



TO: MetroGIS Policy Board

FROM: MetroGIS Support Staff
Contact: Randall Johnson (651-602-1638)

SUBJECT: Information Sharing

DATE: March 29, 2001
(For the Apr 11 Meeting)

a) 2000 Annual Report

Jeanne Landkamer, MetroGIS' communications editor, has submitted the MetroGIS' 2000 Annual Report to the printer. 2000 copies are being printed. The mailing list of about 1600 includes everyone that serves on a MetroGIS team, committee, or workgroup; Metropolitan Council, all chief elected and chief administrative officials with local government in the Twin Cities, legislators, city planners, city & consulting engineers, planning commission chairs, and libraries. We hope to be able to distribute the report by the end of April. Staff will bring a mock-up copy to the Board meeting.

Jeanne also assisted with the preparation of an article that was submitted for the next issue of the GIS/LIS newsletter that will be published in April. MetroGIS publishes an article in each issue of the GIS/LIS newsletter.

b) New Policy Advisory Team Chair

Jim Hentges, Scott County, was elected by the Policy Advisory Team on February 14 as Team Chair. Jim will take over for Virginia Erdahl who retired from Washington County, effective February 28.

c) Professional Services Consultant Contract with Richardson, Richter and Associates

The firm of Richardson, Richter and Associates was retained in late January to assist MetroGIS on several projects over the next two years. The final Scope of Work and fee are attached for the Board's information. The entire fee is within the budget that has been approved by the Metropolitan Council for 2001 and is consistent with that estimated for 2002 in the Business Plan (see Agenda Item 5b).

d) NSDI WEB Mapping Grant Application

At its March 15 meeting, the Coordinating Committee authorized application to the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) for a grant that would provide funding to design, install and evaluate the MetroGIS DataFinder Map Service Project. (Refer to the meeting minutes at www.metrogis.org for the committee's rationale.) A copy of the application can be viewed at (www.metrogis.org > Under Supported Projects > See *Web Mapping Services (Pending)*). The result of the project would be the deployment of three Open GIS Consortium (OGC)-compliant web mapping services that can send standard map images over the Web. A map service is a map that is published over the Internet. It may contain a single data layer (e.g. imagery, elevation, and land use) or a collection of complimentary data layers. Examples of complimentary data layers would be basic basemap layers of administrative boundaries, water features, and city points along with thematic layers such as vegetation and flood zones. Notice of awards is scheduled for June 2001.

e) MetroGIS to Participate in the ESRI's The Geography Network Challenge

At its March 15 meeting, the Coordinating Committee authorized application to compete in The Geography Challenge. (Refer to the meeting minutes at www.metrogis.org for the committee's rationale.) This Challenge is a competition offered by ESRI, Inc. to promote the use of map services (see "d" above) and is open to all ArcIMS users worldwide. The Metropolitan Council, serving in its role as custodian of DataFinder, is an ArcIMS user. This Challenge is designed to increase awareness of Internet mapping

services that enable publishing and sharing geographic information - locally, nationally and globally. There are several challenge categories, but MetroGIS DataFinder would enter under the “Data Sharing” category.

The benefits of entering the challenge are twofold. First, the prizes offered would provide MetroGIS with monetary rewards that would assist in implementing useful services for MetroGIS:

1-Grand Prize \$5,000 in ESRI credit	7-\$1,000 in ESRI credit
5-\$2,000 in ESRI credit	10-\$1,000 credit for ESRI's Virtual Campus

Secondly and perhaps more importantly, the challenge would offer MetroGIS stakeholders a new method for accessing data over the Internet for GIS mapping and Analysis. This would increase the usability of data sets offered on DataFinder and provide easier access to data by new GIS users in the MetroGIS community. In addition, MetroGIS DataFinder would receive additional exposure in the national GIS sphere and continue to expand upon a data-sharing model that other metropolitan communities could use and follow.

f) Major Project Update

• Business Information Needs

1. Regional Parcel Dataset – Public Sector Component: See agenda Item 5d (private component)

Work is progressing on the planning for the regional public parcel data users forum scheduled for April 19. (*Program attached.*) The forum objectives are to identify desired enhancements to the regional data set (data content, accuracy and frequency of updates, etc...); communicate common uses and benefits of using the data; and to identify appropriate distribution mechanisms needed to share the regional data set with stakeholders. 51 organizations obtained licenses to evaluate the pilot regional parcel dataset. Participants who submitted a written evaluation will be encouraged to participate. The results of this forum and subsequent team discussions that will follow in May and June will be used to prepare a Next Steps Work Plan proposal that will be forwarded to the Policy Board on July 11 for consideration. *The action taken by the Board on July 11 may possibly have the most far reaching impact the functionality of MetroGIS of any action to date.*

As a prelude to the April 19 Data User’s Forum, a workshop was held on March 9th for local government interests whose jurisdictions adjoin or cross county boundaries and who did not elect to evaluate the regional parcel dataset. 25 people attended, representing all forms of local government that serve the Metro Area. The purpose of the workshop was to expand understanding of the concept of a regional parcel dataset and benefits that these organizations might gain from using the dataset.

2. Regional Custodian for School District Jurisdictional Boundary Dataset: On February 14, the Policy Advisory Team agreed to create a subcommittee that will approach the MN Dept of Children, Families and Learning (CFL) with a proposal that CFL consider serving in the role as regional custodian for the School District Jurisdictional Boundary Dataset. The Team acknowledged that LMIC would likely be the technical agent for CFL to carry out this role. The subcommittee will be formed the team’s work on Regional Parcel and Regional Planned (Future) Land Use Forums scheduled for April 19 and tentatively May 15.

3. Planned (Future) Land Use

The Metropolitan Council has completed the first phase of a pilot project, conducted on behalf of MetroGIS, to test the regional planned land use coding scheme prototyped by the North Metro I35W Corridor Coalition. The first phase of the pilot project, which began in August 2000, involved the compilation of the official planned land use plan designations for each of the 190 municipalities and townships in the seven county area and standardizing the individual community codes into a regional planned land use coding scheme. As stated in previous Updates, the prototype regional coding

scheme was created by a MetroGIS work group of community development professionals who represented urban core, suburban, rural, and freestanding communities. The I-35W Corridor Coalition has also been testing the prototype scheme. *The regional coding scheme and resulting regional dataset are intended to provide a means to compare the official land use designations adopted by each community. They are in no way intended to replace locally-adopted designations.*

The second phase of the Council's pilot project began in March and represents the region-wide Quality Assessment and Quality Control of the compiled regional data set. A Web page has been developed that displays each communities planned land use in terms of the regional land use coding scheme and in relation to their surrounding communities. Officials with each of the 190 communities will be asked to comment on the accuracy of the Council's coding of their individual community land use plan designations and on the "mapping" of the their individual codes to the regional scheme. Using Web technology, each community will be able to spatially view their community and will be provided a relational table displaying their community's codes, the proposed regional codes, any questions or comments the Metropolitan Council may have regarding the coding process, and an area for community feedback by code. The responses will be tabulated and analyzed by Council and MetroGIS officials.

A Peer Review Forum is tentatively scheduled for May 15, 2001 to present the findings of the Council's and Coalition's testing and to discuss enhancements and changes to the prototype regional coding scheme desired by the user community.

4. **Census Geography**

By mid-April, The Metropolitan Council expects to release the regional (includes the entire seven county metro area) the 1990 Census Block boundaries dataset. The boundaries of the geography received from the Census Bureau have been modified to align with the parcel data maintained by the counties and/or the regional street center line dataset where these boundaries are meant to be coterminous. The Council is the MetroGIS designated regional custodian for this dataset. The Council's GIS Unit will begin work this summer on a regional 2000 Census Block boundaries dataset.

5. **Lakes, Wetlands, etc.**

Due to time constraints, little progress has been made on this information need since December 2000. MetroGIS staff and Governor's Council Hydrographic Committee members have pledged to conduct an inventory of existing data resources that can be used to satisfy desired specifications for a regional/state hydrographic dataset(s). These specifications were identified by participants at the October 29, 1999 Information Needs Workshop. (Refer to the Information Final Workshop Documents posted on the MetroGIS webpage (www.metrogis.org) under the "Supported Projects \ Business Information Needs \ Lakes, Wetlands..." for more information). The next steps will comprise of completing the data inventory project, technical advisory team recommendations for dataset(s) that meet regional needs which are anticipated to be completed by Summer 2000.

- **Next Generation "Umbrella" Data Sharing Agreement:** This topic was introduced to the Policy Advisory Team on February 14. The Team also spent considerable time at its March 28 meeting discussing the philosophy for this agreement. The challenge will be to define a mechanism to effectively capture the collaborative spirit of MetroGIS, expand upon the data sharing that has been achieved through the interim GIS Data and Cost Sharing Agreements, and extend the term of the current open data sharing environment through at least December 31, 2003. Six of the seven interim agreements expire December 31, 2001. The seventh expires December 31, 2003. The goal is to reach agreement by September and to have all critical stakeholders officially adopt/endorse the selected mechanism prior to December 31, 2001.

- **DataFinder Evaluation (www.datafinder.org):** Following several months of development, the enhanced DataFinder site went on-line in January 2001. The MetroGIS DataFinder site was also successfully registered with NSDI in January. MetroGIS DataFinder is now one of the four the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) nodes in Minnesota (the others are LMIC, DNR and ARDC) and one of over 200 NSDI data nodes worldwide. The new metadata search engine is based on an NSDI (National Spatial Data Infrastructure) standard of the FGDC (Federal Geographic Data Committee).

The results of an on-line user evaluation of the new site were presented to the Technical Advisory Team on March 29. Coordinating Committee consideration will be sought on June 14. The overwhelming response has been that the enhanced Internet site is more user friendly and definitely easier to use. The enhanced site allows people to find GIS data and metadata more quickly. Some of the features of the site include a new GIS data catalog, an enhanced search engine, an online-mapping feature, and improved on-line help and resources pages.

- **Registration of MetroGIS and MetroGIS DataFinder Names:** The Metropolitan Council retained a trademark attorney who assisted MetroGIS staff prepare and file applications with the State of Minnesota and federal authorities to register the terms "MetroGIS" and "MetroGIS DataFinder". The applications were submitted the week of February 5. We expect the registration process to be completed sometime in April. No obstacles are foreseen at this time.

g) County Users Group Update

The contacts for each user group were asked to provide a brief summary of the projects their groups are undertaking. The following responses were received:

- **Anoka County:** The group has not met since its Data Fair last Fall due to staff changes at a couple of the cities and county. The leadership is planning to meet again in April or May. The county's proposed improvements to its parcel geography will likely be the main item of interest.
- **Carver County:** Carver County's user group did not meet this quarter as data sets and applications from the county's GIS staff are currently being developed. The User Group will re-convene next quarter with new data sets and applications for users use.
- **Dakota County:** The group last met in January. 2000 digital orthos, census data, and applications for environmental management, plats, and the PLS were discussed. A newsletter is also produced. The last issue is attached.
- **Hennepin County:** Last meeting last November. Planning for next meeting to begin shortly. The main item of discussion will be distribution of orthoimagery obtained Spring 2000 and partnering potential for the next flight.
- **Ramsey County:** The Ramsey County GIS Users Group (RCGISUG) has been working with City of Saint Paul business consultant Lee Turchin to prepare a five-year strategic plan. One impetus for this plan is the intent of Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul to create an Oracle spatial data warehouse accessible by Intranet and Internet. The RCGISUG wants to position itself to take best advantage of this next generation of GIS. In 2001 the RCGISUG is preparing to create a users handbook to make it easier for members to work with the data they receive from the County. The group is also assisting with the financing of the updating Ramsey County's physical features layers from 2000 aerial Photography.
- **Scott County:** The group last met on February 28. A half-section mapper demonstration and a planimetric update partnership proposal were discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for March 28th at 1:30PM.
- **Washington County:** The next meeting is planned for April. The agenda will include Internet parcel access, enhancements to Quick Access, update on MetroGIS projects, and current projects from around the County.