



## DRAFT

### Technical Leadership Workgroup

Minutes – Wednesday, July 23, 2008

1:00 to 3:30 p.m.

MESB/Mosquito Control Offices

2099 University Ave. W., St. Paul

Members Present: Mark Kotz, John Carpenter, Nancy Read, Chris Cialek

Staff Present: Randall Johnson (MetroGIS Staff Coordinator)

Members Absent: Robert Taylor, Jim Maxwell, David Bitner, Bob Basques

#### 1. Welcome, Introductions, Note Taker

Mark Kotz called the meeting to order. Chris Cialek agreed to take notes. Randy Johnson joined the meeting to help provide a MetroGIS Coordinating Committee perspective, answer questions and evaluate Workgroup progress.

#### 2. Approve Agenda

Agenda approved without change.

#### 3. Past Meeting Summary

The June meeting summary was approved with one grammatical correction identified: on page 3, change *Flush* to *Flesh*.

#### 4. Forum for Defining Shared Needs for Web Services and Applications

Mark kicked the meeting off with a review of the workgroup's charge in organizing this forum and the approach options discussed at the Workgroup's June meeting<sup>1</sup>.

- **Purpose:** assist MetroGIS in defining and prioritizing shared needs for collaboratively developed applications and web services.
- **Strategy:** conduct a forum, similar to the January 24<sup>th</sup> workshop, to query a set of experts on what business needs should be addressed and what specific applications or web services would help satisfy those needs for both government and business in the Metro region.
- **Participants:** A representative sample of MetroGIS stakeholders that have two qualities: 1. they understand the benefits of service oriented architecture, at least conceptually, and 2. they can advocate for the broader business needs of their organization.

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Leadership Workgroup minutes – June 17, 2008:

[http://www.metrogis.org/teams/workgroups/shared\\_app/phase2/meetings/Minutes%202008-06-17.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/workgroups/shared_app/phase2/meetings/Minutes%202008-06-17.pdf)

- **Forum Organization:**
  - a. Education piece: provide real-world examples of useful web services and applications to prime the pump
  - b. Gather attendees' input: questions about how to do this remain; should this be done as one big group, or a few smaller break-out clusters
  - c. Break: during a short break, facilitators organize responses and prepare to present the group with a structured summary of responses.
  - d. Prioritization exercise: allow attendees to rank those responses most important to them; keep cost out of decisions at this stage; capture organization type information for each prioritized response.

NR: We could run up against the problem of receiving both *noun* and *verb* responses; the things that get developed vs. the processes that link those things together to do a particular job. The result may yield high priority procedures that require lower priority tools to be developed and thus create an inherent conflict in the priority message the Workgroup sends back to the Coordinating Committee.

JC: This ought not be a technical exercise; we should be seeking out foundational components. The details of detailed tool development should be left for the future.

RJ: The techniques developed and used by Professor John Bryson (University of Minnesota) could be appropriate in establishing the level of the information and the way priorities are set at the forum.

MK: Maybe we need to control responses by constraining the question to: *what are the high priorities for web services in your organization?* The results will form our Workgroup's prioritized list, the outcome of this exercise.

NR: We should also provide some exposure to the use of a collaboration tool (e.g. SharePoint, Wiki, etc) so that the dialog begun in the forum can continue and be refined by participants after the forum is over.

RJ: Do we run the risk of biasing the results by allowing unsupervised and possibly uneven modification to the forum results to take place by the more enthusiastic and tech-savvy collaboration tool users?

JC: What we want is to establish a collaborative process for achieving the priorities we come up with, not a mechanism to recast what was discussed at the forum.

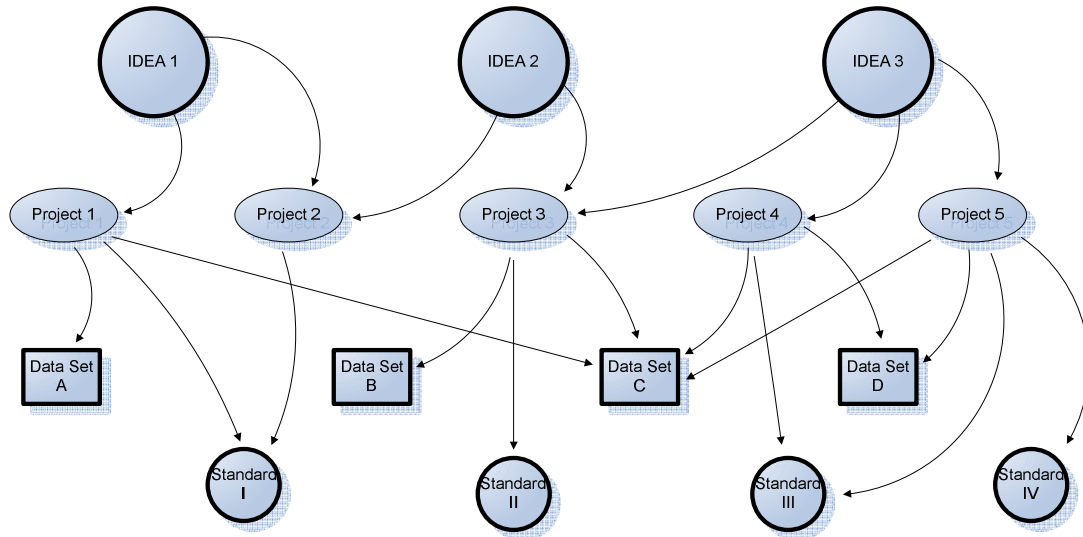
MK: Our deliverable to the Coordinating Committee: 1) the prioritized list of applications and web services described at a relatively high level, but with enough detail to say what and why, but not how; 2) a turnaround document for forum participants and Committee members.

RJ: Suggestion: the Workgroup ought to come up with a short list of candidate ideas to *prime the pump* at the forum.

JC: Perhaps we should employ a two-stage process: 1) capture the list from attendees, then 2) discuss each one in a little depth to tease out whether the need is for a) a collaborative process (a concept) or b) a collaborative tool (an application).

NR: A good illustration of a process with high value content, which could be used as a vivid example to prime the pump, is address data synchronized across data custodians.

RJ: A valuable way to visualize our results may exist in some of the methods Bryson uses. For example, one technique for documenting process components and their inter-relationships is illustrated below:



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CC: This is looking like a tall order for one 3-hour session. Do we need to be thinking about more than one meeting?

MK: Given we just had a full day workshop in January, we need to be aware of the number of people involved, the length of their commitment and possible reluctance if we ask too much.

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RJ: There's an expectation that non-government entities (i.e. private sector) will contribute prominently. Is there value in segregating results based on private sector feedback vs. public sector feedback?

JC: It's true that the private sector often struggles to determine how it fits into MetroGIS. Their biggest concerns revolve around the cost to integrate/clean government data.

MK: Maybe we could subdivide results by organization type.

JC: Simply associating dots with items on a list might not work in this case. We'll be dealing with ideas too discretely. If we're coming up a list of applications and identifying how popular each is in relation to the others, we're missing a bigger

question, namely: how can they be connected to achieve some business solution. Big Ideas are composed of: processes/services/applications. This relationship must somehow be captured.

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NR: Why do we need to prioritize?

RJ: Priorities are asked for by the Coordinating Committee.

NR: Priorities are determined by those who are willing to make it happen (i.e.: those who are willing to pay for it).

JC: What we want to break down are perceived silos of need, and replace them with some collective understanding of the interdependencies that will foster collaboration. In addition to *services* and *applications*, we are also talking about *processes*.

NR: This discussion reminds me of a presentation at a December Minnesota IT Conference some time ago which described the paradigm shift process model. It incorporated both the high level Big Idea aspects with lower level details.

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MK: There are many ways to attack the problem, but we did set out a framework at our last meeting for three hour forum. Given the new discussion, here is a suggestion for deliverables and outcomes:

- A chart of services and applications that have community value
- A list of Big Ideas with ample descriptions of what and why
- An identification of necessary implementation standards
- A prioritized list of services and applications

JC: We might also consider highlighting the critical elements that appear to be standing in the way of progress.

MK: We may limit our outcomes to intelligent suggestions based on forum attendee input. For example:

- *Here are 5-6 things people say are important . . .*
- *Here are the three components needed to make this process available . . .*

NR: This seems to be the place where a collaboration tool could have real value.

MK: If the plan is to deliver what I listed above, here's how I see the session being organized:

0:45 Education

2:00 Facilitated needs capture session

0:45 Voting on results; facilitated collaboration discussion

JC: What if we reduced the size of the group to 15 – a more focused development group? We could start with demos, then to into an exercise to identify actionable steps to getting a few high priority (as defined by the group) processes developed.

RJ: One example of this broad application made up of a series of discrete components and is of value to many is a land management information system (LMIS); made up of five component applications, perhaps incorporating 25 different data sets managed by seven different organizations, overseen by a management group that monitors the system's performance and initiates improvements. This is the kind of recommendation he'd like delivered to the Coordinating Committee.

MK: It doesn't sound like we're ready to put the finishing touches on a plan for the forum. There are many ideas floating around; can we nail down some of the particulars?

JC: Here are a couple options:

- 30 people
- limited outcomes; capture broad ideas that can be turned into recommendations
- 1 session
  
- 15 people
- A more focused process; look for more details; limit scope to a few important processes and their components; spend less time on prioritizing and more on investigating parts
- 2+ sessions

MK: Proposal: Chris Cialek and Mark will meet to craft a plan for a facilitated process. They will send a description of the process to the workgroup for preliminary approval. If approved, Cialek and Kotz will test the methodology in a mock up/dry run session with the workgroup at the next meeting. It can then be evaluated and tweaked to prepare for the real deal.

Note: a lack of opposition to this idea was interpreted as an indication of concurrence.

### **Action Items:**

1. Kotz and Cialek will meet to prepare a draft plan for the forum and conduct a dry run on the workgroup. The workgroup will be given a paper copy of the plan to make notes on during the dry run. Then we will discuss possible changes to improve the process.
2. Kotz will schedule two workgroup meetings for September after the RNC.

### **5. Other Issues**

None discussed.

### **6. Adjourn**

The group adjourned at 3:25

*Notes prepared by Chris Cialek  
July 25, 2008*