



North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2026

PROCEEDINGS

The Council held its quarterly meeting at the William G. Ross, Jr., Environmental Conference Center, 121 West Jones Street, 4th Floor, Raleigh, NC with a virtual meeting option available.

1. New Chair Announcements

Matt McLamb opened the meeting and introduced Natalie Walton-Corbett as the newly appointed GICC Chair, noting that the Governor's Office had recently approved the appointment. Natalie Walton-Corbett has 17 years of experience in the NC GIS local government sector. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Geography from Appalachian State University and is currently the GIS Coordinator for the City of Greenville, NC. Chair Walton-Corbett was formerly the Chair of the Local Government Committee of the GICC and co-founded the HurriUp event in 2019 to provide local governments with collaboration, mutual support, and GIS training for disaster response.

Matt formally congratulated Natalie and turned the meeting over to her.

2. Call to Order

Chair Walton-Corbett called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. She noted her familiarity with many Council members through her years of involvement and expressed enthusiasm for working with both familiar faces and new members.

She announced the summer meeting will be Wednesday, August 19 at the same location (William G. Ross, Jr. Environmental Conference Center, Raleigh) and the fall meeting will be Thursday, November 19th in Kannapolis, NC.

Chair Walton-Corbett introduced the new Council member Joey Ennis, CIO of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, noting his 20+ years of public service and deep commitment to digital capabilities in NC State Government.

Chair Walton-Corbett recognized retiring member John Bridgers of the Local Government Committee (representing the NC Association of County Commissioners / Burke County Tax Administrator), thanking him for his contributions to the NC Seamless Parcels project and the County Consolidated BAS Agreement project.

3. Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder

Ian McAdoo read the ethics statement to the Council:

In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Council member to avoid both conflicts of interest and the appearances of conflict.

If any Council member has any known conflict of interest or is aware of facts that might create the appearance of such conflict, with respect to any matters coming before the Council today, please identify the conflict or the facts that might create the appearance of a conflict to ensure that any inappropriate participation in that matter may be avoided.

If at any time, any new matter that raises a conflicts issue arises during the meeting, please be sure to identify it at that time.

Council members should exercise appropriate caution in the performance of their public duties should conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest related to issues that come before the Council. This would include recusing themselves to the extent that their interests would influence or could reasonably appear to influence their actions.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 2025 and February 2026

Chair Walton-Corbett presented the November 2025 and February 2026 meeting minutes for approval, noting they had been distributed with the meeting invitation.

A motion was made by Gary Thompson and seconded by Eric Wilson to approve both sets of minutes. A vote was taken; the minutes were approved unanimously with no objections.

5. Comments from NC DIT Secretary Nate Denny

Chair Walton-Corbett introduced Secretary Nate Denny, noting his recent confirmation by the NC Senate on May 13, 2026. She described his prior role as Deputy Secretary of Broadband and Digital Opportunity and his experience at the US General Services Administration. Secretary Denny also serves as Chair of the 911 Board.

Secretary Denny offered brief remarks, emphasizing his gratitude for the Council's public service and the work of both state and private sector GIS professionals. He expressed his firsthand appreciation for the impact of the CGIA team's work on broadband expansion during his prior tenure, particularly helping rural communities understand connectivity through geospatial tools. The Secretary reflected on the importance of GIS-driven state services in disaster recovery, referencing his own experience with family communication challenges following Hurricane Helene in western NC. He recognized Matt McLamb's leadership and Martha Wewer's ongoing role as his delegate to the Council.

Secretary Denny committed to attending future meetings when possible and invited Council members to reach out directly with any needs. Chair Walton-Corbett thanked him and expressed appreciation for having a GIS champion in his role.

6. Council Member Introductions

In light of a new Chair and new members, the Council undertook a full round of member introductions. Each member shared their name, organization, role, committee involvement, and what they bring to the Council.

John Quintero - Office of State Budget and Management – Governor's Census Liaison: Member of the Management and Operations Committee and the Municipal Boundaries Working Group. Replaced Bob Coats who retired at the end of 2025. Focus on census programs and their geographic basis.

Eric Wilson - NC DIT / DOT: Member of the State Government GIS Users Committee as the DOT Representative and the Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee. Manages a team of ~60 supporting DOT IT, routing, permitting, and enterprise GIS.

John Cox - Department of Administration, State Property Office: Member of the State Government GIS Users Committee as the DOA Representative and the Building Footprint Workgroup. Maintains the state complex layer, state sport, and state property data.

Joey Ennis - DNCR – CIO. Supports GIS for cultural/natural resource management. Noted work with Historic Preservation Office mapping.

Hope Morgan - Public Member (former GICC Chair). GIS professional since 2003 and a state employee 2007–2020, now working for AECOM. Focus on data analysis and end-user input.

Rich Elkin - Secretary of State, Land Records Management (Proxy for Secretary Marshall): Member of the Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee, State Government GIS Users Committee as the SoS Representative, Seamless Parcels Working Group, Municipal Boundaries Working Group, Ortho/Elevation Working Group, and 2022 Datum Working Group.

Christian Vose - Department of Agriculture, Emergency Programs: Member of the State Government GIS Users Committee as the Dept. of Ag. Representative, Ortho/Elevation Working Group, Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee and Chair of the Working Group for Enhanced Emergency Response. Team of 4 supporting agriculture GIS needs. About 5 years with state government.

Chris Nida - NC League of Municipalities. Represents 550 incorporated municipalities. Liaison role; not a GIS expert but active in connecting Council with member governments.

Gary Thompson - Dept. of Public Safety / NC Emergency Management: Vice Chair of the GICC, Member of the Management and Operations Committee, Lidar Working Group, Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee, State Government GIS Users Committee as the NC Emergency Management Representative, and Ortho/Elevation Working Group. Deputy Hazard Mitigation Chief; Chief of NC Geodetic Survey. Manages CORS network, flood mapping, and flood warning system. Confirmed to continue role as GICC Vice Chair.

Ed Spittler - NC Community College System. 30+ year educator/administrator representing community colleges; focused on how GIS programs serve the public.

Martha Wewer - NC DIT Statewide Chief Privacy Officer (Proxy for Secretary Denny). Focuses on understanding how NC uses GIS data.

David Baker (remote) - NC Association of County Commissioners. 8 years with the association; 20+ years on the GICC. Not a GIS expert but advocates for GIS benefits to local government.

Michael Connolly (remote) - Dept. of Revenue, Local Government Division (Proxy for Secretary Wooten / Director Tony Simpson). Property tax oversight for county tax offices.

Stan Duncan (remote) - Department of Revenue. Works on property tax and boundary matters; GIS use spans sales/use tax and income tax as well.

Diane Enright (remote) - NC DHHS (Proxy for Secretary of DHHS): Member of State Government GIS Users Committee as the DHHS Representative and Working Group for Enhanced Emergency Response. Focus on public health, chronic/communicable diseases.

Dean Grantham (remote) - Dept. of Environmental Quality (NC DIT staff): Member of State Government GIS Users Committee as the DEQ Representative, Technical Advisory Committee and Working Group for Enhanced Emergency Response. 26–27 years GIS experience.

Jason Hedley (remote) - GICC Member at Large (Surveying Community). Represents the surveying community's use of and contribution to GIS data.

Matt Helms (remote) - Charlotte Water: Technical Advisory Committee Chair and member of the Management and Operations Committee. GIS Systems Administrator with 20+ years experience and on the Council ~12-14 years.

Gavin Mouat (remote) - NC Utilities Commission. Utilities Engineer; 1.5 years on GICC; interested in GIS for tracking water utilities statewide.

Allan Sandoval (remote) - Department of Commerce (Proxy for Secretary Lilly): Member of State Government GIS Users Committee as the DOC Representative, and Ortho/Elevation Working Group. GIS since 2002; focus on workforce and economic development.

Allen Serkin (remote) - Cape Fear Council of Governments / NC Assoc. of Regional COGs. Executive Director for 7 years; represents NC Association of Regional Councils.

Linda Thurman (remote) - UNC Charlotte, College of Engineering. 26 years at UNC Charlotte. Connected to GICC through NC Board of Examiners for Engineers and Land Surveyors.

Sallie Vaughn (remote) - Person County GIS Director: Member of the Local Government Committee and Working Group for Enhanced Emergency Response.

7. Review of Council Member Responsibilities

Melanie Williams (CGIA) reviewed Council member responsibilities as a refresher for returning and new members. Key responsibilities outlined include:

- Regularly attend Council meetings.
- Become knowledgeable about the Council and its mission through a review of the GICC web site (<https://it.nc.gov/about/boards-commissions/gicc>), annual reports and bylaws.
- Participate in the new board member orientation program by Council staff. Ask questions.
- Come to Council meetings prepared and informed about issues on the agenda. Stay informed regarding Council matters. Review minutes of the previous Council meeting, the agenda, and other materials prior to Council meetings. Encourage appropriate agency staff to attend Council meetings when a topic important to your agency will be discussed.
- Be a liaison for your organization: Meet regularly with senior management for your organization to inform them about Council projects and priorities and seek feedback for council meetings. Stay informed on how your organization uses or could use geospatial data or services and communicate those needs to the Council or working groups.
- Encourage your agency staff to become involved in the activities of the Council's committees and to support the policies adopted by the Council.
- Contribute to meetings by expressing one's point of view with the best interest of the North Carolina GIS community in mind.
- Consider other points of view, make constructive suggestions, and encourage and respect questions.
- Support the decisions of the Council within the GIS community and to the public.
- Seek to create a culture of trust among Council members, committee members and Council staff.
- Volunteer and accept assignments and complete them thoroughly and on time.
- Do not take on more responsibility than you can reasonably handle given your employment, family, and other commitments.
- Communicate Council actions to your colleagues and relevant associations to inform them as part of your personal and professional networks.

8. GICC Accessibility Working Group Update

Faye Koenigsmark (NC DHHS) and Nancy Ross (Mecklenburg County), Co-Chairs of the Accessibility Working Group, presented a comprehensive update on the group's progress since its formation in January 2026.

Background: In 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a rule on web content accessibility to ensure government digital content was usable by all individuals, including those with disabilities. Compliance deadlines were originally set for 2026 (populations over 50,000) and 2027 (populations under 50,000). Shortly before the 2026 deadline, those were pushed back to 2027 and 2028 respectively, providing additional time for thorough compliance work.

The applicable standard is WCAG 2.2 Level AA, which requires web content to be Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust (POUR). Common compliance requirements include alternative text for images, keyboard accessibility, compatibility with assistive technologies across devices.

The GICC formed a Working Group to assist with this effort. The Working Group Structure consists of Co-Chairs: Faye Koenigsmark (NC DHHS) and Nancy Ross (Mecklenburg County), members from both the Local Government and State Government Committees, CGIA staff support, and ESRI representatives.

The Working Group decided on 7 goals. Ms. Koenigsmark reviewed the 7 goals and progress made on each.

1. **Minimal Criteria for Compliance:** Developed overarching principles for Esri products and open-source GIS, including prioritizing the most-used maps/apps, documenting progress, and providing user feedback mechanisms.
2. **Identifying Common Barriers:** Conducted surveys among work group members and distributed a statewide survey to GIS professionals. Responses received from 13 counties, 6 municipalities, and 5 state agencies. Key barriers identified included limited staff capacity, ambiguity in applying WCAG to specific GIS tools, time, and uncertainty around testing tools and evaluation methods.
3. **Examples and Templates:** Built a SharePoint resource tracker for the working group, which was later transferred to a public-facing website. The site now contains approximately 98 vetted resources.
4. **Inventory of Accessibility Testing Tools:** Compiled a variety of tools for accessibility checks; members have given demos on these tools. Plans to include screen reader demos.
5. **Template Checklists:** Published suggested checklists for applications including Experience Builder, ArcGIS Online Maps, Survey 123, and Story Maps. Checklists for Instant Apps and Dashboards are still in development.
6. **Engagement with DOJ / SE ADA Center:** Direct DOJ contact was challenging. The working group successfully connected with the Southeast ADA Center, which was presented at the April meeting and answered questions. Plans for a follow-up presentation in fall 2026.
7. **Public Resource Hub:** Launched in April 2026. Site includes regulatory background, getting-started resources, application-specific content (Esri and open source), downloadable checklists, and a searchable resource tracker. It is available at the NC GIS Accessibility Resources and Guidance site.

Ms. Koenigsmark demonstrated the public-facing hub live, showing navigation features, app-specific content (e.g., Experience Builder), the resource tracker with filters, and the open-source GIS tab (noted for potential expansion with Doug Newcomb's input).

A question was raised about exemptions for older/archived documents by Mr. Thompson. Mr. Wilson shared DOT's approach of archiving materials in SharePoint with a clearly marked "archive" folder and inclusion of a statement noting the exemption. He offered to share more details with the group.

Doug Newcomb inquired about open-source content on the site and offered to review and potentially contribute additional resources.

A general challenge raised was agency-level responsibility for updating SharePoint content and communicating policies to departments.

Co-Chair Nancy Ross gave special recognition to Darren Smith for his work on the resource tracker and to Melanie Williams for building the Experience Builder-based hub. Chair Walton-Corbett commended the group for the volume and quality of work accomplished in a short period.

8. Committee Updates

State Government GIS Users Committee (SGUC)

David Giordano gave the report in lieu of Chair Raquel Bensadoun who was at a conference.

The purpose of the SGUC is to monitor, evaluate, and make recommendations to the Council on GIS initiative needs, directions, and priorities in state government and to coordinate geospatial data activities. The Committee meets quarterly. Recently the SGUC worked with the Local Government Committee on the joint effort for accessibility; Esri presented accessibility tools for users regardless of physical or cognitive ability. The SGUC coordinated virtual Esri instructor-led GIS training courses with 77 state agency employees attending and applying skills to their business goals.

Currently the committee is working on maintaining an up-to-date inventory of Esri software used by state agencies to support the upcoming enterprise agreement renewal negotiation, developing an ROI document explaining the value of GIS to upper management, emphasizing that GIS is far more than map-making, and continuing to facilitate and promote GIS services and resources for state agency operations.

Request to council from the committee is to continue spreading the word about GIS and its value among decision makers. NC is considered a national leader in GIS coordination and geospatial activities.

The SGUC membership is open to any state agency staff who actively use or have an interest in GIS. The committee will continue seeking to expand.

Federal Interagency Committee

John Derry gave the report in lieu of Chair Jeremy Baynes who was not able to attend.

The purpose of the FIC is to facilitate communication and coordination between federal and state/local GIS users. It has been conducted joint meetings with Local Government and State GIS Users committees in recent years which have been productive.

Currently, federal government activity has been slower than usual. A joint meeting is planned for fall 2026 to discuss the upcoming statewide land cover dataset rollout. Users and potential users will be invited to discuss the dataset's capabilities.

Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Gary Thompson gave the report in lieu of Chair Paul Badr.

The purpose of the SMAC is to develop data content meeting statewide standards, consolidate statewide data requirements, support agencies seeking funding, and make recommendations on creation and maintenance of priority geospatial datasets.

The Ortho Imagery and Elevation Working Group, housed under the SMAC has created a business plan for elevation data maintenance statewide.

The SMAC is currently working on providing recommendations for a statewide orthographic dataset. Work is continuing on the foundation datasets and recommendations. The committee is collaborating with the Seamless Parcels Working Group and tax administrations / mass appraisal vendors to achieve a more complete parcel dataset for all 100 counties. And the SMAC continues promoting the beneficial use of geospatial data, including emerging AI applications.

The committee has one open seat for a representative from the Association of County Commissioners.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Chair Matt Helms explained the purpose of the TAC is to recommend practices for compressing and storing imagery, review and recommend specifications for hardware, software, and database standards, and provide guidelines for developing and installing GIS technology.

Approximately 2-3 years ago the TAC completed the Infrastructure Data document and is currently working on the Big Data Guide. It is expected to be completed within approximately two months.

The TAC membership is full but always looking for additional members with technical backgrounds.

The TAC requests the council to suggest topics to explore as needed.

Local Government Committee (LGC)

Chair Walton-Corbett presented the update for the LGC as the Chair position is vacant. Chair Walton-Corbett was previously the chair of the LGC and stepped down when accepting the GICC Chair position.

The purpose of the LGC is to inform local government GIS users on the status of GIS activities statewide, and to provide a forum for local governments to voice issues, problems, and opportunities related to GIS.

At the beginning of this fiscal year the Blue Sky / Dark Sky Checklist and Hub were presented at the HurriUp workshop designed for local governments to collaborate on how to best prepare their GIS teams for a disaster response. Created in response to Hurricane Helene in 2025, the HurriUp Workshop was well attended and included presentations from local, state, and federal governments and continues as collaborative forums.

Currently the LGC is focused on training, accessibility, and AI tools/applications for local governments.

Since Chair Walton-Corbett will be stepping down as LGC Chair upon transitioning to the GICC Chair role, the committee will be seeking a new Chair. There are currently 2 openings on the executive committee.

9. GIO Report

GIO Matt McLamb provided updates on the Geospatial Maturity Assessment Report, the GICC 2024–2025 Annual Report, and the 2027 NC GIS Conference.

Geospatial Maturity Assessment (GMA)

The GMA, conducted by NSGIC every two years, was completed in 2025. Preliminary grades were presented in February 2026. The final grades are now available on the NSGIC website. Mr. McLamb will distribute the link to all Council members. A notable change from the preliminary grade is that NC's ortho imagery (leaf-off) grade improved from a B+ to an A- after NSGIC adjusted the grading rubric. NC's overall state grade remains an A-. The Management and Operations (M&O) team will review the report in detail to identify both strengths and improvement opportunities ahead of the 2027 assessment cycle.

GICC 2024–2025 Annual Report

The report was reviewed and approved by M&O, formatted by DIT Communications, and reviewed by the DIT Legislative Liaison with no changes requested. The report was successfully submitted to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations. The 2025–2026 annual report will begin soon, with a goal of completing it during Q2 of the next fiscal year.

2027 NC GIS Conference

The conference will return to Winston-Salem at the Benton Convention Center. Dates for the conference will be February 2–5, 2027, with GPN Carolina workshops being held on February 2nd. The main conference will be held February 3–5. Details are available at ncgisconference.com. The call for abstracts is expected to open in early July with registration to open in early August. Council members are asked to share information broadly and encourage agency and private sector attendance.

10. GICC Member Announcements

Chair Walton-Corbett invited any final announcements. No additional announcements were made from the floor.

Chair Walton-Corbett noted that the final GMA report and the GICC 2024–2025 Annual Report would be distributed to all Council members for review. Members were encouraged to provide feedback on the GMA grades to inform preparation for the 2027 cycle.

11. Adjournment

Chair Walton-Corbett thanked all attendees for participating and adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be held on August 19, 2026.

2026 GICC Quarterly Meeting Dates

Wednesday, August 19

Thursday, November 19

Member Attendance

Name	Present	Proxy	Agency/Organization
Steve Averett	No		City of Greensboro
Paul Badr	No		GPI
David Baker	V-Yes		N.C. Association of County Commissioners
Amy Barron	No		Duke Energy
Jeremy Baynes	No		U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Raquel Bensadoun	No		NC DOT/DIT
Lee Clyburn	No		CBRE
Michael Connolly	V-Yes		Department of Revenue
John Cox	Yes		Department of Administration
Jason Dowdy	No		CACI, Inc.
Stan Duncan	V-Yes		Private Citizen
Joey Ennis	Yes		Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Dianne Enright	V-Yes		Department of Health and Human Services
Dean Grantham	V-Yes		Department of Environmental Quality
Joanne Halls	No		University of North Carolina System
Pokey Harris	No		N.C. 911 Board
Jason Hedley	V-Yes		Colliers Engineering
Matthew Helms	V-Yes		Charlotte Water
Jeremiah Jackson	No		Department of Public Instruction
Elaine F. Marshall	P-Yes	Rich Elkin	Department of the Secretary of State
Hope Morgan	Yes		AECOM
Gavin Mouat	V-Yes		Public Utilities Commission
Christopher Nida	Yes		N.C. League of Municipalities
John Quintero	Yes		Office of State Budget & Management
Allan Sandoval	V-Yes		Department of Commerce
Allen Serkin	V-Yes		Cape Fear Council of Governments
Ed Spitler	Yes		N.C. Community College System
Gary Thompson	Yes		Department of Public Safety
Linda Ann Thurman	V-Yes		University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Sallie Vaughn	V-Yes		Person County
Christian Vose	Yes		Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Natalie Walton-Corbett	Yes		City of Greenville
Martha Wewer	Yes		Department of Information Technology
Eric Wilson	Yes		Department of Transportation

Attendance Codes:

Yes = In person | V-Yes = Virtual | P-Yes = Proxy | No = Absent