



North Carolina  
Geographic Information Coordinating Council  
Local Government Committee

MINUTES  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
February 23, 2011

PROCEEDINGS

The quarterly meeting of the Local Government Committee (LGC), a committee of the Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC), was held on February 23, 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  
Alice Wilson, City of New Bern, SMAC Rep  
Tom Tribble, CGIA, Staff to the LGC

ABSENT

Jerry Simmons, Pender County, representing NC PMA

CENSUS SESSION AT NC GIS CONFERENCE

Alex Rickard reported that the census session at the NC GIS Conference was useful. The panel discussed what can be done over the next ten years to improve the Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) program as well as other programs. Deirdre Bishop, Assistant Division Chief for the Census Bureau in Bethesda, MD, expressed

interest in working with North Carolina to improve the coordination on these programs. Alex believes that the session helped generate some momentum for progress and an on-going dialogue. Julie Stamper asked if the SMAC needed to establish a working group to lead an effort to collaborate with the Census Bureau. Alex thinks this is a good idea but is reluctant to volunteer to serve on another working group given his roles on the WGRT and WGSP. He suggested that the LGC broach this idea with Anne Payne, chair of the SMAC, or bring it up at the next GICC meeting. He was unable to attend the Addressing session but he believes that the FGDC addressing standard has been or will soon be officially adopted.

Alex suggested that it may also be a good idea to establish a working group on addresses. Based on his discussions with others in North Carolina, the biggest problem with the LUCA program was that the Census Bureau's address point files do not distinguish residences from businesses. He suggested developing a template or address standard, with Census Bureau input.

Chris Koltyk reported that in Moore County it was a pretty simple and painless process to extract attributes from tax parcels to distinguish residential addresses from commercial or industrial addresses. Chris thought the biggest issue or problem was that the census field workers who confirm the addresses would report that the addresses did not exist when Chris knows that they do. Although the Census Bureau experimented with using GPS and electronic maps, Chris felt that the counters had minimal training and limited information about the area and that the Census Bureau put the burden on the county to prove that the addresses were correct.

Tom Tribble suggested that Chris's observations support the need to maintain the momentum and initiate an effort to work with the Census Bureau to identify and solve these problems over the next few years. There is an opportunity to work more closely with the Census Bureau to improve all of their programs and to begin to think about how the NC GIS community can develop statewide data sets so that the Census Bureau doesn't have to engage 100 counties and 500 plus municipalities. We can build on the activities that Alex is involved in with the WGRT and WGSP as well as the work on addressing.

Alex noted that Moore County was able to pull residential and commercial data from the tax database and that the tax databases in many counties may include commercial or industrial attributes but no residence information. Alice Wilson noted that one problem is that many apartment complexes are listed as commercial and can then be missed. Chris said that the information will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction but in Moore County the apartment complexes are listed as multifamily residential units.

Chris commented on the idea of a creating a centralized address database. Next Generation 911 will lead to regional 911 centers rather than local city or county 911 centers. This will provide the opportunity to create a centralized system, not necessary a database, for exchanging or updating address information. The statewide central address database developed a couple of years ago was never updated. He noted that the

Department of Justice is using Bing to deal with addressing functionality in tracking sexual offenders. The opportunity is there to establish a statewide address system rather than a database. Tom agrees with Chris and suggested that we cannot come up with a solution during this meeting. He simply suggested that we have the opportunity to open a dialogue with the Census Bureau and maybe even get their funding support to develop some tools that may serve as a model for the rest of the country. It sounds as if Ms. Bishop is willing to work with us. He also agreed that Chris makes a good point that Next Generation 911 may drive many of the coordination efforts over the next few years.

In the event that a working group is established to work with the Census Bureau, Alex suggested that CGIA's representative to the National States Geographic Information Council be involved because the Census Bureau is going to be looking for a national solution and other states will be tracking this issue. Julia said that we want to solve the problems for North Carolina but support from across the country would be even better. Gene Hume opined that there will be no lack of support across the country for revising the process for submitting addresses because it was no easier for the rest of the country.

Kathryn Clifton said that she has participated in option 1 of the LUCA process for two censuses. The first time the City of Salisbury used paper files, which was very painful. The second time the city had in place a point address file of all addresses, residential and business, which tied into their street centerlines. The LUCA effort took about a week to accomplish versus two months with the paper process. The city ended up submitting and getting approval for well over a thousand addresses. The city uses their point address file for a variety of applications, including computer-aided dispatch and police and fire response and plan to use it for sanitation addressing. Extracting data from the parcels does not work well for the city because that database is not kept up-to-date by the county and does not accommodate for multiple addresses on a single parcel. She said that she would be interested in a standard to which the city could their data to or keep working in their current format and then translate their data to that standard as needed.

Julie said that it sounds as if there will be plenty of volunteers to participate in a working group if that occurs. Tom said that he is not suggesting that North Carolina work on this problem in a vacuum. It does need to be part of a national effort and it is critical that we involve the Census Bureau. Based on the feedback from the census session at the conference, it appears that Deirdre Bishop recognizes North Carolina's interest and concerns and the problems with the various programs. She will certainly approach this effort from the point of view of developing national solutions.

**Action Item** – Alice, who was involved in planning the census session as a member of the GIS Conference Program Committee, will raise this issue with the Anne Payne, chair of the SMAC, since the SMAC will meet before the next GICC meeting.

Depending on the outcome of that meeting, Julie will raise the issue before the GICC.

## REPORTS

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Alex reported that the TAC has not met since the last LGC meeting. He anticipates that a meeting will be scheduled soon.

#### Statewide Mapping Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Working Group for Roads and Transportation (WGRT) and Working Group for Seamless Parcels (WGSP) – Alex reported EPA has finally given approved of the scope of work and the cost estimates that the WGSP prepared. Later this afternoon Alex will join a conference call with EPA and the primary contractor for the grant – CGI, which will work with several subcontractors. It appears that the grant will not have enough money to accomplish everything that the WGSP would like, which was expected. The discussion today will address the code and libraries that already exist. He expects that a final contract will be in place by mid-March and that it will take 12-18 months to complete the project, again about the time frame that was expected.

Regarding the WGRT FGDC CAP grant, it is still not clear as to how the funding and the work will support or match up with the EPA exchange grant through the WGSP. Alex expressed concern that if the WGRT FGDC CAP grant funds are funneled through the EPA prime contractor, as much as 30-40% of the grant funds could be used for overhead and management. If the FGDC grant funds can go directly to the subcontractors, which will be doing much of the actual work, and cut out some of the administrative costs of CGI, then the funds will go further.

The chairs of the WGRT and WGSP will meet next week after the EPA conference call to discuss options for using the WGRT FGDC grant funds if they are not allocated to the EPA contractor. Alex said that he would hate to return the grant funds to FGDC but neither does he want to see a significant amount of these funds be charged to the EPA contractor's administrative costs. The goal is to have one product that does data translation for both parcels and centerlines but that may not be possible.

Julia said she was sorry that the wheels were not turning faster. Alex indicated that if the WGRT decided to work independently, then a working solution for translating street centerlines could be in place in 12 months. If the goal is to develop one tool that will translate both parcels and centerlines, it may take two years and may not do everything in the proposed scope of work.

Ortho Project - Alice reported that the ortho team will be meeting with representatives of military regarding the release of some of the data.

She knows that delivery of the data to the county E-911 center will start soon but as a municipal government person, she wants to know whether cities will receive the data in a timely way. Julie noted that Kathryn has previously asked this same question. Kathryn said that her county is good about sharing data but operate on their own time frame. James reported that he was invited to attend a meeting on March 1 to receive the Richmond County data. Julie asked if cities were invited. James said he did not see any

cities on the invitation but he wouldn't expect staff from cities in Richmond County to attend as they would expect him to share the data with them.

Alice again noted that the meeting with the military was the final hurdle before releasing the data. Julie asked if the meeting to seek approval from the military involves all the data or only those tiles that cover military bases. Alice believes that it only involves the military bases. James said that his understanding was that the E-911 centers would receive orthos covering the military bases but that the county would not get those tiles. Chris asked for some clarification.

Tom said that he did not have all the answers and would seek clarification on some of the questions that are being raised. He reported that data delivery has begun. Data are being delivered today in New Bern for the counties in that area and in Pittsboro tomorrow for the counties in that area. The E-911 Coordinators and the GIS coordinators are invited to the meetings. The GIS Coordinators are being strongly encouraged to share the data as quickly as possible with other jurisdictions in their county. He does not think that city representatives were invited. Moore County will be scheduled in the fifth week, perhaps three weeks from now. Moore County will be included in a cluster of counties that includes Hoke, Cumberland and Harnett counties. The report that has been released on NC OneMap lists the data that each county will receive. It includes the full TIF files for the county and compressed files for each adjacent county. Tom said he did not know if there is any restriction on the release of photography for military bases. He will try to find out the answer to that question. The delivery schedule is in place but is not on the web site because the schedule is still fluid and depends on the completion of the final visual quality control. Basically there will be 2-3 meetings each week for about nine weeks. Each meeting will cover a cluster of counties. Two meetings were held the week before the conference and delivery resumed this week.

Continuing the SMAC report, Alice reported that some new features have been added to NC OneMap that are very cool. Tom described some of the new features. One is a NC OneMap blog to which you can subscribe through a RSS feed. Julie noted that there are five posts to the blog so far. Tom added that one of the very valid criticisms or recommendations that came out of the NC OneMap revitalization pre-planning project, in which the LGC participated, is that the NC OneMap search capabilities were not very functional. A new map service search feature has been added. A catalog link under Web Map Services opens up a search tool that supports a layer and key word search and enables users to preview the data, which can then be opened in your desktop GIS. He said that CGIA staff are working hard to implement some of the recommendations in the pre-planning study that can be accomplished without additional funding.

James reported that the Floodplain Mapping Program in the NC Office of Geospatial and Technology Management (GTM) is developing building footprints and he believes they will be available for every county. Alice said that she already received the footprints for her county. The data includes a finish floor elevation and a ground elevation. She has some issues with the elevation data, especially the finish floor elevation. Chris asked if they used 2010 imagery or imagery that the county provided in 2007. Alice was

uncertain about the data sources. Julie reported that GTM planned to take pictures of buildings as well. Alice said that her understanding is that GTM plans to release the data through NC OneMap. Tom suggested that it may be useful to contact GTM to confirm the deliverables, the data sources and the coverage. Chris agreed, saying that access to the metadata is important so that local governments will know the date of the imagery that was used. When Moore County acquired their 2007 orthos, the contractor also provided building footprints. Chris noted that the 2010 imagery that counties will receive soon could be used to update the building footprints and wondered if GTM will have resources to do that.

**Action Item** – Tom will work with Julie to get a report from GTM on the building footprint products, distribution plans, metadata, geographic coverage and plans for maintenance.

Utility Standard - James Armstrong presented to the SMAC the latest draft recommendations for revising the utility standard that the GICC adopted in 1997. He received some comments and suggestions, which he has integrated into the new draft standard. He added some simple topology rules and metadata to the standard. The goal is to move the standard from the coverage system to GeoDatabase, a more current data structure, and to add couple of new elements, such as hydrants and manholes. There were questions about providing the content standard in a format other than GeoDatabase. James said that it can easily be ported to a shapefile or XML document although one would lose the topology. Tom asked about the schedule for adopting the standard. James said that the next draft will be submitted to the SMAC, which will determine when to submit it to the GICC for adoption. Chris asked if the standard is available for review. Julie said she thought the LGC previously had the opportunity to vet the standard. Tom confirmed that the original draft was provided to the LGC and A Team for review. James said that it has evolved into a product that a jurisdiction can take and alter for its own needs. He thinks that it will be very useful for agencies that currently have no structure for managing water and sewer data. Julie commended James for his work on this effort.

**Action Item** – James will share the latest version with the LGC.

## GICC REPORT

Julie reported that the GICC met on February 9. She reported that there was a presentation on mapping broadband access in the North Carolina. She had been marginally aware that this effort was underway. The e-NC Authority received millions of dollars to map the availability of broadband with the goal of expanding broadband access. Given their use of street centerlines and address data, she expressed some surprise that this effort had not previously been a topic of discussion for the GICC. Tom commented that the E-NC Authority has to work very closely with the broadband providers, which consider their customer database proprietary.

Julie reported that House Bill 89, which includes preliminary funding requests for NC OneMap, is now with the Joint Oversight Committee on Information Technology. The

bill originally proposed about \$959,000 over a two-year period, \$96,000 for the first year and \$862,000 for the second year. Tom interjected a note of caution, noting that it is a very difficult budget year, especially for expansion budget requests. He believes that the funding request has been revised, eliminating the funds for the first year and a slightly lesser amount for the second year in hope that the economy will improve by then.

Julie reported that at the end of the GICC meeting, the members reported on ways in which they are using GIS. Julie said that she was impressed with some of the activities of the State agencies. Tom mentioned that one of the suggestions from a Council member was that the Council needs to better promote and inform the GIS community and decision-makers on activities of the agencies of the Council, especially those involving data development. He said that CGIA will consider how to better distribute information, especially about data development efforts by State agencies that may be of interest to local governments.

#### ORTHO PROJECT CIR UPDATE

General information about the orthos project was discussed earlier in the meeting. Regarding the access to the color infrared imagery (CIR), the ortho project team will release in the next few days a fact sheet on access to the CIR data. A draft of the fact sheet was distributed to the LGC members before this meeting. Since acquisition of the imagery was done digitally, the contractors did collect the 4<sup>th</sup> band, the CIR band. When the contractors do the original processing, they create interim files or exploitation files. Included was an exploitation file for the CIR band. This is the first step in producing CIR imagery. However, the CIR imagery was not a deliverable under the contract with the NC 911 board. NC 911 generously paid \$12 million dollars to collect color orthophotography for the state but there was no money to develop CIR imagery.

The 4<sup>th</sup> band is available. Wake County contracted independently with the contractor to acquire CIR imagery and any county can do that. However, the interim or exploitation file will only be stored by the contractors through June 2011. The contractors will retain the raw data but because of the size of the interim files, which take up more than 100 TBs, the contractors cannot afford to retain these files. The GICC has been unable to identify funds to store the interim data.

A local government can negotiate directly with the contractor to acquire CIR imagery. If this is accomplished before June 2011 then the cost will be somewhat less because the exploitation files will still be available. If a local government decides to wait until later, then the costs will be somewhat higher because the contractor will have to recreate the exploitation files from the raw data. Tom said that he could not estimate the cost difference and that local governments will have to negotiate directly with the contractors, not through GTM or CGIA or any state agency.

#### WORKING GROUP FOR ORTHOPHOTOGRAPHY PLANNING APPOINTMENT

Julie said that Steve Randone has been serving as the LGC representative to the Working Group for Orthophotography Planning (WGOP). Steve had agreed to be the interim rep when the Statewide Ortho project began but does not have time to continue. Julie asked how often the meetings occur. Tom is uncertain. Julie asked for suggestions on candidates. Tom said that the rep does not have to be an LGC member but can be anyone from local government. Gene said that a deciding factor may be whether the WGOP members can attend by phone. Julie suspects that phone participation is possible but that it is very difficult to be actively engaged when a committee member participates by phone. She acknowledges that this limits the pool of candidates because of barriers to travel and the time obligation of attending in person. She recommends that we identify someone closer to Raleigh who can attend meetings in person. Chris acknowledged that budget realities make it difficult to attend. He suggested that first we need to confirm the frequency of meetings and the extent of the obligation.

**Action Item** – Tom will find out the frequency of WGOP meetings and whether members can attend by phone.

**Action Item** – LGC members will suggest candidates. Julie and Tom will prepare a list of candidates.

#### FEDERAL SURVEY ON ELEVATION DATA

Julie said that Steve Strader, USGS liaison to North Carolina, has announced that the federal government will be conducting a National Enhanced Elevation Assessment. The ultimate goal is to create elevation data for the nation. The assessment or survey will solicit input from state, local and tribal government representatives. Steve emphasized to Julie that the local government participants in the survey need to be knowledgeable about elevation data and its uses and geographically distributed around the state. Steve has not yet seen a final copy of the survey. Chris said that elevation data is critical in the piedmont and suggested that the reviewers include representatives across the state. The LGC agreed that participants need to come from coastal, piedmont and mountain regions as well as urban and rural areas.

Julie suggested that the LGC members might comprise a logical group to complete the survey. Julie said that completing the survey would likely not take more than an hour.

**Action Item** – Once the survey is released, Julie will propose a list of local government representatives to complete the survey.

#### REVIEW OF NC GIS CONFERENCE

Tom asked of those who attended the conferences if any issues arose that need to be brought before the LGC or the GICC. He attended a presentation on Next Gen 911 and felt that it has the potential to drive many of the coordination issues. For Next Gen 911, access to good data and shared data is critical to response times and life saving efforts.

Chris said that he heard that there are already plans to acquire statewide orthophotography in 2012. He asked that there be an emphasis on local government involvement in the process. He praised the cost sharing efforts that occurred in previous years and that local governments were full partners at the table during those efforts. He felt that local government had less involvement in the statewide effort. He mentioned that Moore County has a reevaluation coming up in 2014 and that the county will need to know the delivery timeline if new orthos are acquired. He mentioned that Onslow County had a long term contract with their contractor and will apparently have two sets of 2010 orthos. Julie said this is the reason that an active LGC representative on the WGOP is very important. There needs to be a strong voice for local government, someone who uses orthos and understands the needs of local governments. Chris said he thought the WGOP was only involved in creating standards and not in coordinating acquisition of orthos.

Tom reported that the committee is called the Working Group for Orthophotography Planning. The WGOP created the North Carolina Orthoimagery Business Plan, which has been shared with everyone and can be found on the GICC web site ([http://ncgicc.net/Portals/3/documents/OrthoImageryBusinessPlan\\_NC\\_20101029.pdf](http://ncgicc.net/Portals/3/documents/OrthoImageryBusinessPlan_NC_20101029.pdf)). It outlines plans for collecting orthos in North Carolina in the future and how the efforts could be funded. The WGOP plans a critical role in the planning.

Tom said that there are no plans for doing another statewide acquisition. That was a one-time project, funded by the NC 911 Board. The opportunity came up at the last minute. Everyone is grateful to the NC 911 Board for the opportunity to acquire seamless, statewide orthos for one time frame but it is unlikely that the NC 911 Board will be able to fund another statewide acquisition.

The Business Plan describes several options for acquiring orthos in the future. The recommended option is to acquire orthos for a quarter of the state every four years. The state would be divided into sections and a map in the plan shows the proposed sections. This option minimizes the burden on the contractors and will enable faster delivery than was possible with a statewide acquisition.

At this point there is no funding in place for any plan. The cost share program with USGS and the Department of Homeland Security was a wonderful program, involving the distribution of close to \$1.5 million in cost share funds to counties over the last five years. Unfortunately that pot has dried up. The next challenge will be to find funding for the Business Plan. The NC 911 Board may be willing to contribute some portion of the cost share but local governments will likely have to contribute to the costs.

Chris said that Moore County anticipated using NC 911 funds to support acquisition of imagery and that the reevaluation schedule will drive the plans for Moore County. He noted that counties have different reevaluation schedules and expressed skepticism about developing a 4-year schedule that will accommodate the county evaluation schedules. He suggested that tax assessors might need to come to the table and determine if there is a possibility of coordinating reevaluation years across the state to fit a 4-year schedule for acquiring orthos. Tom reiterated that the WGOP is the committee that is addressing these

issues and where local governments need to bring to the table the issue of reevaluation schedules

Julie expressed the same concern about the reevaluation schedules. However, she said that she had talked to several tax assessors and the ones she spoke to have said that if a schedule for acquiring orthos is in place, then they could adjust their reevaluation schedule. Chris noted that the final decision will be up to the elected county commissioners. He agreed that if there is a coordinated effort across the state for acquiring orthos there may be an opportunity to influence the county elected officials regarding the reevaluation schedule. He believes that the state statute requires that county complete a reevaluation at least every eight years. Julie confirmed this.

Tom commented that Chris and Julie made great points. If the GIS community can develop a plan for acquiring orthos on a regular schedule, then the county commissioners will have the option of rearranging their reevaluation schedules to take advantage of that. Of course any county would still have the option of acquiring orthos with their own money in any year. Tom hopes that he WGOP will reach out to county tax assessors as part of the planning process.

On other conference matters, Julie said that she heard a number of presentations describing amazing applications but expressed concern about the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.' Small, less prosperous counties are still struggling simply with managing parcels and street centerlines. She doesn't have any solutions but feels that some jurisdictions are being left behind. Chris said that NCLGISA is creating local government innovation awards, sponsored by several groups. He believes that the program will involve two \$25,000 grants and one \$10,000 grant. One of the criteria for assessing a project proposal will be how easy the results can be transferred to other jurisdictions. This may encourage organizations to develop applications that can be easily adopted by others.

Chris also mentioned that he is aware of two efforts to create regional websites that will allow 'have-nots' to collaborate in developing a resource for sharing data. He mentioned the Western Foothills Regional GIS Website (*2<sup>nd</sup> place poster winner at the GIS Conference*) and an effort involving Moore, Lee, Harnett and Hoke counties but that will be open for others to join.

Gene reported that Buncombe County has developed a MapWNC website and is encouraging other counties in western North Carolina to load their data. It is developing slowly. He has offered to host data and sites for other counties on the Buncombe County servers, particularly for projects that address issues that cross county lines. Chris mentioned tracking sexual offenders across county lines. Chris suggested some communication among the groups developing these resources.

Julie mentioned that she helped develop a regional Albemarle region web site but is no longer actively maintaining it because each of the counties now has their own web site. She finds it interesting that groups are moving toward regional web sites when the Albemarle region has moved away from it. She asked if NC OneMap is not supposed to

be the solution. Chris said that the Moore County site is a light client site that allows users to search for general information on the regional site but then refers users to the county web sites for more detailed information. In that way it is similar to NC OneMap.

Gene said that the MapWNC site focuses more on specific issues. It was first developed to address development on steep slope development ordinances. It involved a partnership among Buncombe County, the City of Asheville and the UNC Asheville National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center so that citizens could go to one source, regardless of whether they are in the city or county, to determine what steep slope ordinances affect their parcel or parcels in which they are interested. It is not a standard GIS website but rather a targeted application. Other possible applications under consideration include a development mapper and a multi-model transportation application but these are not imminent. Chris suggested that they are more subject specific. Gene said that the site that was the impetus for this work is subject specific but the site includes links to the county web site and other GIS web sites. But yes, they are more subject specific and cross jurisdictional boundaries. Tom suggested that the development of regional sites is positive and it will be interesting to see how they fit into statewide coordination initiatives.

Chris again raised the issue of Next Gen 911. He emphasized that the regional 911 centers will need to have accurate county boundaries. Currently the primary source of county boundary data is NC DOT. He is concerned that the county boundaries are not precise and may lead to gaps between jurisdictional boundary lines that may complicate 911 responses. Chris suggested that someone look at the issue of accurate county boundaries that will comply with the Next Gen 911 needs. Clearly in life saving situations, good data is critical. Chris mentioned the difficulty of coordinating addressing and emergency response boundaries among 11 municipalities and the county. Next Gen 911 will cross county boundaries, adding further complications.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

There was no new business.

#### NEXT MEETING

The next LGC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 25, 2011.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.