



North Carolina  
Geographic Information Coordinating Council  
Local Government Committee

MINUTES  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
June 1, 2011

PROCEEDINGS

The quarterly meeting of the Local Government Committee (LGC), a committee of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC), was held on June 1, 2011.

PRESENT

LGC members:

Kathryn Clifton, City of Salisbury, representing NCLM  
Gene Hume, Buncombe County, representing Carolina URISA  
Chris Koltyk, Moore County, representing NCLGISA  
Alex Rickard, Eastern Carolina Council, representing ARCED  
Julie Stamper, Pasquotank County, representing NC ACC

Others:

James Armstrong, Richmond County, SMAC Rep (for part of the meeting)  
Rachel Wall, Moore County (for Chris Koltyk for part of the meeting)  
Alice Wilson, City of New Bern, SMAC Rep  
Tom Tribble, CGIA, Staff to the LGC

ABSENT

Jerry Simmons, Pender County, representing NC PMA

REPORTS

Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Working Group for Orthophotography Planning (WGOP) – Julie Stamper reported that Chris Koltyk and Jerry Simmons agreed to represent the LGC on the WGOP. The appointments were not confirmed until the day of the last WGOP meeting on April 11. Julie commended Chris and Jerry for making the effort to attend. Chris was able to attend in person and Jerry joined the meeting by phone.

Chris reported that Gary Thompson, chair of the WGOP, was appointed to the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC), which represents non-federal stakeholders in the geospatial community and advises the Federal Geographic Data Committee on geospatial policy and management issues. Tom Tribble noted that David Wyatt, GIS coordinator for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and a member of the Federal Interagency Committee, was also appointed to the NGAC. North Carolina now has two members on this important national committee. Zsolt Nagy, formerly with CGIA, previously served on the NGAC. Chris said it is very important to have North Carolina representation on the NGAC.

Chris said the primary topic at the WGOP meeting was the statewide orthophoto project. The group reviewed the project deliverables, the format of the deliverables, and the difficulty of providing uncompressed data to everyone due to the size of the files. Chris said that he primarily uses the 1:20 compressed MrSID files. The naming convention of the index files is a little bit confusing, especially since the file name changes slightly if it is revised.

A QA/QC process by the counties that received the imagery is currently underway. He encouraged local governments to review the imagery and submit comments to the project team on any problems that are identified. Chris also encouraged local government members to submit comments to him and Jerry so that they can bring any concerns to the WGOP in preparation for future projects.

The WGOP discussed the need for updated LiDAR data. The committee feels that a new round of orthos can be acquired without updated LiDAR data but after that the state will need to consider acquiring updated LiDAR data.

WGOP members Tom Morgan, NC Land Records Management Program, and Jeff Brown, CGIA, discussed the need to clearly identify in advance the opportunities for purchasing additional products, such as color infrared imagery. In this way, local governments can contact vendors about products and consider their budget needs in advance. Chris said that local government participation in planning for future statewide imagery projects is critical.

Julie also noted that the version changes in the file naming scheme were new and a bit confusing. Chris noted that the index file did not include the name of the vendor that collected the imagery. For counties like Moore, in which several vendors were involved, manual work is required to identify the vendor that acquired specific tiles.

Chris said that the imagery for the military bases is restricted. He noted that one problem is that none of the tiles that intersect a military base boundary are included and therefore the counties do not have the imagery for that portion of the tile that is outside the military base. Chris reported that Jeff Brown said that in the near future these tiles will be clipped and the imagery within the tiles outside the military bases will be provided to the counties. It is unclear whether the contractors or CGIA will perform this task.

He noted that when Moore County flew imagery in 2007, the county flew imagery over the base, provided the data to the military installations and retained the imagery for the county to use. Chris noted the importance from a 911 point of view of having imagery for all private property within the county. For the time being, Chris has replaced the missing imagery within the tiles adjacent to the military with their 2007 imagery.

Julie said that in Perquimans County, the imagery the county received around and within the Harvey Point Defense Testing Activity facility had been replaced with 2008 imagery.

*(Post meeting clarification – Tom checked with the ortho project team on the questions that were raised about the tiles around military bases. The contractors will clip the tiles and provide the data to CGIA, which will review the new tiles. CGIA will deliver imagery for only those tiles that were clipped to the county 911 coordinator, probably on a hard drive that will need to be returned. The proposed schedule is to complete this by the end of the summer or at the end of the 90 day review period.)*

Continuing his report, Chris said that the WGOP has prepared a Business Plan for Orthoimagery in North Carolina (see <http://www.nconemap.com/NCOrthos/Resources/tabid/428/Default.aspx>). The plan recommends that in the future 25% of the state be acquired each year, starting in the east and moving west. Chris recommended to the WGOP that it inventory the county schedules for reevaluations and try to synchronize the ortho acquisition schedule with the county reevaluation calendar. He noted that reevaluation is the primary driver for acquiring new imagery at the county level.

Gene Hume asked if they planned to have a single contractor for each quarter of the state. Chris said that it has not been determined. He noted that because of the short time frame in implementing the 2010 statewide project, the state used those contractors that were preapproved by the NC Office of Geospatial and Technology Management (Floodplain Mapping Program) through the state's QBS contracting process. Some photogrammetry firms are not on this preapproved list.

Gene noted his QA review of the Buncombe County imagery has revealed some problems, mostly in undeveloped areas, related to sun angle and flight line overlaps that may not meet specifications. He noted significant problems with seam lines and shadows. He wondered if having more contractors working in smaller areas would help solve these problems.

Chris said that by using the index file you can identify the vendor that flew an area that shows problems. Chris suggested that Gene document the problems that he has discovered and submit them before the 90 day review period is up. CGIA will review them and, if appropriate, return them to the vendor for correction and replacement. Gene said that he plans to do that.

Kathryn Clifton asked how long local governments have to review the imagery and submit comments. Chris replied 90 days from the time the imagery was delivered to the county 911 coordinators. Kathryn said that she has not received the data from the county, despite repeated requests, and plans to send a hard drive to CGIA to get the data for the City of Salisbury.

Tom suggested and Chris strongly agreed that a LGC Alert be sent out to the list serves asking that any comments about the project, the deliverables, the data quality and future projects be sent to Chris and Jerry so that they can share the comments with the WGOP.

**Action Item** – Tom will send a LGC ALERT requesting that comments on the project and future plans be sent to Chris and Jerry.

Water and Sewer Standard – James Armstrong was unable to join the meeting until later. Tom reported that the SMAC established a committee, the Standards Working Group, which will work on improving the process for reviewing, vetting and approving standards. James Armstrong will represent local government on that committee. Once the process for reviewing standards is defined, the SMAC will revisit the draft Water and Sewer Standard.

Census Working Group – At the April SMAC meeting, Alice Wilson asked that the SMAC consider taking a role in planning for updates to the Local Update for Census Addresses. Alex Rickard reported that the SMAC appointed a small group to develop a structure and process for dealing with this issue. Tom Morgan, Alex Rickard and Jeff Brown will develop recommendations on how to proceed. For now, the goal is to maintain momentum and a positive relationship with Census Bureau colleagues in both the Charlotte office and the Maryland office.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Alex reported that the TAC met on May 10 and covered three agenda items. One related to the recommendations that come out of the NC OneMap revitalization pre-planning project. Due to lack of funding, options are limited, although some progress is being made by CGIA staff, as reported at the GICC meeting.

The TAC proposed revisions to the bylaws, which were adopted by the GICC. Finally, there was discussion of a statewide GIS architecture. DENR, DOT and various other state agencies all have different GIS platforms and there is less coordination among the state agencies than everyone would like. Lack of funding is also an issue here. Alex said that he would report as he learns more.

The TAC has now established a regular meeting schedule for the remainder of the year.

Working Group for Roads and Transportation (WGRT) and Working Group for Seamless Parcels (WGSP) – Alex reported problems surfaced with the WGSP exchange grant with EPA. As Alex reported previously, the cost to build the exchange node and the translator tool came in \$250,000 over budget. The EPA contractor (CGI) never provided detailed cost estimates, which was needed to determine what could be cut from the scope of work. The outcome is that EPA agreed to award the grant funds to DENR, which can then hire its own contractor. Alex believes this is good news as there is an opportunity to complete the contract at a more reasonable cost. The sense was that the EPA contractor brought significant overhead costs. The downside is that DENR has to submit the project for review through the OITS Enterprise Project Management Office, a state requirement for IT projects involving more than \$100,000. Once that process is complete, the team will have to prepare a request for proposals, an evaluation plan and finally a contract. The process may take six to eight months at best.

This has implications for the schedule of the WGRT FGDC CAP grant. The Eastern Carolina Council, the FGDC grant recipient, and DOT cannot wait six to eight months to start the street centerline translator project. This means that the two projects to develop translator tools will not be able to collaborate as closely as hoped but will need to follow parallel paths. It will likely be impossible to build a single translator tool to support both projects.

Eastern Carolina Council and DOT will explore other options for completing the FGDC grant so that the FGDC CAP funding is not lost.

Julie noted that Guilford Metro 9-1-1 gave a presentation at the GIS Conference and at the May GICC meeting about Next Generation 911 and the need to seamlessly integrate and share GIS data. The GIS community has been working to build seamless statewide data sets for parcels and roads for what seems like many years without success. Given how challenging this has been, integrating and sharing data to support the Next Generation 911 is an even bigger challenge. Alex echoed Julie's frustration about the delays in getting the EPA project underway. He said that part of the reason that EPA awarded the grant funds to DENR was to obligate the money before it was lost. He noted that the FGDC CAP grant process is very efficient.

Continuing the SMAC report, Alice said that there was discussion about the value of the GISP certification versus the new Esri certification. She suggested that the LGC may want to explore this issue at some point.

The NC Board on Geographic Names is discussing naming conventions to ensure that features are consistent. Tom noted that Amy Durden is the LGC report on the NC BGN and perhaps the LGC should invite Amy to report at the next LGC meeting.

Alice said that Gary Thompson remains concerned about a request by a company called LightSquared for a waiver from the FCC to take the radio spectrum used for satellite

communication and use it from a ground based transmitter to develop a nationwide broadband wireless network. Tests have indicated that interference with local GPS is likely, which could have a big impact on 911 response and other local GIS applications. Julie reported that the GICC will send a letter to the Federal Communications Commission voicing the Council's concern about the potential interference with GPS if LightSquared's request for a waiver is granted.

Alice said that John Lay, NC Office for Geospatial and Technology Management, reported on their project to map building footprints. Alice raised the LGC's concern about the lack of metadata but did not get a clear response at the SMAC meeting. She reported that at another meeting, Hope Morgan said that GTM is reviewing comments from counties and working to finalize the data before releasing the final data with metadata and benchmark information.

Alice said that the Standards Working Group, mentioned earlier, will include Tom Morgan, Kelly Eubank with NC Archives and History, James Armstrong, Steve Strader, John Farley and Jeff Brown.

Finally, she said that Kristian Forslin, NC Railroad, and Jeff Brown reported on the need for a railroad data set. Rather than create a new working group, the SMAC assigned the task of assessing this need to the WGRT.

Julie asked if anything was happening with the Stream Mapping Advisory Committee. Tom said that the group has not been active and will report on developments that arise.

## GICC REPORT

Julie reported that the GICC met on May 11. She said that the M&O Committee organized a GIS Serving North Carolina Day at the General Assembly on May 18. The goal was to demonstrate the broad use of GIS across the state so that legislators will better understand the value of GIS and good geospatial data. The LGC helped recruit several local governments to present. The local government presentations were:

- Wake County's new IMAPS map viewer, developed in collaboration in with the City of Raleigh.
- City of Durham's interactive map application for economic development.
- Forsyth County's analysis of home foreclosures.
- City of Asheboro's E311 mobile application.
- City of Charlotte's dashboard, developed for the Police Department for crime analysis and response.
- Western Piedmont COG's assessment of youth gang activity.

In addition several state government agencies also presented. Julie expressed her appreciation to the local government presenters. Julie said there was minimal attendance by legislators although several staff members did visit the presentations. Jerry Fralick, State CIO and GICC member, suggested that next year the local presenters inform their

local legislator in advance. Julie noted that a newly-elected legislator, perhaps from the Onslow or Pender county area, is a former GIS person with the military. He understands the value of GIS and was receptive to the message.

Julie reported that the GICC adopted the LGC bylaws along with revised bylaws for all the other standing committees.

Julie said that Brett Spivey, CGIA programmer and NC OneMap support staff, presented the latest updates to NC OneMap at the GICC meeting. As Alex noted earlier, there is a lack of funding to contract this work but staff are working to implement some of the recommendations of the NC OneMap revitalization pre-planning project. Earlier this year, several new features were added, including a NC OneMap blog to which users can subscribe through a RSS feed and a map service search. The new search capability was identified as one of the primary shortcomings of NC OneMap in the focus group sessions during the pre-planning project.

Julie announced that in the next few days CGIA staff will activate a new tool called GeoPortal Server, an open source application recently made available by Esri. Alice said that this was reported at the SMAC meeting and described GeoPortal as a one-stop shop for the discovery, previewing, download and use of GIS data and web services.

Tom confirmed that the announcement about GeoPortal will go out to the list serves in the next couple of days. The tool will support access to data both through web map services to a desktop as well as direct download. He noted that it will open up discovery to North Carolina data from those outside the state and may reduce requests to local governments that are serving data to NC OneMap.

Initially, GeoPortal will support access to the statewide 2010 orthoimagery for North Carolina. Over the next several months the contents of the NC OneMap data download and web map services pages will migrate to the Geospatial Portal. To access the GeoPortal, go to [data.nconemap.com/geoportal](http://data.nconemap.com/geoportal), or simply access by clicking on the Geospatial Portal logo on the NC OneMap homepage ([www.nconemap.com](http://www.nconemap.com)).

#### ORTHO PROJECT UPDATE

Tom said this agenda item was covered in the WGOP report earlier. He said that delivery of the imagery has been completed to all 100 counties and CGIA is now receiving comments. As noted earlier, the deadline for receiving comments is 90 days after the delivery date.

He acknowledged Gene's comments and said that in some cases the data may be better in urban areas than in forested rural areas. In most counties the imagery is excellent; in a few it may not be as good as they might have liked. It was a difficult but very successful project in terms of acquiring, processing and delivering the data within the project's very tight schedule. He said that many counties are very appreciative, noting that Cherokee County said this is first time they have had 200 scale orthos. The WGOP learned a great

deal and the knowledge gained is reflected in the business plan. Hopefully, the next project will be more effective due to what was learned during this project.

Tom expressed his excitement and appreciation to Chris and Jerry for participating on the WGOP. They will do a good job of voicing the concerns and issues important to the local government community.

#### FEDERAL SURVEY ON ELEVATION DATA

Julie noted that at the last LGC meeting, the LGC proposed that its members all respond to the survey. Later, Steve Strader, USGS, informed her that only three people could respond. The LGC arranged for three teams, representing the coastal, piedmont and mountain regions to respond to the survey. Julie and Alex submitted the survey for the coastal region. Andy Goretti, with help from Wake County and others, responded for the piedmont region, and Gene, with help from others, responded for the mountains.

She said the survey was difficult, particularly in calculating potential savings, because North Carolina already has elevation data from the statewide LiDAR. Gene echoed her comments about the questions related to savings and costs. He said that the questions related to regular re-flights were not relevant because elevation doesn't often change. Both Julie and Gene felt that the survey was confusing but that they responded as best they could. Tom noted that the knowledge that local governments are not spending money on collecting elevation data may still be useful information to the federal government.

There has been no follow-up from Steve as yet. Tom suggested inviting Steve to give a report at the next LGC meeting. Alice said that Steve reported on the survey at the SMAC meeting and that the purpose is to modernize and improve elevation data nationwide.

#### 2011-12 LGC APPOINTMENTS

Tom said that the two-year terms of Kathryn Clifton, Gene Hume and Alex Rickard will end on June 30. Tom will contact the organizations that they represent and request new appointments or reappointments. He suggested that these members contact their appointing authority and let them know if they want to continue or not. In early July, once the new appointments are made and the 2011-12 LGC is convened, the LGC will have to elect a chair.

**Action Item** – Tom will work with NC League of Municipalities, Carolina URISA and the NC Association of Regional Council Executive Directors to get their appointments to the LGC.

Two other appointments are expiring. Alice Wilson was appointed to serve on the SMAC, replacing Chad Ives in late 2010. That term expires on June 30. Alice was

nominated to continue and the LGC voted to reappoint Alice as LGC representative to the SMAC.

Alex Rickard was appointed to serve on the TAC, replacing Colleen Sharpe last year when Colleen was named TAC chair. That term expires on June 30. Alex was nominated to continue and the LGC voted to reappoint Alex as LGC representative to the TAC.

## LGC ACTION LIST

There was one open item on the LGC action list. The WGOP and the GICC previously requested stories from local governments about how they are using color infrared imagery. Kathryn had promised to provide a report on how the City of Salisbury is using NAIP imagery, which included the CIR band, to map tree canopy.

Kathryn requested the data from Dan Madding in November and received the data three days later. She expressed her appreciation to Dan for his prompt response. The city used image classification tools in ArcGIS 10 to extract a tree canopy layer from the imagery. She said that for several years the city GIS section had budgeted and requested funding to contract this work. The project was not approved until this year, when the image classification tools were incorporated into ArcGIS. The city was able to do the work themselves within about a week, saving significant money.

She provided a report of the project to Tom along with some examples of the results. Tom will share the results with the WGOP.

**Action Item** – Tom will forward Kathryn’s report to the WGOP.

Julie noted that all items in the action list, prior to this meeting, have been completed.

## OTHER BUSINESS

Alice attended the imagery delivery meeting in her region. She was notified about the meeting by Jeff Brown. She expressed frustration, however, that often municipalities are not informed about data releases or other new developments. She also noted that counties do not always readily keep municipalities informed about Census Bureau projects and other issues. Kathryn echoed this frustration. Alice asked if the LGC could address this communication issue.

Tom sympathized with the problem. He did explain that the protocol for the ortho delivery meetings required that we first notify the county 911 coordinator since the project was funded by the NC 911 Board. After that, CGIA did notify the county GIS coordinator and, as with Alice, many of the municipal and COG GIS contacts for those counties in that cluster meeting. CGIA also asked the county GIS coordinator to notify municipalities and COGs in their county. One problem was that the meetings were often scheduled only two days out, depending on the delivery of the imagery from the

contractors, the completion of the QC and the difficulty of finding a host and meeting location. Often the logistical details for one meeting were finalized during the week of the meeting, sometimes while Jeff Brown was on the road attending other delivery meetings. Jeff was not always able to reach all of the municipal and COG GIS contacts.

Regarding the larger problem of poor communication between jurisdictions, Tom noted that while there is good collaboration between city and county staff in most counties, there are exceptions. Alex echoed this assessment. CGIA works hard to widely disseminate information related to data releases, GICC policy decisions, standards, etc. through list serves and the GICC and NC OneMap web sites. CGIA also promotes collaboration among the members of the GIS community but cannot solve the problem of poor collaboration in certain jurisdictions.

Tom said that a feature on NC OneMap (GIS in NC – Who? What? Where?) does include a list of meetings that is updated regularly. It did not include the imagery delivery meetings for the reasons he mentioned earlier. In addition, there is a NC OneMap blog that features data updates and information about updates to NC OneMap, which offers a RSS feed.

A long discussion ensued about how the LGC can help resolve the problem of communicating information, particularly to municipalities. Kathryn suggested a Facebook page to disseminate information about meetings and data releases. Alice noted that county IT departments often block access to Facebook.

Julie asked if the SMAC is the only committee that can create working groups. Perhaps the LGC could ask the SMAC to address the city-county collaboration problem. Tom said the LGC can create a working group. Since the LGC represents local government, it may be appropriate for the LGC, rather than the SMAC, to bring together some city and county representatives to address the problem. Alex suggested that the solution is not obvious and it may be impossible to force jurisdictions to “play nice.” He said that perhaps the solution is to use LGC Alerts and other tools to improve communications. Tom agreed that it will be difficult for the LGC to solve individual local government relationship problems. He suggested that the LGC Alerts, the GICC and NC OneMap web sites, the NC OneMap blog and RSS feed and perhaps some other social media tools can help improve communications so that municipalities have better access to information.

Kathryn suggested that a ‘push’ solution for sharing information is better than having to regularly visit a web site. This is particularly true for a one-person shop in a small municipality. Tom said CGIA will explore better use of ‘push’ technologies. Julie said that ‘push’ technology is how she gets information. Julie said that she will explore creating a local government Facebook page.

**Action Item** – Tom will explore the adoption by CGIA of ‘push’ technologies to improve the distribution of information.

**Action Item** – Julie will explore creating a local government Facebook page.

There was no other new business.

#### NEXT MEETING

The next LGC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday August 24, 2011.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.