

Steps Toward a Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council

An update report for the Wisconsin Land Information Association
March 8, 2007

With the termination of the Wisconsin Land Information Board (WLIB) in 2005, Wisconsin has lacked a governance body to coordinate the development and use of geographic information and technologies across the state. The strategic plan *Wisconsin Location Matters – A Statewide Geographic Information Strategy*, published January 2007, identifies the creation of a “Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council” (WIGICC) as the first of five strategic goals (<http://www.wlia.org/wilandinfo/strategic+planning/default.asp>).

Simultaneous with the development of this strategic plan, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) received a separate grant from the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to develop and promote a geographic information coordinating mechanism. DOA’s Geographic Information Officer contracted with the University of Wisconsin-Madison to research other states’ geospatial governance models and to facilitate the process for the development of a set of recommendations. Towards this goal, an *ad hoc* WIGICC working group* assembled under the DOA FDGC grant developed the following products:

- A detailed review of geospatial governance bodies in 8 other states. This report will be available on-line as soon as all participating states have approved release of their information. A link to the report will be provided though WLIA’s website (<http://www.wlia.org>).
- A set of criteria to be used to evaluate possible models for a geographic information council. These criteria are summarized on the following page.
- Initial concepts for a geographic information council in the form of two **DRAFT** governance models. These models were based on what the WIGIC Working Group judged to be good features of other states’ programs, adapted to the Wisconsin context. The models provided **ARE NOT** recommendations, but rather are intended to generate comments and discussion. **Additional models and ideas are welcome and encouraged.**

The criteria and the two initial draft governance models are intended to help Wisconsin develop a geographic information coordination council that will help meet the other goals defined in the strategic plan – improving coordination, supporting effective and efficient data development and maintenance, fostering a service-oriented environment, pushing for continued and well-directed funding, and promoting understanding and use of a wide variety of geospatial technologies.

Listening Sessions

At least 4 listening sessions will be conducted around the state to generate discussion and to solicit ideas and comments on a Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council (WIGICC). Dates and locations of these sessions have not been finalized; please look to the Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA), Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), Wisconsin State Cartographer's Office (SCO), and University of Wisconsin-Madison Land Information & Computer Graphics Facility (LICGF) websites in the next few weeks for more information. We also will provide a website and email contact information for those who wish to provide additional input.

Next Steps

Based on feedback from many communities interested in geographic information and technologies, we hope a WIGICC model will emerge that is inclusive, representative and participatory – a forum that meets multiple needs.

After the Listening Sessions, a “governance summit meeting” will be held during the summer of 2007. We hope this summit meeting will result in a consensus recommendation to the Governor via the DOA for a Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council, leading to an executive order for its implementation before the end of 2007.

* Members of the *ad hoc* WIGICC working group assembled under the Wisconsin DOA FGDC grant include: Dave Mockert (GIO), Ted Koch (SCO), Tony Bellovary (Bay Lake RPC), David Fodroczi (Saint Croix County), Richard Vraga (USGS), D. David Moyer, Lea Shanley and Steve Ventura (UW-Madison).