MetroGIS Coordinating Committee: Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 3, 2026, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Virtual

Approved 11/4/26

Attendees

☒	Educational Sector: Pete Wiringa, UMN/U-Spatial	☒	Govt - Regional: Pam Olsin, MESB
☐	Educational Sector: Kirk Stueve, St. Paul College	☐	Govt - Regional: Matt Baker, MAC
☒	Govt - City: Molly McDonald, City of Bloomington	☒	Govt - Regional: Nancy Read, MMCD
☐	Govt - City: Tami Maddio, City of Eagan	☒	Govt - Regional: Mary Mortensen, Met. Council
☒	Govt - City: Jonathan Mortensen, City of Shoreview	☒	Govt - Regional: Aaron Goemann, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
☒	Govt - City: Jessica Fendos, LOGIS	☒	Govt - State: Catherine Hansen, MnDNR
	Govt - City: Vacant	☒	Govt - State: Diana Flores Castillo, MnDOT Metro
☒	Govt - County: John Slusarczyk, Anoka County	☒	Govt - State: Alison Slaats, MnGeo
☒	Govt - County: Chad Riley, Carver County	☐	Non-Profit: Jeff Matson, MCN/CURA
☒	Govt - County: Joe Sapletal, Dakota County		Non-Profit: Vacant
☒	Govt - County: Jesse Reinhardt, Hennepin County	☒	Private Sector: Dan Tinklenberg, SRF
☒	Govt - County: Matt Koukol, Ramsey County	☐	Private Sector - Utilities: Tony Grossman, Xcel
☒	Govt - County: Matt McLees, Scott County		Private Sector (2): Vacant
☒	Govt - Co: David Brandt (Vice-Chair), Washington Co.	☒	Special Expertise: Audrey Robeson, MCNet
	Govt - Federal: Vacant	☐	Special Expertise: Brad Henry, UMN
☒	MetroGIS Coord. (ex-officio): Aaron Menza, Met. Council	☒	MetroGIS support: Tanya Mayer, Met. Council

Additional Attendees: Dustin Atwater, WSP; Brook Anderson, Ramsey County; Tony Monsour, Scott County

See Meeting Slides for details regarding the following agenda items.

1) **Call to Order** *(Brandt)*
   - 1:02 pm

2) **Review and Approve Today's Meeting Agenda (motion item)** *(Brandt)*

Motion to approve Agenda: Fendos *Second:* Wiringa *Motion carried*

3) **Approve Minutes from last meeting (November 2025) (motion item)** *(Brandt)*

Motion to approve 11/12/2025 minutes: Read *Second:* Fendos *Motion Carried*

4) **Introductions** *(Brandt)*
   - Brandt welcomed Aaron Menza as the new MetroGIS Coordinator.
   - Menza shared that he recently joined the Metropolitan Council after nearly twenty years of local government GIS experience, most recently serving as GIS Supervisor for the City of Rosemount. He also noted his involvement with the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium and stated that his goal is to serve as a resource to the Coordinating Committee while helping advance existing and future MetroGIS initiatives.

- Attendees introduced themselves, representing a broad cross-section of regional and local government agencies, academic institutions, non-profit and consulting firms.
- New attendees and guests included Matt McLees (Scott County), who has assumed GIS leadership responsibilities previously held by Tony Monsour, and Dustin Atwater (WSP).

5) Future of MetroGIS Discussion – Recap and Next Steps *(Brandt)*

- Brandt reviewed the outcomes of the November 2025 MetroGIS future planning discussion.
- The Coordinating Committee previously expressed unanimous support for revitalizing MetroGIS and restoring dedicated staffing support.
- Brandt noted that the hiring of Aaron Menza as MetroGIS Coordinator represents a significant step toward implementing that vision.
- Results from the November 2025 needs assessment and project ranking exercise were revisited. Members discussed the importance of clarifying priorities and ensuring MetroGIS resources are focused on projects that provide the greatest regional value.
- Members also revisited ideas identified through the January 2025 MetroGIS member survey. Suggested future initiatives included development of a regional building footprint dataset to support data standardization and aggregation efforts, as well as creation of presentation materials that could be used to communicate the value of GIS to non-GIS partners and elected officials.

6) Brainstorming session for project planning 2026-27 *(Brandt)*

- Current MetroGIS Work Plan
    - Mayer clarified that Regional Data Provisioning and External Platform Publishing should now be considered ongoing MetroGIS maintenance activities rather than active projects.
    - Ongoing MetroGIS maintenance activities include:
        - Regional Data Provisioning (Metropolitan Council, MESB, and Metro Counties)
        - Metro Regional Data Viewer (Metropolitan Council, MESB, and Metro Counties)
    - Members discussed the distinction between maintenance work and project work, recognizing that ongoing support responsibilities affect MetroGIS' capacity to undertake new initiatives.
- Metro Park and Trail Data Standard
    - Sapletal reported that work on the project has resumed and is progressing.
    - Mayer noted that project leads have engaged Metropolitan Council staff and stakeholders for input.
    - Slusarczyk provided a project update, explaining that draft schemas for both parks and trails have been developed and reviewed with state partners. Multiple iterations have been completed, and the schemas are now available for broader review.
    - The next phase of the project will involve outreach to cities, counties, and other stakeholders to gather input and refine the standard.
    - Slusarczyk indicated that he hopes to have a working version of both schemas available by fall 2026. He also offered to provide a future presentation on the current state of the project to help bring Coordinating Committee members up to speed on the effort, its progress, and next steps.

    - Members discussed the importance of coordinating with parallel parks and trails initiatives occurring at the state, regional, and local levels to ensure consistency and avoid duplication of effort. Continued communication between related efforts was identified as an important component of the project moving forward.
- Metro Stormwater Geodata Project
    - Mayer shared an update provided by Aaron Goemann.
    - Current work involves collaboration between the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, and the University of Minnesota to explore the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning to support quality assurance and quality control processes.
    - The effort seeks to simplify and automate portions of the process used to convert local stormwater datasets into the MetroGIS Stormwater Data Standard.
    - Goemann later joined the meeting and provided additional details regarding the project. The team plans to test AI-assisted methods using datasets from participating cities and evaluate opportunities to scale the approach regionally.
- Metro Food Resources Map and Dataset
    - Koukol provided an update on the Metro Food Resources Map initiative.
    - Ramsey County has hosted and maintained the application while expanding it into a regional prototype.
    - County partners continue to update and maintain their food resource data as part of the ongoing operation of the application.
    - Discussion focused on transitioning the application from Ramsey County to MetroGIS for long term hosting and management. Members discussed the scope of effort required for the Metropolitan Council to host the application and support ongoing data maintenance activities.
    - Questions were raised regarding the level of effort required by participating organizations and the Metropolitan Council to migrate the application and associated data to a MetroGIS managed environment.
    - The committee discussed data editing and maintenance responsibilities. Chris U. currently manages the application, and a key requirement is that each participating organization maintain its own ArcGIS Online account in order to update and manage its contributed data.
    - The project team has developed recommendations for transitioning the application to a more centralized, long-term hosting environment while maintaining local responsibility for data updates.
    - Members discussed hosting considerations and recognized that identifying a sustainable long term hosting solution remains a key next step.
    - Read emphasized the importance of securing long-term hosting support for regional projects.
- MetroGIS Operational Guidelines and Procedures
    - Brandt reported that the current operational guidelines were last updated in 2016 and are due for review.
    - Brandt, Menza, and McDonald will begin updating the document.

    - Volunteers were invited to participate in the review process.
    - Sapletal offered assistance based on recent experience developing organizational procedures and documentation.
- Project Prioritization Exercise
    - Menza facilitated a brief member survey to evaluate project feasibility, impact, and organizational priorities.
    - Twenty Responses were received
    - Results indicated strong support for the Metro Park and Trail Data Standard, Metro Stormwater Geodata Project, Operational Guidelines and Procedures update, and Metro Food Resources Map.
    - Members discussed the survey results and noted that project prioritization should consider not only potential impact, but also project feasibility, available resources, and the capacity of MetroGIS staff and volunteers.
    - Discussion highlighted the importance of identifying a manageable number of priorities that can be advanced successfully while continuing to support ongoing MetroGIS activities.
    - Additional comments emphasized the importance of focusing on a smaller number of projects and completing them efficiently.
    - Members discussed balancing data focused projects with organizational and governance related initiatives.
    - Members generally agreed that establishing clear priorities would help provide direction for MetroGIS staff, project leads, and participating organizations moving forward.

7) **Approve 2026-27 Work Plan (motion item)** *(Brandt)*

- Members reviewed the proposed MetroGIS 2026–27 Work Plan and discussed how the project prioritization exercise could be used to guide MetroGIS activities over the next year.
- Discussion emphasized the importance of focusing MetroGIS resources on a small number of high-priority efforts while continuing to make progress on other active projects.
- Members clarified that identifying priority projects would not remove other projects from the work plan. Rather, the prioritization would help guide where MetroGIS leadership, staff support, and volunteer resources should be focused.
- Members also discussed the distinction between active projects and ongoing maintenance activities, recognizing that maintenance responsibilities continue to require MetroGIS resources and should be considered when evaluating organizational capacity.

Motion to approve the MetroGIS 2026–27 Work Plan, with the MetroGIS Operational Guidelines and Procedures Update and the Metro Park and Trail Data Standard identified as the committee's highest priority projects for the near future. *First:* Sapletal *Second:* Read *Motion Carried.*

Action: Revise and publish the MetroGIS 2026 to 2027 Work Plan to identify the MetroGIS Operational Guidelines and Procedures Update and the Metro Park and Trail Data Standard as priority projects, while maintaining the remaining active projects in the work plan.

8) Updates from other GIS organizations

- Twin Cities GIS User Group (TCGUG)

    - Mayer provided an overview of the Twin Cities GIS User Group.
    - The organization focuses primarily on local government GIS professionals and provides opportunities for networking, presentations, and professional collaboration.
    - Meetings are held quarterly and recorded presentations are available online.
    - There is a membership sign-up form on their website.
- Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium
    - Menza provided an update on Consortium activities
    - Planning is underway for the upcoming annual conference and members were encouraged to submit presentations and workshop proposals
    - Women in GIS networking events continue to be held throughout Minnesota.
    - Menza also highlighted the Consortium's annual geospatial professional awards program.
- Minnesota County Geographic Information Systems Association (MCGISA)
    - Mayer provided an overview of the Minnesota County Geographic Information Systems Association (MCGISA), a nonprofit organization focused on advancing GIS technology within Minnesota county governments. The organization promotes awareness, collaboration, coordination, leadership, and professional development among county GIS professionals and their partners.Minnesota
    - Mayer highlighted several opportunities for engagement, including the organization's "Spill the Tea" discussions held every other Tuesday and quarterly meetings attended by representatives from regions throughout the state.
    - Sapletal, MetroGIS's representative to MCGISA, shared that the organization provides a valuable forum for county GIS staff to collaborate, exchange ideas, and assist one another with technical challenges related to ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Enterprise, ArcGIS Online, and other GIS technologies.
    - Sapletal noted that MCGISA members regularly share solutions and resources that can be adopted by other organizations and suggested the group could potentially serve as a resource for future efforts to develop GIS communication materials for non-GIS audiences.
- Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC)
    - Mayer provided an overview of the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC), noting that it is a coordinating body established by state statute. Its primary role is to advise the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office on improving the operations and management of geospatial technology within state government, as well as other issues of importance to Minnesota's geospatial community.
    - Mayer noted that the GAC has a different focus than a traditional user group and encouraged members to participate in the GAC's public quarterly meetings.
    - Members were reminded that the GAC solicits priorities every two years to help guide its work and the work of MnGeo on behalf of the statewide geospatial community.
    - Mayer reported that the GAC currently has ten committees, and that participation on many of those committees is open to individuals who are not appointed GAC members.
    - Mayer also noted that the GAC helps guide the Governor's Geospatial Commendation Awards, and that nominations for those awards come from the geospatial community.

- Brandt serves as the MetroGIS representative to the GAC, and Mayer noted that members may contact him with items they would like shared with the GAC. Mayer also identified herself as a resource, serving as the current GAC Chair.

  Action: Mayer will distribute additional information regarding GAC committees and participation opportunities to interested committee members.

Upcoming Meetings and Scheduling Discussion

- Mayer reminded members that the next MetroGIS Coordinating Committee meeting will be held in person on November 4, 2026, and encouraged members to attend in person if possible.
- A live poll was conducted to gather feedback on proposed 2027 meeting dates and identify preferences for the committee's annual in person meeting.
- Twenty-one responses were received. All respondents indicated that the proposed meeting dates of February 17, June 9, and November 10, 2027 would work for their schedules.
- Members were also asked which of the three proposed dates would work best for an in-person meeting. November 10, 2027 received the most support (40%), followed by June 9, 2027 (24%), any of the three dates (24%), and February 17, 2027 (12%).
- MetroGIS staff will use the poll results when finalizing the 2027 meeting schedule.

9) Lightning Round Updates *(Group)*

- **Brandt, Washington County** – Reported on a recent GIS and Next Generation 9 1 1 (NG911) event held at Saint Paul College. Presentations focused on identifying barriers to NG911 implementation, with funding and cross agency collaboration identified as common challenges. Brandt also highlighted a presentation from the Savage and Shakopee Fire Departments regarding the Emergency Communications Network (ECN) Group's hotspot detection tool. The camera-based system is available at no cost to participating organizations, and agencies may subscribe to receive data feeds for use within their own operations**.**
- **Oslin, MESB** – Shared that discussions have begun regarding the creation of a statewide NG911 map service that could be used by counties, vendors, and other partners. The concept would provide a common authoritative source for NG911 related geospatial data, helping improve consistency and accessibility across jurisdictions.
- **Slaats, MnGeo** – Provided updates on several MnGeo initiatives. MnGeo continues to explore opportunities to publish additional map services, with opt in datasets in the updated Geospatial Commons expected to be available as map services whenever possible. Slaats noted that MnGeo is not currently able to provide 24-hour, seven day per week operational support for these services, and discussions regarding long-term support expectations are ongoing. MnGeo recently released MnTopo 2 and continues to develop additional products and enhancements. Slaats also reported that the updated Geospatial Commons has been released and that the legacy Geospatial Commons platform will be retired on June 30.
- **Sapletal, Dakota Co.** – Reported that Dakota County recently received its spring aerial imagery acquisition from Nearmap and has been evaluating the imagery at approximately 0.37 foot resolution. Cyclomedia has also been collecting street level imagery throughout Dakota County since

April. Sapletal noted that he will be presenting at the upcoming Minnesota GIS/LIS Conference on Dakota County's authoritative contour development process in partnership with 3DGeo. He also shared that the County recently launched an updated Property Information Search tool and retired the previous version. Additionally, Dakota County enhanced its Air Photo Time Machine application, including the ability to share direct links to specific views and time lapse imagery. Feedback is being solicited to help guide future enhancements to the Dakota County Air Photo Time Machine. Dakota County Air Photo Time Machine

10) Adjourn

Agenda completed. Meeting adjourned. 2:33pm

Next meeting
November 4, 2026 (in-person)

Proposed 2027 meeting dates
February 17, June 9, November 10 - 2027

Acting-Chair, Dave Brandt
Acting-Vice-Chair, Matt Koukol
MetroGIS Coordinator, Aaron Menza
Met Council staff support, Tanya Mayer