

**Meeting Summary**  
**MetroGIS Coordinating Committee**  
**Ramsey County Public Works Building – Arden Hills**  
**June 27, 2007**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Brown called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. He began by asking the Committee members and audience to introduce themselves, asking them to provide any general announcements of interest.

Gelbmann shared with the group that the Metropolitan Council is preparing a launch a new Maps website. Vice Chairperson Ned Phillips announced that he had accepted a new position not affiliated with water management and as such commented that this would be his last Committee meeting. Members were asked to offer suggestions for appointment of new vice chairperson to Chairperson Brown before the next meeting. Phillips commented that he had contacted the Metro Chapter of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts to begin the process of appointing a new representative to the Committee.

Members Present: *Academics:* Will Craig (U of M); *Cities:* Jim Engfer for Steve Lorbach (AMM: core cities - City of St. Paul), *Counties:* David Claypool (Ramsey); Jim Bunning for Jim Hentges (Scott), Bill Brown (Hennepin); *Federal:* Ron Wencil (USGS); *Metropolitan:* Rick Gelbmann and Mark Vander Schaaf (Metropolitan Council), Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District); *Non-Profits:* Sally Wakefield (1000 Friends of Minnesota); *Special Expertise:* Brad Henry (URS Corp.); *State:* Joella Givens (MN/DOT); *Utilities:* Allan Radke (CenterPoint Energy); and *Watershed/Water Management Organizations:* Ned Phillips (Rice Creek Watershed District).

Members Absent: *Business Geographics:* Patrick Hamilton (CB Richard Ellis); *Cities:* Harold Busch (AMM: suburban cities - City of Bloomington); *Counties:* John Slusarczyk (Anoka), Dave Drealan (Carver), Randy Knippel (Dakota), Jane Harper (Washington), *GIS Consultants:* Terese Rowekamp (Rowekamp Associates); *Metropolitan:* David Bitner (Metropolitan Airports Commission), Gordon Chinander (Metropolitan Emergency Services Board); *Schools:* Dick Carlstrom (TIES); *State:* Tim Loesch (DNR) and David Arbeit (GDA/LMIC).

Support Staff: Randall Johnson and Christopher Kline (MetroGIS Staff Support Team); Jonathan Blake (Richardson, Richter and Associates – Member of the MetroGIS Staff Support Team).

Visitors: Brian Huberty (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services), Mark Kotz and Matt McGuire (Metropolitan Council), and Fred Logman (LMIC).

**2. ACCEPT AGENDA**

Radke moved and Givens seconded to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

**3. ACCEPT MEETING SUMMARY**

Craig moved and Henry seconded to approve the March 28, 2007 meeting summary, as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

**4. POLICY BOARD MEETING:**

Staff Coordinator provided an overview of the April 25, 2007 Policy Board meeting, elaborating on their discussion regarding county revenue for parcel data transactions and approval of a works in progress policy foundation for MetroGIS.

In response to suggestion made by Policy Board Member Schneider at the April Board meeting, Chairperson Brown pointed out that there currently is no difference between what could be considered as certified or uncertified data. The Staff Coordinator commented that the Board's expectation is that the County Data Producer's Workgroup will offer a recommended course of action concerning the direction requested by the Board.

Henry inquired about the vacant Association of Metropolitan Municipalities (Large Cities) seat on the Policy Board and if there had been any candidates proposed. The Staff Coordinator replied that no candidates had been offered, but the possibility for filling the vacant position with a person from the LOGIS organization is under consideration by AMM.

## **5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **a) 2007 Regional GIS Project – Final Review**

Chairperson Brown introduced the agenda item, requesting that Read provide an overview of project proposal and request for a budget increase from \$4,000 to \$14,000. She noted that while the project can be completed for less than \$14,000 the additionally requested allowance of \$4,000 would permit the project to include additional features, not included in the concept proposal.

Craig asked about integration of the entire TLG data (22 counties) and the geocoding engine being used – would it be proprietary or could it be used on other systems? Read replied that the system would be designed to be portable, and is currently proposed to be hosted at LMIC in general, but any organization would be able to install it in-house for mass geocoding. She agreed to look into the question about the geographic extent of the TLG dataset, as that question had not previously arisen.

Vander Schaaf asked if the subject geocoder would be capable of exporting its results to a desktop GIS system. Read replied that the geocoder would be a web-based service, but as most desktop GIS systems, such as ArcGIS, it will have the ability to integrate with web services, no problem should be encountered for desktop users in addition to web-based users. Though she noted that this service will not be designed to support batch geocoding.

The Staff Coordinator asked if a final, definitive budget would be available soon and whether Read expected the project to come in below the revised \$14,000. Read replied that the geocoding application will be finished for less than \$14,000; the additional funds are requested as a buffer for any potential cost overruns, such as paying for hosting or add-ons.

Henry asked if this service could be added to the Metropolitan Council's new GIS site. Gelbmann replied that he would be interested in exploring the addition of geocoding functionality to the Council's new "Maps" website and that it would make no difference where the service is hosted.

**Motion:** Henry moved and Craig seconded that the Coordinating Committee recommend that the Policy Board endorse for funding, not to exceed \$14,000, as the 2007 Regional GIS Project, the project entitled "Geocoding Service and Application Code based on TLG Streets and/or Parcel Data" as described in the final application, dated June 19, 2007. Motion carried, ayes all.

### **b) Amended 2007 MetroGIS Budget for Fostering Collaboration**

The Staff Coordinator introduced and provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the "fostering collaboration" component of MetroGIS's 2007 budget, explaining that the amendment involves reallocation of the funds to a new line item for use to support

“applications” related needs; the top priority cited at the February 8<sup>th</sup> Strategic Directions Workshop.

The group concluded that it should table action on this proposal until it had considered Agenda Item 5e –2006 Regional GIS Project Status Reports – Web Editing Application.

**e) 2006 Regional GIS Projects – Status Reports**

Chairperson Brown introduced the topic, calling on the project directors to offer summaries and commentary.

1) Web Editing Application: Matt McGuire of the Metropolitan Council and manager of the Web Editing Application Assessment Project provided progress update. He noted that broad support has been documented for all levels of government in the Metropolitan Area to proceed with development of the proposed application, also noting that some obstacles will need to be addressed regarding PSAPs that serve Washington and Hennepin Counties. McGuire suggested that MetroGIS consider building relationships with law enforcement agencies and PSAPs. A draft of the final report from URS, the consultant retained to conduct the feasibility assessment is due on June 28. The plan is to forward the report to the Address Workgroup for review and if possible submit a recommendation for the Committee’s consideration at the September meeting. Mark Kotz, lead staff to the Address Workgroup, offered a brief overview of the deliverable that will include recommended technical specifications for the application and associated database, as well as custodial roles and responsibilities involved in the use and support of the application.

Read asked if the Address Workgroup has the resources needed to develop a recommendation for next steps to implement the proposed Web Editing Application for the Committee consideration in September; the point being to be in a position to redirect and capture unused 2007 funding to apply towards those next steps, if the opportunity presents itself. McGuire and Kotz clarified that no additional funds are needed to complete the Web Editing Application Viability Assessment project but did acknowledge that resource needs for the development phase are the focus of the Address Workgroup’s pending recommendation to the Committee.

Bunning commented that three counties have recently decided to develop such an application, therefore, it should be assumed that this application is a good idea and should be pursued and that there is role for MetroGIS to foster a collaborative approach to leverage resources.

No comments were offered by the Committee regarding the specifics of the project deliverables other than to encourage the project to move to conclusion as soon as practical.

2) Service Broker: Fred Logman of LMIC and manager of the Service Broker Project provided an overview of the progress. The project is currently at the stage of defining metadata criteria and that no work has progressed since March.

Bunning asked if there was a way to expedite the project by bringing in additional staff support to work on the technical aspects as opposed to continuing to postpone until policy related matters can be addressed. Logman commented that he does not believe that work on the technical matters would effectively expedite the project, noting that the pending results of a related effort by the Mn Office of Enterprise Technology’s ongoing security update process should be taken into consideration. Logman commented that work on the “catalog” is in progress but that development of the “library” of services requires resolution of security concerns which involves a policy element.

Logman commented that he anticipates the Service Broker Project will be complete in October 2007. The Staff Coordinator commented that the earlier the recommendations can be made the better in particular if additional funding resources will be needed to implement the “service broker – ApplicationFinder” concept.

**b) Continued - Amended 2007 MetroGIS Budget for Fostering Collaboration –**

The Staff Coordinator commented that the primary purpose of the requested action is to obtain Committee agreement that use of the subject 2007 funding to address application-related needs would be a better use than for which they were originally allocated.

Craig acknowledged that the proposed amendment is desirable given that “applications” is the number 1 priority defined by the MetroGIS community but he asked why the suggested new budget line item is named “Shared Application Policies/Plan” which appears to limit expenditure of the subject \$22,250 to \$26,250 in funding to defining policy and not permit these funds to be used for technology solutions.

Gelbmann commented that defining MetroGIS’s overall role and shared applications-related opportunities should take precedence over funding specific solutions without first reaching agreement on an overall strategy.

Givens concurred with staff’s proposal to assemble the subject funds but suggested moving them to the existing Professional Services/Special Project budget line item to provide maximum flexibility.

Staff explained that this compromise is workable as the current action is simply to assemble funds for application related purposes, noting that the second action requested is to create an Applications Workgroup to recommend how the funds will actually be expended. Gelbmann concurred with Staff’s proposal to create an Applications Workgroup and to begin the process of developing a funding proposal for consideration by the Committee at the September meeting to insure available funding is formally encumbered if not spent by year end.

**Motion:** Read moved and Craig seconded that the Coordinating Committee recommend that the Policy Board amend the 2007 MetroGIS budget to:

- 1) Reallocate between \$22,250 and \$26,250 from the originally approved MetroGIS line item budget for the “fostering collaboration” function, as illustrated in the Committee’s agenda packet, to the Professional Services/Special Projects line item for applications-related uses consistent with the priorities defined in the Next Generation Business Planning process, and
- 2) Authorize the Board Chair to authorize minor adjustments up to \$5,000 to the approved budget.

Motion carried, ayes all.

**Motion:** Craig moved and Givens seconded that the Coordinating Committee:

- 1) Create an Applications Workgroup.
- 2) Authorize the Coordinating Committee Chair to appoint a chair and co-chair of the new Applications Workgroup.

Motion carried, ayes all.

**c) GIS Demonstration for July Policy Board Meeting**

Chairperson Brown introduced the agenda item, asking the committee for recommendations for the GIS demonstration. Henry recommended that Read present the mapping software recently demonstrated by the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (MMCD) on Channel 4 television. The group also agreed that the Metropolitan Council's new "Maps" website would be a good option. The Staff Coordinator and Chairman Brown agreed to share both ideas with Policy Board Chairperson Reinhardt.

**Motion:** Henry moved and Craig seconded that the Coordinating Committee recommend dual-topic proposal of the MMCD's Mapping Application and the Metropolitan Council's new "Maps" as a GIS Technology demonstration for the July 2007 Policy Board Meeting. Motion carried, ayes all.

**d) Reschedule September 2007 Meeting**

The Staff Coordinator proposed moving the September 12, 2007 Coordinating Committee meeting to either the week of September 18 or the week of September 25 to permit more time for the Business Planning Process. After a brief discussion, the Committee decided to retain the existing September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting date. No further discussion or action occurred.

**f) Anomaly Report – Quarterly Performance Measurement Report**

No discussion of this item occurred due to lack of time.

(Editor's note: Following the meeting, Craig commented that the two peaks of data downloading activity illustrated on chart included in the agenda report correspond to fall and spring college semesters. He offered that given the robust data holding available via DataFinder, that class projects may be a contributor to these spikes. This comment will be incorporated into the annual report.)

**g) MetroGIS 2008-2011 Business Plan – Preliminary Acceptance of Proposed Strategies**

Chairperson Brown introduced the topic. The Staff Coordinator explained that five members of the Business Planning Oversight Team had accepted responsibility for Challenges and Strategies that comprise each of the eight major activity areas previously identified for inclusion in the Business Plan and, noting that the primary source of the draft strategies in large part came from direction provided by the February 8, 2007 Strategic Directions Workshop.

The Business Planning Oversight Team's idea of breaking into small groups to discuss the proposed challenges and strategies was explained. Committee members decided that they would prefer to discuss the strategies as a large group, focusing on the top three major activity areas given insufficient time to concern all eight areas at this meeting. By way of a show of hands the three major activity areas that were of most interest to the Committee members were as follows: 1) Facilitate Better Data Sharing, 2) Expand Regional Solutions to Include Support and Development of Application Services, and 3) Expand of MetroGIS Stakeholders. A summary of the discussion and suggested modifications for each of these three activity areas follows:

**1. Facilitate Better Data Sharing**

Read, Chairperson of Business Planning Oversight Team, provided an overview of the preliminary "Challenge" and "Strategy" statements for this activity area.

Craig and Logman commented that the idea of fostering data catalogues (in addition to data libraries such as DataFinder) should be investigated, whereby, producers are encouraged to

describe their data holdings in a format simpler than conventional metadata (e.g., datafile name with contact information). These abbreviated descriptions would be posted on a catalog, searchable via the Internet. The members agreed that implementing this concept would be a first step to achieving broader participation by small producers and agreed it should be included in the Next Generation Plan. Logman emphasized that the information maintained in the catalog must be kept up to date or it will not achieve and maintain status as a trusted resource. He offered that this concept is promoted by the National States Geographic Information Councils (NSGIC) under the name RAMONA ([http://www.nsgic.org/events/2005annual\\_presentation/monday/275,2,RAMONA](http://www.nsgic.org/events/2005annual_presentation/monday/275,2,RAMONA)).

## 2. Expand Regional Solutions to Include Support and Development of Application Services

Gelbmann provided an overview of “Expand Regional Solutions to Include Support and Development of Application Services.”

Craig commented that he would prefer to see more emphasis on the “GeoWeb” and inclusion of strategies to take advantage of these technologies. He also suggested that more emphasis should be placed on seeking application partnership opportunities with interests that have not been actively involved in the past –e.g., cities and non-government.

Vander Schaaf commented that an attempt should be made to provide better definitions of terms such as providing a clearer distinction between applications and web services. Staff commented that such an attempt is made in another section of the new Plan and that a Glossary will also be included in the new Plan. The group agreed that provision of the definitions in a section of the Plan that precedes the Challenges and Strategies Section is sufficient.

## 3. Expand MetroGIS Stakeholders

In the absence of member Harper, who had authored the strategies in this section, the Staff Coordinator explained the drafted strategies, requesting feedback on the proposed actions therein.

Craig commented that the Plan should expand focus on cities, which he believes are currently underserved and underrepresented in MetroGIS. Craig also commented the title “system enhancer” should be eliminated, which the Staff Coordinator confirmed had been accomplished in another section of the Next-Generation Plan. The Staff Coordinator offered to share the new version of stakeholder interest definition with Craig and the Team. All commented that they were comforted that the concern was being addressed.

Claypool offered that MetroGIS should strive to incorporate various interests of county and city government, such as public works and law enforcement that are not currently engaged. Givens agreed, indicating that most organizations have more than one professional/service interest perspective that are important to achieving the community-focused outcomes desired for MetroGIS’s efforts. These comments resulted in agreeing to add a new subsection “d” to the Challenge section of this activity area and accompanying strategies targeted at engaging non-traditional interests.

In addition, Chairperson Brown raised a concern about the inclusion of the term “taxpayer” in the major activity area entitled: “**Have funding policies that get the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer money**”. He argued that “taxpayer” was too narrow and should be replaced with “revenue and resources”. This matter was deferred to the Business Planning

Oversight Team for consideration. *(Editor's note: The Team concurred with the Chairperson Brown and highlighted the suggested title modification in the version of the strategies posted for electronic comment via SharePoint beginning on July 3, 2007. The Team considered suggesting that this activity area statement should be converted to status of a guiding principle, as it applies to all decision making and is not an activity area per se. In the end, the Team decided to leave it as an activity area for the time being until the Committee had commented on the appropriateness of associated strategies. Maintaining a focus on the strategies was felt to be a more important matter than naming of the activity area.)*

There was no discussion of the draft Chapter 8: Operation Implications.

The group discussed the option of meeting in a special session prior to the July Policy Board meeting to review the draft strategies not considered at this meeting. Following a statement by Givens, the general consensus was that the draft strategies were sound and appropriate but that their readability needed improvement. The Staff Coordinator conceded that a thorough editing is needed but due to time constraints no attempt had been made to unify the styles of the five authors of the current version. Staff agreed to perform this edit before requesting further comment.

The members concluded that additional comments on the preliminary strategies should be sought via electronic means (i.e., SharePoint), given the general acceptability of the strategies and difficulty of achieving a face-to-face meeting prior to July 13 (deadline for feedback to include in the report to the Policy Board for the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting).

Business Planning Oversight Team members confirmed that a Team meeting was scheduled for that coming Friday (June 29) at which time the modifications requested by the Committee (see above) would be incorporated into the next draft Challenges and Strategies Section of the Business Plan.

## **6. PROJECT UPDATES**

There was no discussion of the items presented in the agenda materials.

## **7. INFORMATION SHARING**

There was no discussion of the items presented in the agenda materials.

## **8. ADJOURN**

Henry moved and Givens seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Prepared by,

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*and*

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