

## Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2024  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Members Present:** Heather Albrecht, *Hennepin County*; Jill Amundson, *West Central Initiative*; Mitch Bergeson, *USGS*; Ryan Bonney, *Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community*; David Brandt, *Washington County and MetroGIS*; Christy Christensen, *McLeod County*; Kari Geurts, *MNIT DNR*; Jessica Fendos, *LOGIS*; Len Kne, *UMN Twin Cities*; Britta Maddox, *Anoka County*; Tanya Mayer, *Metropolitan Council*; Victoria Reinhardt, *Ramsey County*; Cory Richter, *Ramsey County*; Kendis Scharenbroich, *Pro-West & Associates Inc.*; Gerry Sjerven, *Minnesota Power*; Alison Slaats, *MnGeo*; Stacey Stark, *UMN Duluth*; Benjamin Timerson, *MnDOT*; Patrick Veraguth, *Douglas County*

**Members Absent:** Jeffrey Bloomquist, *USDA Risk Management Agency*; Shana Crosson, *UMN Twin Cities*; Leanne Knott, *City of Red Wing*; Dennis Tumberg, *City of Chanhassen*

**Non-Members Present:** Jennifer Adade, *Hennepin County*; Norman Anderson, *MnGeo*; Andrea Borich, *MPCA*; Mary Brodd, *League of Women Voters of Minnesota*; Chris Cantey, *MN LCC*; Curtis Carlson, *MnGeo*; Peter Castro, *MN DCYF*; David Chase, *North Memorial Health Ambulance*; Jennifer Corcoran, *MN DNR*; Will Craig, *UMN Twin Cities*; Mike Dolbow, *MNIT MDE*; Casey Farrell, *MSA Professional Services, Inc.*; Nathan Graham, *Hennepin County*; Karl Hahn, *MDOR*; Michael Ginsbach, *MPCA*; Melinda Kernik, *UMN Twin Cities*; Mark Kotz, *GAC Standards Committee Chair*; Mike Koutnik, *Esri*; Randy Knippel, *Emergency Preparedness Committee Member*; Linse Lahti, *MN DNR*; Nick Linell, *Alight*; Karen Majewicz, *UMN Twin Cities*; Ryan Mattke, *UMN Twin Cities*; Mike McKee, *Esri*; Rick Moore, *MNIT DNR*; Akiko Nakamura, *MnDOT*; Pamela Jo Peters, *Unknown Organization*; Jesse Reinhardt, *Hennepin County*; Mike Robinson, *MNIT DNR*; Nate Rose, *Crow Wing County*; Chris Ross, *Scott County*; Joe Sapletal, *Dakota County*; Dustin Schmiege, *TEKsystems*; Jamie Schulz, *MNIT DNR*; Molly Shoberg, *MN DNR*; Dan Sjoblom, *Alliant, Inc.*; Megan Sisko, *MnGeo*; Carl Sones, *MNIT MDH*; Abby Stamm, *MDH*; Ryan Stovern, *St. Louis County*; Steve Swazee, *SharedGeo*; Kory Thurnau, *MnGeo*; Kevin Trappe, *Beltrami County*; Alec Trenda, *Hennepin County*; Sean Vaughn, *MNIT DNR*; Sarah Voje, *EOR, Inc.*; Sally Wakefield, *MnGeo*; Clayton Watercott, *Metro Transit*; Ace Wesselmann, *MN DEED*; Colleen Wilson, *UMN Twin Cities*

### Meeting Options

- **Virtual:** Online via Microsoft Teams

### Meeting Materials

- [Agenda packet](#)
- [Presentation slides](#)

## 1. Call to order

Chair Albrecht called the meeting to order, calling attention to the Tennessee Warning that the meeting was being recorded for transcription purposes only. Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) members introduced themselves verbally, and additional attendees placed their name and organization in the Teams chat.

Victoria Reinhardt shared that this is her last meeting since she is retiring January 7; she then shared her long history with GIS, and that she has found a potential Twin Cities metro county representative replacement, Washington County Commissioner Michelle Clasen.

Chair Albrecht reviewed the mission of the GAC, highlighted the day's agenda, then called for approval of the agenda. David Brandt recommended moving the "Farewell to Commissioner Reinhardt" agenda item higher up in the agenda (after Committee Reports) since Reinhardt had to leave early. There was no contest to this change.

- **Motion:** Approve the agenda as amended (Maddox/Richter) – Motion passed
- **Motion:** Approve last meeting minutes (from 9/18/2024) (Brandt/Reinhardt) – Motion passed

## 2. Review and accept Committee Reports

Chair Albrecht reviewed highlights from the Committee reports – see committee reports in the agenda packet and slide 11 of the presentation slide deck for highlights.

Chair Albrecht called for approval of the committee reports as reflected in the meeting agenda packet.

- **Motion:** Accept the committee reports (Mayer/Fendos) – Motion passed

## 3. Farewell to Commissioner Reinhardt

Chair Albrecht expressed her appreciation for Commissioner Reinhardt's contributions to the GIS community and the GAC and shared some of her achievements: founding member of MetroGIS, long-standing member of the Governor's Council on Geographic Information (precursor to the GAC), member of the GAC for every year of its existence. On behalf of the GAC, she then presented Reinhardt a Certificate of Appreciation signed by herself and Minnesota Chief Geospatial Information Officer, Alison Slaats. See slides 13 and 14 in the presentation slide deck for more details.

Additional members shared their thanks to Victoria: Stacey Stark, Alison Slaats, David Brandt, Cory Richter, Len Kne (esp. for the "Reinhardt principle" which encourages self-advocacy to raise the value of GIS), Ryan Mattke (esp. related to the Mapping Prejudice Project). Additional guests and GAC volunteers shared their thanks to Victoria: Sean Vaughn (esp. for her contributions to the Clean Water Council which greatly supports the first and second generation lidar efforts). Many additional thanks were shared in the chat.

Victoria shared her appreciation for the GIS community, highlighting how greatly it influences decision making.

Megan Sisko will follow-up with Commissioner Reinhardt to get her a physical copy of the certificate.

## 4. National Geospatial Advisory Committee Update

Ryan Mattke introduced himself as both a GAC and National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) member.

Mattke reviewed the purpose of the NGAC, highlighting its responsibilities to various federal and national geospatial datasets, programs, and policies, and reviewed its place in advising the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). He introduced the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and its strategic plan for 2025 - 2035, which focuses on geospatial data governance, data and technology (modernization and advancement), and people (education). Mattke shared that this is not just a plan for the federal government, but all sectors, and advises everyone to use the plan as leverage in action planning, with the plan providing support for initiative funding.

He then shared about the [3DEP Subcommittee](#) and its recommendations and offered to share subcommittee documents as they are published, via the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) or during GAC meetings. For upcoming papers and reports, see slides 23 and 24 in the presentation slide deck.

Mattke highlighted the FGDC Standards Task Team and shared that there have been talks about retiring the FGDC Metadata standard which the Minnesota Metadata Standard is built upon. He recommended that the community consider paying attention to this metadata effort. Alison Slaats shared that metadata has been discussed greatly during the Commons Modernization effort, so she is looking forward to the new metadata guidelines planned to be released in February by the FGDC. She also pointed out that the Minnesota Metadata Standard was established by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information, but never adopted by the GAC, so this could be a good time to revisit that standard and consider the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard. Mattke shared that the federal government (led by US Census Bureau) is looking to switch to a new standard, and he suspects to have more clarity at the next NGAC meeting in February.

Mark Kotz mentioned in the chat that the GAC did make some progress many years ago to move to the ISO metadata standard but did not get enough support to move it forward.

Steve Swazee asked if the ISO standard would be made freely available (without a cost), and Mattke will find more information on this. Mattke also offered to work with the Standards Committee on this effort.

## 5. Archiving Committee Proposal

Ryan Mattke introduced the Archiving Committee Proposal to (re)establish an Archiving Committee of the GAC. Mattke shared that the Big Ten Academic Alliance Geospatial Information Network (which includes representation from 13 states) has current collection policies, and that this group is looking for pilot partners. He exemplified the need for historical data by highlighting the broad use of historical land use data on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons.

Mattke reviewed the objectives of the proposed Archiving Committee (see slide 31 and the meeting agenda packet for details). He proposed two potential missions of the Committee and asked for feedback from members and guests (focus on establishing MN as a national leader in geospatial data archiving – *or* – develop strategies for preserving geospatial data in MN). The group reacted positively to the latter option.

Mattke shared next steps, including recruitment and submission of a charter and workplan for GAC approval at the March meeting. He asked for representatives from all sectors, highlighting that the expected effort is

minimal, but that everyone's expertise and experience is needed to inform the committee's efforts. Mattke took a moment to allow anyone to come forward who is interested. **The following expressed interested in being involved with the proposed Archiving Committee**, with several noting that they would follow-up with Mattke: Jennifer Corcoran, Linse Lahti (noted potential interest from several at the MN DNR), Nick Liness, and Molly Shoberg. Ryan shared his email for those that would like to reach out and learn more: [matt0089@umn.edu](mailto:matt0089@umn.edu).

Mattke closed the discussion by asking GAC members to consider participating on the committee as Vice Chair, following the new requirement that each committee include a GAC member as Chair or Vice Chair.

## 6. Outreach Committee Update and Call for Volunteers

Chair Albrecht introduced new Outreach Committee Chair Jessica Fendos to share about the committee.

Fendos shared about the history of the Outreach Committee, her role as committee chair, and the work of the committee's Open Data Subcommittee and Success Stories Workgroup. She then reviewed potential changes to the Committee charter (see slide 38), highlighting coordination with Minnesota IT Services' Communications Team and MnGeo to establish communication guidelines for the GAC.

Fendos shared action items to complete by the March 2025 GAC meeting and noted secured and potential new members. She invited anyone to join that is interested, stressing the desire to have representation from all sectors. The committee is expected to hold recurring monthly meetings starting January 2025, and to bring an amended committee charter to the GAC for approval in March.

Fendos shared some initial ideas to help the geospatial community promote its success and for the GAC to enhance public engagement, including increased publications and award recognitions.

**Expressed interested in joining the Outreach Committee:** Kendis Sharenbroich, Alec Trenda, and potentially Abby Stamm. Fendos shared the committee's recruitment survey and encouraged those interested in participating to submit to it: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/f64cc669a72147a184c6027cf623f537>

Sean Vaughn asked how the GAC can improve its recruitment requests to reach the community outside of GAC meetings. Guests offered ideas, including sharing within individual networks and asking for help from peers (Mattke), working with MnGeo to request a MNIT Communications social media post (Sisko), leveraging the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium (Fendos), and rolling out a series of committee communications for reach committee to have a chance to tell its story (i.e., exemplify how the GAC structure accomplishes results).

Abby Stamm asked if the GAC is in contact with Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) GIS users or the State of Minnesota's Tableau user groups. Sally shared that some at the State have been in contact with these groups, but likely not directly connected with the GAC, however, she noted that MnGeo's internal and external GovDelivery newsletters do include GAC content. Alison Slaats recommended connecting with MDH's Bill Dando who is the MDH representative on the State Agency GIS Collaborative, and asked Abby to follow-up with her or Sally Wakefield to connect with that group. Stamm offered to share recruitment verbiage with her networks.

Kevin Trappe highlighted the opportunity to help greater Minnesota local government GIS staff understand the bigger picture of the GAC and its impacts on them, while considering that many are spread thin.

The Standards and 3DGeo Committees put out a call for volunteers in the chat.

## 7. Break

Chair Albrecht put the meeting on break.

## 8. Executive Team Goals Update

Chair Albrecht continued the meeting by recapping items discussed so far.

Albrecht reminded members and guests of the composition and goals of the Executive Team, noting that the team has been spending the last year digging into the structure and history of the GAC to form a path forward.

Albrecht reviewed each Executive Team goal (derived from the [2024 GAC Work Plan](#)) and reminded attendees that anyone can volunteer to be on a committee or assist with a priority – see slides 46 - 55 for more details:

- **Priority project alignment with GAC 2-year term – Complete**
  - Albrecht shared that the next GAC term starts in mid-2025, so the next expected priority project survey is Fall 2025. She then encouraged current GAC members to reapply for their positions if they wish to remain part of the GAC.
- **Alignment of priorities with committees – In Progress**
  - Albrecht reiterated that not all priorities were associated with a committee, sometimes leaving priority owners with lack of support/resources. The alignment of priorities with committees puts responsibility on a committee to help move related priorities forward.
  - Albrecht shared the status of each priority that did not have clear committee alignment:
    - **Geodata Archive Implementation** – Executive Team plans to assign this to the Archiving Committee once it is officially stood up.
    - **Publication of Open Foundational Datasets** – Contributing to Nationwide and Commercial Data Assets (CANDO) Workgroup was promoted to an Ad-Hoc Committee since this group was an ideal home for this initiative and priorities needed to be assigned to committees not workgroups. The ad-hoc committee is a new term intended for committees that are not expected to be long-standing.
    - **Statewide Imagery Program** – Invited recommendations on where this priority could go.
      - Jennifer Corcoran shared that this initiative is being discussed among a small group (but not an official GAC committee or workgroup). She also recommended changing the priority from being referred to as a “program” since a program can be specific in meaning. Corcoran clarified that this is an initiative to support imagery collection statewide, and that it requires more than state agency involvement since county and federal imagery must also be considered. She shared some insight into initiative discussion topics (services, where the imagery should be hosted and how, etc.), and recommended that if there’s a committee that focuses on imagery, that’s where this priority should be assigned. The group has identified its next steps as defining what is needed for this initiative.
      - Megan Sisko offered that if there is long-term need for the GAC to advise on imagery, the GAC could standup some sort of imagery committee.
      - Christy Christenson shared that good progress is being made on this effort.

- **Statewide Survey Records Inventory** – Moved from Parcels and Land Records (PLRC) Committee to PLSS Preservation Committee.
  - **Statewide County Boundary Dataset** – Potentially more appropriate for the State of Minnesota rather than the GAC, with the expectation that state agency representation on the GAC keep the GAC informed on progress.
  - **Geospatial Commons Advisory Group** – Also potentially more appropriate for the State of Minnesota rather than the GAC.
  - **More fully attributed statewide parcel data** – At first was assigned to both Outreach and PLRC and is now assigned to the Outreach Committee.
  - **State-hosted GIS Servers with Feature Services** – Also potentially more appropriate for the State of Minnesota rather than the GAC.
- Alison Slaats shared her thanks with GAC leadership for the priority and committee leadership structure changes, noting increased clarity in roles and responsibilities, accountability back to the Council, and increased guidance.
- Albrecht invited those involved with the above highlighted priorities to reach out with any thoughts so that the GAC can complete the transition of aligning priorities with committees.
- **Committee and Workgroup Reporting Improvements – In Progress**
  - Priorities were previously reported on separately but now are included in the Committee reports. Priority owners and workgroup leads should report to the committee chairs. There will no longer be priority project slides during GAC quarterly meetings, but updates will be in the packet within the committee reports.
  - If priority project owners have relevant information that they'd like to discuss during the meeting, reach out to Chair Albrecht to request time on the meeting agenda.
  - The Executive Team will continue to investigate the best format for quarterly report submissions.
  - Priority owners can also provide updates via the round robin at the end of each meeting.
- **Transition GAC web presence to an Esri Hub Site – In Progress**
  - Fendos is working with MnGeo to gain access to the Hub Site and move this initiative forward.
- **Additional GAC member support for committees – In Progress**
  - Each Committee is to have a GAC Member as part of committee leadership as Chair or Vice-Chair; however, there is no intention to replace current leadership. The intent is to help facilitate proper workflows and ensure alignment of committee work with the mission of the GAC.
  - Reminder: every GAC member should participate in a priority project workgroup or committee.
  - Pat Veraguth mentioned that PLRC does not have a Vice Chair in the charter and asked if the committee needs to submit a new charter for this – Chair Albrecht will follow-up after the meeting to discuss this and determine a path forward.
  - Stacey Stark pointed out that the Data Endorsement Committee was not listed on the slide and Alison confirmed that this group has gone from a Workgroup to Ad-Hoc Committee.
- **Increased GAC committee and sector meeting participation – Not Yet Complete**
  - A sector and committee report is desired at each meeting to assist GAC members in representing their sector on the council and facilitate exchange of information between GAC and the sectors.
- **Smoother transitioning of GAC membership and leadership between terms – Not Yet Complete**
  - Goals: host a GAC member orientation and committee chair retreat.

## 9. MnGeo Update

Alison Slaats presented updates from the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office:

- **Government-Owned Lands Dataset** – A subset of the statewide parcel dataset that contains government-owned lands for State, Tax Forfeit, County Fee, Federal, and Tribal. Slaats reviewed the process for creating this dataset and shared that counties were offered the opportunity to review and provide feedback; MnGeo is now incorporating that feedback before publishing the dataset. See the [Government-Owned Lands StoryMap](#) to learn more about this effort.
- **Geospatial Commons Modernization** – The Commons is over 10 years old and MnGeo has been working to modernize it. As of Fall 2024, two proofs of concept are complete, and one is in progress. The project timeline may be extended from spring to September due to early resource challenges.
- **Lidar Data Distribution** – Development of lidar derivatives and MnTOPO 2 is in progress. Slaats shared insight into the great effort that this project involves, noting the importance of establishing a good foundation to ensure long-term success. A test DEM map service was published in November 2024 and is now being reconfigured for an estimated January launch. Twin Cities metro area building footprints will be created through a project between the Minnesota Departments of Commerce and Natural Resources – the used methodology will be explored to extend building footprints to the rest of the state, although funding for statewide footprints is TBD. A list of derivatives and expected delivery times was shared on-screen.
- **PLSS Monument Grant Program** – Public Land Survey System Monument Grant program projects are underway, with 21% of the awarded \$9.1 million already reimbursed to counties. More information about the program can be found on the [PLSS Hub Site](#). A PLSS Point Data Standard has been submitted to GAC Standards Committee. Slaats reviewed past and upcoming outreach efforts. Additional PLSS funding will be pursued in the upcoming legislative session – this legislation was drafted by the PLSS Remonumentation Legislation Subcommittee and has been submitted to the Revisor’s Office.

See slides 58 - 70 for more details on these topics.

## 10. GIS Day Recognition and Round Robin

Sally Wakefield shared about the November 21 [GIS Day event on equity and inclusion](#) hosted by the State Agency GIS Collaborative, highlighting 63 in-person attendees and 94 online. Attendees were various types of professionals representing a variety of organizations. The event is already producing results, including discussions to add GIS to Minnesota IT Services’ equity toolkit. See slide 72 for more details.

David Brandt shared that Washington County got a proclamation for GIS Day and hosted an event on GIS Day that had 50 attendees. The proclamation was presented at a county board meeting, along with a short presentation about “What Is GIS?” – this prompted productive conversation Commissioner Clasen and the proclamation will now be annual at Washington County. Brandt noted the proclamation’s value being well worth the effort.

## 11. Round Robin / Announcements

Chair Albrecht invited attendees to share any other items with the group. No response.

## 12. Adjourn

Chair Albrecht adjourned the meeting at 12:00 PM.

- **Motion:** To adjourn (Richter/Brandt) – Motion passed

***Next Quarterly GAC Meeting: March 5, 2025, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM***

**Minutes prepared by:** Megan Sisko