

MN Geospatial Advisory Council Committee and Workgroup Guide

May 2016

The following information is intended to provide direction to and help guide committees and workgroups of the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC). Committees are more on-going than workgroups. An effort that is long-term, lasting more than a year, and has multiple phases or iterations is appropriate for a committee, while efforts that are short-term with a limited focus or that produce a specific set of deliverables will be appropriate for a workgroup.

The [Committees and Workgroups webpage](#) provides a list of current committees and workgroups, along with downloadable report templates in Word format.

1. Formation of Committees or Workgroups

- a. The GAC will approve the formation of a committee or workgroup. The GAC itself may direct the formation of the group, or a self-forming group may request to be recognized as a committee or workgroup of the GAC.
- b. Committees and workgroups form to support geospatial needs, activities and priorities of the MN geospatial community, the state, and related stakeholders

2. Governance

- a. The GAC creates and disbands committees and workgroups based on the needs of the geospatial community as represented by members of the GAC with input from the stakeholder community
- b. GAC committees and workgroups serve the geospatial community and report to the GAC
- c. What must a committee or workgroup do to be able to call itself a committee or workgroup of the GAC?:
 - i. Submit a charter to the GAC for approval with a clear statement of mission and how it supports the Minnesota geospatial community and/or the effective use of geospatial technology in Minnesota
 - ii. Submit an annual work plan to the GAC for approval
 - iii. Update the GAC on status for the GAC's quarterly meetings
 - iv. Accept revisions to its work plan and charter if directed by and approved by the GAC
- d. Operation
 - i. A chair and vice chair (focal point and backup) will be identified by the committee or workgroup
 - ii. Committee and workgroup focus is to develop ideas, attain consensus, perform research and/or produce deliverables
 - iii. Committees and workgroups may create subgroups to accomplish their purpose. How the subgroups are formed or managed is up to the committee or workgroup.
 - iv. Committees and workgroups should meet periodically so that they get things done. Suggestion: Committees meet at least 4 times per year and workgroups meet at least 6 times per year. Adjust as necessary to meet objectives and goals. Meetings can be conducted remotely.
 - v. Committee/workgroup "members" are persons who are actively participating in committee/workgroup meetings and work. Committee/workgroup charters in general and work plans in detail will delineate member duties and responsibilities.
 - vi. "Interested parties" are persons who want to be informed of committee/workgroup activity but are not active members
 - vii. Suggested committee and workgroup size: Committees generally have 6 to 20 members, workgroups 4 to 8 members and subgroups 2 to 6 members.

3. MnGeo/GAC Support

- a. MnGeo and the GAC can provide the following support to committees/workgroups:
 - i. Assistance with initial committee/workgroup startup and operation
 - ii. Templates for charter, work plan, and status reports
 - iii. Website for committees and workgroups – content will be provided by the committee or workgroup
 - iv. Publication of committee/workgroup generated reports
 - v. Advice if requested
- b. Committees and workgroups are responsible for all other support and resources needed by the committee including meeting logistics and minutes:

4. Committee/Workgroup Duties

- a. Required documents (all will be posted on web site – see templates)
 - i. A charter to be written by the committee/workgroup when it first forms, then reviewed and approved by the GAC. Charters should be reviewed annually by the committee/workgroup and updated if appropriate.
 - ii. Development of an annual work plan to be reviewed and approved by the GAC
 - iii. Short, quarterly status reports for each GAC meeting
 - iv. Final report when committee/workgroup has completed its mission
- b. Production of deliverables which are defined in the work plan. These should allow the geospatial community and GAC to:
 - i. See progress that is made
 - ii. Assess whether or not committee/workgroup is meeting its objectives or goals
 - iii. Know when work is completed or finished
- c. Meeting minutes (a template is available as a guide)
- d. Possible stakeholder presentations or briefings
- e. Website content

5. Subgroups

- a. May be created by a committee/workgroup. Does not require review or approval of the GAC.
- b. Report to the committee/workgroup or its chair
- c. Usually focused on a portion of the committee/workgroup's planned activity
- d. If the subgroup has a significant responsibility, it is recommended that the subgroup's purpose, responsibilities and work plan be reflected in the charter and work plan of the committee/workgroup
- e. May want to use the committee/workgroup templates
- f. Activity reported to the GAC and community through the committee/workgroup

6. Ending a Committee or Workgroup

- a. Hibernating
 - i. Organized with approved charter and work plan in place
 - ii. Not able to work because they are waiting for something that is beyond their control or ability to do
- b. Finished
 - i. Completed activities, the GAC determines there is insufficient progress toward goals, or the group evolves into something that is no longer best affiliated with the GAC
 - ii. Determined that they have nothing further they can accomplish

- iii. Generated final report (see template) and provided materials as appropriate to GAC and MnGeo to archive or for subsequent activity
- iv. Acknowledged and celebrated successes and member efforts
 - v. MnGeo will archive material and work products
 - vi. MnGeo will update website to indicate committee/workgroup is no longer active