

## SC GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009

DHEC Board Room (Room 3420)

2600 Bull Street

Columbia, SC

### PROCEEDINGS:

Meeting commenced at 2:00

**Welcome and Opening Remarks** – conducted by Doug Calvert. He started the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves. He then turned the meeting over to Tim De Troye to continue with the agenda.

### GIS Strategic Planning Efforts – Tim De Troye, Rich Grady (Applied Geographics)

- Tim De Troye introduced Rich Grady as the contractor from Applied Geographics who was hired with money from the Cooperative Agreements Program grant to help conduct the outreach sessions, interviews, surveys, and who helped to write the strategic planning document.
- Rich Grady:
- National Context:
  - Grant awarded by the FGDC
  - Part of a bigger effort
  - 50 States Initiative
  - Strategic planning for advancing geospatial infrastructure, nationwide
  - Goal for SC: bridging the gap – finding ways to work together and addressing barriers to data sharing
- Bigger Picture: SC and the CAP grant / strategic planning effort are part of a bigger picture/goal in order to have nationwide data and data development as part of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)
- State Outreach:
  - Several One-On-One Interviews
  - On-line Survey Questionnaire (*38 responses from 11 counties*)
  - Five (5) Regional Stakeholder Meetings (*96 people from 26 counties*)
    - Florence
    - Columbia
    - Aiken
    - Greenville
    - Walterboro
- Participants included (from workshop and/or online survey) people from counties or cities that represented:
  - 64% of SC's land area
  - 71% of SC's population
- Actionable Initiatives:
  - A set of recommended pilot projects

- Statewide street centerlines, all roads, fully routable
    - Multi-county parcel map pilot, led by Lexington County
    - Statewide geocoding service
    - Address points data exchange, state & local
    - Statewide orthoimagery service
  - Ongoing outreach and liaison
- Relationships for implementation:
  - State GIS coordinator will have a liaison with the local associations and professional associations
  - State GIS coordinator will report to the SCGIC
  - State GIS coordinator will help coordinate each of the pilot projects
- State strategic planning next steps
  - Seek formal endorsement of the Strategic Plan
    - From the SCGIS Council
    - From Other Stakeholders
  - Develop talking points to promote benefits of GIS on specific issues (different from GIS for the sake of GIS)
  - Presentations to local associations and professional societies
  - Keep Council apprised of progress on pilot initiatives
- Tim De Troye:
- How do we get endorsement from Council agencies? This has never come up before, and it is important to have a clear path/idea on how that will take place?
  - Jon Boetcher suggested that copies of the strategic planning document be sent out to each one of the executive members of the Council for their approval. This could be done via email.
  - Others on the Council agreed
- Tim De Troye – let's move forward with discussing the Pilot Projects
- Aerial Photo Image Server
  - Could provide significant cost savings and remove duplication of effort
  - Geodetic Survey currently has imagery stored on SAN, requires approx. \$30k maintenance annually for licenses, storage
  - Need Image Server or some web-based service to provide to Council agencies
  - Bandwidth concerns/costs are an issue
  - Lew Lapine – license fees for the server are paid up through 2010
  - Doug Calvert – Frank Fusco has been working on IT budget requests – maybe able to fold this in with support of the Council – this is only \$30,000 and would benefit a lot of people within a lot of agencies
  - Lew Lapine – originally this was set up with Homeland Security grant money. It requires \$30k for maintenance for the SAN, Microsoft/ESRI licenses. Idea – bring the server online and let one agency get access and check bandwidth. Right now things are set up with VPN
  - Lynn Shirley and Derek Graves both had ideas on how this could be applied
  - Doug Calvert – Explore the idea and come back to the Council, perhaps as a pilot with one agency – concern with the impact to each agency if there is too much demand

- Jim Scurry – If there is too much demand, it should only impact Lew’s location. Besides to open it up to everyone is the best way to see if there is any type of a problem
- Derek Graves – tiling speeds up the service a lot
- Lynn Shirley – ERDAS image serving product may be a good option with a low cost, while delivering high performance. It is something the University is looking at.
- Statewide Geocoding Service
  - In discussion phase – not final or confirmed by DHEC
  - DHEC could host and serve to Council and address points participant organizations as way to provide value back to local gov’t
  - Service would be available via web, would be configured with Method/Tier ranking
  - Service would receive address, return coordinate location, etc.
- Regional Parcel Mapping
  - Working with Lexington County
  - Multiple counties are being reviewed for field structure, spatial alignment
  - Boundaries between counties can be an issue (scale of data) – Geodetic Survey is assisting
  - Parcel points or polygons are potential products
  - So far all land is being taxed
  - In some cases the county boundary is in question – Geodetic Survey is assisting
  - In the past, two counties’ data alignment a non-issue (computing power) – isolated systems
  - Lew Lapine – 39 counties have digital parcel layers. They need common boundaries to work with. Problem is not collecting boundaries – it is to make them fit (parcels)
  - Gary Merrill – NC parcels and county boundaries don’t line up
  - Rich Grady – boundaries / data alignment is a big surprise for most states when they start doing this
  - Gary Merrill – NC GIS conference had a great session on getting neighboring data to come together. I would like to make a recommendation that Tim De Troye attend the NC GIS conference whenever it is held. Right now, it is held every two years
  - Tim De Troye – it is very important to note that in the past, counties would use county boundary lines supplied by USGS on a 1:24,000 quarter quad map as a guide. By comparison, the data they are trying to build at the parcel level is 1:1,200 or 1:2,400 scale – much more detailed. Other counties, where a river is a boundary, may use a river from USGS, or from U.S. Census, etc. It is not that the data is wrong – it is right. The issue is that the scale of existing boundaries in GIS data do not meet the needs of parcel data development so the counties do the best they can. Lew Lapine and the Geodetic Survey team are doing their best to assist with this process, but it is a tall task. Allen Jon Zupan educated me on the difficulties of defining the boundaries – much research must be conducted in the library, courthouse, etc. Then crews need to go into the field and hope they can find some old tree that was marked by a surveyor many many years ago – this is extremely difficult and time consuming. Further, some of the markers in the field no longer exist.

- Lew Lapine – in addition to that, the county boundaries are written into law for the state – so we can't just go in and change them like you might be able to do somewhere else.
- Tim De Troye – exactly. With this in mind, consider the gaps that we see in the GIS polygons representing the parcels. All of the parcels examined thus far are being fully taxed as they should, even if there are gaps on the screen. In fact, until recent years, without the increase in computing power, we never would have been able to put two counties side by side – let alone an entire region. We never would have seen this gap. The potential issue we now face is that if we take a map service of multiple counties' parcels and put it on the web and someone from the public sees it, they are going to interpret that there are tax dollars that are not coming in, and worse, that they are being taxed while this person who is “not showing up on the map” is not being taxed. It will promote some false perceptions that we need to avoid. Several possibilities here include:
  - Getting agreed upon boundaries – either official through the Geodetic Survey, or at least unofficial for mapping purposes between the counties
  - Not using parcel polygons, but instead use parcel centroids in order to represent the polygon. These can show up on the map, have the parcel information tied to it (ownership, last sale, appraised value, physical address, tax mailing address, acreage, etc.)
- Tim De Troye – parcels are extremely important – they can help us geocode where we don't have address points, they can help us look at land and property valuations across the state, examine foreclosures as they affect us and help project future taxation shortfalls among many other benefits
- Maps are included in the slide presentation
- Address Points
  - Address points have been collected for roughly 30% of the state
  - Not all counties have address points
  - Most counties that do not have address points have parcel points that they can provide, that will have a specific address tied to it (this is not always the case, however)
  - Multiple counties that have not provided their data thus far (address points) expressed interest in doing so, as soon as they are done with the data building process (which can be quite time consuming)
- Routable Street Centerlines
  - DOT and Lexington County
  - Lexington has said they will provide the roads
  - DOT is working on a means to incorporate the data, including address ranges
  - Secondary, separate effort led by Dorchester County – emergency response project for multi-county area – this does not involve the GIC
- GIC Activities – Broadband
  - DHEC – health facilities for CDC and White House
  - DHEC/DNR/GIC – state broadband drops
  - Maps are included in the slide presentation
- IT Standards Committee
  - They requested input on GIS, GPS standards
  - Provided a brief presentation at most recent meeting

- Discussed method/tiers document currently under revision by DHEC and other interested parties
- DHEC & Web Services
  - Offered access to their servers for serving out web-based applications for the GIC
  - Coordinator would be provided administrative rights
  - Benefit – ability to serve base maps, project maps, etc. out to Council and others as necessary
- New GIC Member Agency
  - Emergency Management Division
  - Signing MOA
  - Will be acting member of the Council
- Data agreements
  - Some counties require data agreements
  - Council signing represents implication of one signature binding multiple agencies
  - Council is based on free and open access to data – does this apply only to Council agency data, or any data the Council might wish to use? (e.g. address points access)
  - Request discussion in Tech Committee to develop Council recommendation
  - Chris Post (Clemson) – I understand about the concern over written agreements, but I can also appreciate having an agreement to protect for liability issues
  - Doug Calvert – would like to see what the Tech Committee has to say, and would like to see if we can come up with a generic agreement
  - Jim Scurry – no problem with having an agreement, but does have a concern over the Council not being a legal group/entity – so who can sign? There are misunderstandings with some groups over data agreements. Suggestion that the Council support a workshop to go over data agreements and what they mean
  - Doug Calvert – Frank Fusco was open to moving forward with the strategic planning effort which will require some review, and we may be able to get some help from an agency's legal staff as well
- LiDAR – Jim Scurry / Gary Merrill
  - 16 counties have been delivered from USGS for QA/QC
  - In 2009 Berkeley, Charleston (remaining part), Dorchester, Horry and Florence were flown
  - Currently planning for 2010 – there is some preliminary interest from FEMA and some counties are looking to contribute to help get their county flown (this is an increase over years past)
  - July 21<sup>st</sup> – there will be a LiDAR consortium
- New Business – Doug Calvert
  - Jon Boetcher – interested in getting assistance for GIS support for EMD during an activation – be expecting a call in the near future to discuss
- Jim Scurry – the new invoice for the Council will go out in July

Meeting concluded at approximately 3:30 pm

Meeting notes compiled by Tim De Troye

Version 1.1

Last revised 06/05/09