

## GIS Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes - 10/19/94

Present were (\* authorized to vote):

* Rod Armstrong	Governor's Policy Research Office
Mahendra Bansal	Natural Resource Commission
* Jim Brown	State Surveyor's Office
* Dennis Burling	Department of Environmental Quality
* Blaine Dinwiddie	Omaha Public Power District
* Steve Henderson	Department of Administrative Services
Terry Kubicek	Natural Resources Commission
Tom Lamberson	Department of Environmental Quality
* Jim Langtry	Lancaster County Surveyor
* Jim Merchant	Conservation and Survey Division
* John Miyoshi	Lower Platte NRD
* Jon Ogden	Department of Roads
* Duane Stott	Scotts Bluff County Surveyor
* Laura Valenziano	Legislative Research Office
* Dayle Williamson	Natural Resources Commission
* Dennis Wilson	City of Omaha
Larry K. Zink	Coordinator, GIS Steering Cmte.

**NOTICE OF MEETING.** A public notice of the meeting pursuant to Section 84-1411 R.R.S. 1943, was published in the Omaha World Herald on October 12, 1994.

**ROLL CALL.** Acting Chair Jim Brown called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 pm and requested that Larry Z. call the roll. Eleven duly authorized representatives were present and therefore a quorum was present to conduct business. Chair Rod Armstrong and Steering Committee member Blaine Dinwiddie arrived after the roll call.

**MINUTES:** Dennis B. moved, Jon O. seconded, that the minutes of the September 21, 1994 Str. Cmte. meeting be approved as circulated. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**DATA INVENTORY SUBCMTE.** Jon O. reported that due to numerous surveys and planning meetings, he had not held a Data Inventory Subcmte. meeting and that therefore there was no update on the status of the Data Inventory Catalog or efforts to develop maintenance plans for that catalog. Jon promised the Str. Cmte. to get a meeting called before next meeting.

**POLICY SUBCMTE.** No meeting was held since the last meeting and there was no report.

**TECHNICAL STANDARDS SUBCMTE.** No meeting was held since the last meeting and there was no report.

**EDUCATION SUBCMTE.** Jim Merchant passed out to the Str. Cmte. members a schedule of the presentations planned for the remainder of the academic year for the GIS Forum. Jim noted that there had been approximately 75 people at the GIS Forum prior to the Str. Cmte. meeting. Jim reported that he hoped to have the next newsletter out in two weeks. He noted that he had delayed publication because he was wanting to include a report from Larry Z. on the NSGIC meeting.

**GIS REVIEW SUBCMTE.** There had been no referrals to the Subcmte. since the last Str. Cmte. meeting and therefore there was no report.

**GPS COORDINATION SUBCMTE.** Jim Brown reported that there had been no Subcmte. meeting since the last Str. Cmte. meeting, but that a proposal for the development of three GPS Base Stations had been included in the State Surveyor's budget proposal, as had been discussed previously at the Str. Cmte. Jon O. reported that in conversations which he had with Allan Abbott, Director of Dept. of Roads, Allan had indicated that DOR would support the State Surveyor's proposal. Dayle W. inquired as to whether the GPS Coordinating Subcmte. would be meeting again. Dayle W. also requested that a "white paper" be prepared and made available to the Str. Cmte. which outlines the specifics of the GPS Base Station proposal and possible alternatives. Jim B. said that he would call additional meetings of the GPS Coordinating Subcmte. and that he would get something in writing which outlines the specifics of the proposal and alternatives.

**FLESHING OUT A PICTURE OF FUTURE NEBRASKA GIS IMPLEMENTATION - MANAGEMENT AND/OR COORDINATION ISSUES.** Much of the remainder of the meeting revolved around an extended discussion of the best organizational model to propose to the Legislature for providing coordination and oversight for a "decentralized, but integrated" approach to GIS implementation among state agencies. The responses to a set of coordination/management questions which Larry Z. had developed, based on previous discussions, under the general principal of, "GIS coordination at the state-level should not involve the creation of a new agency" provided a foundation for this discussion. Larry Z. had solicited written feedback from Str. Cmte. members, compiled that feedback, and mailed the results to Str. Cmte. members with the meeting Agenda.

The following major points were raised in the discussion:

Differing Perspectives on Management. There appears to be significantly different perspectives between how the GIS Str. Cmte. feels it can best utilize its limited resources and the desires of the Legislature for oversight and management of GIS implementation and state agency expenditures.

Appropriations Bill. In its most recent Appropriations bill, the Legislature seemed to be asking the Str. Cmte. to take a significant oversight responsibility for GIS expenditures by state agencies, particularly for hardware and software items.

Neb\*Sat Model. Based on conversations with Legislators and staff, it appears that the Neb\*Sat Coordinating Group was a model which had a significant appeal for the Legislature as a model which the GIS Str. Cmte. might follow. The Neb\*Sat group develops detailed, phased recommendations for investments in telecommunications equipment. The Neb\*Sat represents a cooperating group of institutions who share the use of that telecommunications infrastructure.

GIS Neb\*Sat? The Str. Cmte. felt that the application of the Neb\*Sat model to Nebraska GIS implementation would be very difficult and of questionable merit. Unlike the educational use of satellite/ telecommunications technology, with GIS there is no centralized channel through which all activity must or should flow and therefore the basis for centralized planning and investment in hardware and software is significantly less. In addition, there is not one central agency, such as Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission, which is the one obvious central coordinating agency.

Decentralized GIS. The trends in computing in general, and GIS in particular, are toward distributed technology as opposed to a centralized one. With GIS in particular, the utility of this information management tool is greatly enhanced by putting the tool and the associated geo-referenced information in the hands and on the desktops of specialists in the fields of road planning, or natural resource management, or educational planning, or emergency response, or public health monitoring, or tax assessment, or crime prevention, etc. rather than in a distant, centralized computing center. The technology and its applications usually demand significant interaction between the user, the software, and the data. Based on the nature of the technology, the GIS Steering Committee has recommended a decentralized, but integrated approach to implementation.

Nature of the GIS Steering Committee. It was noted that approximately 1/2 of the GIS Str. Cmte. are non-state agency representatives. It was not felt to be the best use of the Str. Cmte.'s limited, but valuable resources to focus so much attention on the details of state agency GIS expenditures.

Response to Legislative Desire for Management/Oversight. The Str. Cmte. felt it had a different perspective, from that of the Legislature, on the Str. Cmte.'s most productive role in the management/oversight of GIS utilization by state agencies. The Str. Cmte., however, did note the importance of responding directly to the Legislature's request. The Str. Cmte. expressed support for responding to the Appropriations Bill's intent language by following through with a review and evaluation of this year's agency budget requests, but also by providing suggestions for alternative management/oversight procedures for the future. One alternative which was discussed was rolling most of the detail oversight of state agency GIS expenditures into the Information Technology planning process which Rod A. is developing.

Coordination and/or Management Responsibilities Accepted by Str. Cmte. Based on the above discussion, the Str. Cmte. indicated their support for undertaking, on an on-going basis, the following roles or responsibilities relative to coordination and/or management of GIS activities of state agencies. The Str. Cmte.'s willingness to assume these responsibilities was conditioned upon the availability of resources to make it possible.

- The Str. Cmte. will conduct background research on promising areas of GIS applications to identify current or planned initiatives, major actors, impediments, risks, data needs, potential for cooperative ventures and to develop strategic proposals to facilitate specific GIS applications.
- The Str. Cmte. will maintain updated guidelines and standards for GIS-related hardware and software.
- The Str. Cmte. will work with state, local and federal government agencies to develop and maintain updated guidelines for spatial data development for specific thematic areas and to facilitate cooperative data development efforts when possible.
- The Str. Cmte. will work with the Nebraska Library Commission and state, local and federal government agencies to maintain a current online catalog listing of available spatial data related to Nebraska.

- The Str. Cmte. will review available multi-year GIS development plans for state agencies with the goals of avoiding duplication of spatial database development efforts, identifying potential areas of interagency cooperation, and facilitating collaborative efforts between agencies at the state, local and federal level. As part of this review and coordination effort, the Str. Cmte. supports the concept of requiring multi-year GIS development plans from state agencies which plan substantial investments in GIS technology and/or geo-referenced databases. These plans should outline planned applications, hardware and software needs, personnel needs, training needs, data development needs, and coordination within the agency and with other GIS-capable state agencies. These plans could be part of a broader information technology plan.
- The Str. Cmte. will also review significant GIS-related hardware and software purchase requests, as requested by DAS/CDP, for compatibility, appropriateness for the intended applications, and harmony with the agency and state's overall GIS development plans. The Str. Cmte. did note that its experience over the last year, where it reviewed all state agency GIS-related purchase requests, has shown that many reviews are repetitive of previous purchase request reviews from other agencies and consequently, additional reviews of the same hardware or software are of questionable value.
- The Str. Cmte. expressed strong support for the importance of integrating local government spatial data development efforts with those of state agencies. To facilitate this integration, the Str. Cmte. indicated its interest in working with local governments and state agencies to develop standards and guidelines for digital data development, identify impediments to land record modernization at the local government level, and develop models for possible legislation and other initiatives to facilitate the coordinated, but decentralized, development of GIS and spatial data for local government applications.
- The Str. Cmte. will provide on-going outreach and education to state and local government agencies and policy-makers regarding the potential of GIS as a government information tool and the importance of cooperation, standards and data sharing.
- The Str. Cmte. also supported the establishment of a Land Records Modernization Fund as one way to encourage and facilitate the coordinated development, by local governments, of updated land-related digital data and GIS. Receipt of these funds would be contingent upon coordination at the local level and cooperation with state standards, guidelines and data development priorities.
- As part of the review of the coordination and management of GIS utilization by state agencies, the Str. Cmte. noted the importance it placed on the Legislature providing sufficient support for GIS Steering Committee operations to ensure its independent ability to fulfill its responsibilities and activities.

The Str. Cmte. did not choose to offer to assume the following proposed coordination and/or management responsibilities or roles. It was noted that the possibly existed that some of these could be integrated into a larger information technology planning and review process for the state. It was suggested that further consideration of these management/oversight functions is needed prior to making recommendations to the Legislature.

- Require specific identification of GIS-related initiatives in state agency budget proposals and provide the Legislature with a GIS Steering Committee review of these proposed GIS budget initiatives.
- Provide the Legislature with fiscal notes for proposed legislation which is GIS-related.

- Require Str. Cmte. review/coordination of significant (substantial) investment, by state agencies, in the development of spatially-referenced (other than addresses) data bases.
- Provision, as needed, of coordination and/or management services for joint GIS-related pilot projects and/or joint spatial data development projects.
- Management and/or provision of technical assistance to help state and/or local government agencies analyze their potential GIS applications, data needs, and system requirements.

Unique Mission or Responsibilities. It was noted during this discussion, that there exists the potential for a significant overlap of responsibilities between the GIS Str. Cmte., NIDCAC, and the Information Technology planning effort by the state. It was suggested that the GIS Str. Cmte. should seek to identify its unique roles and responsibilities and its relationship with these other efforts.

Changes in Structure of GIS Steering Committee. The major change suggested here related to the importance of securing an adequate budget to support the coordination and/or management functions requested by the Legislature and desired by the state agencies using GIS and the larger GIS user community. It was also noted that in the evolution of the Str. Cmte. and its responsibilities, it may be useful to review the various standing subcmtes. to see if they meet the current needs and to possibly disband some and/or create other new ones.

Merits of questionnaires and their continuation. Dayle W. expressed his concern that the questionnaire methodology which the Str. Cmte. was using to solicit thoughts on the conceptual issues before the Str. Cmte. was taking a considerable amount of his staff's time. Dayle expressed a hope that this was nearing an end. Larry Z. noted that this last set of questions was the final one the Str. Cmte. had adopted when it choose to pursue this methodology several months ago.

**UPDATE ON REVIEW OF GIS-RELATED AGENCY BUDGET PROPOSALS.** Larry Z. gave a brief overview of the response he has received from agencies related to GIS expenditures in their 1995-97 budget proposals. Larry Z. reported that the following agencies had indicated that they did have GIS-related expenditures in their budget proposals:

Civil Defense,	NRC,
Bureau of Business Research, and	DOR.

Larry Z. indicated that he had not yet heard back from the following agencies:

Game and Parks,	DEQ,
Conserv. & Survey Div.,	LRD,
State Patrol,	DOH, and

Brd of Educ. Lands. & Funds (this was an error, they had already responded).

Larry Z. indicated, that as per the plan adopted by the Str. Cmte. at its last meeting, the expanded GIS Review Subcmte. would first review and make recommendations to the Str. Cmte. on agency budget proposals. A recommendation would require a unanimous vote of all four members and the alternate of the Review Subcmte. and would be based on the adopted criteria. The agencies would have an opportunity at the Nov. 16th Str. Cmte. mtg. to make a presentation to the full Str. Cmte.

**FUTURE PROJECTS AND FOCI.** NACO Booth. Larry Z. reported that, as per Str. Cmte. decision, he had reserved a booth at the upcoming 100th Annual Convention of NACO. Larry invited suggestions for ideas for the booth. Dennis W. offered the possibility of providing a workstation with some of their data for a show and tell. Dennis W. indicated he had to check to make sure that was possible. Because of the lateness of the hour, Larry Z. invited Str. Cmte. members to share ideas with him later.

GIS Conference. Larry Z. noted that at its last Str. Cmte. meeting, the Str. Cmte. indicated that it wanted to decide at this meeting whether or not to schedule a statewide GIS Conference for early in 1996. Jim B. indicated that he had spoken with the Professional Surveyor's Association and that they are open to the possibility of co-sponsoring such an event. Jim B. indicated that he thought the choices were either to hold it on the East Campus or in the Cornhusker Hotel (a major variable being the amount of Legislative involvement desired). Jim M. offered to help with such an effort. Jim B., Jim M. and Larry Z. were tasked with researching the possibilities and developing a proposal for the Str. Cmte.'s consideration at the next meeting.

Background Research and Development on Promising Areas of GIS Application. Due to the lateness of the hour this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting.

DOQQs Pilot Project. Due to the lateness of the hour this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting.

**REVIEW OF EARLY DRAFT LANGUAGE FOR DECEMBER 1994 GIS PLANNING REPORT.** Due to the lateness of the hour this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting. Str. Cmte. members were urged to provide Larry Z. with written feedback on the draft language (related to Data Development priorities) which he had sent out with the Agenda.

**UPDATE ON DOR/NRC/DEQ ARCINFO/INTERGRAPH TRANSLATION PROJECT.** Due to the lateness of the hour this agenda item was deferred until the next meeting.

**STR. CMTE. MEMBERS UPDATE ON THEIR AGENCY GIS ACTIVITIES.** No agency reports were offered.

**OTHER BUSINESS. NSGIC.** Larry Z. provided a quick overview of his trip to the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) meeting. Larry reported that a very important concept to keep in mind is "Partnerships" or "Collaborative Efforts". These seem to be increasingly important considerations in securing federal funding for spatial data development efforts. Larry Z. suggested that the Str. Cmte. task themselves with looking ahead and developing proposals for state, federal and local partnerships in data development efforts.

FGDC Cooperating Group. Larry Z. also reported that interagency federal efforts are continuing and growing relative to GIS and spatial data development. While there are no critical timelines right now, there are a number of initiatives underway and Larry suggested that the Str. Cmte. probably needs to give increased attention to these federal initiatives. One particular initiative that Larry Z. suggested that the Str. Cmte. consider is the possibility of having the Str. Cmte. designated as a "Cooperating Group" with the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). This would initiate a process of establishing formal relationships with this interagency coordinating group at the federal level, and make it more likely that the Str. Cmte. would be "in the loop" in discussions and decisions that might impact the Nebraska GIS user community. This suggestions was favorably received by the Str. Cmte.

Development of a National Digital Geospatial Data Framework. Larry Z. reported that one of the most ambitious FGDC efforts is that being undertaken by the Framework Working Group. This interagency, intergovernmental body is exploring the feasibility of the development and maintenance of a set of reliable data for several thematic areas which all entities could use as a framework upon which to develop additional data layers. The thematic areas currently being considered include: geodetic control, digital orhtoimagery, elevation data, transportation, hydrography, governmental units and cadastrals. It is currently envisioned that these "standard" thematic data layers would be

available at several levels of spatial accuracy and generalized upward from the highest resolution data. Other concepts considered as part of this effort include the possibility of some standard schema for feature IDs; the certification of data; and the integration of data within themes and across themes. The Working Group is also considering the concept of "Certified Area Integrators" to provide an organization vehicle for "grassroots" coordination of the framework data and effort.

Bureau of Land Management / Geographic Coordinate Data Base (GCDB). Larry Z. also reported on an effort by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which he felt held significant potential for Nebraska. According to a workshop conducted by the BLM, the BLM feels it has a mandate to produce a nationwide digital parcel landbase. They do not however have the funding to do the entire country. One division of BLM is currently developing such a database for the State of Wyoming and expects to have the "initial data collection" completed in May 1995. That same division also has responsibilities for the State of Nebraska, however they currently have no funding for this project for Nebraska.

This GCDB efforts works with local governments to capture the best available coordinate information for existing land parcels. The digital database they create is a measurement based system (bearings and distances) based on the Public Land Survey System (PLSS). BLM has also developed a software, Geographic Measurement Management (GMM), with which one can input the available bearings and distances (and error estimates of that data) and extrapolate the coordinates of parcel corners based on the rules of the PLSS. The system also allows for the maturing of the extrapolated corner coordinates based on the addition of more reliable or accurate data. The GMM software is available from BLM with only a fee for reproduction. The parcel databases developed by BLM are also available with only a fee for reproduction.

BLM is interested in exploring the interest and possibility of a "partnership" with the State of Nebraska to develop this parcel database for Nebraska. It would probably require the State putting up some funds and securing cooperation from the local governments for copies of their parcel data. The Str. Cmte. expressed interest in exploring this idea further. It was suggested that we might invite BLM representatives to come to one of our Str. Cmte. meetings and a GIS Forum. Larry Z. also briefly reported on federal efforts related to a Spatial Data Clearinghouse and coordination related to GPS base station development.

**NEXT MEETING.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:45 pm. The next Str. Cmte. meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 1994 in the East Campus Union.

#### **TO DO LIST**

Everyone - provide Larry Z. with written feedback on the early draft language for the Dec. report, related to Data Development priorities. This draft language was sent out with the Agenda.

Everyone - contact Larry Z. with ideas for the NACO Convention Booth

GPS Coordinating Subcmte. or Jim Brown - develop a "white paper" which outlines the specifics of the GPS Base Station proposal and possible alternatives.

Jon Ogden - Call a meeting of the Data Inventory Project Working Group to assess current efforts to populate data catalog and to develop proposals for procedures for maintenance of collected data and for a System Maintenance Plan.

Jim Brown & Jim Merchant & Larry Zink - research and develop a proposal for a GIS Conference to be held early in 1996.

GIS Steering Committee  
VOTING RECORD

Date 10/19/94

Attendance Minutes

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DAS - Steve Henderson	P																		
DEQ - Tom Lamberson Dennis Burling	P																		
CSD - Perry Wigley Les Howard, Jim Merchant	P																		
NRC - Dayle Williamson Terry Kubicek	P																		
PRO - Rod Armstrong	A/P																		
DOR - Jon Ogden	P																		
Surveyor - Jim Brown	P																		
LRD - Laura Valenziano	P																		
John Miyoshi	P																		
Blaine Dinwiddie	A/P																		
Judy Larsen																			
Larry Worrell <i>Jim Langtry</i>	P																		
Lash Chaffin	A																		
Duane Stott	P																		
Dennis Wilson	P																		
TOTALS	11-P 13-P																		

P = present  
A = absent  
"+" = voting for  
"-" = voting against  
"NV" = not voting