

Meeting Summary
MetroGIS Policy Board
Room 1A, Metropolitan Council's Mears Park Offices
October 27, 2004

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Reinhardt called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County), Bob Vogel (Scott County), Molly O'Rourke for Dennis Hegberg (Washington County), Conrad Fiskness (Metro Watershed Districts), Terry Schneider (AMM- City of Minnetonka), and Tony Pistilli (Metropolitan Council).

Members Absent: Jim Kordiak (Anoka County), Gary Delaney (Carver County), Patrice Bataglia (Dakota County), Randy Johnson (Hennepin County), Dan Cook (TIES), and [vacant] (AMM - Large City Rep.).

Coordinating Committee Members Present: David Arbeit, Jane Harper (Chairperson), Brad Henry, Randy Knippel, Scott Simmer for Bill Brown, and Mark Kotz for Rick Gelbmann.

Visitors: Mark Vander Schaaf (Metropolitan Council)

Support Staff: Randall Johnson, Steve Fester, and Trudy Richter (Richardson, Richter & Assoc., Inc. and member of the staff support team)

2. ACCEPT AGENDA

Member Pistilli moved and Member Fiskness seconded to accept meeting agenda as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

3. MEETING SUMMARY

Member Fiskness moved and Member Pistilli seconded to accept the July 28, 2004 meeting summary as submitted. Motion carried, ayes all.

4. GIS TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION

Randy Knippel, GIS Manager for Dakota County, summarized how Dakota County is benefiting from the use of GIS technology. (His presentation slides can be viewed at <http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/102704/demo.pdf>.) He noted that the GIS office is not supported through charge backs from the other departments, which, in turn, encourages the GIS staff to fully engage with other county staff to explore efficiencies that can be achieved through use of the technology. Eleven departments are currently using GIS technology to support day-to-day functions. Dakota County also provides contract services for three cities within the county. A key to their success is their continuing investment in highly accurate base map data, which allows them to work at the many levels of spatial accuracy required by the various business needs of the county.

He explained that that the GIS Office supports four categories of customers, each with a different level of GIS-related expertise and knowledge. They are as follows:

- Desktop GIS- 45 highly trained GIS staff
- Custom Applications – 320 users who regularly use GIS software for routine purposes
- Printed maps and digital data – 3000 users with in the county and partner communities
- Web-based applications – 480,000 sessions (4.8 million hits) annually from general public (half of which are from the real estate community)

With the advent of Internet distribution, Dakota County has ceased charging for map products where the charge was intended to recover the cost of reproduction. They found that making the information

available at no cost via the Internet permits staff to be used more effectively, and that about 40 times the product is being downloaded as was being sold. The latter is an important result because the goal is to empower citizens with easy access to information maintained by the county.

In closing, Knippel commented that a core function of the GIS Office is to nurture relationships with other organizations that affect or are impacted by county operations. They accomplish this networking through hosting user group meetings that focus on information sharing and by supporting a newsletter.

In response to questions, Knippel shared the following additional information:

- 1) Is the GIS enterprise part of a broader eGovernment initiative? Yes, the GIS Office works closely with the IT Department to implement effective ways to Internet-enable access to county maintained information and services. The applications that have been implemented to improve information delivery to the real estate community are a good example since the data are maintained by more than one office and comprise over 50% of volume of information currently disseminated.
- 2) What is the relationship between the GIS Enterprise Fund and the four levels of user support? The Enterprise Fund is used exclusively to maintain the currency of the base map data (contours, building locations, etc.) derived from aerial imagery. Knippel noted that some time ago, county officials realized that cost recovery expectations would not be achieved and, as such, data sales are no longer looked to as a lucrative source of funding to maintain data. In addition, he commented that the cost of acquiring the imagery and producing the needed data is rapidly falling, making it easier to partner via standard budget practices for expenditures viewed as necessary to achieving core internal business needs.

5. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Socioeconomic Resources Page – Custodian Roles and Responsibilities

The Staff Coordinator introduced Steve Fester, MetroGIS support staff, and Jane Harper, Chair of the Coordinating Committee. Fester demonstrated how the Socioeconomic Resources Page is accessed via MetroGIS DataFinder and how the site is used to identify particular types of socioeconomic data identified by MetroGIS as needed to answer several priority information needs of the MetroGIS community.

Harper then noted that the Board had authorized the Socioeconomic Resources Page concept at its January 2004 meeting, and that the action before it now involved approving the roles and responsibilities required to maintain the site and acknowledgement of the University of Minnesota Population Center as the custodian of the content of the site. She summarized the specific roles and responsibilities and noted that this is the first time a non-government entity has been acknowledged as a custodian of a regional solution to a common information need of the MetroGIS community.

The only question was with regard to the fiscal impact of the proposal. Staff commented that the Population Center views this custodial responsibility as being completely in line with its internal needs, and they believe the presence of the site may actually improve their efficiencies.

Chairperson Reinhardt thanked staff and the workgroup involved in the design of the Socioeconomic Resources Page for their substantial efforts to bring this project to fruition, noting that she expects it will save many prospective users time as they search for data to address a variety of important needs.

Motion:

Member Schneider moved and Member Fiskness seconded to approve the Regional Socioeconomic Characteristics of Areas Policy Summary, dated September 29, 2004, which sets forth the custodial roles and responsibilities necessary to support the Web-based Socioeconomic Resources Page and acknowledges the University of Minnesota Population Center as the custodian of this Resources Page. Motion carried, ayes all.

b) 2005 Meeting Schedule

Chairperson Reinhardt summarized the proposed 2005 meeting schedule, noting that it calls for a mix of 3rd and 4th Wednesdays in an attempt to minimize known meeting conflicts.

Motion:

Member Schneider moved and Member Fiskness seconded to approve the 2005 meeting schedule as proposed: January 26, April 20, July 27, and October 19. Motion carried, ayes all.

6. MAJOR PROJECT UPDATES

a) Next-Generation Data Sharing Agreement / Online Licensing

Chairperson Reinhardt summarized the information provided in the agenda materials. She expressed confidence that all seven counties would execute the agreement by year-end, which would permit the Regional Parcel Dataset to again be distributed via DataFinder. She commented that she recently witnessed two situations where the ability to access the Regional Parcel Dataset would have benefited their decision-making. She closed her comments by reminding the county representatives to make sure they submit their executed agreement and an invoice for the accompanying 2004 funding before year-end.

In response to question, Chairperson Reinhardt commented that if all seven counties do not elect to participate, that access to the Regional Parcel Dataset would be provided via DataFinder for those that do.

b) Priority Common Information Need Solutions

Brief summaries of the information presented in the agenda packet were provided by staff for several of the workgroups, with the exception of the Emergency Preparedness Workgroup, which was covered by its Chair, Randy Knippel.

7. INFORMATION SHARING

The Staff Coordinator called attention to MetroGIS's application for recognition by the Harvard Innovations in Government Program. If MetroGIS is selected, the current thinking is to use the \$100,000 award to further efforts to resolve address-related information needs. Also noted were the Open GIS Consortium's (OGC) selection of MetroGIS as its regional example of an NSDI-compliant data distribution architecture, and the TOP Grant received by a consortium of neighborhood/community interests (MetroGIS was named as a partner to bring its resources to the table to assist with the resolution of standards/policies necessary to achieving the deliverables.)

8. NEXT MEETING

Chairman Reinhardt reminded the members that the next meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2005.

9. ADJOURN

Member Fiskness moved and Member O'Rourke seconded to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. Motion carried ayes all.

Prepared by,
Randall Johnson, AICP
MetroGIS Staff Coordinator