

C Community Development Committee
 Meeting date: January 17, 2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION	
Date:	January 11, 2012
Subject:	MetroGIS Regional Parcel Data Overview
District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Rick Gelbmann, GIS Manager Randall Johnson, MetroGIS Staff Coordinator
Division/Department:	RA/IS

Proposed Action: None.

This informational presentation is intended to familiarize Community Development Committee members with the benefits of the MetroGIS Regional Parcel Data which is available through an updated sharing agreement between the Council and the seven metropolitan area counties.

Background:

MetroGIS: MetroGIS is a Geographic Information System data and application sharing organization facilitated by the Metropolitan Council. Its primary constituency is the 300 local and regional government entities that serve the seven-county, Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area with other partners in state and federal government, non-profit, for-profit and academic communities. Its purpose is to provide a regional forum to promote and facilitate widespread sharing of geospatial data and collaborative solutions to shared geospatial needs. MetroGIS's governing body is its Policy Board. It is comprised of twelve local government elected officials and a Councilmember (currently Council member Elkins). The Council has served as the primary sponsor of MetroGIS since its beginning in 1996.

Regional Parcel Data: Parcel data shows the boundaries for one million plus parcels of land in the seven county area. Each of those parcels is described by 65 attributes including address, size, year built, building description and value information. The data is maintained by the counties and is shared with the Council and 132 licensed users through the Regional Parcel Data Sharing Agreement. Licensed users include the Council, Cities, Counties, Metro Mosquito Control District, Metropolitan Airports Commission, School Districts, Watershed Districts, State and Federal Government, Academic Institutions and Contractors working for these organizations.

Parcel Data Sharing Agreement: The counties dedicate more than 20 FTE to collecting and maintaining Parcel Data as part of their property and property tax responsibilities. Under the Parcel Data Sharing Agreement counties provide quarterly updates to the Council using data standards developed through MetroGIS. The Council combines the data into a single dataset and makes it available for distribution through MetroGIS DataFinder (www.datafinder.org), which resides on a Council-owned web-server. More than 260 GIS datasets are shared through the DataFinder web site, most of which are available to anyone wishing to use the data.

The newest agreement, which is scheduled for final signatures in January 2012, is the fourth in a series of parcel data sharing agreements dating back to 1997. This agreement will for the first time make parcel data that is more than three years old available to any user without fee or licensure. Examples of benefits expected from open access to Historic Regional Parcel data include:

- Nonprofit housing agencies will be better able to understand and respond to housing issues such as foreclosure and vacant home issues and
- Real Estate Organizations are able to quickly identify suitable properties for clients seeking to start or expand their business.

Direct and Indirect Value to the Council

Parcel data is used in all Council Divisions for a wide range of uses. It is one of the most important and valuable dataset to the 170 GIS desktop software users at the Council and to the many more Council users of our internal GIS web applications. In a 2005 survey of Council GIS data users, 67% said that the use of parcel data was “essential to performing my job”. In addition to the availability of parcel data throughout the Council it is also licensed to ten contractors completing work for the Council such as planning and constructing new sewer interceptors and light rail line facilities.

Examples of how the Council uses the MetroGIS Regional Parcel Data:

1. Regional Growth. Since the Parcel data are updated on a quarterly basis it provides an excellent long term source of information about urban change throughout the region. Lot size and year built can be used to describe the character of communities and their growth.
2. Transit Improvement Areas & TOD. The Livable Communities Demonstration Account funding recommendations relies on the availability of Parcel data to describe eligibility areas to applicants and help staff to rate LCA applications. In the future, Parcel data can be used to measure the results of those projects.
3. Locating Affected Land Owners. Environmental Services uses Parcel data to locate and notify landowners who may be affected by inspections of ES facilities or proposed sewer construction projects.

Funding

Funding for this agreement is budgeted in the IS budget. This fourth version of the agreement has a three-year term, with two one-year extension options. The total cost if in place all five years (2012 –2016) would be \$28,000, annually (\$4,000 to each County) for a total of \$140,000.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition. Several testimonials to benefits of the regional parcel data dataset are documented at:

<http://www.metrogis.org/benefits/testimonials/index.shtml>.