

## National Land Parcel Data Panel – NGAC Meeting October 2008

### *Talking points for Randall Johnson - Regional Perspective*

#### CONTEXT

**Thank you for the opportunity** to participate on this panel, represent the regional perspective and share lessons learned from over a decade of experience with MetroGIS's efforts to build and support a regional standardized parcel data solution which serves the seven-county Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. MetroGIS's regional solutions have always been intended to be a component of state and NSDI fabric.

**The topic of parcel data is at the core of why MetroGIS was established.** Briefly, in 1995, the Metropolitan Council's (metropolitan government) acknowledgement for its need to use parcel data produced by the counties led to actions that set the stage for a much more comprehensive initiative to share geospatial data, which became known as MetroGIS.

I am proud to report that a significantly improved public policy situation exists today than in 1995 concerning access to and the quality of geospatial data, due in large part to MetroGIS's efforts to implement collaborative solutions to shared information needs:

- Leadership of the seven counties have agreed to use a common parcel data model (data transfer standard) that was defined, in large part, by user community
- Through a single license, users now gain access to parcel data produced by all seven counties
- Primary and regional parcel custodial roles and responsibilities, which were defined by the community and grounded in principles of the NSDI, have been assumed by organizations with sufficient operating capacity, internally aligned business need, and willingness to participate.
- Access is without fee to all government and academic institutions **located anywhere in the U.S.** (*3 counties located in Wisconsin are part of the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area.*)
- Ideas and principles fostered by the NSDI vision ("skylines", "area integrator", Framework Functions, expansion of access) have been tested, corroborated, and integrated into MetroGIS's endorsed regional parcel data solution.

#### BENEFITS REALIZED BY REGIONAL INTERESTS – REGIONAL PARCEL DATASET

Today, a standardized regional parcel dataset, with over a million parcels produced by seven counties, is accessed via a single Internet application ([www.datafinder.org](http://www.datafinder.org)), along with several other endorsed regional datasets implemented through MetroGIS's efforts. These solutions have been developed in accordance with NSDI principles. (See Exhibit 1 for the Regional Policy Statement.)

129 organizations from all sectors (local, regional, state and federal government, non-profit, and private sector interests) are licensed to access the MetroGIS Regional Parcel Dataset. These entities are benefiting in a myriad of ways from its existence. Links are offered in Exhibit 3 to examples of how three regional government organizations that serve that Twin Cities metropolitan area are benefiting from the existence of this regional parcel dataset. The three benefiting regional government interests are:

- Metropolitan Council
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control
- Metropolitan Emergency Management Resources Board

**Each has benefited substantially from the existence of a parcel dataset that is standardized across** the seven county area and is interoperable with several other "endorsed regional solutions. (See Exhibit 3 for specifics and the Reference Section for a listing of other valuable lessons learned.)

#### COMMENTS - NATIONAL LAND PARCEL DATA VISION

**Introduction:** Overall, from my regional perspective, the proposed national land parcel data vision is **compelling, well thought out.** I support the outcome sought for each of the nine recommendations **but**

have some **concerns about the proposed tactics** to accomplish the desired outcomes. (The page numbers cited below correspond to the vision document published by the National Research Council in 2007.)

### **General - Leverage Regions Where They are Active :**

Page 42 and 116: Table of beneficiaries. I am surprised that regional entities (multi-county jurisdictions), which have responsibilities for transportation, economic development, land planning, housing, parks, water treatment, etc. are not listed among the beneficiaries or as candidates for participation in the organizational and technical schema. In my experience, **multi-county jurisdictions are the major beneficiaries** of standardized/aggregated parcel data and, therefore, viewed as the **most appropriate interest to fund** collaborative activities vital to achieving the NSDI vision. The Metropolitan Council's recognition that it needed a parcel-based GIS catalyzed creation of MetroGIS and the need to look well beyond a single purpose objective of sharing parcel data.

### **Nine Recommendations (Supplemental comments provided within the Summary Matrix):**

1) Page 5: **Recommendation 1 (three parts):**

Establish a National Land Parcel Coordinator.

**a. Concur with the idea that coordination needs to be someone's job one.**

**b. Must be part of a Governance System.** This position needs to be a component of a governance system for the entire NSDI to ensure interoperability with other national solutions. In other words, this position should report to an authority, yet to be created, that has sufficient responsibility and standing to resolve inconsistencies between and among solutions for the operational components of the NSDI (e.g., boundaries align with parcels and roads where intended to be co-existent). Such a governance system is at the heart of the high-level concept that the Organizational Design Workgroup offered for comment at the June NGAC meeting.

Designate BLM as lead Federal Agency:

**a. Strongly concur with need for a lead organization.**

**b. Concur that BLM as a leading contender** to serve as the lead federal organization.

**c. Qualifications:** the panel should include the following determinations as it evaluates the appropriateness of designating BLM to serve in this role:

- BLM's internal responsibilities are well aligned with the custodial responsibilities required to achieve the vision,
- BLM's executive leadership and those who will be responsible for supporting these responsibilities are fully supportive (are willing) , and
- BLM has sufficient operating capacity to effectively carry out the subject responsibilities.

Establish a Federal Land Parcel Coordinator: Support

2) Page 5: **Recommendation 2: Strongly concur** that policies regarding the parcels theme must be fully coordinated with the policies that govern the other identified themes (buildings and facilities, cultural resources, governmental units, and housing). In addition, MetroGIS believes there is great promise to leverage the National Planning Association's Land-based Classification Standard (<http://www.planning.org/lbcs>) to accomplish this type of integration and, in so doing, greatly enhance traditional existing land use data resources.

3) Page 5 **Recommendation 3:** Support

4) Pages 6: **Recommendation 4:**

**a. Concur with the need for a business plan and a project coordinator.**

**b. Concerned with the manner in which the recommendation is written** which **implies a top-down** approach (e.g., the coordinator should "develop a plan" to...) Use of a word like **"foster" would be more appropriate** and work better to provide consistency with the call for a "bottom-up production process" (Recommendation 7), implying responsibility for the outcome but that the process will be collaborative, leveraging people's expertise and ideas from throughout the system. Where standards have been

developed for collaborative efforts, consider using them as a testbed to catalyze the conversation elsewhere.

5) Page 6: **Recommendation 5: Management of Parcel Data for Tribal Lands** : Support Assuming the Tribal community is supportive.

6) Page 6 **Recommendation 6: Concur with proposal to involve of Census Bureau.**

Substantial and costly duplication effort has and will continue to occur until the Census Bureau is able to consume locally-produced data and conversely is willing to share primary data it collects (address points). Two years ago, MetroGIS obtained a commitment from the Census Bureau to “register” their products to locally-produced street and parcel data. Several conversations and trials were required over a two-year period to accomplish this objective. A laudable goal but daunting at a state level where multiple variations of a data model are likely to be involved. Agreement was difficult to achieve with only seven counties that had agreed to the same data model!

Concur that address point data is highly desirable, but I’m not sure if the recommendation suggests integrating address point data within the parcel dataset. If a combined solution is the objective, it is not borne out by MetroGIS’s experience. MetroGIS has concluded that existence of a regional address points database, in addition to a regional parcel dataset, is in the public interest. An effort is currently underway to develop a web-based tool for use by communities with limited resources through which to “write” new and modified address data to the regional dataset. A simultaneous effort is in the early stages to gain the political support needed to achieve the desired outcome. In other words, the proposed regional address points dataset that would be transactionally-maintained by city-based addressing authorities, NOT counties which manage parcel data. MetroGIS has adopted the national address standard. However, political leadership will be required to obtain the resources needed to reconcile the with address data maintained as a component of parcel data with address point data developed from scratch in conformance with the national standard and as part of the proposed regional address point dataset.

7) Page 7: **Recommendation 7: “Require” every state to establish a state coordinator**

**a. Concur with the premise that coordination of the production and management of parcel data management within each state is a requirement to achieve the vision of the NSDI.**

**b. Strongly disagree with a tactic of attempting to require compliance.** Use of the term "require" raises serious issues of unfunded mandates and is counter to the need for consensus-based decision-making that is supported by public policy that acknowledges the benefits of broad access to parcel data. Even if the National Parcel Coordinator position were to possess the authority to "require" compliance, which I cannot imagine will be the case, the unfunded mandate vernacular will be counterproductive. The national coordinator cannot be seen as a czar but rather responsible for programming to achieve national policy. In other words, the desired outcome and benefits should be clearly articulated, legitimized through national policy making, sponsored by NaCO and ICMA, and accompanied by resources to create incentives needed to achieve the desired outcome. MetroGIS used this approach and has demonstrated that it is more effective than mandates. The recommendation should be refined to clarify accordingly.

8) Page 7: **Recommendation 8: Funding Plan Developed by National Coordinator**

**a. Strongly concur with the need for a funding plan and a project coordinator.**

**b. Concerned with the manner in which the recommendation is written** which implies a top-down approach (e.g., the coordinator should "develop a plan" to...) Use of a word like “foster” would be more appropriate and work better to provide consistency with the call for a “bottom-up production process” (See comment for Recommendation 4)

**c. Suggest changing the term "intergovernmental" to something that incorporates other potential partners** (e.g., non-profit, academic, for-profit). A focus on cross-sector partnering will provide for more a more robust land base system and increase the options for providing incentives for counties to participate.

9) Page 7: **Recommendation 9: Call for public domain access.** (Note: in speaking with members of the Cadastre Committee, I learned that “government-to-government sharing of parcel data” is a more accurate expression of this recommendation than use of the term “public domain”.)

**a. Support the objective of achieving an environment where select parcel data are treated as a public the public investment in which is leveraged,** at minimum, by other government units. I also support the emphasis on incentives to foster participation.

**b. Opposed to a tactic of attempting to demand compliance.** Ultimately, this is a matter of public policy. The public value to be gained (compelling social outcome) by placing parcel data into the public domain must be understood by key policy makers at all levels who, in turn, are willing to advocate via their national organizations (e.g., NaCO) for the required change in policy. Regardless of the laws on the books, government-to-government sharing has been proven to be doable and can provide a solid foundation from which to demonstrate public benefits to be gained from broader access, without fee.

The “government-to-government” sharing philosophy is at the core of the accomplishments that MetroGIS has made over the past decade to greatly improve and streamline access to parcel data, while respecting the counties’ investments, and accommodates related intellectual property rights. These accomplishments include:

- Established a norm of access without fee by government and academic interests located anywhere in the USA to foster the leveraging of public investments by other public interests
- Gained approval from the seven counties to implement public domain access (interests that are not licensed to use the source data) via “view only” Internet applications that do not support downloading of the source parcel data in its native format.
- Streamlined licensing procedures and provided access to all seven counties’ data via a single license document.

In our experience, the counties have been receptive to modifying licensing and access procedures, in response to needs of the broad user community, to streamline access when the social/public purpose is understood (e.g., standardized license and central point of access that required the grant of distribution authority via DataFinder - see link to license in Exhibit 2).

Finally, MetroGIS’s leadership has directed an investigation of partnering with non-government entities to address shared application needs. In so doing, it is understood that the matter of authorizing access to parcel data, without fee by non-government interests, is a matter of public policy that will require county officials to be convinced that the benefit to their organizations of the prospective partnership will exceed the value of continuing to impose a fee for access. In other words, if the intent of the subject land parcel vision is, in fact, to achieve public domain access demanding it without a plan to achieve the required political support will not achieve the desired results.

#### **QUESTION FOR CADASTRE COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP**

**What changes** to MetroGIS’s Regional Parcel Dataset policies (Exhibit 1) **would be required** to align with the National Land Parcel Data vision. MetroGIS is willing to serve a testbed to work through any policy inconsistencies.

#### **RESPONSES TO STATEMENTS MADE IN THE SUPPORTING TEXT (VISION STATEMENT)**

1) Pages 4, 109 and 110: Fully **concur** that local governments have few incentives to participate. Counties are critical participants (primary producers ) but we have found they benefit the least from a regional dataset. In our experience, incentives were offered that were important to the target producer, which in some cases were not directly associated with the community’s data priorities (e.g., funding for imagery to achieve participation in parcel sharing agreement). Ultimately, the question needs to be framed in terms of a compelling social purpose to be achieved and political leadership (e.g., NaCO, ICMA, NARC, NASCIO, etc.) need to advocate for adoption of an equitable and cohesive national policy and the operational capacity needed to realize the social purpose. In MetroGIS’s case, an organizational structure that engaged elected officials has been critical to MetroGIS’s ability to succeed.

2) Page 4 and 137: **Concur** with the committee vision for linking a series of distributed servers: The proposal for a federated model is appropriate, wherein counties are the primary producers and support of coordination activities are supported by state and federal government interests. But I am concerned that regional entities, where they exist, are not mentioned as a component of this vision. These entities have a clear business need

to resolve inconsistencies across jurisdictions and to work through standards issues. Therefore, they can play central roles in mitigating differences which in some cases are not solely a technical in nature and which state government can not accomplish as effectively. Working through these policy issues takes political leadership, leadership that is at the core of many regional entities. The solutions from state-to-state are also expected to differ; regional can also play a role in mitigating cross-state differences.

- 3) Page 5: The call for shared funding responsibility **implies benefits are understood and equal**; generally they are **not, in either case**. County producers receive the least benefit from sharing. To achieve equity, the “cost of sharing” needs to be borne by those who benefit most. An argument can also be made that local government (counties in this case) are doing their fair share by keeping the source data up-to-date.
- 4) Page 93 and 115: **Disagree** with statement that differences in external boundaries “must” be reconciled. A policy central to reaching agreement on the standards and procedures that govern the MetroGIS regional parcel dataset is that no changes to parcel data geography (edge matching) or attributes, other than the projection, are permitted by the regional custodian responsible for assembling (not integrating) the seven county parcel datasets into the regional solution. Only the primary custodian can make changes to the parcel geography or associated attributes.

The “skyline” concept promoted by the NSDI in the late 1990’s was successfully embodied into the agreed upon procedures. Co-mingling of best available data with acceptance of overlaps and slivers has been demonstrated to be fully workable. A related procedure was created to report “anomalies to the primary producers (counties) to investigate and pursue modifications, as warranted. All changes are restricted to the primary producer level to ensure they are institutionalized and not lost with the next version of the dataset. Additionally, changes are limited to the primary producer because the area aggregator, in this case the Metropolitan Council, did not want to take on liability regarding the data content; the domain of the counties.

- 5) Page 117: Role of the Private Sector: MetroGIS **concurs with the direction** of this statement. An initiative planned to launch latter this year is designed to investigate interest among non-government interests in collaborative solutions to shared information needs (data web services and applications) to among things test the notion that realizing the vision of the NSDI will require participation by all sectors. The objective is to pursue actual partnerships to address geospatial information needs shared by government and non-government interests.
- 6) Page 130 Milestones for formal business plan: **Is metadata/documentation addressed in this plan?**

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in this important discussion.

## REFERENCE SECTION

### OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION THAT LED TO THE CREATION OF METROGIS AND THE FIRST MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT - A STANDARDIZED REGIONAL PARCEL DATASET:

In 1994, the Metropolitan Council acknowledged that it needed a parcel-based GIS. The situation was not conducive to collaboration or sharing geospatial resources.

- Six of the seven Twin Cities metropolitan area county surveying departments were using GIS technology to managing their parcel data but the “geography” was not integrated with the attributes managed by the assessors.
- Most of the counties were also “selling” their parcel data to other government units, including local units of government within their own boundaries, as well as non-gov’t interests.
- The fee was in many cases cost prohibitive but worse the data often were not of the best quality, they were undocumented, and often unusable with an adjoining county’s data without a good deal of manipulation.

Three examples of the asking prices from my own experience (1994 to 1996):

- \$720,000+ quoted to the Metropolitan Council for a one-time purchase of digital parcel data from six of the seven counties. This was the catalyst to investigating a collaborative initiative.
- \$45,000 paid by the Metropolitan Airports Commission for parcel data produced by Dakota County to support the Commission’s mandated noise abatement program
- \$10,000 billed received by City of Shoreview, a community of 25,000 people within Ramsey County, home of St. Paul, for a one-time update in the Ultimaps format, which required an additional \$4,000 cost to convert to ArcCAD.

### TESTIMONIAL

Jeff Matson, a researcher with the Center of Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota, appeared before the MetroGIS Policy Board on July 23. During his presentation he made the following comment about MetroGIS’s endorsed regional parcel dataset:

“...Matson thanked the Policy Board for its pioneering efforts through which the seven-county, Regional Parcel Dataset was accomplished. He commented that he believes this dataset is unparalleled in the country, adding that only a few other areas in the country have achieved standardized parcel data across multiple counties but none involves more than three counties to his knowledge...”

The complete meeting summary can be viewed at

[http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/08\\_0723/08\\_0723m\\_d.pdf](http://www.metrogis.org/teams/pb/meetings/08_0723/08_0723m_d.pdf)

### OTHER LESSON LEARNED – 10 YEARS OF METROGIS EXPERIENCE WITH A REGIONAL PARCEL DATASET

- 1) Advocate for NSDI vision. Strive to be part of state and national fabric. Accept responsibility to catalyze dialogue and action to achieve standards needed to foster enhanced sharing beyond the seven county metro area.
- 2) The community agrees on a data model and custodial roles and responsibilities but does not require the data producers to populate attribute fields unless easy for them to accomplish and required to support an internal business need.
- 3) Pursue collaborative solutions to the breadth of shared information needs to broadly leverage existing public investments. Parcel data is one of several interoperable endorsed regional data solutions. (Reference to MetroGIS on page 76 represents only a fraction of the collaborative solutions that have been achieved by MetroGIS.)

## EXHIBIT 1

# REGIONAL PARCEL DATA BUSINESS INFORMATION NEED POLICY SUMMARY

*(To become effective with the January 2005 Dataset release)*

### Preamble:

*A guiding principle of MetroGIS is that no organization will be asked to perform a task for MetroGIS for which they do not have an internal business need. Primary custodians are responsible for providing only that parcel attribution data that they maintain for their own internal business purposes and which can be retrieved and provided to the regional custodian without an excessive level of effort. Within these bounds, it is expected that each primary custodian will work toward providing the most complete dataset practical. Regional custodians are not obligated to manipulate data received from the primary custodians when doing so would exceed their business needs. Gaps may continue to exist between defined data needs and available data. MetroGIS will work to identify solutions that bridge these gaps for the broad MetroGIS community.*

## *Parcels – Regional Data Specifications*

### **DESIRED REGIONAL PARCEL DATASET**

#### **(GOVERNMENT UNITS AND ACADEMIC INTERESTS VERSION)**

The regional parcel dataset should be a metro-wide (7-county) dataset with a high horizontal positional accuracy. Each primary custodian (each of the seven counties) should provide their parcel boundary and point data in NAD83, UTM coordinate system, on a quarterly basis to the regional custodian, with complete metadata. The regional dataset custodian will provide the parcel boundary and point data in NAD83, UTM coordinate system, on a quarterly basis, with metadata, entity and attribute information, and contact information.

Attribute fields attached to each parcel shall be as presented in Appendix A.

## *Parcels – Roles and Responsibilities*

### **A. PRIMARY CUSTODIAN**

Responsibility for the primary (source) data and its maintenance shall remain with each individual county.

### **B. PRIMARY CUSTODIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Update the primary parcel datasets on a continuous basis.
2. Submit a copy of their primary parcel polygon and points datasets to the regional custodian on a quarterly schedule established by MetroGIS and the regional custodian in shape file format and in UTM, NAD83, meters. The shape files are expected to include all attribute fields endorsed by MetroGIS with the exact field name, field length, and field type specified. *It is understood that the attribute fields will be populated at each county's discretion based upon data availability in each county.*
3. Create, maintain, and provide metadata for the datasets. *If a county elects not to submit metadata, contact information for a person with appropriate expertise will be included in the regional metadata.*
4. Primary producers are encouraged to periodically test and report the spatial accuracy of the parcel boundary data they submit to the regional custodian. If testing is undertaken, primary producers are also encouraged to use of the NSSDA testing and reporting procedures.

### C. REGIONAL CUSTODIAN

The Metropolitan Council (Council) has been identified and has accepted, on behalf of the MetroGIS community, designation by MetroGIS on July 11, 2001 as the best candidate to carry out the roles and responsibilities associated with assembly and maintenance of the regional parcel dataset.

### D. REGIONAL CUSTODIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Compile the regional dataset of parcel boundaries, parcel points and attributes, as agreed upon by MetroGIS, from the primary sources. The data specification standards endorsed by MetroGIS should incorporate use of FGDC cadastral standards to the extent practical.  
*Note: As a matter of MetroGIS policy, the regional custodian shall **not** change the parcel boundary data received from the counties. The counties, as primary custodians, shall be the only entities authorized to modify parcel boundary data as it pertains to the regional dataset.*
2. Establish and maintain a process to automate, to the extent practical, the compilation of a regional dataset from the primary sources, including, but not limited to, the following procedures:
  - a) The regional custodian shall compare each dataset submitted by the primary custodians with the desired standard specifications (UTM, NAD83 coordinates and the attributes in Exhibit A). Specifically the regional custodian will check:
    - field name
    - field width
    - field type
    - field order
    - county code and dash appended to PIN
    - visual check of projection against orthophotos to see if parcels appear to be in the correct location
    - existence and format of metadata
  - b) Inform the primary custodian where a primary dataset differs from a MetroGIS-endorsed standard. If differences are minimal and only involve attributes, the regional custodian will modify the primary dataset to match the desired standard specifications. If the regional custodian perceives the differences to be significant, it will distribute the primary dataset as provided by the primary custodian with a note to users indicating the differences from the desired specifications.
  - c) Compile metadata from all sources into one set of regional metadata for the dataset and distribute it in the format provided by the primary custodians. However, the regional custodian will, at the request of a primary custodian, convert metadata in DataLogr, SGML or ESRI's XML formats to a standard HTML format. The regional custodian will also help any primary custodian to develop Minnesota Geographic Metadata Guidelines format metadata. The regional custodian will maintain complete regional metadata and make the supplied county parcel data and metadata available to approved users.
  - d) Include a contact person for the primary custodian with the distribution of the regional dataset if metadata is not available from a primary custodian.
3. Re-compile, from the primary sources, the regional dataset on a quarterly basis according to a schedule established by MetroGIS.
4. Each parcel shall have a unique parcel identification number consistent with the standard adopted by the Policy Board on January 27, 1999, or as subsequently modified by the Board.
5. Further the use of cadastral standards for the regional parcel boundary dataset, where applicable.
6. In conjunction with the MetroGIS user community, provide a means to notify the counties of gaps/overlaps in primary datasets along county boundaries (interior boundary gaps/overlaps are the responsibility of the primary custodian). The decision as to whether or not to modify any identified boundary anomalies is solely the discretion of the county(ies) involved.
7. Provide for data archive, backup, retrieval, and disaster recovery.
8. Provide for distribution of the dataset via MetroGIS DataFinder and such other media as permitted by the Counties.
9. Execute a quality control/quality assurance procedure that assures the regional dataset user that the data they receive is the same as provided to the regional custodian from the primary producers for assembly into a regional dataset.
10. Support distribution of one quarterly version of the Regional Parcel Dataset for each year, as determined by MetroGIS, as an annual archive along with appropriate metadata.

11. Co-host, with MetroGIS, Data Users Forums on a schedule decided by the Coordinating Committee to obtain feedback from the MetroGIS community as to desired enhancements to the dataset and any associated data access, content, documentation and/or distribution policy(ies).

## *Parcels – Access Policies*

Rules associated with access to the Regional Parcel Dataset, or any portion thereof, shall be decided by the counties, the primary producers of the data. MetroGIS's role is to foster coordination among counties concerning access to parcel data. Such rules may be part of a formal agreement or enacted by letter of intent/resolution from the counties, as determined at the counties' discretion. Each such MetroGIS facilitated policy follows:

**1. Data Sharing Agreement – Seven Counties and Metropolitan Council.** Through this agreement, which has been a principal focus of MetroGIS's efforts since its inception, the seven Minneapolis – St. Paul Metropolitan Area counties establish access policy regarding the Regional Parcel Dataset (e.g., without fee, to government and academic interests subject to obtaining and abiding by the provisions set forth in a License).

**2. Waiver of License Requirement for Access to Historical Versions of the Regional Parcel.**

*(A proposal was received Spring 2004 from the neighborhood group community, consideration of which was indefinitely postponed by County Data Producer Workgroup on July 22, 2004 until the broader topic of non-profit access to parcel data has been resolved.)*

**3. Waiver of license requirement for view-only access.**

On July 28, 2004, the MetroGIS Policy Board endorsed a policy of supporting view-only access to the regional parcel dataset via the MetroGIS Emergency Preparedness Internet Application which is under development, subject each county ratifying this policy. The Board also imposed a one-year sunset if it has not endorsed roles and responsibilities by that time to sustain support of the Emergency Preparedness Internet Application.

**APPENDIX A**  
**STANDARD PARCEL ATTRIBUTES – REGIONAL PARCEL DATASET**

Regional Parcel Attribute <sup>1</sup>	Regional Dataset Field Name	Field Description <i>with some comments</i>	Field Type	Field Width
Unique County ID	COUNTY_ID	Three digit FIPS and State standard county code.	text/string	3
Unique Parcel ID	PIN	Unique regional parcel ID comprised of the county PIN with the county code and dash appended to the front.	text/string	17
House Number	BLDG_NUM	The building or house number of the parcel. (Things like fractional house numbers should be included with this field.)	text/string	10
Street Prefix Direction	PREFIX_DIR	Street prefix direction for the parcel. Domain = N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE or SW (as defined in USPS Pub. 28 Appendix B <a href="http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub28/pub28.pdf">http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub28/pub28.pdf</a> )	text/string	2
Street Prefix Type	PREFIXTYPE	Street prefix type (e.g. Hwy) for the parcel. <i>Few counties store this data separately.</i>	text/string	6
Street Name	STREETNAME	Street name for the parcel. If a county is unable to provide the individual street data fields (direction, type, etc), they may be provided as a combined data element in this field.	text/string	40
Street Type	STREETTYPE	Street type abbreviation for the parcel (as defined by USPS Pub. 28 Appendix C. <a href="http://pe.usps.gov/text/pub28/pub28apc.html#508hdr2">http://pe.usps.gov/text/pub28/pub28apc.html#508hdr2</a> )	text/string	4
Street Suffix Direction	SUFFIX_DIR	Street suffix direction for the parcel. Domain = N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE or SW (as defined in USPS Pub. 28 Appendix B <a href="http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub28/pub28.pdf">http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub28/pub28.pdf</a> )	text/string	2
Unit Information	UNIT_INFO	Additional unit information for the parcel for condominiums, etc. (e.g. Unit 5B, Suite 8, etc.)	text/string	12
City (actual)	CITY	Name of city or township in which the parcel actually resides (not the mailing address city).	text/string	30
City (mailing)	CITY_USPS	The mailing address city for the parcel as defined by the USPS.	text/string	30
ZIP Code	ZIP	ZIP code for the parcel.	text/string	5
ZIP 4 Extension	ZIP4	The four digit zip code extension for the parcel.	text/string	4
Legal Description Plat Name	PLAT_NAME	The legal description plat name (this is often synonymous with the subdivision name).	text/string	50
Legal Description Block	BLOCK	The legal description block within the plat.	text/string	5
Legal Description Lot	LOT	The legal description lot within the block.	text/string	5
Polygon Acreage	ACRES_POLY	The calculated acreage of the polygon within the GIS spatial data. (numeric field with two decimal places)	numeric	11 (2 dec)
Deeded Acreage	ACRES_DEED	The deeded acreage of the parcel. (numeric field with two decimal places)	numeric	11 (2 dec)
Use Type 1	USE1_DESC	Description of use type 1.	text/string	100
Use Type 2	USE2_DESC	Description of use type 2.	text/string	100
Use Type 3	USE3_DESC	Description of use type 3.	text/string	100
Use Type 4	USE4_DESC	Description of use type 4.	text/string	100
Multiple Uses	MULTI_USES	Flag (Y/N) to indicate if multiple uses exist.	text/string	1
Landmark/Business Name	LANDMARK	Name of the predominant landmark or business on this parcel.	text/string	100
Owner Name	OWNER_NAME	The full name of the owner. The format should be last name first where available. Inclusion of multiple owners is up to each county.	text/string	50
Additional Owner Name	OWNER_MORE	Field for additional owner information where available (e.g. joint owner or additional first name first format).	text/string	50
Owner Address	OWN_ADD_L1 OWN_ADD_L2 OWN_ADD_L3	Mailing address of the owner. Up to three lines may be used. Typically line1 is street address and line2 is city, state & zip, but other variations exist.	text/string	40 each
Taxpayer Name	TAX_NAME	The full (first and last) name of the taxpayer. The format (e.g. last name first or last name last) and inclusion of multiple taxpayers is up to each county.	text/string	40
Taxpayer Address	TAX_ADD_L1 TAX_ADD_L2 TAX_ADD_L3	Mailing address of the taxpayer. Up to three lines may be used. Typically line1 is street address and line2 is city, state & zip, but other variations exist.	text/string	40 each
Homestead Status <sup>ii</sup>	HOMESTEAD	Homestead status (Y = yes, N = no, P = partial) <i>Note: The inclusion of this field will allow parcel data users to assume the owner is the occupant for these parcels. Not all counties have this data as a yes or no type field. Those counties can decide if they want to process it into a Y/N field.</i>	text/string	1
Estimated Market Value - Land	EMV_LAND	Land estimated market value	numeric	11
Estimated Market Value - Buildings	EMV_BLDG	Building estimated market value	numeric	11
Estimated Market Value - Total	EMV_TOTAL	Total estimated market value	numeric	11
Tax Capacity	TAX_CAPAC	Tax capacity of the parcel	numeric	11
Total Tax	TOTAL_TAX	Total tax of the parcel	numeric	11
Special Assessments	SPEC_ASSES	Special assessment value due and payable in the current year.	numeric	11
Tax Exempt Status	TAX_EXEMPT	Tax exempt (Y/N) <i>(Note: The counties that do have this information tend to have it imbedded in other code fields. A Y/N field will be maintained and counties can decide whether to do the processing to create that information to populate the field.)</i>	text/string	1
Exempt Use 1	XUSE1_DESC	Description of exempt use type 1.	text/string	100

Regional Parcel Attribute <sup>1</sup>	Regional Dataset Field Name	Field Description <i>with some comments</i>	Field Type	Field Width
Exempt Use 2	XUSE2_DESC	Description of exempt use type 2.	text/string	100
Exempt Use 3	XUSE3_DESC	Description of exempt use type 3.	text/string	100
Exempt Use 4	XUSE4_DESC	Description of exempt use type 4.	text/string	100
Dwelling Type	DWELL_TYPE	Type of dwelling (e.g. single family, duplex, etc.)	text/string	30
Home Style	HOME_STYLE	Home style description (e.g. rambler, split entry, etc.)	text/string	30
Square Footage	FIN_SQ_FT	Finished square footage	numeric	11
Garage	GARAGE	Garage (Y/N)	text/string	1
Garage Square Footage	GARAGESQFT	Garage square footage	text/string	11
Basement	BASEMENT	Basement (Y/N)	text/string	1
Heating	HEATING	Type of heating in use	text/string	30
Cooling	COOLING	Type of cooling in use	text/string	30
Year Built	YEAR_BUILT	Year built	numeric	4
Number of Units	NUM_UNITS	Number of residential units.	text/string	6
Last Sales Date	SALE_DATE	Date of last sale	date	8
Last Sales Value	SALE_VALUE	Value of last sale	numeric	11
School District	SCHOOL_DST	Unique school district number	text/string	6
Watershed District	WSHD_DIST	Watershed district name	text/string	50
Green Acres	GREEN_ACRE	Green acres status (Y/N)	text/string	1
Open Space	OPEN_SPACE	Open space status (Y/N)	text/string	1
Agricultural Preserve	AG_PRESERV	Agricultural preserve status (Y/N)	text/string	1
Ag. Preserve Enrolled	AGPRE_ENRD	Agricultural preserve enrolled date	date	8
Ag. Preserve Expiration	AGPRE_EXPD	Agricultural preserve expiration date	date	8
Parcel Polygon to Parcel Point and PIN Relationship Code	PARC_CODE	This field is used to provide information about the relationship between parcel polygons, parcel points and unique tax parcel identifiers (PINs).	numeric	2

<sup>i</sup> Washington County’s agreement specifically exempts “property line dimensional data” from inclusion in the regional parcel dataset. This was the intent and understanding with other counties that raised the issue.

<sup>ii</sup> “Resident name” has been identified by the MetroGIS community as a desirable attribute for the regional parcel dataset. However, this information is not maintained by counties. Until a suitable source for “Resident Name” is identified, “homestead status” will serve as a surrogate for “Resident Name”.

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**APPENDIX B**  
Operational/Procedural Clarifications

*Note: On October 22, 2002, the Policy Board modified the regional policy statement to include this Appendix and authorized the Coordinating Committee, from that point on, to modify this Appendix and other regional policy statements (parcels and other) when all relevant and affected parties are in agreement.*

1. If counties have polygons in their parcel dataset for rights-of-way, lakes or other “non-standard” parcels, these should not be removed from the regional parcel dataset. Counties do not have to go to any extra lengths to create polygons where they do not already exist in their parcel dataset. *(October 2002)*
2. The quarterly update schedule will be April 1, July 1, October 1 and January 1. Valuation and tax information in the Regional Parcel Dataset will generally be updated with the April release. Counties that do not have the new assessments available by April should provide them with the next quarterly release after they are available. Parcel geography and other attributes will be updated with each quarterly release. *(December 2003 Coordinating Committee clarification)*
3. Historical Information *(September 2004 Coordinating Committee clarification)*:
  - When new quarterly updates are posted, the previous version will be removed from MetroGIS DataFinder.
  - In accordance with Regional Custodian responsibility D(10), the Council will retain the end of calendar year quarterly update and make it available through MetroGIS DataFinder as historical data for that year.

<sup>(1)</sup> Revision History:

Version 1 - Initial Adoption: October 27, 1999  
Modified: January 9, 2002 and October 22, 2002  
Version 2 –Adoption: July 28, 2004  
Modified: September 29, 2004 (Appendix B)

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## EXHIBIT 2

To view the license to access the MetroGIS Regional Parcel Dataset go to <http://www.metrogis.org/data/datasets/parcels/public/index.shtml> .

