Ten Recommendations for Geospatial Data Sharing
Adopted by the North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council, 11/07/2007

1. **Avoid Formal Agreements**
   Written agreements that unnecessarily restrict the free exchange of geospatial data will be avoided. Exceptions could include circumstances that involve:
   - Records that are protected by General Statute, such as those under the authority of the State Veterinarian; or are otherwise deemed confidential by appropriate authorities;
   - Records that could pose a public safety or security risk, as written in law, or when appropriately restricted as part of a structured decision-making process guided by the federal "Guidelines for Providing Appropriate Access to Geospatial Data in Response to Security Concerns."

   In the rare exception, if a formal agreement is necessary the data *producer* is the appropriate authority to decide on the need for that agreement.

2. **Web Access**
   Local, regional, state and federal geospatial content providers will make every effort to make data available to other local, regional, state, and federal entities through Internet technology, by uploading data or linking local services through *NC OneMap*. This will help meet a desired increase in efficient handling and distribution of geospatial data. Also, it will enable all users to access data and reduce the number of inquiries and data requests to staff in each individual organization.

3. **Secure Access**
   To facilitate the distribution of certain data among government organizations, additional services, including a secure site, may be necessary. Use of secure sites should not hamper or prevent the free sharing of data among public agencies. The road centerline data distribution tool, currently under development by the SMAC-Working Group for Roads and Transportation, is an emerging example of secure ways to facilitate an organized approach to loading and distribution of data among public organizations.

4. **Free Data**
   If local, regional, state, or federal data providers do not choose to make their data available on *NC OneMap* it is recommended that providers supply data, including metadata, to other local, regional, state, and federal governmental organizations free of charge.

5. **Single Point of Contact**
   Local, regional, state, or federal government organizations are to consolidate and identify a point of contact for acquiring and distributing data. This will streamline and alleviate the number of inquiries and requests to each organization. Contacts should be registered on the *NC OneMap* inventory and contact information should be publicized, regardless of whether or not the organization releases data as part of *NC OneMap*.

6. **Regional Solutions**
   Regional approaches for data collection and data sharing through *NC OneMap* should be employed where beneficial and appropriate.

7. **Official Outlets**
   Data will be acquired only from original sources, *NC OneMap*, or through an official outlet, named by the *producer* of that data. Consumers that request data from secondary sources shall be directed to primary outlets. Secondary sources of data shall not redistribute original data, except at the request or permission of the originator. This does not apply if secondary sources have added value in some way to the original content and provide disclaimers/metadata indicating that they are not the original source.

8. **Archive and Long Term Access**
   Data producers should evaluate and publish their long term access, retention, and archival strategies for historic data.

9. **NC OneMap Brand**
   The *NC OneMap* logo (Service Mark) should be displayed on web sites among collaborating partners. The *NC OneMap* 'brand' conveys to visitors that the agencies are working together in a collaborative network on mutual interests to meet the GICC goals and *NC OneMap* vision.

10. **Outreach**
    Outreach and education on the recommendations above and the "Best Practices" below are vital components to the success and benefits of cooperative data sharing among government agencies. Appropriate material should be developed to communicate the recommendations and best practices, which should be publicized and used to encourage cooperation among all government agencies.

Core Best Practices

Members of the Committee developed the following core practices to help data producers and content providers meet the intended goals for solving the issues with statewide data sharing. The list does not reflect all of what can be done, but represents a minimum set.

1. Data producers and content providers should register on the *NC OneMap* Inventory and complete agency profile and data content information. Maintain the information on a regular basis.

2. Write and maintain complete Federal Geographic Data Committee-compliant geospatial metadata for all datasets. Publish the metadata for discovery, and distribute it with the dataset.

3. Provide access to geospatial data for free via the Internet, through your agency's data download page, FTP site, and/or via *NC OneMap* FTP site (or combination thereof).
   - ✓ Determine the data layers most needed/most requested; a minimum list should be the framework layers;
   - ✓ Periodically review the content available to see if layers should be added, removed, or replaced;
   - ✓ Periodically review the data formats provided and modify/update based on current industry standards; and
   - ✓ Include aggregated or value-added data in your data sharing process.

4. Make sure the location of the data for download and instructions for downloading are clear and posted prominently on your agency's web site. Provide "Help Desk" capability for the public and others accessing your data.

5. Publish your web services and catalog through *NC OneMap*. Connect or enhance your Web Map Services to the *NC OneMap* viewer by contacting the *NC OneMap* staff at the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis, staff to the GICC. If your organization does not utilize web services, then contact the staff about using the services from a regional partner or from the *NC OneMap* servers.

6. Establish a policy and procedure for the provision of access to historic data, especially for framework data layers.

7. Provide alternate methods to share/use restricted data between key approved partners in preparation of emergency, security, and hazard events.

The entire report and attachments are available at: www.ncgicc.org