

Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting

March 11, 2026
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

This is a special meeting of the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) dedicated to discussing selection of priorities for the term – it is not a part of the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings.

Meeting Attendance

Members

- Alison Slaats**, MNIT MnGeo
- Amy Harrigan**, MnDOT
- Britta Maddox**, Anoka County
- Carla Coates**, MN GIS/LIS Consortium | MN DPS
- David Brandt**, MetroGIS | Washington County
- Dennis Tumberg**, City of Chanhassen
- Gerry Sjerven**, Minnesota Power
- Heather Albrecht**, Hennepin County
- Jessica Fendos**, LOGIS
- Kari Geurts**, MNIT DNR
- Karissa Beierle Pavek**, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments
- Kendis Scharenbroich**, Pro-West & Associates
- Mary Mortensen**, Met Council
- Matt Goodman**, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
- Michael Krueger**, City of Moorhead
- Michelle Clasen**, Washington County
- Mitch Bergeson**, US Geological Survey
- Pat Veraguth**, Douglas County
- Quentin Ikuta**, National Indian Carbon Coalition
- Rama Mohapatra**, MN State University, Mankato
- Rick Schute**, City of St. Paul
- Ryan Bonney**, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
- Ryan Stovern**, St. Louis County
- Shana Crosson**, U-Spatial - UMN Twin Cities
- Stacey Stark**, U-Spatial - UMN Duluth
- Tanya Mayer**, Metropolitan Council

Meeting Support Staff Attendees

Megan Sisko, *MNIT MnGeo*; Sally Wakefield, *MNIT MnGeo*

Non-Member Attendees

Abby Stamm, <i>MDH</i>	Brian Matheson, <i>MNIT</i>	Curtis Carlson, <i>MNIT MnGeo</i>
Andrea Bergman, <i>MNIT DNR</i>	Brittany Polzin, <i>MN BWSR</i>	Diana Flores Castillo, <i>MnDOT</i>
Andrea Borich, <i>MPCA</i>	Clayton Watercott, <i>Metro Transit</i>	Elizabeth Clausen, <i>MESB</i>
Anton Kvit, <i>MDH</i>	Connor Plagge, <i>City of Brainerd</i>	Eric Solo, <i>Lake of the Woods County</i>

Jared Baloun, *Jackson County*
Jason Ewert, *MNIT MPCA*
Jenna Walz, *Sherburne County*
Jennifer Murphy, *MN DNR*
Jennifer Tworzanski, *MN Admin*
Jesse Reinhardt, *Hennepin County*
Jessica Orlando, *NEMAC | UNC-A*
Joe Sapletal, *Dakota County*
Joel Stevens, *Tech Wave*
Jon Janke, *Coon Creek Watershed*
Kaitlyn Bakken, *North Dakota*
Association of Counties
Karen Majewicz, *BTAA-GIN | UMN*
Kevin Stark, *St. Mary's University*

Kevin Trappe, *Beltrami County*
Kiah Sagami, *Houston Eng.*
Kristina Krepela, *MnDOT*
Len Kne, *U-Spatial | UMN-TC*
Mandy Olson, *Clay County*
Mark Kotz, *Standards Comm. Chair*
Matt McLees, *Scott County*
Megan Otten, *Houston Engineering*
Mia Ross, *Minnesota Valley Electric*
Michael Ginsbach, *MPCA*
Mike True, *Watonwan County*
Molly Shoberg, *MN DNR*
Nancy Rader, *Unaffiliated*
Nate Rose, *Crow Wing County*

Nathan Graham, *Crow Wing County*
Nick Linell, *Alight*
Norman Anderson, *MNIT MnGeo*
Pamela Oslin, *MESB*
Peter Castro, *MN DCYF*
Preston Dowell, *St. Louis County*
Randy Knippel, *Unaffiliated*
Reese Phillips, *MN DPS-ECN*
Rick Moore, *MNIT DNR*
Ryan Mattke, *Map Library | UMN-TC*
Sarah Voje, *EOR, Inc.*
Sean Vaughn, *MNIT DNR*
Shauna Bridger, *MNIT MnGeo*
Steven Moe, *Polk County*

Meeting Options

- **Virtual:** Online via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Materials

- [Agenda packet](#)
- Presentation slides

1. Call to order

Chair Tanya Mayer called the meeting to order and conducted roll call of GAC members. Prior to this, Megan Sisko reminded attendees that the meeting will be transcribed (but not recorded) by Microsoft Teams to assist with the minutes, and that attendees should refrain from sharing private information.

Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) meeting support staff introduced themselves verbally, and virtual guests placed their name and organization in the Teams chat.

Mayer reviewed the meeting agenda then called for a motion to approve it. Ryan Stovern moved to approve the agenda, and Rick Schute seconded. Motion passed by general consent.

- **Motion:** Approve the agenda (Stovern / Schute) – **Motion passed**

Mayer called for a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes from December and January. Dave Brandt moved to approve the minutes, and Ryan Stovern seconded. Motion passed by general consent.

- **Motion:** Approve last meeting minutes (from [12/17/2025](#) and [1/14/2026](#)) (Brandt / Stovern) – **Motion passed**

2. Review and receive Committee Reports

Chair Mayer Tanya acknowledged receipt of committee reports that are included in the agenda packet, and provided a few highlights:

- **Archiving Committee** - Restarting the Image Services Sustainability Subcommittee.
- **Data Endorsement** - Testing a draft process for data endorsement.
- **Emergency Preparedness** - Education Workgroup was revitalized with a resource from HSEM; a workgroup may form to research options for the Fire Risk Assessment Tool priority project.
- **Parcels and Land Records Committee** - An introduced bill would generate between \$8-10 million per year for remonumentation; Alison Slaats noted that Public Land Survey System (PLSS) legislation is dynamically changing while the legislature is in session so the committee report was accurate at the time it was submitted but may have changed since then.

3. Approve modified Committee Work Plans

Chair Mayer reviewed [priorities](#) newly assigned to committees, highlighting the expectation that committee work plans will be updated to accommodate these new tasks. The Emergency Preparedness, K-12, and Standards committees completed their work plan updates which are in the agenda packet for review. The 3D Geomatics, Outreach, and Parcel and Land Records committees are still completing work plan updates.

Mayer requested a motion to approve the three updated committee work plans as reflected in the agenda packet. Britta Maddox moved to approve the updated work plans, and Carla Coates seconded. Motion passed by general consent.

Motion: Approve the three updated committee work plans as reflected in the agenda packet (Maddox / Coates)
– **Motion passed**

Mayer acknowledged that the Statewide Imagery Program priority has not been assigned to a committee – a group of volunteers will be submitting a proposal to start a new committee for this effort. If anyone is interested in this effort or would like to be a part of this committee, reach out to Chair Mayer.

4. Recap Data Practices Act judicial GIS impacts information session

Chair Mayer summarized changes to the Data Practices Act as of Jan. 1, 2026 regarding judicial officials' ability to request restricted access to real property records containing information with their (or their family's) name and address – see slides for details.

Mayer then described the Feb. 9, 2026, information session held by the GAC, Minnesota County GIS Association (MCGISA), and MnGeo to help the community navigate these changes and their impact on GIS data management and sharing.

Resources from the session are available:

- [Session recording](#)
- [Session slides](#)
- [Q & A handout](#)

None of the content presented during the session or in the Q & A handout should be construed as legal advice. If you need legal advice on the related statutes, please contact your entity's legal representative.

5. Map accessibility presentation

Jason Ewert (MNIT partnering with MPCA) described Title II Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance required for many governments by April 24, highlighting the requirement to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1, Level AA (which are applicable to maps).

Ewert summarized these accessibility guidelines as ensuring that digital content is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. He noted that there are some exceptions for archived web content and content that refers to events or deadlines that have happened in the past.

Ewert shared various map accessibility resources (below) and suggested steps to take today.

Shared resources:

- [ADA Fact Sheet](#)
- [WCAG 2 At a Glance](#)
- [WAVE](#) (accessibility checker)
- [ANDI](#) (screen reader)
- [NVDA](#) (screen reader)
- Resources from MNIT
 - [Learn about accessible maps](#)
 - [Office of Accessibility](#)
 - [Office of Accessibility Communities of Practice](#) (state agency access only)
 - [Map Accessibility Community of Practice](#) (state agency access only to webpage, however, the public can join by contacting Jason Ewert at jason.ewert@state.mn.us)
 - [WCAG 2.1 Training](#) (state agency access only; for public access go to [Deque University](#))
 - [WCAG 2.1 Role-based Training](#) (state agency access only) – see the [Maps/GIS Role](#)
- Additional resources shared by attendees:
 - [National States Geographic Information Council \(NSGIC\) Accessibility Workgroup](#) (open to all; shared by Sally Wakefield)
 - [State of MN Data Viz a11y CoP Microsoft Teams](#) (state agency access only; shared by Abby Stamm)

See slides for details from the presentation.

6. MN GIS/LIS Consortium updates on awards and Spring Workshops

Carla Coates provided updates from the MN GIS/LIS Consortium board, sharing highlights from committee reports and 2026 goals which included partnership between the Consortium and GAC's K-12 committees and strengthening Consortium collaboration with the GAC and MnGeo. Coates also mentioned the board's consideration for introducing membership dues.

Shared events:

- [Women in GIS Networking Event](#) - March 26, 5:30-7p.m., St. Paul
- **Mappy Hour Networking Events** - After board meetings; next one is April 13 (location TBD)
- [Spring Workshops](#) - May 14, 8-4 p.m., UMN Minneapolis Campus
 - The Spring Workshops Committee is seeking a new Chair or Co-Chair
- *(New) mAppetites!* - Virtual lunch & learn events, recurring dates TBD
- **GIS on Tap** - Presentations and networking in a relaxed setting; recurring dates TBD

Miscellaneous news:

- [2026 Salary Survey](#) is open! Take the survey to improve understanding of the state of GIS/LIS jobs in MN.
- [Award nominations](#) are April 1 through May 31; an e-announcement in March will include more details.
- Nonprofit seat on the board is open.

Coates closed by noting that all are welcome to attend Consortium board meetings.

7. Committee Presentation 1: Awards

Len Kne shared about the [Awards Committee](#) and its mission centered on the [Governor's Geospatial Certificate Award](#) (first awarded in 1996; [view past recipients](#)) – promoting awareness, reviewing nominations, and submitting recommendations to MnGeo for sharing with the Governor's Office.

Kne shared the [award criteria and nomination process](#), highlighting changes to the process over time to support successful nominations. Key dates include:

- **June 1** - Submit a preliminary nomination packet to the Awards Committee at gisinfo.mngeo@state.mn.us
- **June 7** - Awards Committee provides feedback to all groups submitting nominations
- **June 30** - Final nomination packet is due
- **Awards presented** at the MN GIS/LIS Consortium Annual Conference in October

8. Committee Presentation 2: CANDO

David Brandt reviewed the mission of the CANDO Committee: To share local authoritative data with nationwide and commercial assets. Brandt shared the committee's objectives, how it completed its work, and key findings:

- The [National Address Database](#) (NAD) pulls data at different timeframes from various sources (e.g., cities, counties, Minnesota's statewide opt-in address point dataset, etc.).
- Apple, Esri, Google, Here, and TomTom are using data from the NAD.
 - These organizations pull data from the NAD at different timeframes (8 months, 5 months, etc.).
 - OpenStreetMap (OSM) pulled NAD data in 2021 and has relied on OSM mappers since then.
- Esri and TomTom use local street centerline data contributed through [Esri's Community Maps Program](#) (MetroGIS contributes to this program, but there is no statewide contribution at this time).
- Each organization has different mechanisms for keeping data up to date, and requirements for sharing data to populate in their products and services.

Brandt shared methods and resources for contributing data to Esri, Google, and OpenStreetMap:

- **Esri** - Three ways to share under the [Esri Community Maps Program](#)
 - [Provide map feedback](#) - **Tell Esri what's wrong**; send corrections so they can fix it
 - [Edit Features](#) - **Add basemap details** by creating or editing large scale features
 - [Share data](#) - **Send Esri your authoritative data** so they can enrich the basemap
- **Google** - Through the [Google Maps Content Partners Program](#)
 - [Content requirements: specifications for sharing data](#)
 - [Share Data Feeds](#) and [Share via a website URL](#)
 - [Edit the map directly](#)
- **OpenStreetMap** - Two methods to share data
 - Direct editing of the [OpenStreetMap](#) layers
 - [Importing data](#)

Brandt also shared about a few other initiatives:

- **Overture Maps Foundation** - a collaborative open-data initiative led by software developers, data experts, cartographic engineers, and product managers from dozens of [Overture Maps Foundation member companies](#) (including TomTom and Esri). Their vision is to create reliable, user-friendly, and interoperable open map data that supports current and future map products.
- The State of MN is exploring a [CCO Public Domain Dedication](#) for use with the Geospatial Commons.

Brandt closed with a quote, "If you build it, they will come", encouraging organizations to make their data open so that these data can be sourced by other organizations, improving data quality across all of these platforms.

The CANDO Committee has created a summary of their findings, and the GAC Executive Team will determine a location to post this on the GAC website. David Brandt moved to sunset the CANDO Ad-hoc Committee since its work is complete, and Ryan Bonney seconded. Motion passed by general consent.

Motion: Sunset the CANDO Ad-hoc Committee (Brandt / Bonney) – **Motion passed**

9. Sector Report 1: City - Greater MN

Michael Krueger, the GAC's Greater MN City representative, presented about the Greater MN City sector, describing it as cities that are geographically outside of the Twin Cities metro area, and in general more isolated.

Krueger met with members of the sector in February (4 cities represented), using MnGeo's [MN City GIS Contact List](#) as a resource for contacts. Krueger highlighted recurring sector themes:

- GIS staff often wear many hats, fulfilling multiple roles such as city planner, GIS manager, etc.
- Organizations tend to be smaller and have fewer resources
- With broad duties, growing demands, and limited resources, GIS staff are being challenged to "do more with less"
- Popular datasets include parks, airports, utilities, cadastral, addressing, and much more

The sector would like to know more about GIS at airports and whether there are standards related to this work.

Krueger stressed the sector's need for assistance communicating GIS needs to city councils, commissions, and leadership, highlighting the importance of sharing success stories to help support others that may need to exemplify the importance of GIS to their organizations. Krueger is considering forming a working group to create a toolkit that includes return on investment templates, success stories, etc.

Krueger noted that the sector has had no submissions to the priority project surveys the last two terms. Moving forward, he plans to work on increasing sector engagement with the GAC, building sector awareness of available resources, and stewarding sector participation in priority projects. He may also reach out to those cities without GIS contacts to expand the sector's network.

Sally Wakefield recommended that Krueger connect with John Nerge about his experience facilitating the Metro Cities GIS User Group.

10. Sector Report 2: Tribal Government

Ryan Bonney, the GAC's Tribal Government representative, presented about the Tribal Government sector, highlighting the [National Tribal GIS Annual Conference](#), April 27-May 1. Bonney is a part of the group that plans this event and is hoping to bring it to MN next year.

Bonney highlighted a recent loss of GIS professionals across Tribal governments, and shared sector challenges and opportunities:

- Access to high resolution aerial imagery
 - Securing cost-effective imagery is a challenge for many Tribal governments
 - Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) uses high-resolution Twin Cities metro area imagery and Nearmap which provides imagery as a service for a cost; however, coverage may not be available everywhere, requiring reliance on county or state-provided imagery
- ArcGIS Enterprise
 - Bonney will reach out to sector members to see if they need assistance embracing this platform
 - Bonney is implementing OpenGov with ArcGIS Enterprise and welcomes tips from other users

At-Large member Quentin Ikuta (Indian Carbon Coalition) shared about a Tribal Youth GIS Workshop that occurred Dec. 16-17, 2025, in Rapid City, SD. The event was hosted by the Indian Land Tenure Foundation as part of the Lakota Nation Invitation (one of largest indigenous events in the country). The GIS workshop introduced 15 high school students to GIS concepts, software, and career exploration. Coursework was created by [Joseph Kerski](#) (previously with Esri) using ArcGIS StoryMaps. Students learned from the instructor, their elders, and other young professionals. They plan to make this an annual event and hope to bring it to MN. Questions? Reach out to Ikuta at gikuta@iltf.org.

Additional resources shared by attendees:

- (From Nancy Rader) Joseph Kerski's blog: [Spatial Reserves: A Guide to Public Domain Spatial Data](#)
- (From Jason Ewert) State of MN GIS Bytes session from Levi Brown, Director of Tribal Affairs for the Minnesota Department of Transportation and citizen of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe: [Tribal-State-Federal Indian Country Conversation](#) (state agency access only)

11. Minnesota Geospatial Information Office updates

Alison Slaats shared updates from MnGeo:

- **PLSS Grants** - 23 of 34 projects will be completed by March 31; 8 counties have been granted extensions – some of these saw unexpected efficiencies so are completing more preservation work with their grants. MN Land Surveyor's Day is being celebrated April 7 at the Capitol in the L'Etoile du Nord room.
- **MN Geospatial Image Service** - Met Council's 2025 Spring Imagery has been added, and 2025 NAIP imagery is coming soon. MnGeo is exploring ways to enhance this service with new technology such as cloud optimized GeoTIFFs (COGs). Reach out to [Kory Thurnau](#) if you have imagery you'd like added to the service.
- **Geospatial Commons Modernization** - The last of the four collaboration types for sharing data to the new Commons is planned for release at the end of the month. So far, 33% of resources are migrated and 31% are in progress. A newsletter will announce when the site is officially launched. Anyone looking to publish data to the new Commons should reach out to commons.mngeo@state.mn.us.
- **MnTOPO 2 / Lidar** - MnTOPO 2 application development is complete and is soft launching March 12. Available products so far: seamless statewide 0.5-meter lidar-derived digital elevation model (DEM) (some areas still in development), raw vendor-delivered 0.5-meter lidar-derived DEM, flight swaths service, metadata, a guide for data access, and an updated lidar information page. Additional resources to come: contours (in progress), hillshade, Hydrographic Position Index (HPI).
- **Legislative Updates** - *Federal*: During NSGIC Day on the Hill (in Feb.), Slaats and Sally Wakefield visited Senator Klobuchar's Office to advocate for continued funding of the Digital Coast Act, 3D Elevation and Hydrography Programs, and Next Generation 911. *State*: The PLSS Legislation Subcommittee may modify the proposed PLSS funding bill since it isn't moving forward well; [HF 3353](#) proposes changes to the Data Practices Act which would expand protection for Judicial Officials to "Covered Officials", with a taskforce to "analyze need for expanded protection ... and explore options for efficiently and effectively administering such protections."

12. Executive Team updates

Chair Mayer reviewed Executive Team activities since the Dec. 17 meeting and outlined what's next, highlighting **one-on-one coffee chats with each GAC member**, and the **GAC Committee Leadership Retreat** May 20, 2026, 2-4 p.m. (in-person). Sign-up instructions for the one-on-one coffee chats will be emailed to members.

Mayer noted a time change for the May GAC meeting to start and end 30 minutes earlier than usual to allow transition time for the GAC Leadership Retreat – new time for the next GAC meeting:

May 20, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Mayer reviewed the GAC's desired outcomes and goals for the term, providing an update on each, highlighting completed and in-progress activities related to each goal. She also shared the GAC member sector and committee presentation schedule for the term on-screen.

See slides for details about these updates.

13. Round Robin / Announcements

Chair Mayer invited attendees to make announcements or provide updates.

- **Ryan Stovern** - A monthly meeting for Greater MN counties will be coming on Monday March 16 – upcoming meetings will include presentations about critical infrastructure and lidar.
- **Kari Geurts** - The GAC state government representatives continue to meet with the State Agency GIS Collaborative; the next meeting is March 26 for State of MN staff who would like to get involved.
- **Gerry Sjerven** - Call for MN GIS/LIS Consortium conference presentations is going out tomorrow and will likely close by the May GIS/LIS board meeting; Sjerven encouraged GAC presentations at the conference and will work with MnGeo and the GAC Executive Team to get an announcement out.
- **Tanya Mayer** - If the proposed Data Practices Act bill that Alison Slaats mentioned ([HF 3353](#)) is of interest, there is opportunity to provide feedback on that bill.
- **Sean Vaughn** shared an example of the 1-ft contours displayed over the 0.5-meter DEM; he also shared about creation of the seamless data, highlighting the large effort to handle these massive datasets.

14. Adjourn

Chair Mayer adjourned the meeting at 11:49 a.m.

Next Quarterly GAC Meeting: May 20, 2026, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (*hybrid*)

Minutes prepared by: Megan Sisko

For questions regarding the minutes, please contact gisinfo.mngeo@state.mn.us.