

## **MetroGIS Operating Guidelines**

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### **Article I Definitions**

For the purpose of these Operating Guidelines, the following terms shall have the meaning as provided within these Sections:

#### Section 1.

"MetroGIS" means a regional geographic information systems (GIS) initiative serving the seven-county Minneapolis-St. Paul (Minnesota) metropolitan area, which provides a regional forum to promote and facilitate widespread sharing of geospatial data. It operates as a voluntary, self-governed collaboration of local and regional governments, with partners in state and federal government, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations and businesses, through which participants easily and equitably share commonly needed geospatial data that are accurate, current, of common benefit and readily usable.

#### Section 2.

"Operating Guidelines" means the procedures and rules that govern the organizational aspects and decision making of the MetroGIS Policy Board, Coordinating Committee, Technical Advisory Team and work groups.

#### Section 3.

"Stakeholder" is defined as one of the following classes of participants relative to the MetroGIS initiative:

**Essential Participant:** Organizations whose participation is vital to the existence of the MetroGIS. They are producers of essential data and/or providers of essential functionality or resources. These organizations are both influencers and beneficiaries of the MetroGIS. (Examples: The seven metro area counties and the Metropolitan Council.)

**System Enhancer:** Organizations, which produce data or possess resources (equipment, staff, or funds) that, although not essential to the existence of the MetroGIS, would enhance the functionality or benefits received from it. These organizations are beneficiaries of the MetroGIS and are influencers to varying degrees based on the importance of their data or resources to the functionality of the MetroGIS and to the degree of their participation. (Examples: Cities, school districts, utilities, watershed districts, state agencies, and federal agencies.) System Enhancer organizations are represented by class of organization, not by individual organizations.

**Secondary Beneficiary:** Organizations or individuals, which are solely users of MetroGIS data or services. They do not produce data or contribute resources that would enhance the functionality of the MetroGIS. (Examples: general public, business geographics, and nonprofits.)

#### Section 4.

"Policy Board" means collectively the members of the MetroGIS Policy Board. It is comprised of elected officials from local government stakeholders and a member of the Governor-appointed Metropolitan

Council. The Policy Board decides policies to effectively guide the implementation and ongoing operation of MetroGIS.

#### Section 5.

"Coordinating Committee" means collectively the members of the MetroGIS Coordinating Committee. The Coordinating Committee is comprised of managers and administrators from stakeholder organizations. The Coordinating Committee advises the Policy Board on matters concerning the design, implementation and operation of MetroGIS.

#### Section 6.

"Technical Advisory Team" means collectively the members of the standing MetroGIS Technical Advisory Team. The Technical Advisory Team is comprised of technical staff from stakeholder organizations. It exists primarily to create a technical user forum to foster information sharing related to GIS technology within MetroGIS community and to serve as a resource for the Coordinating Committee, MetroGIS workgroups and MetroGIS staff for review and/or approval of technical issues (standards, data development, data delivery, applications, etc.)

#### Section 7.

"Workgroups" means ad-hoc or special purpose groups responsible for recommending strategies and mechanisms and framing policy needs for consideration by the MetroGIS Coordinating Committee related to specified data access, content, standards issues and/or related applications.

## **Article II** **Policy Board**

#### Section 1. Purpose

There shall be a MetroGIS Policy Board. Its purpose is to effectively guide the implementation and operation of MetroGIS.

#### Section 2. Composition

The Policy Board shall decide the interests that comprise its membership according to the guidelines set forth in this Section. The Policy Board's composition shall consist of a minimum of twelve voting members, one representing each of the following eleven MetroGIS stakeholder organizations, with the exception of Metro Cities, which shall be permitted two representatives:

Metro Cities [*formerly the Association of Metropolitan Municipalities (AMM)*]  
Counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington  
Metro Chapter of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD)  
Metropolitan Council  
Technology Information Education Services (TIES)

The Coordinating Committee Chairperson shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Policy Board.

The Policy Board may expand its membership, as it deems necessary, to successfully carry out the objectives of MetroGIS.

Designation of an alternate for each Policy Board member appointee is encouraged. Designation of an alternate Policy Board member shall be by the governing body of the respective stakeholder organization. Designated alternate members are encouraged to attend all Board meetings, voting only in the absence of the primary representative.

### Section 3. MetroGIS Endorsement and Board Membership

To be eligible for representation on the Policy Board, an organization or class of organization must:

- a) Be classified as either an essential stakeholder or a system enhancer stakeholder.
- b) Have adopted a resolution endorsing MetroGIS.

Policy Board members shall be appointed by the governing body of their respective organizations and shall serve at the discretion of those organizations.

### Section 4. Powers and Responsibilities

The purpose of the Policy Board is to maintain the form and function of the policy making body for MetroGIS and through a voluntary, collaborative, and cooperative process seek the powers and resources necessary to effectively govern MetroGIS.

The Board shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) Determine the interests to be served by MetroGIS.
- b) Represent stakeholders that are Essential Participants and System Enhancers (those with membership on the Board) and serve as liaisons with their respective policy bodies.
- c) Represent Secondary Beneficiary stakeholders to MetroGIS.
- d) Maintain an up-to-date business plan to guide the operations of MetroGIS.
- e) Determine the appropriate mechanisms and policies for development and implementation of MetroGIS.
- f) Ensure the decision-making process involves all relevant and affected parties and is dominated by none to achieve the broadest efficiencies possible.

### Section 5. Voting and Decision Making

Each organization represented on the Policy Board shall have one vote, unless authorized in Section 2 of this Article to have more than one representative on the Policy Board. In the latter case, each duly appointed member shall have one vote. A motion supported by fifty percent of the duly appointed members or their designated alternates, plus one member, shall be the act of the Policy Board, unless a greater number is required by law or by another provision of these guidelines. Notwithstanding, a consensus process involving all Policy Board members is encouraged for matters fundamental to the long-term success of MetroGIS.

### Section 6. Executive Committee

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Policy Board. The following procedural specifications shall govern its activities:

- a) It shall be comprised of the following members:
  - (1) Policy Board Chairperson
  - (2) Policy Board Vice Chairperson
  - (3) Metropolitan Council (*Primary Sponsor of MetroGIS*) Representative to the Policy Board
  - (4) MetroGIS Staff Coordinator (Non-voting, Ex officio)
  - (5) Chairperson, Coordinating Committee Chairperson (Non-voting, Ex officio)
- b) Its domain shall be restricted to urgent, non-policy matters, unless the Policy Board expressly delegates a matter of policy to the Committee to decide. Such delegation is restricted to a case-specific basis.
- c) Assess opportunities and approve/empower MetroGIS staff to pursue partnerships and projects. To remain more vital and relevant, it is important that MetroGIS has the ability to

engage in a timely manner in an increasing variety of geospatial opportunities that may originate both inside and outside of government.

- d) Following Policy Board approval of the annual MetroGIS budget, the Executive Committee may approve project funding for amounts up to 50 percent of MetroGIS's budget, but not greater than \$50,000.
- e) Its decision making rules shall comply with the following requirements:
  - (1) All three voting members of the Policy Board must be present to take action.
  - (2) A unanimous decision is required for all decisions.
  - (3) The Policy Board Chair shall preside over meetings.
- f) Decisions of the Executive Committee may go into effective immediately.
- g) A written summary of each meeting of the Executive Committee shall be provided to the Policy Board at its next regular meeting.

#### Section 7. Meetings

The Board shall meet as necessary to carry out its responsibilities. The time and place of the meetings shall be at the discretion of the Board membership.

Written notice (mail, facsimile, email) of the regular meetings of the Board shall be given to each member at least five (5) days prior to the meetings and shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Special meetings of the Board or Executive Committee meetings may be called by the Board Chair, at their discretion, provided that at least three (3) days written notice is given to each member.

#### Section 8. Quorum

A quorum shall be present to take action on a business item. Fifty percent of the duly appointed members or their designated alternates, plus one, shall constitute a quorum. Fifty percent of the members present, plus one, even if less than a quorum, may adjourn a meeting.

#### Section 9. Chair

The Board shall annually elect a Chairperson from its membership. The Chair shall preside at the meetings of the Board and perform the usual duties of Chair and such other duties as may be described by the Board from time to time. The Chair shall serve until his or her successor is duly elected.

#### Section 10. Vice Chair

The Board shall annually elect a Vice Chairperson from its membership. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act and shall serve until his or her successor is duly elected.

#### Section 11. Member Absenteeism

The Board's ability to achieve collaboration that is necessary to achieve long-term solutions to common geospatial needs is compromised when its members do not regularly participate in its affairs. Successful implementation of regional solutions requires champions within each of the affected organizations, a role expected of Board members.

If a member misses three (3) consecutive meetings and does not arrange for an alternate, the member shall be contacted to investigate options to ensure the member's constituency is appropriately represented in the affairs of MetroGIS.

## **Article III** **Coordinating Committee**

### Section 1. Purpose

There shall be a Coordinating Committee. Its purpose is to advise the Policy Board on matters concerning the implementation and operation of MetroGIS.

### Section 2. Composition

The Policy Board shall approve the interest categories to be represented by the members of the Coordinating Committee. The approved interest categories shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, essential participant stakeholders, government that serves the metro area, academic institutions, non-profit organizations that serve as adjunct resources for local government, non-government providers of essential public services, private sector GIS consultants and 'business geographics' interests, and other interests important to the long term success of MetroGIS.

The Coordinating Committee shall be responsible for selecting organizations or individuals to represent each of the approved general interest categories. To qualify for consideration, candidate organizations, classes of organizations, and individuals must: 1) be an essential participant stakeholder or a system enhancer stakeholder or 2) possess special expertise or knowledge important to the MetroGIS mission not provided by another member.

Each Coordinating Committee member is encouraged to seek appointment of an alternate. Designation of an alternate member shall be by the governing body of the respective stakeholder organization. Designated alternate members are encouraged to attend Committee meetings, voting only in the absence of the primary representative.

Committee member selection shall be subject to the following guidelines:

- Members of the Coordinating Committee shall include a variety of government, academic, utility, non-profit, and private-sector perspectives. Producers and users of geographic information and a diversity of operational areas important to the long-term success of MetroGIS shall be represented.
- Private sector representatives must represent a broad perspective. Appropriate measures must be employed so that no particular firm receives or is perceived to receive an unfair competitive advantage. (e.g. Gopher State One Call to represent utility interests, advisory committee with a liaison to the Coordinating Committee, etc.)
- Each organization represented on the Policy Board shall also be represented on the Coordinating Committee and shall have the same number of voting members on each.
- An organization(s) selected to represent a specified stakeholder interest category shall appoint their respective representative(s). Members and their alternates shall serve at the discretion of the organization they represent.
- Individuals determined to possess perspective and/or expertise that helps further the mission and goals of MetroGIS may serve on the Coordinating Committee at the discretion of the Coordinating Committee, subject to the guidelines set forth in this Section.
- Persons representing academic, for-profit, and non-profit interests may comprise up to thirty (30) percent of the Committee's membership.

- Members who represent broad communities, as opposed to single organizations, are expected to make an attempt to bring the communities' ideas and concerns to MetroGIS's deliberations but they are not expected to establish regular, formalized communication channels with their broad communities.

### Section 3. Powers and Responsibilities

The Committee shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

- Advise the Policy Board on matters concerning the design, implementation, and operations of MetroGIS, to include, but not be limited to: datasets and their characteristics which provide the greatest utility for the MetroGIS community (regional datasets/solutions), standards and/or guidelines that facilitate data sharing among MetroGIS stakeholders, and data delivery and access procedures.
- Oversee performance measure and user satisfaction monitoring to periodically evaluate who is using DataFinder, what data are being accessed, and satisfaction with the functionality and data provided.
- Oversee provision of effective opportunities to share GIS related knowledge important to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations that comprise the MetroGIS community.
- Oversee implementation of MetroGIS Policy.
- Advise the Policy Board on the content of its business plan that guides the operations of MetroGIS.
- Ensure an effective means of communication between the Policy Board, the Committee, the Technical Advisory Team and any ad hoc work groups.
- Coordinate the work of the Technical Advisory Team and the ad hoc work groups.
- Remain current and discuss new trends regarding Geographic Information Systems technology and related capabilities as they relate to the MetroGIS community.
- Provide for coordination and outreach with entities such as the Governor's Council on Geographic Information, LMIC, Mn/DOT, State Demographer, federal agencies, etc.
- Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Policy Board.

### Section 4. Liaisons to Technical Advisory Team and Ad Hoc Work Groups

The Coordinating Committee shall appoint at least one member to serve as liaison to the Technical Advisory Team and each ad hoc work group. Said appointments shall be for a term decided at the time of appointment. It is desirable for each liaison to attend Policy Board meetings. Liaisons are responsible for:

- Presenting recommendations to the Coordinating Committee and Policy Board.
- Informing their respective group of direction received from the Coordinating Committee and Policy Board.

### Section 6. Chair

The Coordinating Committee shall annually elect a Chairperson from its membership. The Chair shall preside at the meetings of the Coordinating Committee and perform the usual duties of Chair. Not more than two consecutive terms may be served by one person, unless no one else is willing to serve. The Chair shall serve until his or her successor is duly elected. Additional duties of the Chair are to:

- Guide the preparation of agendas and agenda materials for Coordinating Committee and Policy Board meetings.
- Present plans, studies, reports and such measures to the Policy Board as are deemed necessary to carry out the mission of MetroGIS.
- Serve as liaison between the Policy Board and the Coordinating Committee.

#### Section 7. Vice Chair

The Coordinating Committee shall annually elect a Vice-Chairperson from its membership. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act. Not more than two consecutive terms may be served by one person, unless no one else is willing to serve. The Vice-Chair shall serve until his or her successor is duly elected.

#### Section 8. Quorum

A quorum shall be present to act on a business item. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the full voting membership, plus one member. Fifty percent of the members present, plus one, even if less than a quorum, may adjourn a meeting.

#### Section 9. Voting and Decision Making

Each organization represented on the Coordinating Committee shall have one vote, except where organizations are approved to be represented by more than one person.

##### a) At meetings

(1) Recommendations to the Policy Board: A motion for a recommendation to the Policy Board must be supported by at least 75 percent of the members present to be approved, unless a greater number is required by law or by another provision of these guidelines. If other than unanimous support, the differing opinion(s) must be carried forward with the recommendation.

Situations where issues of policy arise that are beyond the Committee's scope or where additional direction is needed to resolve a matter shall be passed to the Policy Board for consideration and direction.

(2) Other Motions: A motion that will not result in a recommendation to the Policy Board must be supported by at least 50 percent of the members present, plus one, to be approved, unless a greater number is required by law or by another provision of these guidelines.

##### b) Between Meetings

To maintain flexibility to address issues and opportunities in a timely manner, the Committee may make decisions between meetings, provided the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) This process is restricted to operational matters. It cannot be used to decide matters of policy. A special meeting of the Committee must be called for consider such decisions if between regularly scheduled meetings.
- (2) The Committee Chairperson and Vice-chairperson, or their respective designee(s), both conclude that the situation is urgent.
- (3) The call for a vote is made via email and the subject line states "E-Vote Requested – Urgent MetroGIS Business".

- (4) Members are provided with at least five (5) working days to respond.
- (5) The rules set forth in Sections 8 in this Article governing the Committee's quorum shall be satisfied. The number of votes cast shall be used to determine compliance with quorum requirements.
- (6) Prior to voting on the motion, the members must vote on the appropriateness of the topic as an E-vote. If ten percent or more of the members state the topic is inappropriate for an E-vote, the motion is automatically tabled to the next regular or special meeting of the Committee.
- (7) Motions must be supported by a minimum of 75 percent of the votes cast to be approved.
- (8) The Committee is apprised of the results and the course of action to be followed by email immediately following conclusion of the voting.
- (9) The action is ratified at next regular or special meeting of the Committee as a consent item to document the action taken. Ratification is for documentation purposes only. The result of the E-vote shall not be affected.

#### Section 10. Member Absenteeism

The Committee's ability to achieve collaboration that is necessary to achieve long-term solutions to common geospatial needs is compromised when its members do not regularly participate in its affairs. Successful implementation of regional solutions requires champions within each of the affected organizations, a role expected of Committee members.

If a member misses three (3) consecutive meetings and does not arrange for an alternate, the Staff Coordinator and/or Coordinating Committee Chair shall contact the member and investigate options to ensure the member's constituency is appropriately represented in the affairs of MetroGIS.

#### Section 11. Meetings

The Coordinating Committee shall meet as necessary to carry out its duties. The time and place of the meetings shall be at the discretion of the Committee membership.

Written notice (mail, facsimile, email) of the regular meetings of the Coordinating Committee shall be given to each member at least five (5) days prior to such meetings, and shall comply with the provisions of the open meeting law. Special meetings of the Coordinating Committee may be called by the Chair, provided that at least three (3) days written notice is given to each member and otherwise comply with the provisions of the open meeting law.

### **Article IV** **Advisory Teams**

#### Section 1. Purpose

Advise the Coordinating Committee on matters concerning data access, data content, policy, standards, applications and other areas as may be identified and serve as a mechanism for widespread knowledge sharing among entities that comprise MetroGIS's stakeholder community.

#### Section 2. Creation of Teams

- a) A standing Technical Advisory Team shall be created and maintained at the discretion of the Coordinating Committee. This Team will be relied upon by the Coordinating Committee for advice when it is not practical to convene a special purpose workgroup. Its primary function is to facilitate knowledge sharing among MetroGIS stakeholders.
- b) Ad Hoc or Special Purpose Workgroups are created and populated at the discretion of the Coordinating Committee and are to be dissolved when its assigned responsibility has been fulfilled. Once operational,

Workgroups will generally report directly to the Coordinating Committee, as opposed to the Technical Advisory Team.

### Section 3. Composition

- Team members shall have acknowledged expertise relevant to the objectives and tasks of the team to which assigned. Team members shall: 1) represent a variety of points view and be affiliated with organizations or interests with jurisdiction within one or more of the Metro Area Counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington or 2) possess desired knowledge or expertise not otherwise provided.
- Each team shall have a liaison member from the Coordinating Committee.

### Section 4. Chair

Each team shall designate a chairperson from its membership. The chairperson shall preside at the meetings and perform the usual duties of a chairperson. The team chairperson may be someone other than a designated liaison to the Coordinating Committee.

### Section 5. Powers and Responsibilities

The tasks and responsibilities of each team shall be determined by the Coordinating Committee. The teams shall have the following powers and duties:

- Present the Coordinating Committee with plans, studies, and recommendations for action that address each of its tasks as assigned by the Coordinating Committee or Policy Board.
- Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Coordinating Committee.

### Section 6. Decision Making Process and Voting

Teams shall be free to determine decision-making rules consistent with their task(s) but a consensus process is encouraged. If a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee receives less than unanimous support, the differing opinion(s) must be carried forward with the recommendation. Team recommendations shall be carried forward to the Coordinating Committee by the team's Liaison to the Coordinating Committee or staff or the team chairperson in the absence of a Liaison. Each team shall work to resolve issues before it within the team. Situations where issues of policy arise that are beyond a team's scope or where additional direction is needed shall be passed to the Coordinating Committee for consideration and direction.

Teams shall not be subject to a formal quorum requirement to either convene their meetings or to act on matters before them. The membership of these teams shall have the discretion to act on matters regardless of the number of members present to expeditiously move proposals, concerns, and issues forward to the next level of review, provided the meeting notification guidelines set forth herein for a regularly scheduled or a special meeting, as the case may be, have been satisfied.

### Section 7. Meetings

Teams shall meet as necessary to carry out their duties. The time and place of the meetings shall be at the discretion of each team.

Written notice (mail, facsimile, email) of the regular meetings of each team shall be given to each member at least five (5) days prior to such meetings. Special meetings of the teams may be called by the respective Chairs, provided that at least three (3) days written notice is given to each affected member and otherwise comply with the provisions of the open meeting law.

## **Article V** **Amendments**

### Section 1.

Amendments to these Operating Guidelines may be proposed by any member of the Coordinating Committee or Policy Board. A statement explaining the purpose and effect of the proposed amendment shall accompany the amendment proposal.

### Section 2.

To become effective, amendments to these Operating Guidelines shall receive two readings; one before the Coordinating Committee and one before the Policy Board, each preceded by written notice to each member of the Coordinating Committee and each member of the Board at least fifteen (15) days prior to their respective consideration. Amendment proposals may be considered at a regular or a special meeting of the Committee and/or the Policy Board, provided the notification requirements in this Section are satisfied.

Amendments initiated by the Policy Board shall move forward from the Coordinating Committee to the Policy Board for consideration whether or not the Coordinating Committee recommends approval. Policy Board approval shall require at least a majority vote in favor, as outlined in Article II, Section 5.

## **Article VI** **Procedure**

### Section 1. Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

The rules of parliamentary procedure and practice contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be used as guidelines for the Coordinating Committee's and Policy Board's decision making unless otherwise stated herein. Decisions that result from a process that does not meet the strict procedures set forth in Robert's Rules of Order shall remain in effect if the decision resulted from due consideration of the options presented for discussion.

The Technical Advisory Team and Ad Hoc Work Groups shall have the discretion to devise and follow decision making rules acceptable to their members.

### Section 3. Public Notice of Meetings

Public notification of meetings of the Policy Board shall be provided via the Metropolitan Council's Metro Meetings publication until such time that the provisions of the Open Meeting Law dictate otherwise.