

MetroGIS Coordinating Committee: Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 3, 2015, 1 PM - 3:30 PM

Metro Counties Government Center, 2099 University Avenue, St Paul

Draft Minutes – Pending Approval of Coordinating Committee



In Attendance:

Matt Baker, Metropolitan Airports Commission
David Brandt, Washington County (Vice Chair)
Curtis Carlson, Northstar MLS
Erik Dahl, EQB (Chair)
Brad Henry, University of Minnesota
Pete Henschel, Carver County
Len Kne, U-Spatial
Randy Knippel, Dakota County
Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council
Matt Koukol, Ramsey County
Mark Maloney, Shoreview
Eric Menze, Resource Data, Inc.
Nancy Read, Metro Mosquito Control
Dan Ross, MnGeo
John Slusarczyk, Anoka County
Ben Verbick, LOGIS
Sally Wakefield, MnDOT
Hal Watson, DNR
Ron Wencl, USGS

Guests:

Jeff Bloomquist, USDA, Farm Services Agency
Jon Hoekenga, Metropolitan Council

Absent:

Hal Busch, City of Bloomington
David Bitner, db Spatial
Gordy Chinander, MESB
Carrie Magnuson, Ramsey-Washington-Metro Watershed District
Jeff Matson, CURA/Non-Profit
Tony Monsour, Scott County
Gary Swenson, Hennepin County

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Brandt called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm
(Chair Dahl arrived at 1:10 pm)

2) Approve Meeting Agenda

No changes advanced; approved by group consensus.

3) Approve Meeting Minutes from August 27, 2015

No changes advanced; approved by group consensus.

4) Election of MetroGIS Chair and Vice Chair for Jan 2016 – Jan 2018

As per Article III, Sections 6 and 7 of the MetroGIS Operational Guidelines and Procedures, the Coordinating Committee is to elect from its membership a chair and vice chair to serve a two-year term. Current Chair Dahl and vice-chair Brandt have both expressed interest in serving another term in their respective offices and no other candidates self-identified as being interested in the positions. Dahl and Brandt were re-elected unanimously by the members of the Committee.

5) Update on copyright issues regarding old aerial imagery

At the August 27 Committee meeting, representatives from the University of Minnesota advanced the 'Historical Aerial Imagery Mosaic' project idea. The Coordinating Committee approved the project and its request of \$5.076 from the 2016 MetroGIS budget on the condition that it demonstrate that the correct permissions were in place to redistribute this archival data and

Ryan Mattke (Head of the Borchert Map Library) and Geoff Maas documented these concerns and advanced them to their respective legal, finance and procurement contacts. Both the University of Minnesota and Metropolitan Council were supportive of the project, acknowledging there was minimal risk to either agency in redistributing the data. The agencies cited these are essentially public data resources that were paid for with public dollars for public purpose and that the existing practice of the Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online (making archival aerial imagery available since December 2008) without requests from past vendors to remove them from the service.

Should a past contracted aerial imagery vendor approach either the Borchert Map Library or Metropolitan Council about the publication of this archival material, the agencies will respond to their specific concerns at that time.

6) USDA: Farm Services Agency Update Presentation

Jeff Bloomquist, GIS Coordinator and EM Coordinator with the Minnesota State Office of the USDA, Farm Service Agency gave a twenty minute presentation on the current and future work of his agency.

Highlights of his presentation included the mission, purpose and work of the FSA, the types of geospatial data they consume and produce for their customers, the 'common land unit' polygon they use for working with farm program participants, their participation in and extensive use of the NAIP imagery (the next full flight of which is anticipated for 2018), the role and actions of the FSA in disaster response work (damage to farmland and farm infrastructure), specifically the FSA's actions in flood recovery, tornado recovery and wildfires. He described how the 'common land unit' dataset is protected under Section 16-19 of the Farm Bill and how sharing their data with other governments is not possible at this time.

Jeff went on further to describe how they combine their data with that of the National Weather Service for documentation the storm or other weather event damage to create narrative maps and help pin point sites for recovery. As an agency primarily concerned with agriculture, the focus of the FSA is primarily on rural areas, not urbanized areas of city features. In times of serious weather events, the FSA is able to share their data with appropriate emergency managers.

Jeff indicated that the FSA was in the process of ramping up its ArcGIS OnLine presence with both internally facing and externally facing sites, this is taking some time as the FSA is a federal agency; all state sites need to be uniform in content and design. Additionally, he indicated that the FSA was already working with agricultural producers in Minnesota on the forthcoming buffer protection initiative.

Questions for Jeff from the group included interest if the FSA were to be using drones (*not at present, put the future potential is being assessed*), how the FSA contracts for aerial imagery (*the FSA has an aerial photography field office that handles all the contracting through its list of vendors*) and about the protection and confidentiality of the data maintained by the FSA (*to avoid speculative commodities trading, protect farm program participants identities and other related security concerns*).

Jeff can be reached here:

Jeffrey M. Bloomquist, GIS Coordinator & EM Coordinator
USDA Farm Service Agency, Minnesota State Office
375 Jackson Street, Suite 400, St. Paul, MN 55101
651.602.7728 (Direct)

7) Address Editor Tool Discussion

Maas provided a brief context of where the Editor Tool is at present: as of mid-2015, the budget for maintaining the maintenance Purchase Order through the Metropolitan Council has been exhausted. The current status of the tool is as follows:

- Version 3.0 was completed and made available in March 2015
- Version 3.0 is in use by several stakeholders and data producers in the metro;
- No “Version 4.0” has been identified by the stakeholders for the 2016 MetroGIS Work Plan;
- No budget has been formally identified or committed for future enhancements;

The Metropolitan Council funded and maintained an on-going Purchase Order for services that included: completion of fixes to various reported bugs identified by users; user installation support and an update to support ArcGIS Server 10.3;

Metropolitan Council staff has been collecting a list of concerns, ‘bugs’ and as well as ideas for enhancements and recommended improvements from the stakeholder and user community regarding version 3.0 of the tool. Two optional enhancements—which were part of the discussion for Version 3.0—were not completed during this past contract, these include, expand the searchable fields within the application; providing support checks for street name discrepancies between the address point and adjacent centerline or parcel. Several new suggestions for enhancements have also been submitted, these include expand searchable fields, providing support checks for points/centerline discrepancy; better ability to use the application in mobile environment, more flexibility in the ‘config’ for different database schemas and adding the ability to process address points in bulk;

If we gathered our current group of Address Editor Tool users and stakeholders for a session to discuss current ‘bug’ issues and ideas for enhancements, we could very likely have enough information and rationale to develop a ‘scope of work’ for a Version 4.0 of the tool. At present, the project is not formally on the MetroGIS 2016 Work Plan. For MetroGIS to move on the project and for it to be eligible for MetroGIS budget funding, it needs to be prioritized in context to the existing list of projects and added to the annual work plan document.

The Committee then had an open discussion of approximately 30 minutes on the topic.

Ross: Essentially we (state) are in a holding pattern, we have not yet chosen a 911 vendor for the state yet, when we have, it we can roll this out statewide. To date we have 47 (of the 87) counties providing address points, and as you might imagine, they are a mix of authoritative points, parcel centroids, points on buildings, ends of driveways, on street centerlines, and so on. Our goal, which we share with this group is to have both a common schema and a common set of tools. When we begin evaluating the tools offered from vendors, we will want this group to provide input and help with that review.

Ross indicated that the State of New York has deployed an enterprise license for a vendor solution and given out the tools to local governments at a cost of approximately \$2 million/year, however Minnesota does not have that level of budget committed to address points at this time.

As these data are tied to the centerlines and utilized in the 911 schemas the state will offer validation work and can point out any discrepancies and issues in the data as an on-going process. IT is anticipated that the address points will be integral to the state system, the state will take the call and route calls to the local PSAPs as they come in.

Questions for Dan on the state-level initiative included: would local authorities be updating and modifying a central database or still having county-level aggregation and pushing it up to the state *(there would be options for local and state hosting, may be able to edit individual records and do batch uploading)*, would address points be available as a web service *(yes, this is desirable along with additional caching tools)* and if there would be an avenue or process the discrepancies when authoritative sources potentially conflict with one another on the address points *(state and regional users will have the means to document discrepancies they find and bring these back to the counties and cities to resolve)* and the timeline anticipated for the state deciding on a tool and roll out (3 years, metro and northeastern Minnesota will be first, looking to start pilot projects in summer of 2016) and how does the existing MetroGIS Address Editor Tool fit into the discussion *(offers a challenge to users in Greater Minnesota as it requires an ArcGIS Server Implementation, state does not have the resources to implement that for users statewide, however there is the potential for a regional 'host' county to pull together the data for its neighbors)*.

Ross cited that in New York, they have rolled out two versions of their tool, a desktop version and a web based version, by offering the free tools to the local address authorities they can then get the data in the standard which in turn saves them time having to do a huge amount of validation. He anticipates a blend of centralized and distributed tools in Minnesota and will be looking to the metro counties to help in evaluating the tools.

Mark Kotz asked the group if there is anything specific that needs to be done in the interim with the existing tool and put the proposition to the counties that if they want to see things take shape they can bring a proposal to the Committee for review and action.

Randy Knippel indicated that between now and the eventual deployment of forthcoming state tools that Dakota County and its cities would be making use of the existing version 3.0 of the editor tool.

Matt Koukol indicated that if something were done to advance a version 4.0 of the metro tool that the most advantageous action for them would be in modularizing the code and making the code sharable

(which is not permitted under the current vendor contract). Matt cited that every county has different challenges getting it going, but being able to get into the code and pull it apart would help them move forward more quickly.

Knippel expressed concern that the MetroGIS tool would be relegated to being simply an interim solution or ‘throw away’ tool.

Ross indicated that the existing MetroGIS tool will be part of the forthcoming statewide evaluation and to gauge their interest and ability to participate in a state-hosted solution as well.

Kotz contributed that the metro tool was a point of beginning and got things moving and reminded the counties that if they as current users want to formally propose a modifications (modularizing the code, etc.) or a solution and are encouraged to come together, develop that proposal and bring it to the Coordinating Committee.

Ross added that having the cities using any tool is valuable, that getting this work into practice through any means is good forward progress, regardless of the tool.

Knippel reiterated that counties have has limited leverage with a county’s constituent cities, however, direction—and potentially resources as well—from the state, especially with the needs of the 911 work ahead, puts everyone in a better position to work together and get things done more efficiently. He also restated that having a single contact person in each city to handle addresses is desirable.

Read stated that at previous policy board meetings, officials always respond well to all things around emergency response and that address points are integral to that effort should we need their support.

Ross related that in recent conversations with DPS they are working to fully understand the full set of resources (human, infrastructural, technological) that will be needed for a statewide implementation and the necessity of approaching the Legislature for the needed funding.

Knippel added that while 911 remains a huge driver, there are so many other benefits to be leveraged. Even if 911 work is the main push for it, the uses for address points, road data and other data is broader, reducing the duplication of effort, cost savings, richer better data available to all users.

Ross agreed and cited that in his conversations with partners in Greater Minnesota, the PSAPs are curious about how the state is going to make their data available and identified the challenges that when PSAPs roll to one another, they don’t always have one another’s data. He also indicated the use of Google as a de facto solution when they don’t have each other’s data. He further acknowledged that this continued to evolve and he wants this group (MetroGIS) to be a large player in those discussion.

Kotz reiterated that the current tool has been a good start in getting cities and counties working together and building relationships, we continue to learn what does and doesn’t work and the current work and feedback will be useful to the larger state effort.

8) Brief Updates on Current Work Plan Project Items

8a) Address Points Aggregation Project;

Jon Hoekenga of the Metropolitan Council provided an update the progress of the Aggregation Project. He reiterated that the primary goal of the project was to develop efficient workflows which support continuous (sustainable) standardization, aggregation, publication and availability of geospatial data. Key requirements and task of the project include examining how to leverage existing technology and available from the Minnesota Geospatial Commons to gather and publish data; to test and assess the efficacy of the proposed workflow with two data producers (Dakota and Carver counties); make process easy for other data producers to participate; and assess and report how the process could be used for other inter-agency data aggregation needs such as road data, park and trail data or parcel data. To date the project as developed its schema validation tool, completed set up of FTP accounts for data producers and test data has been posted in the staging area. Remaining tasks for the end of 2015 and beginning of 2016 include completion of the backend aggregation and validation process; the creation of a package for other data producers to use so they can easily contribute data using the same workflows. Project participants include Hal Watson and Zeb Thomas of the DNR, Brent Lund of MnGeo, Joe Sapletal of Dakota County, Pete Henschel and Chad Riley of Carver County, Jon Hoekenga of the Metropolitan Council and Geoff Maas of MetroGIS.

8b) Metro Regional Centerlines Collaborative

Maas reported on the steady progress of the MRCC initiative, the Build Team (GIS staff at the participating counties) have been making marked progress toward the December 7 goal for 40-60% of the attributes populated, data edge-matched and ready to be ingested by the MnGeo hosting method. The MRCC team has been having monthly phone conferences (9/17/15, 10/15/15 and 11/25/15) to document progress and relate any issues. On December 10, MnGeo will put on a 'hosting demo'. After the December 7 goal, the first aggregation will begin and all issues related to aggregation will be documented to work out any remaining bugs. The first version of the MRCC dataset is anticipated to be in production by March of 2016.

It is anticipated that the Core Team (County GIS leadership) will need to convene sometime early in 2016 make decisions on many of the issues revealed through the build process in late 2015. Maas is documenting these issues and will present them to the Core Team in a method of their choosing. All MRCC documents are up to date and available on the metrogis.org website.

8c) Free + Open Public Geospatial Data

Maas extended congratulations to Scott County, who on October 6, 2015 became the latest county in Minnesota to formally adopt a free and open data policy; their data portal is also up with downloadable data available (<http://data.scottcounty.opendata.arcgis.com/>). Itasca County in northeastern Minnesota is planning to open up their data in January 2016, it is unknown if they are adopting a formal policy or simply putting their data on a portal. Rice County GIS Coordinator Michelle Trager presented the free and open data issue to the Rice County Board on November 2, 2015 receiving support from county surveyor Mike Fangman.

On March 5-6, 2016, Hennepin County will once again host a second code-a-thon event (called "Geo:Code 2.0") as it did in February 2015. This year's event will be held at the Bruinincks Hall at the University of Minnesota and the invitation has been extended to the larger metropolitan regional community. A planning kick-off meeting was held on November 19 with representatives from Hennepin,

Carver, Washington, Ramsey, Dakota counties and the Metropolitan Council in attendance. Kelly Clausen at Hennepin County is the lead organizer of the event.

At present, nine counties in Minnesota are making their data freely available without a policy, eight have adopted a formal policy and three others are actively considering or moving toward free and open data.

A second 'white paper' resource "Free + Open Public Geospatial Data in Minnesota: Questions, Answers, Concepts and Resources for Practitioners"—remains available on the metroqis.org free and open data project web page. This document is in its 'third draft' and is intended as an informational resource to the geospatial community. This document is has been updated and revised in response to the requests received by the geospatial community especially professionals working in county departments in Greater Minnesota.

The group recommended that the 'counties adopting a policy' map should be changed from purple to a dark green and the 'open data/no policy' counties should be changed to a light green, Maas agreed to make those changes in subsequent editions of the map.

8d) Minnesota Geospatial Commons

Dan Ross indicated that the Commons continued to expand its data offerings, and as of December 3 has 504 resources available from 15 different agencies. The largest contributor to the Commons at present was the Metropolitan Council, followed by the DNR and Dakota County. Dan indicated they would be seeking additional storage capacity given the recent attempts of counties to add their data to the Commons.

8e) Statewide Centerlines Initiative

Dan Ross indicated that the NextGen911 will be the leading platform over esri Roads and Highways as was originally thought. A 'cut' of the NextGen911 roads will be carved out through an ETL process and sent to MNDOT for their various uses. MNDOT will continue its process of integrating local and state road geometry and is in process of sitting down with each county to figure it out, conflation work is started in Ramsey County and we'll be sitting down with Carver County very soon.

Matt Koukol reiterated that it is generally the case the locals have more roads than MNDOT carries in its system and this is problematic for automated conflation. Ramsey, for example, has several hundred more features than MNDOT, this remains in process and development.

Ross also provided a brief update regarding FirstNet, the effort to build broadband for public safety; and the on-going need for public service entity boundaries which helps the federal government to understand how emerge response occurs in Minnesota.

8f) 2016 Aerial Imagery Collection (Metropolitan Council staff)

This Metropolitan Council needs to fly the entire seven county metro area in spring 2016 for leaf-off imagery. The MetCouncil is contracting with MnGeo to lead/coordinate (via an inter-agency agreement) this imagery collection effort. In a parallel effort, MnGeo is working on a 5-year Master Services Contract for imagery. If the Master Services Contract is not in place in time for the spring 2016 image collection project, the Council will still use MnGeo to coordinate the effort using the inter-agency agreement process. The Council has a maximum budget of \$160,000 earmarked for the aerial collection. Agencies interested in participating in the project are encouraged to contact Chris Cialek at MnGeo (chris.cialek@state.mn.us).

8g) Address Points Editor 3.0

This future of the Address Point Editor tool was discussed as a separate agenda item (Item #7) As version 3.0 of the tool was completed in March 2015 and is in use by several stakeholders, the project as originally conceived is considered completed.

9) Vote to Adopt 2016 Work Plan

Maas reminded the group that the draft plan was made available on October 27 via the metrogis.org website, and that no revisions were suggested by the Committee members, during its review period. Henry made a motion to adopt the 2016 plan as is, seconded by Kotz, and the Committee unanimously adopted the plan and its budget for 2016.

10) Lightning Round Update

Brad Henry (U of Mn): Reminded the group of the work he is part of with the State of the Infrastructure MN2050 Survey. The results of that survey are in and available here: <http://mn2050.org/survey/>. The survey report contains 16 pages of charts and detailed analysis of the resulting data. Henry made note that small cities are managing up to 17 different asset categories, more than half of large agencies such as MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council, and went on to state that they received better response from Greater Minnesota participants than from the metro region.

Randy Knippel (Dakota County): Noted that Dakota County has received its 2015 ortho imagery at 6-inch resolution. Dakota County does its own survey control and found the imagery to have exceedingly good accuracy (0.8 feet/~95%). The county partnered with the City of Northfield (which is partially in Dakota County). Dakota County, similar to Washington and Anoka counties has implemented next generation of interactive GIS through WebGIS; based on html5 and JavaScript which makes it compatible with mobile devices. The WebGIS Deployment is running smoothly with no issues. Dakota County remains interested in partnering with the Metropolitan Council on the 2016 aerial imagery collection and will be engaging its cities on the topic.

Matt Koukol (Ramsey County): The County just released an asset management RFP yesterday and our new aerial imagery is due in next week and we anticipate our impervious surface data and physical features data to come in early part of next year. Regarding the Address Editing Tool, we have engaged in training for about half the cities in Ramsey County and also moving to HTML5 for the MapRamsey to facilitate mobile use.

Pete Henschel (Carver County): We are working with our cities and have established an 89-mile fiber optic ring with all of our cities. We will also be hosting and publishing city data for three of our cities in the next month.

Sally Wakefield (MnDOT): Good to be back on the group, I'm now representing MnDOT.

Curt Carlson (Northstar MLS): I recently had a good chat with Mike Dolbow and connected with Chris Meldrum at the Minnesota Department of Health to use their website can search for well data; there is a significant real estate interest in the availability of well sites. Since 2008, it has been a requirement to disclose the presence of a well on a property Requirement to disclose MDH since 2008 to disclose a well when there is a property transaction, and we've got this got this well data going back to 1993. We are working with this archival data; working with it and how it can be used by the MDH. We have different interests, but we are looking at ways to

fuse it up. Also we've been integrating statewide parcel data in Wisconsin into our real estate system and it's pretty astonishing, we looking at 3.4 million parcel records, 99% of the state, version 1 of which has been out since August 2015. This makes a lot of our work in real estate really efficient, faster in producing listings and so on.

Ron Wencil (USGS): First, I want to thank Jeff Bloomquist for coming, it's nice to have another 'fed' in the room. We (USGS) are certainly big users of the NAIP imagery. We are wrapping up the hydrography benefits study, we had members of this group and others in the state contribute for which we're grateful.

Matt Baker (Metro Airports Commission): We are working to get address points assigned to everything associated with the MAC.

John Slusarczyk (Anoka County): We've wrapped up our first batch of roads for MRCC and otherwise it's "business as usual".

Nancy Read (Mosquito Control): Our staff is doing its winter work which is focused mostly on wetlands mapping, pulling in available aerial photos from the metro counties, we're always looking for news and updates on imagery. Also, I'm still looking for good examples of policies about using your personal device for work, if you have something you can share that I can review. One other thing, I had my furnace worked on, and the guy showed up and knew the square footage of our place, testament to the fact that the parcel data is being used out there

Dan Ross (MnGeo): One more update, the MnDOT Crash Application, we've now got GIS in every law enforcement vehicle in the state better able to record and locate crashes.

Ben Verbick (LOGIS): No update

Eric Menze (Resource Data, Inc.): No update

Hal Watson (DNR): Let you all know there is a website now up on the DNR buffer mapping project: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/buffers/index.html> The site contains some good explanations of the project and provides answers to common questions as well as providing a link to a viewer of the current protected waters under consideration.

We've also been working with counties on an application to identify local water access sites. We're working with ecological services, helping distribute funding around invasive species initiatives and protection efforts at local water access points. We've been able to put together an ArcGIS JavaScript API with authentication outside our internal network that allows authorized users at the county level to add data to the dataset, verify it and edit data that they've gathered already. This data will be used to help distribute those funds. I'll mention also that ArcGIS Collector is taking off in our agency, we are seeing many spin off apps from it.

Len Kne (U of MN): Pass

Jon Hoekenga (Metropolitan Council): We will be formally retiring the DataFinder on December 15, all the Council and MetroGIS data are fully migrated to the Commons.

Mark Kotz (Metropolitan Council): Although we've retired the DataFinder, we still have datafinder.org being retained by the Council and there is potential to have that point directly to the Commons. Following up with what Hal mentioned, we are also focused on ArcGIS Collector apps for sewer infrastructure inspections, we are being asked for them and Jon has been able to meet with those who need it and perform a 'mini-needs assessment'; they are very pleased with our ability to get them built and to be able to use them in the field so quickly. The MetCouncil is part of the State's enterprise license agreement with esri and we have signed on with that. The Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council has chosen to rename itself as the MN Geospatial Advisory Council. The group has a new chair, me, and we are seeing it becoming more driven and active, and we are rethinking the governance of the group how that will work. We have established a leadership team of 5 people, myself, David Brandt, Blaine Hackett, Michelle Trager and Victoria Reinhardt to flesh out things to bring to the team to work with and we can really hit the ground running with new things. We are also very fortunate that Victoria Reinhardt has agreed to be on the Outreach Committee.

Mark Maloney: I am pleased to report that after many years of trying, my department in Shoreview got an in-house dedicated public works GIS position and we have our first tangible deliverable: the Adopt A Trail map for Shoreview. Also, we in Shoreview are in many ways 'ground zero' for the water supply issues being explored by local, regional and state interests. We are seeing how just one agency or one way of thinking can't solve or even address the water supply issues; water doesn't respect the boundaries, this will be an on going challenge.

Curt Carlson: Mark, to let you know, my family are participating in the water monitoring program in Shoreview.

Mark: Wow, excellent, thanks for doing that.

Geoff Maas (MetroGIS): Pass

David Brandt (Washington County): We are finally set to move on our own CAD-RMS Tiburon/TriTech solution. I can't put a firm date on it yet, but we are moving. Also, we have implemented WebGIS internally and it will be publicly-facing in the next month.

Erik Dahl (EQB): No update

11) Next Coordinating Committee Meeting: [March 24, 2015, 1 pm.](#)

12) Adjourn

Chair Dahl adjourned the meeting at 3:17 pm