

**Meeting Summary
MetroGIS Technical Advisory Team
Centennial Office Building – Rm 302
December 6, 2001**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Maxwell called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Members Present: Bob Basques (St. Paul), Dave Brandt (Washington County), John Connelly (Capital Regional Watershed District), Rick Gelbmann (Metropolitan Council), Susanne Maeder (LMIC), Jim Maxwell (The Lawrence Group), Michael Munson (Metropolitan Council), Bart Richardson (DNR), Ronald Wencl (USGS), and Tim Zimmerman (Hennepin County).

Support Staff: Steve Fester, Randall Johnson, Paul Hanson, and Alison Slaats

2. ACCEPT AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as submitted.

3. ACCEPT MEETING SUMMARY

Wencl moved and Brandt seconded to approve the August 22, 2001, meeting summary as submitted. Motion carried, ayes, all.

4. ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) 2002 Major Tasks and Short Term Outcomes

Randall Johnson provided an updated version (dated December 5, 2001) of staff's suggested major tasks and short-term for MetroGIS that expanded upon the version included in the agenda packet, summarized the changes and asked for comments from the Team members concerning any desired additions or modifications.

Gelbmann called attention to the philosophy of the desired short outcome that calls for integration into the day-to-day activities of the MetroGIS's stakeholders of the tasks fundamental to achieving MetroGIS's mission. The membership concurred with the importance of this outcome to the success of MetroGIS.

Connolly moved and Gelbmann seconded to accept the suggested short term goals and 2002 major tasks (December 5, 2001 version) as submitted with the understanding that the team members have until noon on December 11th to submit any additional comments they wish the Coordinating Committee to consider. Motion carried ayes all.

b) 2002 Technical Advisory Team Workplan

Randall Johnson provided an updated version (dated December 5, 2001) of staff's suggested 2002 workplan for the Technical Advisory Team and summarized the proposed tasks.

Hanson suggested that the proposed workplan should be revised to include recognition that work will be in progress with the Planned Land Use Land Information Need through March or April 2002. The group agreed.

At the suggestion of Member Munson, staff agreed speak to the leadership of the Twin Cities Research Group to explain the regional data sets that are available from MetroGIS and the pending Internet distribution mechanism. It was also agreed that a standing "Technology Trends" information sharing topic would be added as a standing item on each meeting agenda.

Maeder updated the members on work that had occurred at the state level that was relevant to the Lakes and Wetlands Information Need. She and Paul Hanson agreed to present a next steps strategy to the Team at its next meeting.

Connelly moved and Wencl seconded to accept the proposed work plan (December 5th version) revised as suggested concerning the Planned land Use Information Need and forward it to the Coordinating Committee for approval. Motion carried ayes all.

c) 2002 Meeting Schedule

Maxwell moved and Wencl seconded to change from an every other month to a quarterly schedule and to set the following meeting dates for 2002 (all Thursday from 2-4 p.m.): Feb 7, May 9, Aug 8, and Nov 7. Motion carried ayes all.

d) Search Engine for MetroGIS Web Site

Slaats commented on the pending redesign of the MetroGIS web site and the benefits of adding a “key word” search capability given the complexity of the site. Slaats summarized the pros and cons of utilizing the “Google” search engine via mock-ups of the MetroGIS site modified to include this capability and resultant search results pages.

Pros: Google is very robust in that it can search PDF and HTML code. MetroGIS would not have to invest in development or operational costs. The Google engine is free but MetroGIS would have to use the “Google” logo and accept advertisement if Google would choose to use our site for such purposes. “Safe” search protocol would minimize display of search results on pages with the MetroGIS logo from undesirable/in appropriate sites. **Cons:** Google would reserve the right to display advertisements on “search results pages”.

Brandt suggested the “Powered by Google” logo as opposed to the “Google” logo used in the mock-ups because it is less conspicuous. Maeder commented that many state agencies use a product called “Inktomi” through a contract with the DNR Bridges project and wondered if MetroGIS would be eligible to be covered under the same contract.

Gelbmann asked whether a contract is involved. In particular, could MetroGIS subtract the Google engine at will if it interfered with another objective of MetroGIS? Slaats stated that a contract is not required. Gelbmann noted that this would be important should MetroGIS wish to seek out paid advertisements on DataFinder to assist with the financing of MetroGIS.

Basques moved and Brandt seconded to recommend that MetroGIS add the Google search engine to the MetroGIS web site until something better comes along. Motion carried ayes all.

(Editor’s note: Prior to consideration of this recommendation by the Coordinating Committee, MetroGIS staff learned that MetroGIS could use, free of charge, the Inktomi search engine provided by the DNR through the Bridges project. The search capability was subsequently added without need for further discussion since the concern for the presence of advertisement had been resolved; the would not be any.)

e) Election of Officers Notice

Co-chairs Maxwell and Connelly commented that it is their desire that one or more members of the team will contact them or staff prior to the next meeting to volunteer to chair the Team. Both commented on the importance of the Team’s work and the importance of rotating the leadership to the long-term vitality of the Team.

5. PROJECT UPDATES

a) Internet – Enabled Data Distribution Mechanism

Slaats commented that Syncline, the top-rated proposer, had been offered the contract and that negotiations were in progress to complete the first milestone – a functional requirements document. The

next phase, preparation of a systems design document, is expect to be complete by early February. Staff agreed to post each major milestone final document on the MetroGIS Web site. Members were encouraged to speak with staff if they wished to participate on the project team. Staff also noted that the Technical Advisory Team will be looked to to be the nucleus of the Peer Review Forum that will be held to evaluate the Alpha version of the on-line application expected to occur around April. There was some discussion of the functionality sought; in particular, the ability of the users to obtain data in a variety of formats. Staff summarized the multiple format translation capabilities that the SaveSoft SpatialDirect and FME products will provide.

b) Web Mapping Services

Slaats commented that MetroGIS's NSDI-funded Web Mapping project has been on hold since the training was received in September to coordinate with the Internet Data Distribution Project. She explained some of the benefits of Web Mapping Services, the objective to conform with OpenGIS Consortium standards, and that the project would be get underway shortly.

c) "Next Generation" GIS Data Sharing Agreement

Johnson commented that the current GIS Data Sharing Agreements expire December 31, 2001. He noted that the "next generation" agreement with the seven counties would address only parcel data. Non-licensed data produced by the counties will continue to be shared without fee to government under the rules of the previous agreements. Johnson noted that an agreement-in principle had been achieved with each of the seven counties concerning them permitting the Metropolitan Council to assemble parcel data from each county and redistribute it in part or in whole to government and academic interests. He noted that each county had also agreed to the data specifications endorsed by the Coordinating Committee. Finally, it was noted that the goal is to distribute the next version or the regional parcel dataset in March via CD, with Internet distribution beginning by September.

d) Performance Measures

Johnson summarized progress made to identify performance measures for MetroGIS to use to determine whether the organization is achieving its goals and effectively carrying out its functions. Board approval will be sought in April 2002.

e) Priority Business Information Needs

Hanson and Johnson updated the Team on the progress made on the Planned Future Land Use, Parcel, 2000 Census Geography, and Lakes and Wetlands regional datasets. There was some discussion of the benefits of regional datasets – interoperability among them, as much uniformity with them as possible across them when a product of multiple producers, and a formal feedback mechanism regarding data specifications and roles and responsibilities.

Staff and co-chair Maxwell summarized the talks that are underway with the US Census Bureau to explore the possibility of integrating locally produced street centerline, MCD boundaries, and census geography into TIGER. Brandt noted that several cities in Washington County had already completed efforts to align census geography with parcel and street centerline data. Gelbmann asked if possible to share this work with the Council's consultant. Brandt believed so agreed to check into this request.

6. INFORMATION SHARING

There was no discussion of the materials included the agenda packet. Maxwell encouraged the members to read through this material on their own and to speak with staff if they have questions.

7. NEXT MEETING

February 7, 2002.

8. ADJOURN

Co-Chair Maxwell adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Prepared by,

Randall L. Johnson, AICP
MetroGIS Staff Coordinator