



North Carolina  
Geographic Information Coordinating Council  
Local Government Committee

MINUTES  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
November 1, 2017, 2:00 PM

## PROCEEDINGS

The quarterly meeting of the Local Government Committee (LGC), a committee of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC), was held on November 1, 2017.

## PRESENT

LGC members:

Kathryn Clifton, Chair, Davidson County, representing NCLM  
Alice Wilson, Vice-Chair, City of New Bern, representing APA-NC and SMAC  
Representative  
Robin Etheridge, Dare County, Property Mappers Association  
Tom Bell, Western Piedmont Council of Governments, representing ARCED  
Travis Penland, City of Hendersonville, representing Carolina URISA

Others:

Stephen Dew, Guilford County, Metadata Committee and Working Group for  
Orthoimagery and Elevation  
David Nash, City of Fayetteville, Working Group for Census Geospatial Data  
Marcus Bryant, Durham City/County, SMAC Representative  
Jeff Brown, CGIA, Staff to the LGC

Absent members:

Michelle Deese, Catawba County, representing NCLGISA

## WELCOME

Kathryn (Kat) Clifton called the meeting to order and welcomed members and representatives.

## MINUTES

The Minutes from the August 16, 2017 meeting were approved as submitted.

## MEMBERS

The committee still has a vacancy for the representative from the NC Association of County Commissioners.

## BRIEF UPDATES FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

### Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Alice Wilson reported that SMAC met October 18. Briefly, Darrin Smith of CGIA provided an update on Statewide Orthoimagery and the upcoming delivery of 2017 imagery for the Eastern Piedmont region during the week of December 11. This will be six weeks earlier than the last few years. For the 2018 North Piedmont and Mountains phase, four contractors were selected: Surdex, Atlas Geographic Data, Spatial Data Consultants, and Sanborn. Local governments are reminded to contact CGIA if they are interested in piggy-backing on the state contract to purchase additional imagery-related products from the vendors. Ms. Wilson added that flight plans will use specifications for nadir (straight down) image capture above buildings 40 feet and taller in selected areas in Greensboro and Winston-Salem. That will solve the problem of “building lean” in the imagery that can obscure streets and facilities next to those tall buildings.

Regarding hydrography, Cam McNutt reported on efforts in the Division of Water Resources to ingrate stream data with three databases. He displayed the status of mapping of headwater streams based on models, in progress by the Division.

On the topic of geodetic control, Gary Thompson described a “GravityD” project with National Geodetic Survey and data acquisition in North Carolina using a hybrid unmanned aircraft system. The data will support the 2022 Reference Frame. County boundary work continues. Notably, a new state law (HB 740, Session Law 2017-170, Section 2) gives NC Geodetic Survey authority to record a boundary re-establishment if a county has not approved and recorded the boundary within one year. Stephen Dew observed this may motivate counties where final approved and recording has been delayed for years.

Regarding municipal boundaries, NCDOT is editing the latest collection of boundaries and will publish a new version in February.

SMAC created an ad hoc working group for land cover that will report on business needs for land cover. Volunteers are welcome to join Kenneth Taylor in the effort. More below.

Also, Tim Johnson is leading the NC Board on Geographic Names temporarily, and the group met August 16 to catch up on decisions about proposed names.

Marcus Bryant added information about the NC Parcels program – SMAC encourages counties to participate in the fall update, and the more counties that register with the NC Parcels Transformer to run their own updates, the more efficient the process. More below.

### Working Group for Orthoimagery and Elevation

Stephen Dew reported on a discussion about color infrared imagery and acquisition of the fourth band of imagery by vendors in the Statewide Orthoimagery Program. The fourth band is not fully processed and published under the project paid for by the NC 911 Board. The group asked questions about the requirements, level of effort, and cost. Currently a local government or state agency may request color infrared imagery (e.g., Onslow County) and pay for it.

### Working Group for Professional Land Surveying and GIS

Bob Brinson, chair of the working group, selected a few members—including Kat Clifton as LGC chair, John Farley as SGUC chair and Kent Rothrock as a private service provider—to meet with the surveying committee of the NC Board of Examiners for Engineers and Surveyor in September to review the documents and findings of the working group. The meeting went well with much discussion. After reviewing a set of summary points, participants began walking through use cases that describe geospatial data development and factors that determine which use cases represent GIS practice and which represent licensed surveying. There were valuable insights into differences in terminology between the groups that will help as review of use cases resumes on the morning of November 8. The full working group may be reconvened after completion of the discussions with the surveying committee.

A question that came up for future consideration: should GIS professionals be licensed, beyond certifications such as GIS Professional? Also, Kat and John pointed out that few GIS professionals applied to be grandfathered as Professional Land Surveyors in “Mapping Science” in 2013 without going through the standard examination process. On LGC, Kat and Stephen took advantage of the process to become licensed, but they are the exception in the GIS community. One of the factors may have been the requirement for an applicant to have three references from licensed Professional Land Surveyors; GIS professionals do not necessarily work with surveyors, making the requirement difficult to meet. Also, as Robin pointed out, many GIS practitioners focus on parcel mapping based on land records and do not collect data in the field and do not manage field data collection. Kat also observed that surveying exams have elements that are not relevant to GIS practice. She confirmed her understanding that the local government exemption from surveying rules still applies to local governments and lead regional organizations.

On the topic of mapping water and sewer infrastructure, defining use cases includes stating the purpose, such as an inventory of facilities. Stephen confirmed that Global Network Satellite Systems can be utilized for representing infrastructure in local government. Tom noted that lead regional organizations can assist small jurisdictions in creating geospatial inventories of infrastructure, not intended for engineering purposes.

On a related topic, Jeff shared his latest information on the national Geospatial Data Act. The National States Geographic Information Council continues to monitor and advise on the act. The latest expectation is that a revised bill will remove language about federal procurement of geospatial services introduced this year, and refocus the bill on provisions

carried over from the 2015 version that would improve collaboration and effectiveness of federal agencies in producing, sharing, and using geospatial data. This sort of revision could resolve the opposition of GIS professional organizations that were concerned about harm to GIS practice, especially in federal agencies and academic institutions.

#### Working Group for Seamless Parcels (WGSP)

Jeff Brown reported the working group met and identified which standard fields are of highest priority, reviewed how many counties are populating those fields, and discussed ways to promote population of those fields to benefit data consumers. Fields of concern are calculated acres, last sale date, site address, parcel use descriptions, and present use value. As the NC Parcels program evolves, those fields are being more fully populated, but reminders are going out this fall to consider including parcel fields in source shapefiles to match the priority standard fields needing attention.

Also, Lucy Cardwell of Currituck County informed the working group of her strategy—as soon as she learned of a potential hurricane event she updated her parcels in the NC Parcels Transformer to ensure a current back-up copy offsite in case of service interruption in her county.

Collaboration and data sharing are vital and greatly appreciated. The fall update is 73 percent complete. Regarding self-service operation of the NC Parcels Transformer, 54 counties are now registered with an NCID. For example, Robin recently took on responsibility for transforming Dare County. Twenty-one other counties have readily downloadable parcel data for the working group to transform on their behalf. The remaining 25 counties do not offer publicly downloadable data and require a data request and file transfer. The working group's goal is to grow the self-service portion and reduce the file transfer portion, while realizing that a mix is likely to persist as county data distribution policies vary.

Kat added that CGIA is very responsive in quality control and assistance as needed in her experience with transforming Davidson County parcels. Jeff invited questions and comments from LGC to take to the working group. Kat asked about reaching out to educational institutions to promote NC Parcels and other statewide datasets that can be useful in student projects and faculty research. Familiarity with NC OneMap among students can carry over into professional life. Jeff confirmed good communication with GIS librarians at NC State University and UNC Chapel Hill, but acknowledged that smaller institutions may benefit from more information.

#### Census 2020

David Nash updated the committee about the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and the Census Bureau's request to each county and municipality to register for the program by December 15. [Training](#) sessions are being hosted by lead regional organizations now through January. Data will be sent out in February 2018 and the review period is 120 days. David will encourage Bob Coats, the Governor's Census Liaison, to use the GIS listserv for LUCA announcements. LGC members pointed out that notification about LUCA participation went to the highest elected official in each

county and municipality. The risk is the letter may be overlooked, declined, or assigned to an office that is not prepared to participate, without coming to the attention of a GIS manager who may be most able to assist. Copies of communications to local government Census Liaisons is recommended to support full participation.

Alice pointed out likely needs in some small jurisdictions lacking GIS capacity where experienced local government GIS professionals could assist in Census participation. What are ways LGC could reach out to identify needs? Some counties have likely covered this (e.g., Stephen reached out to all small jurisdictions in Guilford County) but probably not all.

David added that Bob Coats emphasizes the value of a complete population count, with associated federal dollars amounting to as much as \$1,600 per resident per year.

#### Working Group for Roads and Transportation (WGRT)

In the absence of a member of the working group, Jeff noted from a report to SMAC that the group began work on updating the GICC's data content standard for road centerlines (2005) and is creating a crosswalk from the NC standard to that road centerline standard of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). Harry Lee and Greta Bumgarner are serving on the working group as local government representatives.

#### GICC TOPICS

The GICC meets next on November 8. Kat asked members for comments on three questions posed by the GICC Chair for discussion during the Council meeting.

1. What do local governments need from the GICC? Policies, direction, initiatives?
2. How can data sharing work better?
3. What can the GICC do for local government GIS professionals?

In a discussion, Alice described a need to inform smaller local governments about available geospatial resources. Even with some GIS capacity, a local government may not be able to participate in the organizations represented on the LGC. Travel to GIS events may be prohibitive, staff may have multiple major responsibilities, or other factors may limit what staff can learn and adopt that would be beneficial. Communication, information sharing and perhaps training resources could add value to some jurisdictions. LGC should not presume that a county and all its municipalities are fully collaborating. Workshops in various locations may be part of a solution.

Tom explained an approach by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments. NC Department of Environmental Quality provides competitive Asset Inventory and Assessment [Grants](#). WPCOG helps small municipalities to propose projects that establish GIS capacity in-house so they can develop geospatial data, for example, for water and sewer infrastructure. It may be the only region that does that. For small matching amounts, towns can afford GIS. This may be worth promoting. Esri ArcGIS Online software is a solution, and open source GIS software may be applicable as well. The

grants make GIS affordable and towns like having some GIS capacity in Tom's experience. Tom offered to write a description to share and circulate.

On the topic of communication, Kat observed effective use of Twitter at the NC GIS Conference 2017 as an easy way to share information. Might the GICC and/or NC OneMap be active in communicating information via Twitter for a wider audience? Alice suggested the GICC could use a listserv and social media to communicate policies and issues that could affect the GIS profession.

On the question of making data sharing work better, open data software is coming into play in more local governments. One concern is how to enable users of NC OneMap to easily discover geospatial data in federal portals and applications outside of the state collection but potentially useful to consumers. Another issue is data managed by a state agency, for example superior court district boundaries available from NC State Board of Elections, that are not discoverable through NC OneMap. Another example is data from the General Assembly.

Stephen observed that local government open data implementation can lead to redundant data efforts if not well coordinated. For example, geospatial data served by the county GIS operation may be served also through open data application efforts outside of county operations but accessed by county data users. Issues of authoritative sources and open data applications and data access can arise. Marcus confirmed the interest of coding groups in open data sites. Durham's policy is to serve city/county data and not copies of data from other organizations. Durham has an open data administrator who would be willing to provide more information (contact Marcus).

Alice added concern about hurricane impacts on local governments. GIS could help local governments in identifying vulnerability and planning for evacuations. She noted the State of Florida invested in planning and is willing to share information.

#### LAND COVER CLASSIFICATION – BUSINESS NEEDS?

Kat invited insight on business needs for land cover data, relating to resolution, frequency, classes, locations, and other factors. Land cover includes impervious surface, farmland, tree cover, grass, water and other categories. The effort does not include land use (e.g., residential, commercial, etc.). Land cover may relate to property mapping. Jeff invited volunteers for the new working group for land cover under the Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee. Marcus will identify someone from Durham. Alice is willing to participate for planning needs. NC Department of Agriculture including NC Forest Service are likely to be interested.

#### OTHER CURRENT ISSUES OR CONCERNS

No additional items.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Kat noted a Massive Online Open Course ([MOOC](#)) on cartography via Esri started today. There is no charge. Alice pointed out Esri's YouTube channels for videos.

## MEETING DATES FOR 2018

Tentative LGC meeting dates for 2018: Wednesdays—February 28, May 23, August 22, and November 28—starting at 2:00 PM.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30.

LGC's web page on the GICC website:

<http://it.nc.gov/gicc-local-government-committee-lgc>