

Statewide Parcel Data Workgroup Meeting Notes

9/30/15

National Life, 6th Floor, Calvin Coolidge Room, 1:00 – 2:30

Present: Leslie Pelch, VCGI; Steve Sharp, VCGI; Doug Farnham, Dept. of Taxes; David Metraux, ACCD; Karen Horn, VLCT; Johnathan Croft, VTrans; Ryan Cloutier, VTrans; John Adams, ACCD; Susan Boswell, CTI (phone); Dean Russell (phone); Adam Saunders, NEMRC (phone); and Franco Rossi, CAI-Tech (phone).

Agenda:

1. Update on what is happening with Agency Leadership meetings and discussions
2. Report on Feedback received from Mapping Contractors
3. Review draft Project Charter – Leslie and Melissa have been working on a project charter document. You will receive a copy of the draft the day before our meeting.

Notes:

Agency Leadership Discussions -

Leslie explained that there was some discussion going on among VTrans and ACCD leadership about how the effort would move forward. Rich Tetreault (Deputy Secretary of VTrans) is very interested in the project and motivated to help it succeed and find the funding it needs. More discussion between VTrans and ACCD is planned.

Leslie was unsure whether we should move forward with the project charter until leadership on the project was clearer. Everyone agreed that we should go ahead and give it a look and have participants give feedback (and solicit feedback from the rest of the parcel workgroup) so that that the draft charter could be passed along to leadership.

Ryan shared that they had checked with FHWA and confirmed that they approved VTrans using funds that they provided to contribute to phase one of the project (creation of statewide parcel data). There was some discussion about the fact that we need to continue to pursue the legal issues around joining grand list data to parcel data and whether we can distribute and display that joined data.

Review of Project Charter –

Steve expressed concern about whether uncertainty/risk associated with estimated costs for the project had been included in the budget. He suggested that we add a 10% contingency fund.

Several people said they felt the hourly rates used in the budget were very low. Leslie explained where she got them (consulting with Kathy Thayer-Gosselin), but people felt that the rates normally used for such estimates would be “fully loaded” and more in the range of \$70-\$100 per hour. Leslie needs a source for these rates (DII?)

Scope – several people felt this section should be organized into sections. It was decided to break it into phases and then within each phase break outreach activities out from the technical activities.

Leslie pointed out that the charter presents the “Shared Responsibility” model for the data maintenance program to be developed. This was done in part to simply pick one model and then talk about that choice in a workgroup meeting, and partly because VCGI staff believe this is the model most likely to succeed. Johnathan agreed that this model makes more sense because it is an extension of the current system, rather than the creation of a new system from scratch. Steve added that it would enhance the current system with “carrots,” “sticks,” and coordination.

Doug reminds us that the entity that houses this program should have a broader mission and set of constituents than most state agencies so that there is less chance that the program will evolve in a way that causes it to lose value to others.

Other comments were received via email and incorporated into the draft charter, which was then shared with Rich Tetreault of VTrans.

Mapping Contractor Feedback on the ROI and Parcel Lifecycle documents –

Leslie summarized the feedback she received and asked the contractors participating via phone to jump in with additions, clarifications, etc.

1. All of the comments below reflect the contractors' support for the shared responsibility model and concerns about the state responsibility model.
2. Budget estimates severely underestimate time required to do the work described in the state responsibility model. They all feel that based on their experience, much more time would be spent communicating with towns, doing research to verify changes submitted, resolving conflicts and disputes, etc. One contractor who works with over 70 towns in VT estimated that the time spent just on updating the digital data for those towns is around 1800 hours per year.
3. They question the assumptions about knowledge/skills needed to perform the work described. Deed research is required in some cases, for example. Other knowledge related to land records would be important.
4. They expressed concern about the state responsibility model breaking the link between the data creation/update process and the map creation process, which involves annotation, cartography, etc. This could create new costs that offset some of the cost savings offered by the state doing the data updates.
5. Some towns work with their mapping contractors to keep other data layers up to date as well, such as zoning boundaries. Losing that link could cost towns more money.
6. There was concern about creating a state program that takes over certain tasks and what would happen if that program was later de-funded or eliminated, disrupting the town's mapping resources and pushing the cost back onto the town.