Metro Stormwater Geodata Project (MSGP)

Project Charter

Approved by MSGP Steering Committee on August 28, 2018

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The document was prepared by Geoff Maas on behalf of the MSGP Steering and Coordinating Team. Questions, comments or suggestions can be directed to:

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Many government agencies in Minnesota—either as part of their core mandate or through the work of their various departments—manage and deal ***directly*** with a range of water issues ranging from water supply, surface and ground water quality and recharge, runoff management, regulatory work or constructing and maintaining physical stormwater infrastructure as well as ***indirectly*** through land use and land management decisions that impact water.

Many of these agencies are leveraging geospatial technology as a means of conducting their work. The availability of consistent, standardized geodata representing stormwater assets to meet clearly defined shared business needs has been identified as a useful tool in working more efficiently and effectively.

The **MSGP** is a ***voluntary*** multi-agency effort in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Region to develop a means by which geospatial data representing assets important to the work of managing stormwater can be assembled, standardized across jurisdictions, and made available to the stakeholders and data consumer community to meet their various business needs.

Project Goals

The goals of the **MSGP** are:

- To identify and engage stakeholders at all levels of government, in the private sector as well as in the academic and non-profit sphere and to document their core business needs to be served by a stormwater geodata transfer standard and wider availability of standardized data representing stormwater assets and systems;

- The development of a data exchange standard or data transfer standard resource for stormwater geodata that meets the needs expressed by the stakeholders, data producers and data consumers;

- To engage in research and provide resource materials representing the legal and policy topics potentially affecting the sharing and availability of stormwater geodata;

- The identification, documentation and resolution of known obstacles, needs (funding, personnel, resources) or technical gaps in the data producer community that inhibit the creation, maintenance and sharing of stormwater geodata;

- The creation of a pilot project or proof-of-concept to test the efficacy and usefulness of the data standard developed;

- The exploration, testing and movement toward inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional work flows that facilitate the creation, standardization, aggregation and publication of stormwater geodata to the data consumer community;

General Scope of Work

The Scope of Work of the **MSGP** includes the following:

- Documentation of the general and specific business needs of the stakeholder community;

- Development of a data exchange/transfer standard resource for stormwater geodata that meets the needs expressed by the stakeholders, data producers and data consumers;

- Research on the legal and policy aspects of stormwater geodata availability and sharing;

- Identification and documentation of the various obstacles and needs (funding, personnel, resources, etc.) or technical gaps in the data producer community that inhibit the creation and maintenance of stormwater geodata;

- Creation of a pilot project or proof-of-concept project to test the efficacy and usefulness of the data standard developed;

- Development of data aggregation, validation and publishing workflows for completed datasets to be available to the user community;

Stakeholders and Participants

Participation in the **MSGP** effort is open to any individual, agency or interest in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region with a business need for geodata representing stormwater features. As a voluntary, inter-agency effort, anyone with a business need or with a strong professional interest are encouraged to participate and contribute.

The work of the **MSGP** will be guided, shaped and performed by a Steering Team. This Steering Team is composed of individuals representing city, county, regional, state, federal, watershed districts and special districts and well as partners from the private sector and academic interests. The Steering Team will work toward consensus decisions—both general and specific—in moving forward on the work of the **MSGP**, including the development of the data standard, parameters of the pilot project and other decisions relevant to the work.

The **MSGP** Steering Team consists of a group of individuals representing a cross section of interests who have self-identified and volunteered to participate. The following individuals formed the initial Steering Team body (as of June 2018):

- Heather Albrecht, City of Maple Grove
- Perry Clark, Carver County Public Works
- Stacy Harwell, WSB Engineering
- Masha Hoy, Carver County Water Management Organization
- Brian Jastram, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
- Mike Koutnik, ESRI
- Joe Lewis, Houston Engineering
- Nicholas Lott-Havey, City of Chanhassen
- Erik Madland, City of Bloomington
- Meaghan McGinn, SRF Consulting Group
- Drew McGovern, Hennepin County
- Rachel Olmanson, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Joshua Petersen, Dakota County
- Cory Richter, City of Blaine
- Mark Ryan, Vermillion River Watershed Management Organization
- Chris Sanocki, U.S. Geological Survey
- Kristine Stehly, Hennepin County
- John Studtmann, City of Minneapolis
- Tyler Thompson, Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization

The effort will be guided and assisted by a Coordination Team, who will be tasked with research, scheduling and facilitation of meetings, documenting meeting proceedings, publication of documents, management of communications and general administrative support. This Coordination Team is composed of:

- Alex Blenkush, GIS Analyst, Hennepin County GIS Office
- Ann Houghton, GIS Project Manager, Hennepin County GIS Office
- Carrie Magnuson, GIS Technician, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
- Geoff Maas, MetroGIS Coordinator, MetroGIS/Metropolitan Council

Members of the Steering Team will be encouraged to assist with Coordination Team duties as their interests and schedules allow.

Project Timeline (Overview)

As an all-volunteer, collaborative, inter-agency effort, the **MSGP** project timeline will need to be flexible to accommodate the diverse demands and schedule constraints of its constituent members. The date ranges and list of activities shown below are intended to provide a general 'shape' to the schedule but are not a fixed schedule and may shift as the project evolves. Key anticipated project milestones for the **MSGP** include the following:

Phase I (April 2018 – August 2018)

- Documentation and publication of general and stakeholder business needs;
- Establishment of a Steering Team and Coordination Team
- Creation of 'Flash Teams' (subsets of members of the Steering Team) to research the specific features to be carried in a potential data exchange standard;
- Development of the contents and form of a preliminary stormwater geodata standard;
- Determination of how a stormwater standard can be assembled from the findings of the 'flash teams'
- Preliminary research into the data policy/data availability issues raised by the stakeholders;

Phase II (August 2018 – Mid-2019)

- Definition of a study area within the Twin Cities Metropolitan region suitable for a 'proof of concept' to test the proposed standard
- Aggregation of stormwater data from the study area, translated into the proposed standard

- Publication of the draft standard and study area dataset to the larger metro professional community for review, comment and critique
- Development of a draft 'best practices document' for data creators and data users
- Continued research and refinement of materials related to data policy and data availability

Phase III (Mid 2019 – Onward)

- Delineation of resources (funding, personnel, in-kind, agency commitment, etc.) are needed to assist each stormwater data producer (in its unique circumstance) to provide data in the proposed standard (either via conversion, translation by producer or translation by a trusted aggregating agency (such as county, watershed district or regional government)
- Continued research and refinement of materials related to data policy and data availability

Project Budget

For the initial work of the **MSGP** effort, there are no currently committed funds. Phase I and Phase II tasks of the effort will be met largely in-kind and volunteer contributions.

During the development of the project conceptually, several interests including the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County GIS Users Group indicated that they would be willing to contribute when funds are needed. As MSGP is listed as a priority project in the current (and foreseeably, future) MetroGIS Work Plan, it is eligible for MetroGIS Work Plan budget funding.

As the specific need for funding emerges (e.g. to hire consultants, personnel, to offset data producing agency staff costs or meet other expenses which arise) the Coordination Team will work with these interests and agencies to secure the needed funds and develop needed contracts and arrangements.

Constraints, Assumptions, Risks and Dependencies

Constraints. The following are the understood general constraints on the **MSGP** effort.

No single agency in charge. The primary constraint of the **MSGP** effort is that no single agency is 'in charge' of the project; rather, the effort is intended to be a collaborative attempt to develop and deliver a data standard, pilot project and supporting research to the larger professional community.

Mitigation of constraint: This constraint is not an existential threat to the effort, rather it is a reflection of the egalitarian, inter-agency nature of the collaborative spirit of the **MSGP**.

No formal budget assigned. A second constraint is that no funds of any participating agency have been formally assigned to the effort.

Mitigation of constraint: The initial phases of the effort will be met by volunteer, in-kind contributions of time and research by the participants. As formal funding is potentially needed in later phases of the work, the **MSGP** project members will pursue them.

Assumptions. The primary assumption of the effort is that the participating members of the Steering Team and Coordinating Team will have the capacity, permission from their agency and sustained interest to see the project through its various initial, middle and end phases to success. As a large, complex, multi-year and multi-agency effort, the project needs to remain engaging, nimble and productive to keep its participants involved.

Risks. Potential general risks to the success of the project involve the following:

- Dissolution and/or lack of project focus;
- "Meeting fatigue" on the part of the participants;
- Withdrawal of agency support (e.g. not allowing their staff to participate);
- Inability to develop a suitable draft data standard in a timely fashion;
- Inability to effectively define a suitable study area in the metro region;
- Inability to get permission from data creators to translate and share data for the study;

These risks will be mitigated with the planful spacing of meetings, events and actions so that progress can be made without burning out the participants, and with efficient agendas and productive meetings so that definitive and measured progress can be made within meetings and in the intervening time between meetings.

Research to find a suitable study area and participating municipal data producers willing to share data will be performed well in advance to their need in the project schedule to ensure continuous progress on the work.

Dependencies. The primary dependency of the project is the ability of the Steering Team and its constituent work teams to develop a suitable and workable initial draft data standard model. The standard is the core resource needed to effectively advance the other major portions of the project. Phase I of the **MSGP** is focused on the development of said standard.

Project Champion, Project Owner/Managers and Work Team

Project Champion. The **MSGP** has as its 'project champion' Hennepin County Commissioner Debbie Goettel. A project champion is generally defined as a senior leadership official who supports the project from a policy-level or administrative capacity.

Support from leadership. In addition to Commissioner Goettel providing her leadership to the effort as its champion. the project has to date also received verbal support from the MetroGIS Policy Board (*comprised of both elected, senior level agency staff and appointed senior officials in the metro region*), the MetroGIS Coordinating Committee, leadership at the Metropolitan Council, GIS management-level leadership at the Seven Metropolitan Counties and from the Board of the Metro Chapter of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts. As the project advances, periodic updates to Commissioner Goettel and the agencies identified above will be delivered to keep them apprised of its progress.

Project Owners/Managers. The **MSGP** Coordination Team members are working together in the role of project co-owners and managers, these are Alex Blenkush (Hennepin County), Ann Houghton (Hennepin County), Carrie Magnuson (Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District) and Geoff Maas (MetroGIS).

Project Work Teams. The **MSGP** project team will be fulfilled by the constituent members of the Steering Team (please see roster list on Page 3). Smaller breakout work teams will be created and assigned specific research, technical or other tasks from the

Steering Team membership as needed. The project may draw upon additional expertise from individuals, agencies and interests as it evolves and progresses.

Key Project Contacts

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Additional Information and Resources

The MetroGIS collaborative will be maintaining a publicly facing website containing general information and links to resources relevant to the **MSGP** here:

https://www.metrogis.org/projects/stormsewers.aspx