

## GIS Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2025

1:00pm - 2:30pm

**Members present:** Alfredo Herrera (OPM), Scott Gaul (OPM), Elizabeth Congo (DOT), Dan Czaja (DESPP), Gary Archambault (DPH), Erik Snowden (CRCOG), Mark Hoover (MetroCOG), John Guskowski (CCM), Tracy DeGrazia (CCM), Emily Wilson (UConn), Meghan McGaffin (General Assembly)

**Absent:** Stuart DeLand (DEEP), Peter Sampiere (United Illuminating)

**Start time:** 1:01PM

### Introductions and Attendance

- Welcome from Alfredo Herrera
- Attendance

### Council Administration

- Sent letter to Carl Zimmerman. He was very appreciative of the communication.
- Mark Hoover: Question in regard to terms. What is the process if someone else wants to get on the council?
  - Alfredo Herrera: Will have to look into the language, not sure there are terms. Reach out if there is someone who wants to step down or have someone else fill a spot.
  - Scott Gaul: Two-year term, and then members can decide. Everyone on the council was appointed by someone else.

### GIS Office Staff Update

- Sarah Hurley promoted to be GIS Coordinator.
- There is now a vacant GIS Analyst position.

### GISO Priority Topics and Working Group Updates

Broadband Data (Ashley Benitez)

- We collect ISP data in the state, availability and subscription data.
- Data is compiled and organized into one single map, can be seen on the Broadband Hub
- Data is considered trade secret at location level, so they are aggregated at tract and block
- New section on About page on the Hub to describe more detail about what we are trying to do, give people more understanding about the context of the data
- The site will continue to update and evolve over time
- Updates to the datasets
  - Now included in the attributes: FIPS for all geographies, providers list, number of providers available, technologies mix, advertised download/upload speed, ACS 2023 5-year broadband data
- Data is available on the Hub for anyone to use
- Alfredo Herrera: We parse data from ISPs quickly to a clean dataset. One big change is Ashley added a lot of pre-analysis at the block level. Question to the council: Are there any questions or research avenues that you've heard of that we can highlight to help direct our data analysis efforts? We want to make sure it's maximally useful and we hear where the data is succeeding and not succeeding. Please reach out.

### 3DHP DCA Approval

- As of yesterday, CT & New England DCAs have been approved by USGS
- Now we will be moving on the next steps of the process.

### Bridge and Culvert Collection

- Specified in resiliency bill, we need to collect data on all bridges and culverts in the state
- Data coming from 3DHP will be vital for this since that will show flow interruption, which tends to be a bridge or a culvert. This will help us see where to target our efforts
- We've developed a rough plan on how to achieve this
- We would like to hear your input. We have a working group that is tackling 3DHP and culvert collection. Please let us know if you have ideas, thoughts, or comments.
- Workflow developed.
- Meghan McGaffin: How much do we have already and how much will the towns have to do?
  - That is unclear right now. We haven't yet aggregated the data. DOT has many bridges and culverts mapped, but that is on state roads. A lot of towns (especially MS4) have some version of this data. unknown variable of how much of that is digitized in a way we can use.
  - Meghan McGaffin: Was there a statewide aerial culvert photo within the last 20 years?
  - Alfredo Herrera: It would be a useful dataset if anyone has a lead on it.

- Mark Hoover: Is there a timeframe expected for the hydro work?
  - Alfredo Herrera: Data development will take several months, but the determining factor is how quickly we can get funding set up. Will take the vendor 6-10 months for data development once started. Anticipating having the data sometime in 2027.
- Elizabeth Congo: DOT dataset for culverts only on state roads. Dataset a work in progress. Also have a state bridge dataset, schema matches what is provided federally.
- Meghan McGaffin: Possibly you can figure out the bridges from the lidar data.
  - Elizabeth Congo: Especially in areas where there are gaps.
  - Meghan McGaffin: Raster analysis looking for sinks/low spots in areas for areas that would flood outside of flood zones. Maybe a bridge/culvert version.
- Different in specifications from USGS data

#### Housing Bill (Sarah Hurley, Alfredo Herrera)

- New housing bill pass and signed into law (HB 8002). Covers a range of topics related to affordable housing and lays out plans to support future housing growth.
- Bill calls on GIS Office at OPM to develop statewide data tools that municipalities and COGs can use as they create their housing growth plans, which are due in 2028 and 2029.
  - Many factors going into identifying developable land
  - Goal to build mechanism to bring together data, tools, and resources that towns and COGs can use to shape plans and do analyses
- Avoiding "kitchen sink" tools that try to include everything
- Creating a Housing Hub site to serve as collection point of data and resources
- The bill also calls on OPM to provide mapping standards for the annual progress reports that towns will be submitting
- John Guskowski: Glad to have this effort statewide to help states plan. Request: information rollout session in January, would be good to have GIS Office there to contribute to the discussion.
- Meghan McGaffin: Example of another state that has done a similar effort?
  - John G: New Jersey
- Scott Gaul: Please let us know if you have advice on doing an effort of this topic or type.
- Mark Hoover: When you are assembling data layers, please reach out to discuss.

#### Accessibility Guidance (Sarah Hurley)

- GIS Office publishing CT GIS Mapping Accessibility Guidance document, focused on creating accessible GIS products

- Best practices guide for developing accessible maps and applications so all users can fully interact with them
- Building off great work done by other states and organizations
- ADA deadline in April 2026 that all public-facing application from the state need to need WCAG 2.1 AA standards
- Previously shared draft with council to get feedback, currently incorporating the feedback
- Should be published within a few weeks

#### Address Updates (Ashley Benitez)

- The way addresses are collected by state agencies lack consistency
- We are developing a guidance on location ...
- Part of a larger effort working on creating a master address dataset
- Recommendations
  - Separate location and mailing address, use minimum location address standard, privacy
  - With inputs, use drop downs
- How do we handle location addresses
  - Looking for addresses organized on a schema separated into fields, or a clean complete address in one field
  - NENA standard
- Any suggestions on this first pass on handling location addresses?
- Trying to help out those tracking their data collection in a non-spatial way. We want them to accommodate a potential future of spatial use in a geocoder.
- Meghan McGaffin: Maybe use an AI to help people check their addresses?
  - Ashley: We can try to create a validation tool
- Placename to Town list
  - List of common spellings, villages, CDPs, and other
  - Dataset table
  - Draft available to share, if interested. Can also share R code and Python code.
  - It's a life document that will require feedback and local context.

#### Public Comment

- Erik Snowden: Status of impervious cover?
  - Alfredo: We have a draft version of it. It has some minor repairs that Ecopia is making. If you have a need now, we can give you a preliminary copy. We are waiting on Ecopia response for fixing the errors. We now have edge to edge coverage in the state.

## Closing Remarks

- Thank you for joining us.

**Adjourn:** 2:03PM

