

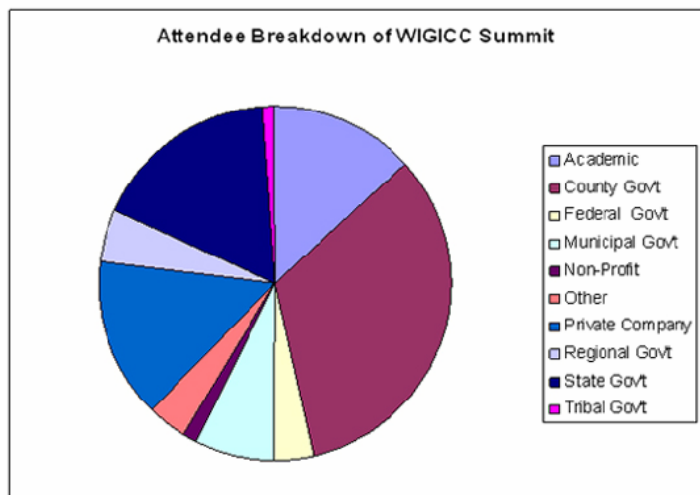
## Proposal to create the Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council (WIGICC)

### Background:

Geographic information is a strategic asset. Yet, no systematic statewide approach exists for creating, maintaining, accessing and using Wisconsin's geographic information. Consequently, creation and maintenance efforts are often redundant, and the geographic information used in public decision-making is commonly out-of-date, incomplete, and incompatible with other systems. In some areas, adequate capabilities or resources do not exist to effectively use this information. Conversely, standardized, accessible and usable geographic information would facilitate effective service delivery, improve operational efficiencies, and expand agencies' capacity to address priorities.

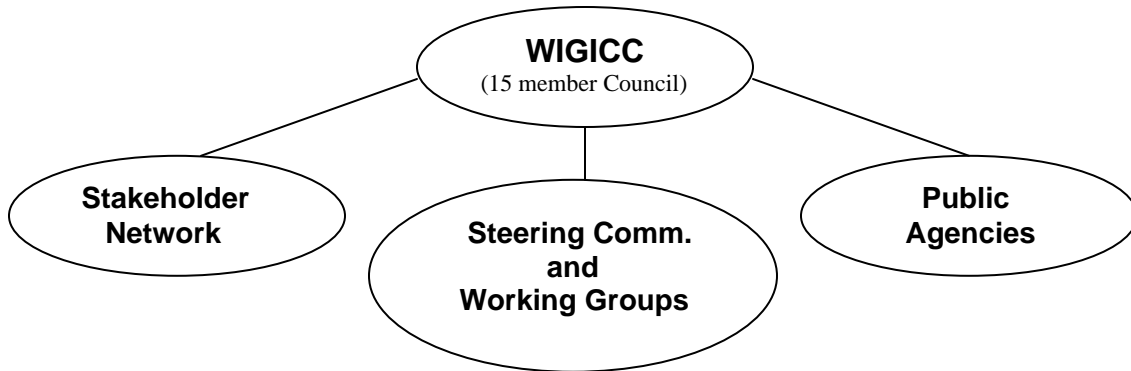
The strategic plan *Wisconsin Location Matters (Jan, 2007)*, prepared under the guidance of the Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA), underscores the value of statewide collaboration and cooperation, and identifies a Wisconsin Geographic Information Coordination Council (WIGICC) as its top priority. WIGICC offers a new opportunity for geographic information governance. More importantly, it also provides a mechanism for the State Geographic Information Officer (GIO) to engage the GIS community across Wisconsin. Also of note is the fact that Wisconsin is one of only four states without an advisory statewide GIS coordination group in one form or another. Seven states have an voluntary/informal council similar to the type of council we are proposing on an interim basis. (See attached map in Appendix A.)

In early 2007, Wisconsin's Geographic Information Officer, in cooperation with the Wisconsin State Cartographer's Office (SCO), assembled a working group, comprised of state, county, regional, university, and private sector representatives, to facilitate the creation of a WIGICC. Based on an evaluation of best practices and coordination councils in other states, the working group developed a set of criteria with which to evaluate potential governance models, as well as two sample models to serve as starting points for discussion. The working group hosted five "Listening Sessions" around the state to facilitate dialogue among a wide range of stakeholders, and to solicit ideas and feedback on the scope, composition and structure of WIGICC. Over 150 people from all sectors participated in these meetings. Synthesizing the ideas expressed during these sessions, the working group brought forward a draft council proposal for discussion at a "WIGICC Governance Summit," held in early September, 2007 and attended by 83 people from across the state (see graph above).



Building on a long history of cooperative geographic information activities, this effort developed a proposed WIGICC model that is appropriate for the times and mitigates some of the deficiencies of previous arrangements. Moreover, this model is inclusive, representative, and participatory – creating

a forum that meets multiple needs. The Working Group believes that the statewide GIS community supports the mission, vision, goals, and structure of WIGICC as outlined in the following sections.



**WIGICC Structure**

**The value of WIGICC**

WIGICC, as a statewide GIS coordination council, will be of significant value to the State of Wisconsin. The wise use of geographic information technology can assist in improving our economy, help support public safety, improve the effectiveness of our health care systems, and be a valued tool in protecting our cultural and natural resources. The council can provide effective leadership in coordinating, promoting and facilitating the development and use of geographic data and information. It can remove barriers to the implementation of GIS technology to assist the delivery of public services at all levels. Ultimately, when fully functioning, WIGICC will make sound recommendations on complex issues that will be backed by solid planning, thorough technical evaluation and measurable results.

Within this environment, WIGICC can be a tremendous asset to the DOA. WIGICC provides the means for the GIO to interface with the larger statewide GIS community, and in many instances, these communities don't identify themselves as GIS users. They will be individuals and organizations that have a need for geographic data to help solve problems, but are not necessarily primary creators or custodians of geographic information. WIGICC can provide the means to engage a variety of "communities" bringing their needs and solutions into a common forum and environment of understanding.

**The DOA Role:**

For WIGICC to become a reality the endorsement and support of DOA is critical. The State's GIS community needs to be assured that the intent to form and operate the Council is endorsed by the State's leadership. The public/private relationship that is a central concept of the WIGICC model is important, and to implement this, support from the administration will be a critical success factor.

The working Group envisions that WIGICC can provide insight and assistance with business issues that are of critical importance to the administration. Our intent is to establish WIGICC very soon, so it can begin to work with DOA and others to identify and address specific issues relevant to state business operations.

The Working Group advocates that WIGICC be informally established on an interim basis as soon as possible with a planned transition to a more traditionally formed council within a specified time frame, possibly within two years. We believe that stakeholders around the state are enthusiastic about participation in WIGICC activities, that they support the concept of a council, and believe that the WIGICC model will be successful in accomplishing needed changes and advances in GIS policy and applications.

Given there is widespread acceptance for creating WIGICC; we believe it is time to take action. The working group believes the following steps should be undertaken now:

- Establish the Council on an interim basis.
- Work cooperatively with DOA to identify critical issues and specific steps required to strategically address these issues.

**The WIGICC Role:**

WIGICC will be a small body of individuals who believe in the value and utility of GIS to be a component in addressing some of the State's more pressing problems. The WIGICC leadership will, as effectively as possible, represent the GIS stakeholder communities. The leadership will provide the direction and recommendations for the cooperative development and use of the state's geographic information resources.

Over all, WIGICC will be an action-oriented entity in that it will help identify and align geographic information resources to meet the needs of statewide business issues. In the process of doing this, it will evaluate information and recommendations made by its Stakeholder Network (discussed below).

More specifically WIGICC objectives will be to:

- Provide statewide leadership, guidance, and strategic planning,
- Facilitate the equitable creation, access and sharing of geographic information,
- Evaluate and promote geographic information standards and best practices, and policies
- Identify funding to support and maintain geographic information, and
- Advise and consult with decision makers on the appropriate use of geographic information to address critical societal issues.

The Working Group recommends that a small (15 member, see Appendix B) WIGICC be established as soon as possible on an interim basis. After two years, the work, effectiveness, and accomplishments of WIGICC will be evaluated. We anticipate that the evaluation will provide sufficient justification to create a permanent, chartered, and appointed WIGICC. Ideally, the permanent WIGICC will be established via executive order or legislation.

The Working Group, based on recommendations from statewide stakeholder groups, will facilitate the initial membership selection of the WIGICC. During its initial term, the WIGICC will develop procedures for membership, including fair and representative elections.

WIGICC members will elect the WIGICC chair. We propose that the DOA and State Cartographer's Office share WIGICC administrative responsibilities. This includes meeting support, document preparation, and communication management such as maintaining a dedicated website and organizing outreach activities. Ultimately, we hope that these duties will become part of GIO operations. To begin with, the two respective offices will work together to get it all started, looking for appropriate divisions in the two years of experimental operation. In December 2007, the SCO applied for a

Federal Geographic Data Committee Grant to assist in supporting initial WIGICC administrative, outreach, and communication operations. A decision on the award of this grant is expected about March 1, 2008.

The Working Group believes the proposed roles identified for the GIO and State Cartographer provides an appropriate assignment of complementary responsibilities and a cooperative working relationships that is in agreement with the duties of the GIO, and the statutory responsibilities of the State Cartographer.

The Stakeholder Network is one of the primary components of WIGICC, and will be a critical aspect of its successful operation. The concept of the network as a statewide forum to identify and debate issues was very well received in last year's five different Listening Sessions and the September Summit. The Network will be open to all individuals and organizations with an interest in supporting the mission and objectives of WIGICC. It is envisioned that the Network will reach beyond traditional GIS communities into business issues-oriented communities such as emergency management, economic development, and education to assure that their needs are being met.

The Network will serve to identify issues and make recommendations to the WIGICC on actions and policies relating to the use and sharing of geographic information and data. We expect that "communities of practice" will form within the Network around common business interests and within loosely defined geographic regions. The communities' actions can involve formulating issue papers, proposing solutions and reviewing Council activities as well as acting as a forum for better communication within the communities themselves. We envision that participants in the Network will register as a means to document who is participating on a regular basis, and that much of the network's "interaction" will make use of electronic communication methods such as wikis, blogs and webinars.

In order to initiate Network actions it will take a small and dedicated group to help form the Network. In order to make the biggest impact quickly, we intend to use existing people and organizations to help form parts of the Network. The following groups/individuals have been identified:

- Statewide business needs (e.g., voter registration) - State GIO (Curt Pulford)
- State agency needs – SAGIC Group (Lisa Morrison)
- Educational community concerns – SCO (Ted Koch)
- Federal agency coordination – USGS (Dick Vraga)
- Emergency management needs – WEM (Chris Diller)
- Land Information issues – WLIA (Jason Grueneberg)
- Business sector – (Brian Jensen and Dave Mockert)
- Transportation infrastructure – DOT ( ? )
- Resource management – DNR (Kenny Parsons)
- Local government – LION (Bret Davies)

#### **WIGICC Business Goals:**

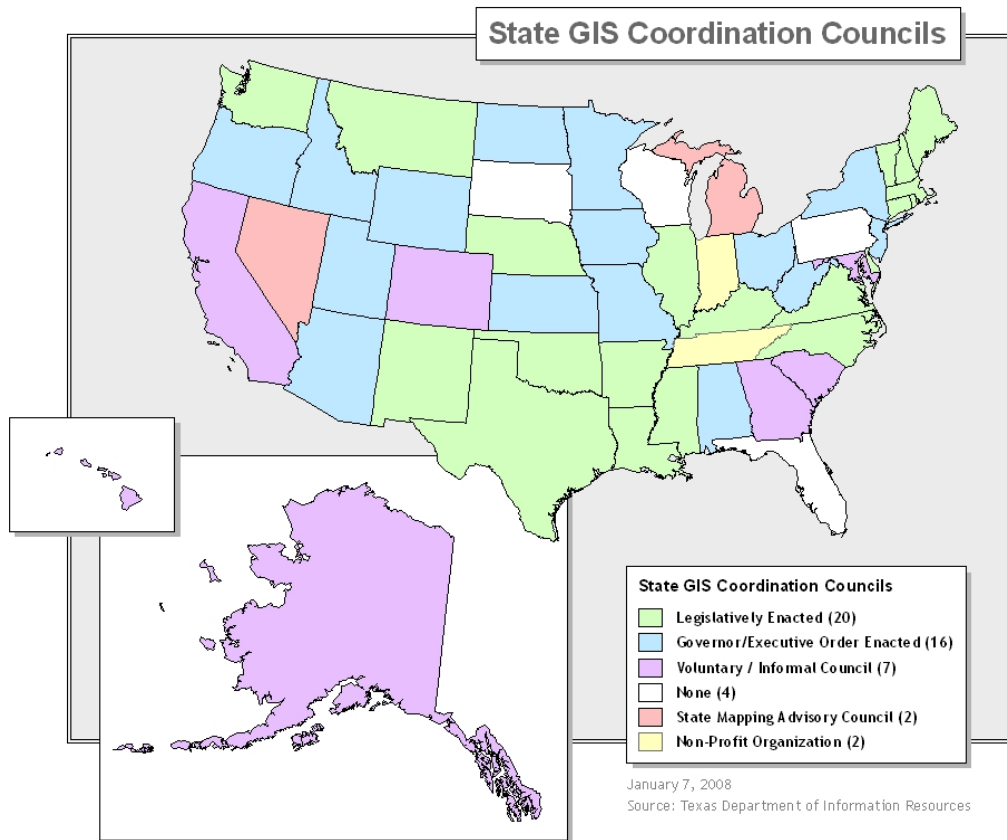
Location is an integral component of most operational decisions made by governments, businesses and organizations. Where people live, work, play, and go to school directly influences how and where public and private services are delivered. Deciding where to build a house, school, health care center, factory, pipeline, landfill, farm, industry, bike path, grocery store, etc. requires extensive knowledge of the geographic location and distribution of humans, natural resources, and infrastructure in the area.

During its first two years, WIGICC will take specific actions to identify problems and recommend solutions for the collection and sharing of geographic information, technology, and procedures associated with homeland security threats and public health emergencies. More importantly, WIGICC will facilitate communication and coordination about geospatial issues *between* the Governor’s Homeland Security Council and Public Health Council.

- **Homeland Security Council (HLSC)** HLSC advises the Governor, coordinates outreach, directs state homeland security operations, and works with federal, state and local agencies to prevent and respond to threats. To date, HLSC has no specific working group to identify geographic information, technology, and procedures that must be in place and coordinated among stakeholders to support statewide threat prevention and response activities.
- **Public Health Council (PHC)** PHC advises the Governor, Legislature, state agencies, and the public on implementation of the state’s 10-year public health plan and coordinates responses to public health emergencies. PHC has created a Committee on Emergency Preparedness, but has no specific working group to identify geographic information, technology, and procedures that must be in place and coordinated among stakeholders to support statewide public health emergency response.

### Appendix A: State GIS Coordination Councils

(Source: Texas Dept. of Information Resources, Jan, 2008)



## Appendix B: WIGICC Composition

<b>Proposed Interim Council Membership</b> 15 Voting Members 2 Non-voting Members	
<b>State Government</b>	<b>3</b>
State Agencies who are members of the WI State Agency Geographic Information Coordination (SAGIC) Team	3
<b>Local Governments and Regional Organizations</b>	<b>4</b>
Regional Planning Commissions	1
County Governments	2
City, Towns and Village Governments	1
<b>Other Government</b>	<b>2</b>
Tribal Governments within the boundaries of the State of Wisconsin	1
Federal agency field offices within Wisconsin	1
<b>Non-Government</b>	<b>4</b>
Private Businesses	2
Non-Profit Organizations	2
<b>Academic</b>	<b>2</b>
Universities, UW-Extension, and Technical colleges,	2
<b>Ex-Officio, (Non-Voting)</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>WI State Geographic Information Officer (GIO), ex-officio, non-voting</i>	1
<i>Wisconsin State Cartographer (SCO), ex-officio, non-voting</i>	1

Model C – Jan, 2008