

MINUTES
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION COORDINATING COUNCIL
November 13, 2002

PRESENT

Chair, Dempsey Benton. Members: Bryan Beatty, Tim Brewer (for Martin Lancaster), Bob Brinson, Carol Burroughs (for Carmen Hooker-Odom), Jean Crews-Klein (for Billy Ray Hall), Terry Ellis, Dianne Enright, Derek Graham (for Mike Ward), Stan Jenkins (for George Bakolia), Susan Johnson, Linda Haywood (for Jo Anne Sanford), Reggie Hinton (for Norris Tolson), Kelly Laughton, Tim Lesser, Dr. Lee Mandell, Joe McKinney, Rex Minneman (for Elaine Marshall), Steve Morris (for Molly Broad), Carlton Myrick (for Gwynn Swinson), Tom Newsome (for David McCoy), Forrest Robson (for Lyndo Tippet), Charlotte Turpin, Chris Wease, Gary Zeller (for Meg Scott-Phipps)

PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council was held in the Board Room of Department of Transportation in Raleigh, North Carolina on November 13, 2002. Chair Dempsey Benton called the meeting to order and asked members to introduce themselves. The Minutes of the August 21, 2002 meeting were approved.

Report on Long-term Water Issues and GIS

Dempsey Benton asked Dr. Lee Mandell to report on the working group. A meeting was held on October 15th. The group includes representatives from the NC League of Municipalities, NC Association of County Commissioners, the Rural Economic Development Center, Division of Water Resources and CGIA. The group was convened to ascertain data availability on water usage to address issues of drought across the state, and build better cooperation between local agencies. The Division of Water Resources has legislative funding to complete a 50-year plan for the Cape Fear River basin, but the other 15 river basins have not been funded. Data exists for service area boundaries, but other datasets need to be identified, such as information on agricultural usage. The group expressed a need for a data inventory. It was suggested that the group be augmented with members from the Division of Water Quality, the Soil and Water Conservation, US Geological Survey/Water Resources Division, and the Water Resources Research Institute. The group will report at the next Council meeting.

Report on National White Paper: Public Safety—Saving Lives and Saving Money

Tim Johnson, CGIA staff to the Council, said the National States Geographic Information Council was circulating a declaration of interdependence to make sure there is money available for the development and use of GIS data in Homeland Security initiatives, since most public safety information resources have a spatial, or geographic, context. The resolution calls for a comprehensive National Spatial Data Infrastructure to support Public Safety by routinely

utilizing GIS technology. The white paper was circulated to Council members prior to the meeting. Mr. Johnson said that 13 state councils have already signed this document. Secretary Beatty said he has discussed this within his agency and there is value in using spatial data in law enforcement and for public safety support, especially with uniform standards and interoperability. He said this is the right general approach and there is nothing objectionable in the white paper's position and recommendations. Mr. Johnson said all states are evaluating this document. Susan Johnson said from a local government perspective she appreciated the inclusion of data maintenance. Carlton Myrick said the document supports money-saving efficiencies in government. A motion to endorse this resolution as a Council was approved.

ACTION #1: The electronic signature of Chair Dempsey Benton will be added to the web document to reflect the Council's endorsement of this national white paper.

Committee Reports on Issues and Actions

Local Government Committee (LGC). Kelly Laughton said the LGC identified and discussed the most critical issues raised by the white paper on the Corporate Geographic Database (CGDB) and the facilitated discussion presented at the August meeting. From a local government perspective she said the "common understanding" of what the CGDB is and its relationship to the North Carolina Geographic Data Clearinghouse is poorly understood. Other critical issues include the need for a data inventory because of widespread lack of knowledge of existing data; the need for well-defined data content specifications to facilitate data sharing; the need for written access and distribution policies that the Council could promote to local governments to assist in cross-jurisdictional data integration; promotion of the Internet as the means of data access and support of the Rural Internet Access Authority to extend high speed connectivity throughout the entire state. The LGC made recommendations for each issue and also encouraged the Council to explore opportunities for state and local government agencies to pursue federal funding opportunities to address Homeland Security issues. She said the LGC supported the preparation of a compendium of state and federal legislation that affects the collection of geospatial information by state and local governments and to make it available on the CGIA web site

State Government GIS Users Committee (SGUC). Dianne Enright reported that the SGUC agreed that the "common understanding" of the CGDB and Clearinghouse is a problem: the Committee suggested they be merged into a single entity with its operation supported by state funding. Data should be cataloged in conjunction with the Clearinghouse and better tools are needed to help data producers create metadata. She mentioned that data custodians should be the keepers of the data with links and references from the source to the centralized Clearinghouse. CGIA should continue as custodian of record for statewide imagery or for any state data that does not have a primary custodian, or when it acts as the distributor for another data custodian. Common standards for local government data need to be developed, such as a street-addressing standard. The SGUC suggested that the roles of stakeholders should be formally defined and broader data sharing among jurisdictions and the state pursued, using the Floodplain Mapping Program model. Open access through the Internet is supported, however it is recognized that there are address security and confidential data issues. Enright proposed that a workgroup be formed to consider these sensitive issues. The SGUC also supported federal initiatives, such as Homeland Security and Geospatial One-Stop. The SGUC recommended that all agencies have

access to fast network speeds as well as statewide contracts and licenses for hardware, software and data to save costs.

Federal Interagency Committee (FIC). Jerry Ryan said the federal perspective is that the vision for the Corporate Geographic Database should specify that it is dealing with data in the public domain, and it should strongly encourage partnerships. The FIC suggested that the 1994 Strategic Plan for Geographic Information Coordination in North Carolina should be revisited. On the subject of data custodians, the FIC said the agencies that develop data should also be charged with maintaining it. The FIC encouraged open standards for GIS data so it is not dependent on any specific software. The Council should support the goal of seamless geospatial data across North Carolina jurisdictions, and the nation. Since funding is always a problem, creation of data layers should be prioritized and duplication avoided. The FIC offered to work with Federal agencies in the state to develop procedures among themselves and share that information with the Council. The FIC indicated that it could develop applications in GIS using tools such as Internet mapping, to assist with current policy issues.

GIS Technical Advisory Committee (GIS TAC). Susan Johnson said the GIS TAC is highly interested in facilitating data reuse and data sharing among federal, state, and local agencies. The GIS TAC is interested in guidelines to help integrate statewide geographic information into a seamless entity for any agency or citizen using this information. The GIS TAC believes that a formal linkage is necessary between GIS architecture and the statewide approach of the Information Resource Management Commission. There is support for Council participation in the development of federal standards. She said the GIS TAC is interested in finding incentives that would encourage the development of metadata by local agencies to create a document data users could trust. She mentioned the state's data resources should be available 24/7 and to do that requires the definition of best practices and technology. The Council should take the initiative in reviewing public policy as it relates to public access of some GIS data. The GIS TAC recommended that an appropriate legal services group within the state should work with the Council GIS user committees to identify specific areas that must be addressed. The GIS TAC would work to implement that approach using necessary technologies. She said the GIS TAC would coordinate with statewide IT procurement on the possibility of creating "enterprise" level contracts for GIS tools and datasets.

Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC). Terry Ellis reported that this committee is being transitioned to the chairmanship of Bill Holman, who was unable to attend this meeting. Mr. Ellis, from his perspective as former chair, said the SMAC is interested in data standards and is in agreement with the recommendations made by the Local Government Committee.

Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (staff to the Council). Tim Johnson said that CGIA staff prioritized all the issues presented in the white paper and subsequent discussion into four main areas: "common understanding"; "data inventory"; "content standards and implementation plan"; and "access and distribution." Recommendations were made for each issue and a committee was suggested to take the lead. For "common understanding," the recommendations were to clarify/redefine the Corporate Geographic Database and Clearinghouse and to promote, publicize and provide compelling reasons for organizations to participate. The lead was all committees through a focus group. On the issue of "data inventory," the staff recommended the documentation of geospatial data holdings and to support/enhance an ongoing inventory of municipal, county, state and federal data. CGIA recommended that it take the lead

on developing a process for collecting that information and maintaining the inventory. The recommendations on the issue of “content standards and implementation plan” included the development of content standards for framework data layers and to formalize roles for data providers as well as to develop cost projections for implementation and maintenance. CGIA recommended that the Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee take the lead for this issue. The GIS TAC was the recommended lead for the final issue of “access and distribution.” Recommendations here included the enabling of widespread use of data (organizationally and geographically), providing distributed links to data; and evaluating the issue of restricted access versus public domain. The GIS TAC could consider any technology barriers to achieving 24/7 access.

Roundtable Discussion on Issue Prioritization

Chair Dempsey Benton led discussion, using the matrix that mapped recommendations from all committee reports to the four issues summarized by CGIA. Jean Crews-Klein said that increasing awareness about the Corporate Geographic Database seemed essential and that changing its name was the place to begin. She asked staff how it had been marketed to potential participants in the past. Mr. Johnson said CGIA was not aggressive and relied mainly on the Internet. Ms. Laughton offered the LGC to work as a facilitator on the issue of common understanding. Stan Jenkins said that although this body deals with GIS data, this is like any other information technology process since it includes data warehousing. The key issues are the same for growing the scope of the Corporate Geographic Database, which will not be stored in a central database, but instead will exist in a portal world linked to numerous hosts. Ms. Johnson said the name itself is a problem and she suggested more inclusive names, such as North Carolina Spatial Marketplace or North Carolina Spatial Distribution Center. Mr. Benton said staff might also want to consider dropping the word geography since data could also be census and demographics.

Mr. Myrick asked about time schedules and deadlines. Mr. Johnson said the staff considered how these four issues flowed into each other and would create a schedule. Ms. Enright said the focus group for the issue of common understanding seemed to be a clear first step. Mr. Ellis said there is the North Carolina GIS Conference in late February 2003 and that would be an ideal time to get information out to large numbers of local government people. Derek Graham said the conference is a perfect time to launch the renamed Corporate Geographic Database and generate excitement.

Mr. Benton asked if the staff report advances the objectives and recommendations of the committees. There was affirmation that CGIA’s issue prioritization would be accepted. Mr. Johnson said staff could begin the process on the first two issues: “common understanding” and “data inventory.” Issue three, “content standards and implementation,” would be referred to Bill Holman, the new Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee chair and the GIS TAC would develop a work plan for issue four, “access and distribution”

Mr. Ryan asked about infrastructure issues and Ms. Johnson raised the issue of 24/7 availability as something the GIS TAC can begin work on to identify networks and bottlenecks. Enabling widespread use and availability through distributed links is critical.

Ms. Laughton suggested that instead of a focus group taking responsibility for the first issue the Management and Operations Committee, which is composed of all committee chairs, should be tasked as the lead. The Chair agreed and confirmed all the leads.

ACTION #2

Issue #1—Common Understanding, lead is Management and Operations Committee

Issue #2—Data Inventory, lead is Center for Geographic Information & Analysis

Issue #3—Content Standards and Implementation Plan, lead is Statewide Mapping
Advisory Committee

Issue #4—Access and Distribution, lead is GIS Technical Advisory Committee

Presentation: Rural Internet Access Authority

Jane Patterson, the Executive Director of Rural Internet Access Authority (RIAA) said the authority was established by legislation in 2000 and has 21 commissioners. She mentioned that the authority spent almost two years researching telecommunications infrastructure and demand within the state. They surveyed homes, agriculture and business because the state is concerned about getting information to citizens through the Internet. They also ascertained the various utility infrastructures, including cell towers, in place throughout the state. She said all utility companies have put their infrastructure data into a template that goes through the RIAA website (www.e-nc.org).

The authority has made an impact in assisting local governments. Camden County, for example, was considering an expensive proposal for installing a wireless network, but RIAA was able to cut their cost in half by identifying existing towers that could lease them space. Charlie Clark of RIAA mentioned that DSL (digital subscriber lines) that are offered by the phone companies are on the Internet website map as well as high-speed cable infrastructure. Ms. Patterson said that there is a new \$1.4 million federal award with a state match that will allow RIAA to take 20 counties to a full transactional basis. By the end of this year, more than half of North Carolina households will have high-speed access. Ms. Patterson said that about 62 percent of North Carolina citizens have computers in their homes and 80 percent of those homes have Internet access. Current statistics indicate that only 17 percent of jobs today do not depend on web access.

RIAA can tell any citizen if DSL or cable access is available in an area. In addition to its web site, RIAA supports 135 public access sites in all counties. She said of the 85 rural counties in North Carolina, 81 have completed e-plans that include information on connectivity and digital literacy training.

Chair Dempsey Benton presented Jane Patterson with a plaque in recognition of her six years service as the previous Chair of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council.

News

GIS Day LIVE! Rita Hagevik, from NC State University, and Cris Crissman, representing Distance Learning from the NC Department of Public Instruction, spoke about the North Carolina's ambitious program for GIS Day on November 20, 2002. The program will feature a

full-day web broadcast of GIS presentations from state and local government, the National Weather Service and the university on such topics as floodplain mapping, crime analysis, emergency planning, coastal development and marine habitat, as well as the use of imagery from TerraServer. Students from four middle and high schools will also participate in a real-time biological exploration and GIS mapping of the Museum of Natural Sciences' butterfly garden. The students are part of a team-challenge that will also involve participation from anyone tuning in to the streaming video on the web broadcast. The day ends with a two-hour teacher-to-teacher symposium at 13 North Carolina Information Highway sites where teachers who use GIS in the classroom for class projects will share their projects and experiences with 300 other teachers. State agencies and local governments have organized and will participate in this statewide endeavor. More than 1,000 people have signed up to participate over the web. The web site is www.ncsu.edu/scilink/gislive.

2003 NC GIS Conference. The Council is one of 50 co-sponsors of this biennial conference that attracts almost 800 participants. The dates are February 19, 2003 for the pre-conference workshops sponsored by North Carolina Chapter of Urban and Regional Information Systems Association, and February 20-21, 2003 for the two-day conference.

Floodplain Mapping Program. Tim Johnson said that appropriation was provided to continue this statewide project westward. Completion of the Cape Fear River basin had been put on hold, but now it is expected to be complete by December 2003, per the budget bill passed by the 2003 legislative session. Several river basins will be flown with LIDAR this winter, yielding high resolution elevation data: the Roanoke, Yadkin, Catawba, New, Watauga and Chowan.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held February 12, 2002 at 1:00 pm at the Department of Public Instruction Board Room, Room 755, 301 N. Wilmington Street, Raleigh.

All PowerPoint presentations and reports are on the Council Web site: www.cgia.state.nc.us/gicc, then click on "Meetings." The individual "Presentation" icons follow the Agenda and Minutes.