

MetroGIS Address Workgroup Tuesday, May 31, 2005

Metropolitan Counties Office Building – 2099 University Ave. W – St. Paul

Members Present: Amy Geisler (City of Ramsey Planning); Gordon Chinander (Metropolitan 911 Board); Peter Henschel (Carver County); Erin Naughton, (Minneapolis GIS); Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District and liaison to Coordinating Committee); Scott Simmer (Hennepin County); Lynn Rohe (Scott County); Jeff Gottstein (Woodbury PD); Todd Sieben and Dave Brandt (Washington County); and Ben Verbick (LOGIS and Liaison with Street Centerline Workgroup).

Members Absent: Deb Jones (Falcon Heights and liaison to Address Committee of the Ramsey County GIS Users Group), John Slusarczyk (Anoka County), Christine Meyer (St. Paul Water Utility) and Kent Tupper (Dakota County).

Staff Present: Mark Kotz and Randall Johnson (MetroGIS Staff Support Team)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kotz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked each member to introduce himself or herself.

2. Approve Agenda

The proposed agenda was accepted, as submitted.

3. Approve Meeting Summary

The summary for the April 11, 2005 meeting was accepted as submitted. Nancy Read complimented staff for the bulleted listing of items under Item 6 (Define Custodial Roles), noting that capturing these ideas will be helpful in the group's subsequent work. Kotz noted that this information will be a key component of the proposed White Paper to document the workgroup's efforts.

4. MN GIS/LIS Conference Presentation

Kotz explained his proposal to present a summary of the Workgroup's efforts at the 2005 GIS/LIS Conference. (A draft abstract had previously been sent to the workgroup for comment, since the deadline for abstracts was before the workgroup meeting date.) Kotz noted that he planned to make the presentation but also encouraged members of the workgroup to participate if they had an interest. He explained that his goal is to submit the group's proposed White Paper to the Coordinating Committee for consideration at its September meeting and then make it available at the 2005 GIS/LIS Conference as part of the proposed presentation.

5. Web Editing Application Subgroup

Kotz briefly summarized progress made by the Web Editing Application Subgroup at its April 19th meeting, noting that a general consensus was that further work should be deferred until the Database Design Workgroup has substantially agreed on a host of database design matters that will affect the proposed application design process. Kotz noted that Verbick has agreed to assist with the coordination of the two workgroups. He also emphasized that a key to the success of the application will be the workgroup's ability to demonstrate its value to city officials who are the target users and that the proposed White Paper is expected to play a critical role in the outreach strategy to clearly communicate both the purpose of the proposed dataset and editing application as well as the benefits of using the application use.

Kotz then briefly summarized each of the Next Steps listed in Item 5 of the Workgroup's meeting summary and asked those present to provide a status report for their respective task(s).

Henschel commented that Chanhassen is about 70% complete with a citywide occupiable unit database they are building from scratch. There is no existing documentation of any of the decision rules employed thus far. Henschel agreed to speak with the project manager on an as needed basis as to the rationale of various components of their design and implementation.

Read commented that a User Needs Assessment seemed to be in order. Kotz responded that until the group can clearly explain the vision for the occupiable units dataset and a potential web editing application, that a User Needs Assessment would be of limited value given the unprecedented nature of the proposal.

The group briefly talked about anticipated differences between small cities, which are the target users of a web editing application, and those of large cities that are not expected to use it. Most agreed that the majority of the addressing data to be maintained as part of the regional solution will likely be produced by larger cities and that the application would likely be the source of 20+/- percent of the regional dataset.

The group briefly talked about the need to better understand existing relationships between city officials that create address data and PSAPs. Johnson suggested looking to the 27 PSAPs as candidate intermediate aggregators. Chinander then mentioned that the number of PSAPs is very likely to be fewer in coming years due to an ongoing attempt to consolidate them.

6. Ramsey County Occupiable Units Project Update

Kotz mentioned that Ramsey County had met with ESRI to talk about the potential for a web editing application for an occupiable units point dataset. This would be very much like what this workgroup has envisioned. This is in a preliminary planning phase right now.

7. White Paper Outline

Deferred to the next meeting due to lack of time. Kotz handed out an outline and asked the members to review it prior to the next meeting.

8. Database Design Subgroup

Kotz commented that the Database Design Workgroup has made significant progress and in so doing has identified several topics for which it wishes further direction from the full workgroup. Kotz led a discussion of several of these items as described in the agenda packet report entitled "Address Points Database Design Notes" and summarized below.

Prior to discussion of the specifics, the group concurred that the standards agreed upon by the workgroup are to facilitate implementation of a primary product/protocol for testing and refinement by the user community. It was also agreed that subject standards. This . Finally,

The group spent a good deal of time discussing the distinction between "guideline" and "standard", ultimately agreeing "standards" are perceived as minimum requirements for the associated data to be useable as a component of the regional solution. If an organization can't meet the standard, then their data cannot be part of the regional dataset. "Guidelines" would be best practices on top of these minimum standards. For example, for encoding the street name for "7th Street", either "7TH" or "SEVENTH" would be required as a standard (just "7" would not be acceptable), but as a best practice, we would like to see it as "7TH". The group agreed that flexibility to accommodate different business models is important to long term success and that the perception of mandating compliance must be avoided unless it is critical to the functionality of the dataset. As such, the consensus was to make sure that the final database design clearly defines what is mandatory or "standard" and what is an additional best practice or "guideline", and erring on the side of guidelines.

a) Points for Every Unit vs. Related Table for Multiple Units per Point:

The workgroup agreed that the database should have a point for each unit and not a related table for multiple units in a building. This is subject to confirmation by the user community. The reasoning for this decision is that in order to easily create related tables that describe additional attributes of individual units (socioeconomic characteristics, presence of hazardous materials, presence of life saving equipment [defibrillators], landmark names, etc.) it is necessary to have a unique ID for each unit. Having an ID for just a building would not permit this functionality in some cases.

b) Positional Accuracy.

Agreed that the minimum requirement should be that each unit point is to be located with the correct parcel polygon. The group acknowledged that this requirement would not apply to new “preliminary” point locations created when photo and plat information was not yet available to the data editor.

- c) Multiple Addresses for a Building
Discussion to be continued at the next meeting. More clarity of the problem definition is needed.
- d) Database Fields: Building Number Suffix
It was agreed that a separate alpha-numeric field should be created to capture anomalies such as “1/2” or “B” that follow a building/house number, such as found in situations of accessory (grandmother) apartments on the same property as the primary residence. Note: this is different than the unit number (e.g. for a unit within a building).
- e) Database Fields: Street Name Prefix
Staff stated that more work needed to be done to see how cities within Ramsey County handle this issue.
- f) Database Fields: Street Name
After some discussion, the group generally concurred that a field width of longer than 40 character would be OK. Members asked staff to further investigate before making a decision.
- g) Database Fields: Numeric Street Names
The group concluded that two options will be acceptable in the database “SEVENTH” and “7TH”, but that the “7TH” style is preferred. However, simply using the number “7” would not be allowed. The group recognized that Qwest is currently using the “7” format, but is in the process of changing to “7TH”. No other known database or standard uses the “7” format.
- h) Database Fields: Highway and County Road Name Formats
The group consensus was to suggest the USPS formats as a guideline/best practice, but not require them.
- i) Database Fields: Alternate Street Names Highway and County Roads
The group concurred with staff’s suggestion that any alternate names should be managed only in the street centerline database, to avoid having to maintain the same data in two different places.
- j) Database Fields: Street Type
Accepted as proposed in the staff report (4 character text field with a fixed domain). Group agreed that we will have to define a few where they do not exist in USPS Pub. 28.

Time ran out before any more database issues could be discussed. Kotz was asked to set up a follow-up meeting via email.

Note: Gottstein raised the matter of whether addresses for mileposts will be included. The group concurred that the scope of this project is limited to occupiable units but agreed to capture the topic for a possible future phase/enhancement.

9. Next Meeting

The group asked staff to set up a meeting via email in early to mid June to: 1) complete consideration of the standards-related items for which the Database Design Workgroup has requested direction and 2) finalize the outline for the proposed White Paper.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Randall Johnson and Mark Kotz
MetroGIS Staff Support Team