

Meeting Summary
MetroGIS Coordinating Committee
MN Counties Insurance Trust Bldg. – Board Room
September 10, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Wakefield called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and asked the others in attendance to introduce themselves.

Members Present: *Academics:* Will Craig (U of M and NSGIC); *Cities:* Bob Owens (AMM: suburban cities - City of Bloomington); *Counties:* Peter Henschel (Carver), Bill Brown (Hennepin), Jim Bunning (Scott); John Slusarczyk (Anoka), Mike Fiebigler (Ramsey), and David Brandt (Washington); *Metropolitan:* David Bitner (Metropolitan Airports Commission), Mark Kotz for Rick Gelbmann and Mark Vander Schaaf (Metropolitan Council), and Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District); *Non-Profits:* Sally Wakefield (1000 Friends of Minnesota); *Schools:* Dick Carlstrom; *Special Expertise:* Brad Henry (URS Corp.) and Ben Verbick (LOGIS), *State:* Tim Loesch (DNR); and *Utilities:* Allan Radke (Xcel Energy).

Members Absent: *Business Geographics:* (Vacant); *Cities:* Jim Engfer (AMM: core cities - City of St. Paul); *Counties:* Randy Knippel (Dakota); *Federal:* Ron Wencl (USGS); *GIS Consultants:* Larry Charboneau (NCompass Technologies), *Metropolitan:* Gordon Chinander (Metropolitan Emergency Services Board); *State:* David Arbeit (GDA/LMIC) and Joella Givens (MN/DOT); and *Watershed/Water Management Organizations:* Mark Doneux, Capital Region Watershed District.

Open Seats: *Business Geographics and Non-Profits*

Support Staff: Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator and Lori Christensen (MetroGIS Support Team)

Visitors: Kathie Doty, KLD Consultants, John Cannon, assistant to KLD Consultants, Libby Starling, Metropolitan Council, and Policy Board Chairman Terry Schneider.

2. ACCEPT AGENDA

Member Bitner moved and Member Craig seconded to approve the agenda, with one change – consider Item 5h after Item 5b, as suggested by staff. Motion carried, ayes all.

3. ACCEPT MEETING SUMMARY

Member Verbick moved and Member Brandt seconded to approve the June 25, 2009 meeting summary, subject to modifying “Erik_____” on page 4 to “Eric Moffet”. Motion carried, ayes all.

4. SUMMARY OF APRIL POLICY BOARD MEETING

No discussion of the materials presented in the agenda packet. Chairperson Wakefield noted that several of the items related to topics on the Committee’s agenda.

5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Performance Measurement Plan

Staff Coordinator Johnson provided context for the action requested and emphasized that this Plan is the first of a two-phase project; the second phase involving development of the actual measures to achieve the objectives defined in the proposed plan. Johnson then introduced Kathie Doty, the lead developer, to explain the elements of the proposed plan and to facilitate review by the Committee.

Doty began by noting that the proposed plan represents an expansion of the objectives sought via the current Performance Measurement Plan adopted in 2002. The proposed change involves adding greater emphasis on value-based measures. That is, measures designed to monitor user satisfaction more so than activity associated with DataFinder, as is the current focus. She then summarized

proposed measurement objectives for each of several major categories of users and producers. Following Doty's presentation, the members offered the following comments:

- There was general consensus that the high level focuses for each of the proposed measures are sound (e.g., unmet needs, quality of data, access to data, use of data for decision making, broadened participation, and governance (resolving policy differences)).
- Member Vander Schaaf – Commented that he believes the proposed measures offer a means to eventually integrate with individual stakeholder decision processes.
- Chairperson Wakefield – Asked if the measures should attempt to monitor characteristics concerning how web services are being consumed by others, in particular, non-traditional organizational interests and the general public. Kotz commented that the Technical Leadership Workgroup is thinking of a voluntary “service registry” as a means to notify users of service updates. He mentioned that the registry might also provide a means to measure use.

The Staff Coordinator reminded the members that MetroGIS's mission is to “enhance the capacities of stakeholder organizations” to carry out their respective business functions noting that they, not MetroGIS, are responsible for interfacing with the general public. He also asked if the group felt that this mission statement should continue to be interpreted as focusing MetroGIS's efforts, in the case performance measures on “regionally endorsed solutions” to shared needs. If not, he suggested that the underlying policy foundation should be revisited. There was no further comment other than to defer this topic to the next phase of the project –development of metrics to carry out the general framework presented in the subject plan.

- Starling asked why the proposal calls for a **bi-annual assessment** (twice per year). Doty noted that the previous quarterly assessment for anomalies, which formed the foundation for the annual performance measurement report, is no longer possible due to a reduction in support resources. All agreed that the frequency of a particular measure will depend upon the subject matter involved, a topic for Phase 2. It was agreed that the goal should be annual measurement of a subset of the measures, with all measures visited within a to-be-determined schedule.
- Policy Board Chairman Schneider noted that he is pleased with the proposal as it provides flexibility to document opportunities to improve interactions with the non-government community and in so doing is expected to provide a platform from which to pursue broadening of funding support beyond the Council.
- Chairman Schneider's comment about expanding funding for MetroGIS spawned a wide ranging discussion about the need for quantitative measures if leadership is to successfully attract broader financial support. Threads offered for the next phase included: 1) how best to measure use of existing web services in addition to use of data resources that are available via DataFinder, 2) how are existing capabilities/ systems being assisted via MetroGIS's efforts, 3) easier to measure effect (value) when a shift in technology occurs, 4) need to find a way for current users to offer/acknowledge insights to benefits received given that they did not participate in the pre-MetroGIS environment, 5) need to find an effective means to help producers recognize benefits of working together beyond those received as a user from an enterprise perspective, as benefits realized by individual departments often range widely.
- Member Craig commented that receiving useful information from a survey involves significant effort to devise clearly articulated questions – no guessing on the part of the person responding as to what a question means. The extra effort needed to get the questions right is worth the cost. Ensuring sufficient response rate from key stockholders is also critical to reliable information. Craig's comments resulted in restatement of a need by Chairperson

Schneider for MetroGIS leadership to continually be in the loop regarding changing stakeholder needs and use of short Internet-based survey that take users little time to respond to. All acknowledged that a focus of the next phase will be to define metrics that are both easy to execute and which provide trusted information.

Motion: Member Read moved and Member Bitner seconded to recommend that the Policy Board approve the Plan, subject to suggested refinements mentioned above being addressed in Phase 2. Motion carried, ayes all.

b Regional Address Point Policy – Part 1: Regional Policy Statement

Staff Coordinator Johnson introduced the topic by explaining that a regional policy statement has been adopted by the Policy Board for each of the other eight current endorsed regional datasets.^[1] He noted that these statements set forth data content standards, custodian roles and responsibilities, and identify the organizations that have agreed to assume the specified custodian roles and responsibilities. He noted that the draft statement attached to the agenda report for the pending Regional Address Points Dataset is comprised of policy defined by the Committee and Policy Board over the past 5 years as the concept of a Regional Address Points Dataset has matured.

He then introduced Mark Kotz, Chair of the Address Workgroup, to talk about draft policies related to accessing the proposed dataset and, in particular, a standard liability disclaimer acceptable to address authorities, and access by 1st responders under a possible limited access option. A wide-ranging discussion ensued involving a variety of topics including:

1) how best to deal with mixed intellectual property rights that will be present for those cities that develop their address points dataset as a derivative of county parcel data

If the need for a limited access version is found to exist:

- 2) what is the definition of a 1st responder (i.e., how to distinguish between hospitals that own ambulance services),
- 3) who decides if an organization qualifies as a 1st responder,

Member Brown noted that he favors the open access policy. All concurred that a widely accepted standardized liability disclaimer would be an important component of the solution, the goal of which being indemnification of addressing authorities for any and all uses of the dataset. Brown mentioned that he would look into the possibility of revising Hennepin County's data license with cities within the county for those cities that may want to use the county's parcel points as a source from which to develop an address point database and to enable them to share the new address data with whomever they wish.

Chairman Schneider suggested contacting the Minnesota League of Cities Insurance Trust and LOGIS to assist with the crafting of the disclaimer language. Member Verbick agreed to contact the League.

The Committee postponed further consideration of the suggested 1st responder access policy until the limited access option is requested by a participating city. The Committee also postponed action on the proposed regional policy statement until the standard liability statement is developed, with the understanding that work will precede on the development of the disclaimer and that a progress will be given at the December Coordinating Committee meeting.

Regional Address Point Policy – Part 2: Legal Costs for Limited Access Option

Discussion postponed until after the specifics for Part 1 are decided.

5h) Web Feature Services Contest

Alison Slaats, a member of the MetroGIS feature service workgroup talked about efforts made to move forward the idea of hosting a web applications contest. The Coordinating Committee endorsed

the idea at its June meeting. She began by stating that the Policy Board had granted concept approval at the July Policy Board meeting with the understanding that the idea needs to be refined and sponsors other than MetroGIS and the Metropolitan Council will be needed to be successful.

Slaats stated that the current emphasis is educating other organizations about the concept and on securing interest, with the ultimate goal of cost sharing. She shared a preliminary draft of a one-page handout intended to be used as talking points when speaking with leadership of prospective sponsoring organizations. She also shared that the contest idea had been well received by the members Twin Cities Map Server User Group (TCMUG). The members concurred that the contest would provide an excellent way for organizations to evaluate with little risk or cost the value of leveraging new technology (e.g., iPhone, Facebook, Twitter applications) as a component of their tools to interface with the public.

In response to question from Member Craig about who would be eligible to participate, several questions came up about the criteria that would be used to evaluate proposals and offer awards. A wide-ranging discussion followed involving topics that included:

- need for a variety of services to be operational, documented, and discoverable as prerequisite for success
- the need for the services to be long-lived and stable
- potential for lifting restrictions to licensed data during the contest to demonstrate value of the data. If so, need to clearly communicate the license waiver for the contest;
- how best to get the word out to the non-GIS application developers which all concurred are a key target audience
- need to retain publicity expertise
- budget implications
- need define the data that will be made available and create examples to promote the contest
- need to seek out individuals to participate on the workgroup who represent the U of M Computer Science Dept, high school students, and independent application developers
- how might the awards be used to catalyze proposals that address specified needs/preferences
- who should fund the awards and what should they involve – money, product, recognition;
- define the geographic extent – preference was expressed for it to be larger than MetroGIS - the seven county metropolitan area.

Policy Board Chairman Schneider conveyed that the Policy Board was intrigued with the idea but is skeptical until other sponsors commit resources. He also noted that the Board believes a successful contest will require a rich assortment of reliable services to be made available. This comment resulted in Member Brown commenting that he believes the Committee had considered a policy some time ago to publish 5-year old parcel data as public domain. The Staff Coordinator agreed to review the record for reference to this topic and report back to the Committee at the December meeting.

Members Loesch and Bitner volunteered to serve on a workgroup with Slaats to assist in refining the proposal. Chairperson Wakefield volunteered to present the idea Mn GIS/LIS in hopes they will agree to serve as a sponsor. Member Bitner also agreed to share the idea with OSGeo.

Coordinating Committee chair Wakefield noted that Slaats would be unable to lead this workgroup in the long term and so the workgroup would also need to find a leader and champion to take this idea forward.

Motion: Member Read moved and Member Bitner seconded to:

- 1) Authorize creation of a second-phase Web Feature Service Contest Workgroup to oversee preparations to host a web feature services contest similar to that hosted by Washington D.C.
- 2) Task the Workgroup with reaching out to other organizations to gauge interest and if interest in co-sponsoring is found, refining a contest plan for consideration by the Committee. The workgroup update the Committee at its December Committee as to the viability of hosting the proposed contest.

Motion carried, ayes all.

c) Preliminary Budget/Objectives for 2010

Staff Coordinator Johnson summarized the information presented in the agenda report and requested comment from the Committee.

No comments were received concerning the suggested priorities presenting in the agenda report for 2010. With regard to the preliminary 2010 budget proposal, Member Read observed that the proposed Web Feature Services Contest can be leveraged as an outreach tool for MetroGIS. She also suggested a move away from printed outreach materials to web-based methods and, accordingly, reallocation most of the \$3,000 proposed for printed outreach materials to development of solutions to technical needs. The Committee concurred and encouraged increased use of printing-on-demand for handout/outreach materials.

The impact on support for DataFinder was questioned in response to the proposed zeroing out of funding in MetroGIS's budget. Staff commented that this funding is now provided via the software license and no longer needs to be budgeted for separately. The Staff Coordinator also confirmed that ongoing staff support for DataFinder is embedded in the Council's GIS Unit operations support responsibilities.

Member Read concluded her comments by noting she would prefer a split of funding closer to 50/50 between organization and technical projects. The members concurred, adding that freed up funds should be added to "populating metadata for GeoServices Finder" in support of the proposed Web Services Project. The consensus was that support of projects related to implementing the Regional Address Points Dataset should also be given priority for funds freed up from the organizational side of the ledger.

Accordingly, staff was asked to refine the preliminary 2010 and forward it along with the suggested preliminary 2010 Work Plan to the Policy Board for comment prior to developing the final proposal for consideration by the Committee at the December meeting.

d) Glossary of Terms for Policy Board

Postponed to the December meeting due to lack of time to consider.

e) GIS Technology Demonstration for October Policy Board Meeting

The group considered two options – Red River Valley Flood Response and Cyclopath – as suggested in the agenda report. Chairperson Schneider offered that the Red River Valley Flood Response appeared to be more appropriate for the October meeting. Committee members asked that the presenter talk about what worked well as well as lessons learned what can be improved upon. The Staff Coordinator agreed to pass this information along to the presenter.

f) Enhancements Made to Socioeconomic Web Services Page

Member Craig, who served as the project manager for the subject enhancements, summarized the enhancements described in the agenda report and demonstrated, with a live Internet connection, how the new information had been integrated in to the MetroGIS Socioeconomic Web Services Page. The Committee thanked him and his associates for their considerable effort to enhance the usefulness of the MetroGIS Socioeconomic Web Services Page. Members asked if it would be possible to RSS-enable the site to alert users when data sources are updated. The Staff Coordinator agreed to investigate this possibility.

g) Phase-Out Planned for Current Finder Technology

Kotz encouraged the members to review the one-page summary of rationale for this planned phase out and to contact him with any questions. There was no discussion of the item due to lack of time.

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

Member Bitner moved and Alternate Member Kotz seconded to adjourn at 3:45 p.m.

Prepared by,

Randall Johnson, AICP
MetroGIS Staff Coordinator