



MetroGIS Technical Leadership Steering Workgroup Meeting Notes – November 27, 2007

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Metropolitan Airports Commission

1) Welcome and Introductions

Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator, welcomed the members and thanked them for volunteering to service on this important workgroup. He also commented that this group differs from MetroGIS workgroups in the past in that the expectation is that the members will collectively serve in the capacity as a Technical Coordinator to address two charges and the role of the Staff Coordinator will be to assist the group with the process but not the substance of their deliberations.

Team Members Present: David Bitner (Metropolitan Airports Commission), David Brandt (Washington County), Jim Bunning (Scott County), Mark Kotz (Metropolitan Council), Jim Maxwell (The Lawrence Group), Nancy Read (Metropolitan Mosquito Control District), and Ben Verbick (LOGIS).

Team members absent: Bob Basques

Staff Support Present: Randall Johnson

2) Overview Charge to the Workgroup

Johnson summarized the two charges to the Workgroup and direction provided by the Policy Board in its adoption of the 2008-2011 MetroGIS Plan, as outlined in the agenda report. Johnson also commented on the concept of hosting a one-day workshop to facilitate agreement on general policy related to the role(s) MetroGIS should serve regarding solutions to shared application needs. The members were encouraged to keep the agenda report for reference.

There were no questions.

3) Evaluate Bid Proposals – Facilitator (January Forum)

Johnson commented that he was pleased that bids had been submitted by GeoAnalytics and PlanGraphics; two firms with strong credentials and national leaders in the industry, together with senior officials with each that had been identified to serve in key roles. He also noted that although the goal is to retain the successful bidder with funds included in the 2007 budget, if the workgroup concluded that the higher cost proposal was justified that funds from the 2008 budget could be considered subject to receiving approval from the Policy Board for the resulting changes to the 2008 workplan.

The group discussed the two proposals relative the criteria presented in Attachment B of the agenda report. Both met Items 1 and 2. Items 3 and 4 are intangibles not well suited to be addressed in the respective proposals but rather on the basis of conversations with previous clients. Items 5 and 6: Given the credentials possessed by each proposer sufficient knowledge is assumed. The group noted that the more important expertise will be that possessed by the participants which the facilitator must be capable of eliciting. Item 7: Both proposers determined to have sufficient understanding. Ultimately the group concluded that the higher cost of the proposal from GeoAnalytics did not include enough substantive difference from the lower cost proposal (PlanGraphics) to justify the added expense for the outcome desired.

Motion: Maxwell moved and Read seconded to cease further consideration of the proposal from GeoAnalytics on the basis that: 1) it is too costly for the outcome desired at this time and 2) it appears to align with a standard “large scale project” methodology than with MetroGIS’s preference at this time to

reach broad agreement on a general policy foundation related to addressing sharing application needs. Motion carried, ayes all.

The group then returned its attention to the question “Does the proposal from PlanGraphics meet our needs?” All agreed that a principle expertise sought is that of an expert facilitator, knowledgeable of the complex area of geospatial applications and levels or types of sharing that is possible, capable of effectively drawing the desired information out of the considerably talented individuals who will participate in the subject forum and achieving agreement on a strategy(ies) appropriate for MetroGIS to pursue.

The group discussed the provisions of the proposal from PlanGraphics and concluded that although one can not be sure that the desired facilitation expertise would be provided, the considerable experience offered justified the risk relative to the cost of the project.

Motion: Brandt moved and Bitner seconded to offer the project to PlanGraphics. Motion carried, ayes all.

Johnson commented that he hoped that he would be able to offer the project to PlanGraphics the following day.

4) Preliminary Design – Proposed Facilitated Forum in January

Johnson provided an overview of the concept forum design that was developed when the Operations Chapter of the recently adopted 2008-2011 MetroGIS Business Plan was developed.

All agreed on the following working title for the forum: “Meeting Shared Geospatial Needs Beyond Data”. Johnson was encouraged to invite comment from the consult team. The concern is that the use of the term “applications” can imply a narrower focus than intended.

A. Outcome/design expectations agreed upon or corroborated:

(1) Demonstration component (first 2+/- hours):

- Clear understanding of the options/opportunities/possibilities for sharing related to applications together with the costs, benefits, risks, and obstacles associated with each. The starting point for development of the content for this component is the listing of 10 options in Section C of Attachment A to the report for Agenda Item 3.

Bitner agreed to begin developing a short list of specific discussion topics for this component leveraging the work of the LMIC Service Broker pilot project. All agreed that the following projects should be included as demonstration discussion topics:

- a) Regional Geocoder – Nancy Read, project manager
- b) Compare and Contrast from Randy Knippel’s experience of development of the Open Source GeoMoose application versus collaborative modification of the proprietary parcel query application developed by Greenville, South Carolina.

- This portion of the forum can be attended by individuals who will not be involved in the afternoon session as observers for educational purposes.
- Questions and comments will be encouraged to the extent they help the participants better understand the possibilities costs, who benefits, risks, and obstacles. The format should be similar to that associated with brainstorming – options identification without judgment as to viability for any particular organization or MetroGIS. The later will be topic of discussion in the afternoon.
- Use the demonstrations to assist in defining terms for use the remainder of the day. It was agreed that a glossary should be made available to the participants before the forum. Johnson agreed to post the glossary developed for the 2008-2011 Business Plan on a SharePoint/Wiki site for the members/consultant team to modify as they deem appropriate.
- Role of the facilitator will be to keep the pace moving by keeping the speakers on point and cutting off comments that drift into policy/judgments inappropriate to the brainstorming format

- Recorders with sufficient content expertise will be vital to capturing subtleties important for the consideration in the afternoon session of whether an option is realistic.

(2) Remainder of the Forum:

The eight items outlined in Attachment A of the report for Agenda Item 3. The group recognized that unlike regional data solutions, applications-related projects with less geographic extent than the entire seven county area can have significant benefit to the region and should be considered as candidate “regional solutions”.

B. Forum Participants

It was agreed that:

- Invitations should be made 4-5 weeks before the forum if at all possible
- The process of identifying candidate participants should begin by identifying perspectives that should be represented in the deliberations
- PlanGraphics suggestion of limiting participation to 20 individuals should be a goal to extent possible.

Time ran out before further progress could be made. All agreed to give thought to this matter before then next meeting and that this closure on the candidates should be reached at that time.

5) Next Meeting and Topics

The next meeting was tentatively set for Thursday, December 6, 10 a.m. to noon, at the MAC. Staff was asked to invite PlanGraphics to participate by teleconference. He was also directed to ask when PlanGraphics was prepared to have the proposed project website operational, how long after project completion it would be maintained, and if it will include a “wiki” capability.

Maxwell asked for clarification of the Workgroup’s role relative the applications recommendation following the forum. Read commented that the main purpose of the forum is to reach agreement on the opportunities/possibilities that are appropriate for MetroGIS to pursue. The charge to the workgroup is to develop a strategy for how to best achieve/act on these possibilities and offer its recommendation by March 2007 to the Coordinating Committee for consideration.

6) Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Prepared by
Randall Johnson,
MetroGIS Staff Coordinator