

## WORK IN PROGRESS

### NEXT-GENERATION (2008 -2011+) METROGIS POLICY FOUNDATION

(Note to the Reader: The base language was developed by the Business Planning Oversight Team from direction received at the February 8, 2007 Strategic Directions Workshop. The modifications illustrated below (proposed language underlined and language to be deleted) were subsequently made by the Business Planning Oversight Team in response to direction received from the Policy Board on April 25, 2007)

#### **1. Suggested Vision (*destination*) Statement: “*Organizations serving the Twin Cities 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

#### **2. Suggested New Mission Statement: “*The mission of MetroGIS is expand stakeholders' capacity to address shared geographic information technology needs, through a collaboration of organizations that serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.*”**

The suggested mission statement, or statement of operational purpose, is intended to work in concert with the vision statement and guiding principles. 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)

The specificity of the past mission statement is now 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 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

## REFERENCE SECTION

### **1) Policy Foundation ENTERING INTO the February 8<sup>th</sup> 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 that can be viewed at [http://www.metrogis.org/about/business\\_planning/sdw/workshop\\_summary\\_%2007\\_0417.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/about/business_planning/sdw/workshop_summary_%2007_0417.pdf)*)

<b>Item 3, Main Body of Report</b>	<b>Principle/Operating Standard (Short Name)</b>	<b>Direction Received February 8, 2007 Strategic Directions Workshop</b>
A	Focus on Stakeholder Benefits	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stakeholder interests have a common motivation to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Sharing/collaboration is fundamental to maximizing effectiveness and efficiencies.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• An expectation should be that all interests will do what they can – that the concept of a balance sheet gets in the way.</li> </ul>
A	Pursue collaborative solutions when more efficient option	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.)</li> <li>• Change the phrase to "pursue collaborative efficient solutions".</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Use of the term "commonly-recognized need" or "shared" need appears to provide the flexibility desired.</li> </ul>

C	Voluntary compliance with standards	<p>Agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary compliance was necessary to launch MetroGIS but standards and dominance by others are not longer viewed as threat. Offered as an escape clause.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Need to investigate is possible to pursue “mandatory” implementations with regressing in support.</li> <li>• Need to investigate the implications of mandatory requirements in terms of a broader stakeholder community.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• Consideration should be given to changing “share” to “use”.</li> <li>• This topic takes on broader implications if the stakeholder community is broadened.</li> </ul>
E,F	Encourage data enhancements from many sources	<p>Concurred acceptable as stated.</p>
G	Acknowledge fair-share contribution in several forms	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The ramifications of “expecting” stakeholders to bring something to the table should be investigated. What are the implications if the stakeholder community broadens?</li> </ul>
H	Align regional solutions with willing custodian organizations	<p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• To consider dropping the term “regional” solution. Instead consider referring to as simply “collaborative” solution?.</li> </ul>
I	Have consensus-based decision making	<p>Agree that <i>consensus</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should remain an important component of the way MetroGIS decides issues important to long-term success.</li> <li>• Is attained when all parties are either in favor of or can tolerate particular outcomes or decisions.</li> </ul>
J	Have all relevant and affected perspectives	<p>Concurred that involvement by diverse perspectives will result in the ability to serve many purposes/users which will strengthen base of support.</p>
K	Have broad support of vision and objectives	<p>Concurred and reinforced that support is necessary by many champions to sustain efforts.</p>
K	Have many champions with diverse perspectives	<p>Agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To change “with” to “from” (e.g., Have many champions <b>from</b> 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.)</li> <li>• That “champion” is synonymous with “advocacy” and includes individuals and organizations. It does not imply a vote/decision focus.</li> </ul>

## **2) Cross Cutting/Framework Policy Issues**

A) On March 14<sup>th</sup> the Business Planning Oversight Team, in preparation for the March 28 meeting of the Coordinating Committee meeting, concurred that:

1) The **direction** received during the Workshop concerning several **key cross-cutting policy issues** is sufficient to **move forward**. (*Note: The guiding principles presented in the main body of this report incorporate the concepts set forth below in above stated cross-cutting policy issues*).

- **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.

2) 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.

3) 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.

B) On March 28, the Coordinating Committee:

- Decided to seek direction from the Policy Board on suggested language for the next-generation policy foundation and directed the Business Planning Oversight Team to package the direction received at the February 8, 2007 Strategic Directions Workshop for comment by the Board. The Team’s presentation to the Board included suggested revision to MetroGIS Guiding Principles that addressed the cross-cutting policy issues outlined in Item 1 above.
- Decided to defer a decision on Items 2 and 3 until the Policy Board had accepted a draft policy framework from which to build upon.