions to needs that are critical to a significant contingent of MetroGIS's participants.
 - **Geographic Reach – Direction Received:** The geographic scope of MetroGIS extends beyond the seven-county metropolitan region, as needed, to address issues and provide or enhance services important to its members.
 - **Critical Infrastructure – Direction Received:** Investigate how best to interface with/promote Information Systems infrastructure important to MetroGIS's ability to achieve its goals but beyond the scope of GIS technology.
 - **Stakeholders, Participants, and Partners – Direction Received:** There is a need to establish terminology, whether using these or other words, which clearly communicates those who contribute to and benefit from MetroGIS's efforts as well as clearly define expectations for participation. The key is to be clear on expectations for support roles and other means of contributing to MetroGIS's efforts; as such, the Oversight Team believes this definitional need is best addressed as a component of defining strategies to achieve priority needs and not as a separate exercise - form to follow function.
- b) Rely upon a **workgroup-based process methodology**, similar to that used the past, should be utilized to evaluate options and formulate recommendations for desired courses of action to address priority needs - the core component of the Next –Generation MetroGIS Business Plan. The first two workgroups would work simultaneously – Policy Foundation (vision, principles, etc.) and an Applications Workgroup.
- c) The **priority outcomes and activities** as **established at the Workshop** should **drive the Business Plan Update** process. That is, a survey of the broad community is not necessary to set priorities, given the breadth of perspectives involved in the Strategic Directions Workshop exercises, including both policy makers and managers, and the maturity of MetroGIS's philosophies since

the survey of stakeholders was administered in 1999 to establish MetroGIS's initial priority functions. The Oversight Team members did, however, concur that a survey could be useful later in the process as we get further into projects concerning updating of information needs and/or identifying real world problems facing participants.

d) **Suggested Project Schedule** (*Milestones only*)

- March 28 - Coordinating Committee Meeting (*Create Applications Workgroup*). (NOT DONE)
- June (tentatively): GCGI Strategic Planning Workshop (*coordinate on areas of common interest*)
- June 27 - Coordinating Committee Meeting: Act on draft findings/recommendations
- July 25 - Policy Board Meeting: Provide direction, adopt positions preliminary plan.
- July or August – Begin Performance Measurement Plan Update process
- September 12 - Coordinating Committee Meeting – Recommend Approval of Business Plan Update
- October 17 Policy Board meeting - Target adoption of Business Plan Update
- January XX Policy Board meeting - Target adoption Performance Measurement Plan Update

4) Chronology - Strategic Directions Workshop & Causal Map Refinement and Interpretation

Preferences for desired activities and outcomes that were generated at the February 8th Workshop were captured and distilled over a 6-week process the results of which are presented in this report. The steps involved in the distillation process are the focus of this section.

The raw materials generated at the Workshop (desired activities, desired outcomes, and straw polling to obtain a sense of the topics most important to the participants) are illustrated on the attached “causal map”. (Go to http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/07_0425/index.shtml) to view/download an 11 x 17 version of this “map”.) The following activities were involved in developing the policy foundation presented in this report.

- a) On February 8, 2007, MetroGIS hosted a Strategic Directions Workshop. The purpose was to provide policy level direction to guide MetroGIS's efforts over the next 3 to 5 years. Thirty-two individuals, each of whom possesses insight important to MetroGIS's continued success, including four members of the current Policy Board, participated in this day long event. The activities and results of those activities are summarized in a draft report that can be viewed at http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/sdw/workshop_summary_%2007_0315.pdf.
- b) The staff support team produced a draft Workshop Summary to document the processes used at the Workshop and the major results of those processes. This document was distributed to the Workshop participants for comment on March 15 to insure their recollections of the day were correctly captured. Several participants commented that the summary accurately documented the day. The only change requested was from Chairperson Reinhardt who asked that the Executive Summary more clearly state the outcomes of the workshop relative to where the group started the day. This request resulted in a decision to expand the summary document to include the refinement process in addition to documenting the result achieved at the workshop itself.
- c) Immediately following the Workshop, Chris Kline, member of the staff support team, captured the ideas generated at the workshop in the form of a “causal map”, using specialized software provided by Professor Bryson who facilitated the Workshop. The support staff then met six times from February 27 to April 9, the last four meetings with Professor John Bryson, to distill and interpret the direction received at the workshop into the policy foundation components presented in this report.

After each meeting, a modified “causal map” was produced, which in turn, led to the identification of further desired refinements to improve the usefulness of the product. Refinements included:

- (1) Rearranging the activities and outcomes presented in the “causal map” to improve clarity and understanding of relationship. Among the major realizations that occurred early on was the presence of both community-focused outcomes and capacity building outcomes. .
- (2) Adding “best estimates” of causal relationships between activity and related outcome statements that had been identified by the three individual workgroups at the workshop and for those not identified on the combined concept map created by the full group at the February 8 Workshop,
- (3) Consolidating like statements.
- (4) Applying a color and highlighting scheme to clarify the hierarchy between highest level and supporting outcomes and activities.

The primary reasons for taking the time and effort to distill the “causal map” into a product that more clearly illustrates major elements are to: 1) insure none of ideas is lost and 2) establish a well grounded and coherent starting point for analysis of options for each of the major activity areas. Using this “causal map;” special purpose workgroups will be able to identify the outcomes that their efforts are intended to achieve, as well as, easily see related subtasks that were identified by the participants of the Strategic Directions Workshop, and a preliminary view of steps that likely will be important to defining a recommended solution.

As the workgroups proceed with their respective investigations, modifications are expected to the relationships between activities and outcomes depicted in the attached Version 1 Causal Map, dated April 13. It is also possible that desired modifications may also be identified to the outcomes and or activities as the workgroups develop their recommendations for particular topics. For this reason, final Policy Board approval of a next-generation policy foundation for MetroGIS is proposed to occur as part of the adoption of a complete Plan. In other words, the policies suggested herein are proposed to remain designated as “works in progress” until adopted as part of a complete Plan.

Causal Map

(April 13, 2007 Version)

(For an 11 x 17 version of map deliverable go to
http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/07_0425/index.shtml)

Note to the reader:

The complete Causal Map consists of:

- 1) Composite map of the three teams' individual efforts
- 2) Each of the three Team maps, which provide additional detail for most outcomes and \activities.
The additional detail is expected to be valuable resource for the workgroups charged with making recommendations to implement the related major strategies/activities.