

IDAHO SDI PROJECT-STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS SUMMARY NOTES FROM POST FALLS-JUNE 12

Prepared, 6-19-2008

Introduction

These are summary notes from the stakeholder meeting for Idaho Spatial Data Infrastructure Planning Project on June 12, 2008 in Post Falls. The main objective of the project is preparing strategic and business plans to guide long-term development and enhancement of a statewide SDI. This is one of six regional stakeholder meetings conducted at different locations around the state (other locations include McCall, Lewiston, Pocatello, Twin Falls, Nampa) during the month of June. The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Get input and ideas for achieving the SDI
- Learn about status of stakeholder GIS use, business needs, and ideas on direction and goals
- Build stakeholder understanding of and support for statewide SDI development

Participants are encouraged to submit comments, clarification, additional points, etc.. Comments and mark-ups may be submitted in electronic form (highlighted mark-up of this document) by **July 14, 2008**. Please submit via email to Gail Ewart (gail.ewart@cio.idaho.gov) and Peter Croswell (pcroswell@croswell-schulte.com).

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Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Business Drivers and Business Needs for GIS
3. High-level Characterization of GIS Status and Obstacles
4. Geospatial Data Activities and Needs
5. Ideas for Improvements to Statewide GIS Access and Coordination
6. Brainstorm Session on Mission, Vision, and Goals for Implementing Idaho's Spatial Information Infrastructure
7. Summarize Results of Meeting and Identify Follow-up

Summary Notes

Business Drivers (major program area, need, or challenge that GIS technology and geospatial data can help support or address)

- Reduction in redundant work processes and better sharing of data (eliminate multiple departments maintaining the same data in inconsistent ways)
- Public Safety Support: GIS connection with E911 efforts and emergency response. Better state coordination of E911-based GIS data compilation. Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APSCO) supports this. Public safety applications have need for all Framework data layers
- Economic development: Use of GIS to support access to information for development site selection. City of Haydon has been successful.
- Support for land development planning: Access GIS data and use applications for preliminary planning and design work. Avoids great amount of research and field work. Noted by Avista and local governments.
- Timber Assessment: discussed GIS Web-based application used by Riley Creek Lumber developed by Sentry Dynamics. Supports access to timber volume assessment tools and property information
- Utility Master Planning: use GIS as tool to support planning process. Also need to coordinate well with engineering contractors to doing planning work to deliver GIS data in a usable format for on-going update and use by municipality
- Real Property Appraisal: use of GIS to support more equitable and complete appraisal of parcel values. GIS can ensure that all parcels are being accounted for and that appraisals are consistent and equitable.. Also, GIS is tool to support examination of regional and neighborhood factors that influence valuation (sales history and physical attributes). Also need GIS to support accurate capture of multiple taxing districts.
- Historical Archives: Use of GIS to support a geographic archive into historical data. Can support modeling, analysis of future trends, and potentially legal cases that require historical information (parcel boundaries, infrastructure information, permitting, signage).
- Any applications that show GIS support for "safety" is a good selling point
- GIS and geographic data from government sources as incentive and supporter of private businesses—title companies, realtors, land developers, and array of value-added data/product services.

Current GIS Status, Obstacles, Limitations

- Inconsistent land base: No high-accuracy, high-resolution, consistent land-base information available statewide. Lack of full coverage of important data—locally and statewide
- “Fuzzy Creep” Job assignments: Government agencies tend to make informal assignments of job responsibilities to individuals who show initiative and skills (work outside of “job description”). Can create confusion, inefficiency in work assignments, and assignment of mundane tasks to employees with high skills sets.
- Senior Official Connection: Always problem in getting awareness, understanding, and sufficient time with senior officials to get necessary support for GIS. Need for continual education process.
- Low-population Counties: Low population counties and cities do not have the resources and staff to support major GIS database development and GIS program operations. Resource problems with the “one-person” GIS Department.
- Historical Data and Institutional Knowledge: Use GIS as a means to store map history—infrastructure changes and property boundary disputes. This includes the need to maintain institutional knowledge—important knowledge about geographic data that is not well documented but maintained in the minds of staff who depart or retire
- Overselling GIS: Sometimes, younger staff can oversell the technology—promise results that are unrealistic in stated time and cost. In the end, this does damage to programs by creating lack of confidence and understanding by senior officials.
- GIS clearinghouse (Inside Idaho) could be improved (if resources available): more intuitive front-end interface, documentation, more access to local data, better direct access to data custodian agencies possibly addition of more Web-based services and applications (beyond data access and download). Note: Discussion gave high marks to Inside Idaho. There was acknowledgement that it needs sustained and increased resources.
- Network Infrastructure: complex array and options for broadband network access across state. Presents obstacles to effective communication and data transfer.
- Political obstacles: prevents building multi-organizational relationships. Organization missions do not establish clear basis for collaboration. Narrow focus on individual organization missions—not long-term benefits of collaboration.
- Hard to sell GIS since it is hard to show ROI
- Inconsistent policies among local governments re charging fees for GIS data. Need statewide consistency with perspective of access to data by public and private companies seeking to provide value-added products
- Private sector cautions about public sector fee for service shops
- Need champions; upper management support.

Geospatial Data Status and Needs

- Framework Themes: Gail Ewart discussed current Idaho Framework Data Themes (commonly needed data by majority of stakeholders) with idea that this definition can be adapted as part of this SDI project. Current Idaho Framework Themes are a) Geodetic Control, b) Cadastral, c) Orthoimagery, d) Transportation, e) Land Use/Land Cover, f) Hydrography/Watersheds, g) Elevation, h) Governmental Units.
- Status of Framework development work at state level:
 - GIO preparing proposed process for standards making and approval
 - Imagery – 2009 NAIP partnership purchase. Contribution commitments & upgrade needs
 - Cadastral Reference (updating GCDB). Assessors and surveyors are also involved; plans are beginning to gel; led by Sheldon Bluestein
 - Parcels – working on goals and objectives for statewide ownership; led by Craig Rindlisbacher and Jeff Servatius
 - Geodetic Control – ITD has agreed to be the lead agency for Height Modernization. Next steps include writing a proposal
- Orthoimagery: Gail Ewart discussed current project in place for full state coverage of orthoimagery as part of Farm Service Agency National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP). This will deliver 1-meter resolution (3-bands) statewide with opportunity for increased resolution and IR band for selected areas. This is leaf-on coverage. Mechanism is set-up to support contributions of funding for enhanced image capture. Orthoimagery Consortium: Kootenai County and cities in the County are cooperating with utility company, Avista, in the acquisition of orthoimagery (color, 6-inch resolution, leaf-off) for urban areas. Countywide coverage at 1-foot resolution.
- Orthoimagery: recognized need for 6-inch resolution orthoimagery for urban areas. 1-meter resolution imagery is of limited use but still valuable for statewide coverage (although 18-inch is better for rural areas). DEQ mentioned that

stream corridors could use 1-foot resolution. Leaf-on coverage for NAIP imagery is not best for urban areas. One-year refresh is best for urban areas experiencing development. Some, but not great need expressed for IR band.

- Inconsistent land base: No high-accuracy, high-resolution, consistent land-base information available statewide
- Parcel boundary accuracy: need adequate parcel boundary accuracy in GIS. State Tax Commission provides minimal cartographic accuracy requirements (State Mapping Manual) but actual mapping accuracy varies among counties. Many counties still use paper maps. Some counties use contract services for parcel mapping
- Resolving County boundaries as part of GCDB effort is important. BLM role is critical.
- Important in resolving parcel boundaries associated with timber and mining claims
- Administrative District Boundaries: very complex set of district and program boundaries (within counties and statewide). Some of these constitute taxing districts for various service entities. Taxing district boundaries (resolved to local data) is very important. Local service districts (public utility districts, school districts, fire districts, etc.) often follow parcel boundaries but sometimes street centerlines or physical boundaries. Sometimes hard to map. Need to examine State Tax Commission approach.
- Utility Data: Maintained by mix of municipalities, independent utility districts, private utility companies. Water, electric, gas utility infrastructure important as an element of "critical infrastructure" with potential data/system security concerns. Need data standards for GIS capture and maintenance of water and sewer data. Important to capture boundaries of utility service areas particularly where they constitute taxation districts (needed by State Tax Commission). Private companies may provide utility data to governments but confidentiality and data access restrictions apply.
- Easement boundaries: potential value in mapping easement boundaries? Group was mixed on this issue. Acknowledged as important but difficulty of getting easement boundary source information (public ROWs, utility easements, private conveyances of access rights).

Green Infrastructure: growing interest in green infrastructure as GIS data issue to support land management. Green infrastructure is the *"interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, wetlands, parks, forest preserves and native plant vegetation, that naturally manages stormwater, reduces flooding risk and improves water quality."*

Discussion on Draft Vision and Mission (reaction to draft Vision and Mission statements prepared by the Executive Steering Committee)

Draft Vision:

"Idaho's spatial data infrastructure is widely used to enhance and expedite public- and private-sector policies and decisions for the benefit of Idahoans and beyond"

Draft Mission:

"Idaho's geospatial community will deliver a robust statewide spatial data infrastructure that supports routine and extraordinary business needs"

- Need to make sure that there is an effective explanation of context and major terms (e.g., SDI) as a part of an introduction to the Vision and Mission statements
- Mission: wording, "...routine and extraordinary.." is a little vague. Maybe strike this and use such terms as "mainstream" or "mission critical"
- Mission: not just "deliver" but use term, "maintain"
- Mission: possibly use wording, "...Idaho's geospatial community will maintain and deliver a robust Infrastructure.."
- Vision: term, "business needs" is vague and open to confusion
- Vision: somehow need to reflect importance of SDI
- Vision: remove words, "...and expedite". Perhaps use wording, "..add efficiency and effectiveness..."
- Convey concept of what SDI will be and what problems it will solve. Possibly include more specificity about what SDI will deliver: "safety," "improved quality of life," "effective use of resources"

Discussion on Draft Goals (reaction to draft Vision and Mission statements prepared by the Executive Steering Committee)

Draft Goals:

1. Secure sustained funding to support SDI implementation and management by the end of 2010.
2. Develop and establish pathways for stewarding Framework data by March 1, 2009.

3. Create and effectively communicate a sound business case for the SDI that promotes alignment of investments in spatial data and technology by the end of June 30, 2009.
 4. Support regional GIS user groups and establish or enhance regional centers to aggregate and extend access to Framework and the technology to use it, with emphasis on low-resourced jurisdictions and organizations not able to maintain GIS capability on their own beginning in 2009.
 5. Conceive and implement an improved governance and coordination structure, with appropriate legislation, policies, and management practices that support realization of the SDI by the end of 2009.
 6. Support local data development through collaboratively developing standards, supporting partnerships, and providing funding by July 1, 2010.
 7. Create an effective communication, education and support environment and tools that increase awareness, broad support, and wide use of the SDI.
 8. Expand the use of spatial data and technology into new business areas.
- Discussed the fact that these goals create a basis for defining more detailed initiatives and actions. In other words, in the strategic and business plans, multiple initiatives of a more specific nature will be defined under each of these goals and have timing, resources, and performance criteria defined.
 - Goal #1: Use phrase, "...SDI implementation, management, and distribution...". Or maybe just eliminate words, "implementation and management" and just say SDI.
 - Keep wording as short and concise as possible
 - Goal #4: consider differentiation of low-resourced areas from counties with "some resources". Idea was issue that it could be non-productive to "throw money" at jurisdictions not in best position to use it effectively and apply their own resources to build GIS program.
 - Goal #4: be careful of focusing on local initiatives and avoid potential problem of state "unfunded mandates."
 - Should reflect importance of sustained funding for clearinghouse.
 - Need to emphasize statewide completion of framework data development
 - Need to reflect importance of state buy-in and support
 - Focus on deliverables and specific results. Perhaps make goals much more specific on particular initiatives and results that can help justify funding. Commentary: Will more specificity in goals impact strategic long-term focus of plan. Initiatives defined under each goal can be more specific.

Potential Initiatives (ideas on important initiatives to be cited in the strategic and business plans for SDI development)

- Project Management Standards and practices: Can use improved, standard, well documented project planning and management practices and tools for GIS development issues to avoid overselling of initiatives and best use of available resources to support project coordination, cost efficiency, quality results, and adherence to planned schedule
- Improve, enhance, and get more sustainable resourcing for statewide GIS portal (Inside Idaho). U of I is well positioned for expansion of program. Improve user interface, establish additional data connections (virtual data clearinghouse idea—not dependent on all data being centralized), and more on-line services. "federated system configuration" concept.
- Put in place better organizational incentives and administrative structures for project collaboration—even when organizational missions do not seem to have synergy or basis for cooperation.
- Statewide parcel mapping: Need mechanism and funding approach to support GIS-based parcel mapping statewide with focus on low-resourced counties.
- Need to clarify IGC membership and succession of membership and leadership. Have better ways to support IGC communications (voice, video conferences)
- Examine current resources applied to geospatial initiatives and find ways to coordinate and realign them to support SDI
- Very important to engage and get support from public. Use public to help get support from state legislators.
- Investigate grant sources for funding but be careful about terms and commitments applied to use of grant sources
- Build regional centers to support access to GIS data services by entities and public in regional areas. Base regional centers on existing services—primarily university-based centers.

- Capitalize on existing regional user groups and provide for more effective coordination and role of these groups.
- Enlist influential current users to spread the word, and develop materials for locals to distribute.

Other Information and Ideas

- Engage APSCO in move to coordinate E911 programs statewide? There are 21 counties with no E911 and not well-resourced to develop E911.
- City of Spokane has nice economic development information portal
- Canyon County uses a special “information technology fund”. Allows a dedicated funding source for IT and GIS initiatives. Note: This is an effective approach used in other public agencies that provides a solid accounting mechanism for delegation of funds for GIS.
- In making pitch to state legislature—best neighboring state comparisons on MT, UT, AZ
- Concept of GIS like a utility—expected service delivered in easily accessible system environment.
- Geographic disparity and inconsistency in type and accuracy of GIS data across the state
- Contact Bonneville County for their ideas and participation
- Green Infrastructure: growing interest in green infrastructure as GIS data issue to support land management. Green infrastructure is the “*interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, wetlands, parks, forest preserves and native plant vegetation, that naturally manages stormwater, reduces flooding risk and improves water quality*”.