

Meeting Summary
MetroGIS Coordinating Committee
MN Counties Insurance Trust Bldg. – Board Room
March 27, 2008

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Brown called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Members Present: *Academics:* Will Craig (U of M); *Cities:* Jim Engfer (AMM: core cities - City of St. Paul), Bob O'Neill for Harold Busch (AMM: suburban cities - City of Bloomington); *Counties:* John Slusarczyk (Anoka), Pete Henschel (Carver), Randy Knippel (Dakota), Bill Brown (Hennepin), David Claypool (Ramsey), Jim Bunning (Scott), Jane Harper (Washington); *Metropolitan:* David Bitner (Metropolitan Airports Commission), Rick Gelbmann and Mark Vander Schaaf (Metropolitan Council), and Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District); *State:* David Arbeit (GDA/LMIC), (Joella Givens (MN/DOT); *Federal:* Ron Wencil (USGS); and *Utilities:* Allan Radke (Xcel Energy).

Members Absent: *Business Geographics:* Patrick Hamilton (CB Richard Ellis); *Metropolitan:* Gordon Chinander (Metropolitan Emergency Services Board); *Non-Profits:* Sally Wakefield (1000 Friends of Minnesota); *Schools:* Dick Carlstrom (TIES); *State:* Tim Loesch (DNR); and *Special Expertise:* Brad Henry (URS Corp.)

Open Seats: *GIS Consultants:* [Terese Rowekamp (Rowekamp Associates) resigned effective this meeting], Non Profits (second seat), and *Watershed/Water Management Organizations.*

Support Staff: Randall Johnson and Jonathan Blake (MetroGIS staff support team)

Visitors: Mark Kotz (Metropolitan Council and member of the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup), Chris Cialek and Fred Logman (Minnesota Land Management Information Center-LMIC) and Gary Swenson (Hennepin County)

2. ACCEPT AGENDA

Chairperson Brown suggested adding Item 5h) Resignation of Member Rowekamp and offering Member Craig an opportunity to make an announcement before the business items are considered. The agenda was accepted, as modified.

2A. ANNOUNCEMENT – LECTURE BY JACK DANGERMOND

Member Craig commented that Jack Dangermond, President of ESRI, will receive an Honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota on April 2 at 4:30 p.m. in Memorial Hall, McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak St. S.E., Minneapolis. Following the award ceremony, Dangermond will give a lecture entitled “*The Geographic Approach – A Cross-Cutting Methodology.*”

3. ACCEPT MEETING SUMMARY

Member Bitner moved and Member Read seconded to approve the December 18, 2007 meeting summary, as submitted, with the exception of correcting a typographical error in the last line on page 3 (change “the when” to “that”. Motion carried, ayes all.

The staff coordinator was thanked for the completeness of the meeting summaries that he prepares.

4. SUMMARY OF JANUARY POLICY BOARD MEETING

Member Knippel commented that he is concerned that the Policy Board may have come away from the presentation about the I-35W Bridge collapse with the opinion that the data access problems encountered only related to parcel data where in fact the data needs involved went well beyond parcel data. Chairperson Brown commented that it is the committee’s responsibility to frame the issues for further consideration. He suggested and committee concurred that the committee’s response to the Board should lead off with a clarification of the breadth and depth of the data involved, follow with an explanation of

distribution policies that are currently used (e.g., Hennepin County distributes data for areas up to 10 square miles without a license), and conclude a list of specific actions of how the problems encountered last August will be proactively dealt with before the next event occurs – Resolve Now to Avoid Later.

Givens clarified that MnDOT had the data that it needed but that the problems began to arise when others (e.g., FBI) unlicensed to access the data wanted access directly from MnDOT. It was agreed that in the next-generation license it should be made clear when and how exceptions can be made. Knippel also commented that the GIS community has a responsibility to better understand its role and the issues that need to be overcome to effectively carry out that role.

The was no action other than to encourage the Emergency Preparedness Workgroup to consider the points made in this discussion as it develops its recommendation in response direction provided by the committee at the December 2007 meeting. (Editor’s note: See Agenda Items 6b and 6f in the packet for the March 27, 2008 Coordinating Committee meeting for more information.)

5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Next Steps: Solutions to Shared Application Needs

Mark Kotz and Nancy Read, members of the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup, introduced Agenda Items 5a and 5b (GeoServices Finder Final Report). (See http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/08_0327/5a%20NR%20and%20MK%20presentation.pdf for the respective PowerPoint Presentation.) Kotz offered a depiction of what web services are and how they might be used for geospatial applications. Kotz suggested that the committee consider Item 5b before considering 5a because the next steps suggested for Item 5b are incorporated into the Workgroup’s 5a recommendation. The group concurred. Consideration of Item 5a was postponed until following consideration of Item 5b.

b) GeoServices Finder Project: Final Report & Next Steps

Fred Logman, manager of the GeoServices Finder project, provided an overview of the process used to create the Version 1 application, also noting that the project had been funded in cooperation by LMIC and MetroGIS (2006 Regional GIS Project).

Chris Cialek, lead technical support, provided an overview of the functionality supported by the Version 1 application. He then summarized the recommendations set forth in the project summary document (http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/08_0327/5b%20Separate%20Att_%20Final%20Project%20Report.pdf) and three suggested general next steps: Promote, Commit, and Incubate. (See http://www.metrogis.org/teams/cc/meetings/08_0327/5b%20project%20presentation.pdf for the PowerPoint Presentation.)

Member Read asked how far the outreach effort should extend to populate metadata records for services valuable to local stakeholders but which involve interests that go beyond MetroGIS and Minnesota based producers of web services. She gave an example of a precipitation data web service provided by Iowa State that covers a multi-state area. Member Arbeit encouraged the user community to speak with producers of any web services important to supporting local users’ information needs and encourage them to document their services.

Knippel commented that there is potential for duplication between the DataFinder and GeoServices Finder applications. Kotz concurred and asked Knippel to hold his question until the recommendations associated with Agenda Item 5a are presented, noting that the Workgroup is proposing a project to blend these applications.

Motion: Member Craig moved and member Bitner seconded that the committee:

- 1) Endorse pursuing the next steps described in the “First Generation Geospatial Services Broker” project report, dated December 27, 2007, including the project addendum dated March 20, 2008, as a component of MetroGIS’s workplan to pursue solutions to shared geospatial needs beyond data.
- 2) Accept:
 - a) The functional design recommendations for the broker suggested in the project report (pages 5-11),

- b) LMIC's offer to share its services library via the broker (page7),
 - c) LMIC's offer to host the GeoServices Finder for the MetroGIS community (page 5)
 - d) LMIC's offer to assist with the promotion of the GeoServices Finder (page12)
 - e) LMIC's offer to promote standards necessary to achieve the vision of the broker (page 12)
- 3) Direct incorporation into MetroGIS's next-generation Outreach Plan, tactics to achieve the "Shared Commitment" next step (page 12)
- 4) Direct incorporation into MetroGIS's next-generation Performance Measurement Plan the "Experienced-Based Evaluation" next step (page 12).

Motion carried, ayes all

5a) Resume consideration: Next Steps: Solutions to Shared Application Needs

Member Read, acting as a spokesperson for Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup, summarized direction the Workgroup received from both the Policy Board and Committee in connection with adoption of the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan. The Workgroup started with that base and used surveys, presentations on current shared applications, and user input at a full-day workshop Jan. 24 facilitated by PlanGraphics, to explore issues and options and develop recommendations as to how MetroGIS should proceed to address application needs shared by the community. Read also commented that a surprising finding, from her perspective, was that organizational structure and funding issues could be as important for enabling shared applications as were more technological issues, a finding that highlights the continued need for MetroGIS's role.

Mark Kotz, also acting as a spokesperson for Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup, presented the Workgroup's recommendations, as outlined in the agenda report, noting that a key finding of the Workgroup is that the services of a technical coordinator dedicated to MetroGIS will be needed to fully realize the broad outcomes defined in the 2008-2011 business plan and to achieve the application-sharing strategies defined via the evaluation overseen by the workgroup.

Before discussion of the recommended 2008-2009 workplan began, staff commented that the concept of securing the services of a technical coordinator was shared with senior Metropolitan Council officials on January 30, 2007. Member Vander Schaaf, who participated in the meeting, commented that Metropolitan Council Chairperson Bell, Councilmember Pistilli (Council representative to the MetroGIS Policy Board) and members of Council senior management attended to discuss preliminary findings of the Workgroup, including the need for a technical coordinator. He commented that Chairperson Bell and Regional Administrator Weaver had responded positively, and they acknowledged that such an investment would benefit the Council. However, Vander Schaaf went on to comment that since that meeting a State hiring freeze had been imposed, which also applies to the Council. Until the freeze is lifted, new Council hires will only be approved if the need is urgent.

General discussion ensued as to how MetroGIS should proceed in terms of submitting a "foster collaboration function" budget request to the Metropolitan Council, given the uncertainties that have arisen due to the hiring freeze. After discussion of several options, it was agreed to submit a budget request for what the committee believes MetroGIS needs to achieve the outcomes defined in the business plan and leave it up to the Council to decide how it wishes to proceed. (Editor's note: Chairperson Brown, Vice Chairperson Wakefield and the staff coordinator met with Policy Board Chairperson Reinhardt the following day. Chairperson Reinhardt concurred that MetroGIS should request the resources it needs to be successful. It was also agreed that once the budget proposal is submitted to the Council that status updates would be provided to the committee and Board at their summer and fall meetings.)

Comments/Discussion about the Proposed 2008-2009 Work Plan:

1. Chairperson Brown commented that inclusion of "cost recovery" as a topic to in a proposed plan to address obstacles to sharing (Item 6 in the Workgroup's suggested next steps and in the composite 2008-2009 work program on page 57 of the agenda packet) concerned him as it is his belief that the Policy Board had agreed to leave this matter to the counties' discretion. The group concurred with

member Craig's suggestion to drop this phrase from the list of "e.g.," that provide context for the activity.

2. Member Knippel asked about the choice of "applications" versus "web services" terminology in the recommended next steps. A short discussion followed in which some argued that "services" are components of the broader topic area here described as "applications" and that the recommendations are intended to include both. Bitner, a member of the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup, commented that behind all services is an application, and thus they are both part of a continuum.

The idea of changing the terminology used in the top priority next step from "applications and service needs" to "applications and related components" was talked about nothing definitive was decided. (Editors note: After attending the lectures by Jack Dangermond on April 2 and 3, the Staff Coordinator, members Read and Kotz concluded that the committee should give more thought to retaining specific reference to the term "web services" (e.g., shared needs for applications and web service"), given the emphasis he placed web services playing a central role in achieving the vision of a federated enterprise or services oriented architecture involving sharing of data resources among multiple organizations via the Internet.) Member Harper encouraged those who will be presenting these recommendations to the Policy Board to use terms that are appropriate for an audience of policy makers.

3. Member Vander Schaaf suggested, and the group concurred, that the budget action request to the Policy Board should be worded as "adopting a budget recommendation" to connote MetroGIS leadership understands that the actual budget approval lies with the Metropolitan Council, not with the MetroGIS Policy Board.

The staff coordinator encouraged members of Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup and others to remain engaged to maintain momentum achieved at the January 24 Workshop, given the uncertainties that have arisen with the recommendation to pursue a technical coordinator.

Motion: The following five recommendations were moved by Member Bitner and Seconded by Member Givens as a single motion with five parts, voted on simultaneously, and unanimously approved.

- 1) **Endorse Appropriate Roles for MetroGIS:** That the Coordinating Committee seek endorsement from the Policy Board that MetroGIS's roles related to shared application needs should consist of providing:
 - Leadership,
 - Coordination,
 - Policy and procedural support, and
 - Seed funding.
- 2) **Initiate Negotiations to Secure Technical Coordinator:** That the Coordinating Committee:
 - Request the Policy Board to authorize immediate negotiations to achieve dedication of additional technical staff support to MetroGIS consistent with the responsibilities and skills defined in Attachment A, of Agenda Report 5c.
 - In the short term, to the extent practical, continue to rely upon the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup to serve as a surrogate for a dedicated technical coordinator.
- 3) **Define Specific Shared Application Needs:** That the Coordinating Committee:
 - Create a workgroup to begin work immediately to oversee a process to identify and prioritize shared needs for applications and web services.
 - Charge this workgroup to report back to the committee at its June 2008 meeting with progress made and if not completed, a proposed plan to secure resources needed to accomplish this task.

- The membership shall be comprised of those members of the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup who wish to continue to serve in this capacity, supplemented by persons that the Workgroup members wish to invite who possess skills important to achieving the charge.
- The chair of the new Shared Applications Workgroup shall be designated by the workgroup members, subject to approval by the Coordinating Committee.

4) Update Outreach Plan: That the Coordinating Committee:

- Authorize creation of a workgroup to guide updating of MetroGIS's Outreach Plan to address direction provided in the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan (Attachment G), recommendations provided by the PlanGraphics Team (Appendix A), and recommendations of the Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup presented in this report such as showcasing of benefits anticipated to be achieved from collaborative application solutions, and explaining easy ways to find applications, services, and opportunities for collaboration.
- This workgroup would begin its work once specific shared application needs are defined.

5) Test Mechanism to Foster Partnering: That the Coordinating Committee:

- Direct the Technical Advisory Team to test the potential for it to expand its scope as principally a knowledge sharing vehicle to oversee a "mail list or list serve" mechanism as the initial strategy to foster partnering in addition to knowledge sharing.
- A role of the proposed Technical Coordinator would be to moderate this "partnering" mechanism.
- Offer a recommendation for how best promote the nine categories of application related sharing defined as appropriate for MetroGIS to foster (e.g., add a business rule, outreach, etc.)

Motion carried, ayes all.

C) 2008-2009 Budget and Workplan Refinements

The staff coordinator summarized the 2008-2009 work program and non-staff budget proposals, as outlined in the agenda report, noting that the total budget request remains unchanged from that approved for 2008 and that the 2009 total request is the same as for 2008; \$86,000.

He shared a recommendation to delete, as a separate allocation of funding, the competitive Regional GIS Project proposal line item in 2009. Rather, the committee would be relied upon to prioritize among the shared application-related projects anticipated to be defined in the coming months.

Member Craig requested clarification that the proposal to forego the competitive Regional GIS Project program means that the funds are still available but only that the manner in which they are allocated is being changed. The staff coordinator concurred, noting the subject funding for 2009 is proposed to be used for shared application related projects, with the priority among projects recommended by the committee, as opposed to via proposals received.

Member Craig also reminded the group that in the discussion for Agenda Item 5a, the group had agreed to remove the phrase "cost recovery" from the list of "for examples" in last Item on page 57. (*Editor's note: Line numbers will be added to the next version.*)

Motion: Member Craig moved and member Vander Schaaf seconded that the committee recommend that the Policy Board:

- 1) Request the Metropolitan Council to dedicate support resources to MetroGIS sufficient to accomplish the roles and responsibilities of a Technical Coordinator, as described in Attachment A of the agenda packet.
- 2) Adopt the proposed revised 2008 and proposed preliminary 2009 MetroGIS work plans, as presented in Attachment B and dated March 13, 2008, subject to deleting the phrase "cost recovery" from the "for examples" in the last item on page 57, with the understanding that securing a technical coordinator is required to fully achieve the associated outcomes in a timely manner.
- 3) Endorse the proposed revisions to the preliminarily approved 2008 budget line items, as presented in Attachment C and dated March 13, 2008, involving postponement of updating the Performance

Measures Plan until specific shared application needs are defined and shifting the \$10,000 allotted for updating the Performance Measurement Plan to addressing shared application needs.

- 4) Endorse the preliminary proposed 2009 MetroGIS “foster collaboration” project budget request, presented in Attachment C and dated March 13, 2008, with the understanding that the support role of a Technical Coordinator will be filled by January 1, 2009. (The total amount of \$86,000 requested for the 2009 is the same as approved for 2008.)

Motion carried, ayes all.

d) 2008 Regional GIS Project - Call for Proposals

The Staff Coordinator Johnson stated that with this presentation the call is officially underway for 2008 Regional GIS Project proposals. He commented that announcement of this call had been postponed until tentative agreement had been reached on a modified work plan for 2008, which occurred with the recommendation for Agenda 5c.

Johnson went on to suggest modification to the traditional committee and board evaluation processes for allocation of these funds to enable project to begin in early August, which has been the case with the previous approval cycles.

After some discussion of several options, the committee concurred that a modified evaluation process should be implemented that incorporates the following components:

- A workgroup of the committee will be created to comment on completeness of proposals and assist the full committee decide if any are inconsistent with direction desired by the committee. The members will be decided once proposals are known to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Concept proposals are due by May 2. Concept review is not required though highly recommended to insure that the final proposal is consistent with established guidelines for approval (i.e., ideas consistent with outcomes previously defined as important to achieving MetroGIS’s vision).
- Preference should be given to proposals that involve shared services.
- Seek consent from the Policy Board to accomplish board consideration as to their appropriate use of the subject funds via its Executive Committee in late May.
- Final project proposals are due by June 6. The Workgroup will again assist in the review of the proposals for relative importance and preparation of a recommendation to the full committee.
- Final recommendations for funding to be made by the committee at its June meeting.

Motion: Member Bitner moved and member Harper seconded that the committee:

1. Recommend that the Policy Board endorse the proposed Regional GIS Project approval schedule as presented in Attachment 1, Exhibit A, which includes authorizing its Executive Committee to review and comment on concept project proposals, as opposed to the full Board.
2. Decide on the appropriateness of concept proposals via electronic vote.
3. Authorize its chair to create a workgroup comprised of individuals with expertise appropriate to identify any gaps in concept proposals needed to determine consistency with the guidelines and relative value to the community.

Motion carried, ayes all.

e) Leadership Development Plan

Consideration postponed to the June meeting due to time constraints.

f) GIS Demonstration for April Policy Board Meeting

The pending Regional Economic Development (ED) Web Site was agreed upon as the top choice for a demonstration at the April Policy Board meeting. Member Knippel agreed to head up a workgroup, including Chairperson Brown and member Craig, to prepare the presentation. The committee encouraged workgroup to use this application to help the Board members understand the types of

applications possible, explore ideas they may have for other applications, and or offer enhancements to the first generation of the ED application. Another theme of the presentation should be to help the Board understand appropriate roles for government and non-government interests as we pursue partnerships to develop and support solutions to shared application needs.

It was also agreed that the Council's Natural Resources Atlas would be the second choice if the time was too short to pull together a presentation on the ED website. A third option of demonstrating the intersection between IT and GIS was also identified.

(Editor's note: Chairperson Reinhardt asked for a presentation that had been made at the March meeting of the Governor's Council on Geographic Information regarding the statewide effort to develop emergency preparedness data based upon the model defined by MetroGIS)

- g) Open Seat on the Committee (Non-Profit Organizations)**
Postponed discussion to the June meeting due to time constraints.
- h) Resignation of Member Rowekamp**
Postponed discussion to the June meeting due to time constraints
- 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**
The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Prepared by,

Randall Johnson, AICP
MetroGIS Staff Coordinator

and

Nancy Kruger
MetroGIS support staff