

EGC Parcel Workgroup Meeting

12/11/13

VTrans Board Room

Present: Ryan Cloutier, VTrans; Johnathan Croft, VTrans; Leslie Pelch, VCGI; Ivan Brown, VCGI; Jeff Briggs, FPR; Dan Currier, CVRPC; Melissa Prindiville, ACCD

VTrans Project:

Jonathan and Ryan brought us up to date on the VTrans IT Governance Committee meeting that led to change in direction for their project.

The issue of whether DII needs to have a role in this project seems to have been resolved as NO they don't.

Hard questions were asked by the several supervisory-level and IT folks at this meeting:

- Why is VTrans paying the entire cost to produce a data product that is needed and valued by many agencies and organizations (Tax Dept. ANR, ACCD, etc.)?
- Why is this money coming out of the STIP fund (transportation infrastructure) rather than the State Planning Fund? There are potential ramifications to this fact that I don't fully understand, but relate to future Federal Funding and the questions that might arise about the appropriateness of using the money from this fund in this way...
- Are their risks associated with including this project in the STIP administrative section (as was originally going to happen), rather than breaking it out as a separate, identified project? Yes.
- Why is there no detailed Return on Investment (ROI) document?
- What is the maintenance plan for this data, and why should VTrans invest money in this data product when there is currently no actual maintenance plan in place?
- Is there a connection to Broadband? (the answer from VCGI is...not really here in VT, because we have Esite data which is more useful).

The result of the discussion spurred by these questions is that Ryan and Jonathan have to work on a very concrete ROI document. That document will probably focus on the return to VTrans only. We decided that Leslie (VCGI) will work with others in this group to put together a complementary ROI document that may be a bit lighter on the hard numbers (though we will include them where possible) but will enumerate "return" or benefits that will accrue to state agencies and citizens as a result of this project.

It was brought up that the other agencies and departments may have more to contribute to the maintenance aspect of this data, rather than up-front costs to bring the data up to a current and consistent level.

What will happen next:

- VTrans folks will bring their agency budget to the Legislature with this project identified in the STIP section, rather than buried in the administrative line. Whatever discussion needs to happen about it at the legislature will happen. This document will be completed by end of January.
- VTrans will put together their ROI document, which will be available for VTrans supervisors and the legislature if they have questions.
- VTrans will decide at some point in the coming year whether and how they will move forward on this project. Perhaps it could be as soon as the spring, perhaps not until next fall.
- This workgroup will put together an ROI document as well, so that it can be referred to by VTrans and the legislature as needed. The collaborative nature of this effort will be emphasized/promoted. This document will be completed by end of January.
- This workgroup will ask all partners what they can contribute to this effort in either monetary or in-kind support.
- This workgroup will continue to identify stakeholders in order to build the case for how important and useful this data layer could be.

Statewide Parcel Maintenance Program Development:

Our original time frame for the development of a statewide parcel data maintenance program was the next 9-10 months. We are now thinking that we need to shorten that time frame quite a bit so that by spring we at least have the outline of a realistic program to propose. If possible, we could pursue legislative support for whatever funding mechanism we come up with. The likelihood of the VTrans Parcel Mapping Project moving forward depends on being able to describe how the data will be maintained into the future.

Some questions were identified for Leslie to pursue:

- How many new SPANs are assigned each year? And perhaps how many are actually for landed parcels?
- What is the property transfer tax volume (in dollars)? Can we break out only new properties (subdivisions)?
- What is the per parcel cost to maintain parcel data (via contractor, but also if this function were performed by a state employee)? Can we get such an estimate from the UNH folks?

Another document that Leslie needs to draft in the next month is a matrix showing a comparison of similar parcel data programs in different states. I will use whatever I can find online plus NH and MA.

Questions we need to pursue at future meetings:

- Which agencies might actually be willing/able to house a new employee to handle parcel data updates (if that option were pursued)?
- Could the state contract with an outside entity to incorporate parcel data changes into the statewide database (like NH)?

It is extremely important that all members of this committee participate in the exploration and development of a statewide parcel data maintenance program over the next few months. Please note that we have scheduled meetings on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month 1:30 – 3:30 PM (other than March 4th – Town Meeting Day- which has been re-scheduled to March 5th). Most of the meetings are taking place in the 5th floor VTrans Board Room at National Life in Montpelier. Please don't hesitate to contact Leslie if you are not sure where the meeting is or how to get there!