

Statewide Parcel Data Project Meeting

11/07/2013

National Life Bldg. VTrans Conference Room N413

Present: Bill Johnson (VT Tax Dept.), Jim Knapp (VT Tax Dept.), Leslie Pelch (VCGI), Ivan Brown (VCGI), Ginger Anderson (ANR FPR), Johnathan Croft (VTrans), Ryan Cloutier (VTrans), Gary Smith (VTrans), Dan Currier (CVRPC, VAPDA), and Joanna Grossman (VAAFM)

This meeting was of the smaller group, a subset of the larger committee, known as the "Short Term Group". The primary focus of this group is to work on immediate issues related to the VTrans funded project including defining a work plan, project scope of work, defining deliverables and organizational structure of the working committee.

Two hand-outs were provided at the start of the meeting that covered a draft Work Plan and Scope of Work for the project. The draft work plan provides a straw man on the direction of the project and a point of beginning. The key areas noted are as follows:

Steps for Implementation

1. Establish the Organization and Project Oversight Committees
2. Define a Communication Plan
3. Collect Existing Parcel Maps and Data
4. Data assessment
5. Develop the Request For Proposals (RFP)
6. Work Sequence

There was discussion on insuring that Leslie's Project with the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) project gets included in the overall Statewide Parcel Mapping Project. The NBRC parcel project is a year grant. There was discussion regarding the ability of using the VTrans project funds to cover the match for the NBRC grant. This is an open question and will need research to answer. The RPC's will work on the NBRC project and provide outreach and coordination with towns. There is also a strong maintenance component with this project and a need to keep the parcel data up-to-date once created. This is a key element to the overall Statewide Parcel Project and was a shortcoming of the initial digitizing project in the 1990's.

There was discussion regarding the need for a seamless parcel data layer at this point and whether this creates a barrier to progress, due to potential boundary disputes that may arise between towns. It was noted that there is some bad tax mapping in this State and some of the edge-matching between towns could be easily remedied. There may also be areas where boundary issues do exist and these issues may need to be tabled for a later date.

Possible Project Risks

Questions arose regarding why some towns might not want to participate and a short list of reasons was drafted, including the following:

- Possible boundary disputes
- Privacy
- Development concerns
- Administrative issues, contractors
- Possible perception of a State mandate

There was discussion on means of avoiding major issues with the roll out and getting buy-in from the towns. Providing more of a positive approach to the project and using the notion of “This is what we want to do for you.”

To mitigate some of the possible issues, consultation with Attorney General’s Office needs to occur early in the project.

There is also a need for disclaimers and a defined scope, allowing for the project to not get mired in legal issues. The data will be parcels and not survey

Data Development and Review

One means of having the new parcel data vetted is opening it up for review by landowners and having them provide insight to any errors. This process would need to be limited in scope and the documentation provided by the landowner must be definitive on resolution to an error.

There are currently 11 Regional Planning Commissions (RPC) and the 14 Counties, and there was discussion on how to craft a contract that would be equitable and allow for edge-matching between towns. Some contractors have relationships with specific towns and the contractor holds institutional knowledge that would be beneficial to this project. Based on this, it makes sense to craft a contract that has blocks of towns that may not be contiguous, but leverages the relationships between town and contractor. It would be beneficial to have the RPCs provided the outreach and coordination with the towns on the project.

There needs to be a decision on the contracting by blocks of geography (RPC, County) or by number of towns with certain amounts in each status type (current shapefile, vintage shapefile, CADD, paper, nothing).

Outreach

There is a strong need for outreach meetings and the first should be with all the regional planning commissions and another would invite tax mapping contractors to participate. The goal would be to solicit their input on possible scenarios for how the contracting would be set up (see paragraph above). There is also coordination with the Vermont Association of Listers and Appraisers (VALA) and a fair amount of outreach directed to the municipalities directly.

A question was raised on whether this project needs to be reviewed by the Dept. of Information and Innovations (DII), and this question has been forwarded to Tom Hurd, VTrans IT Manager. This project will be discussed at the upcoming IT Governance meeting, with a decision forthcoming on whether there needs to be DII involvement or not.

Short Term/Long Term Groups

It seems to make sense to merge the Short Term Group and Long Term Group into one, as the topics are nearly the same and each needs to have a high awareness of the other group as we progress.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 22, at 9 AM at National Life.