



January 4, 2006

Gopal Khanna
 Chief Information Officer
 Minnesota Office of Enterprise Technology
 658 Cedar Street, Room 450
 Saint Paul, MN 55155

Re: Geospatial Technology Opportunities in Minnesota

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information. First, I want to again thank you for the time you spent with us at our November 30th meeting. The Council members were impressed with and share your vision of implementing a shared service environment. At that meeting you "challenged" the Council to look for ways to improve efficiencies and reduce redundancies. We have identified the following four ways we can begin working with you and the Office of Enterprise Technology (OET) on this important effort:

1. **Act as the advisory body to OET relating to geospatial issues.** To ensure timely communications between the Council and OET, we are designating David Arbeit, Director of the Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis, as the Council's point of contact.
2. **Provide input to OET's committees and workgroups.** We can help ensure that OET committees and workgroups are well-informed about the requirements of Minnesota's geospatial community. This may not require additional committee members, as some members may be designated by the Council as its representative. We have reviewed the November 10, 2005 document *OET Enterprise Initiatives* that identifies workgroups that have been tasked to advise OET and think input from the geospatial community would help improve the ultimate product. In particular, we envision contributions on workgroups tasked to address:
 - Service Oriented Architecture
 - TCO Model
 - IT Acquisitions – Enterprise-wide Image
 - IT Acquisitions - Configuration and Enterprise IT Acquisition Strategy and Framework
 - Strategic Planning

Please let us know if you would like a Council designee to actively represent the geospatial community on any of OET's committees.

3. **Identify opportunities for implementing "shared geospatial services".** Minnesota's geospatial community has a long history of collaboration and sharing, mostly related to data, but also including services. We are currently identifying available shared services as

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a next step of the Council's strategic plan for enterprise GIS, *A Foundation for Coordinated GIS* (<http://server.admin.state.mn.us/resource.html?Id=9084>), and to flesh out the Council's geospatial shared services outlined in *Minnesota State GIS Enterprise Conceptual Architecture Design* (<http://server.admin.state.mn.us/resource.html?Id=17091>). During the next several months, we intend to review available and potential shared services and identify services that could be easily deployed for the entire enterprise - what you described at our meeting as the "low hanging fruit." Our report will be available by the end of March 2006.

4. **Collaborate with OET on geospatial architecture project.** The Council's proposed architecture would provide the foundation for shared geospatial services that support Minnesota's government agencies. It would balance desktop computing and server-based services, leveraging high-performance shared applications through a Minnesota Geospatial Services Clearinghouse which also would be responsible for access, quality assurance, and security. We feel that implementation of this architecture would provide considerable benefit to the State and that a pilot project should be developed as soon as possible with OET support.

The Council recognizes that a significant amount of work is needed to realize our vision and recognizes that it can only be achieved in partnership with the Office of Technology. Enhanced services, improved efficiencies, and reduced redundancy are all achievable outcomes of fully integrating geospatial services into the state's enterprise vision.

Please let us know how we may begin to work on this challenging opportunity together.

Sincerely,



Rick Gelbmann, Chair
MN Governor's Council on Geographic Information