

# **Narrative - Endorsement of the Common Operating Picture (includes benefits and costs)**

1. Please attach a brief narrative describing the issue.

The Council is asked to support the sixteen (16) general recommendations made to the State CIO for the long-term strategic direction of geospatial activities within Montana State government agencies and organizations.

Primary among these is the creation of an independent Geographic Information Office housed in the Governor's Office (subsequent to the report, the Governor's Office acted upon this recommendation but decided the GIO should reside within ITSD at a Deputy CIO level) and staffed by a Geographic Information Officer (GIO) and the current DofA, ITSD GIS Service Bureau personnel. Further, that the office oversees the development, implementation and coordination of GIS activities and technology across all State agencies. A well thought out transition plan is critical to the success of these recommendations. The subcommittee recommends that development of the detailed transition plans be directed by the GIO.

Secondarily, the report recommends that the Montana State Library, Natural Resource Information System (MSL/NRIS) is the State's GIS Data Clearinghouse, including being the providers of the State's primary (but not exclusive) GIS Data Portal, and the holder of the State's principal GIS metadata files. Further, that the MSL/NRIS not be limited to only providing these services for natural resource information but be allowed to provide these services for all of the State's GIS information content. Finally, that the MSL/NRIS discontinue the business of applications development for State agencies and stop storing GIS data content except where that content is archival data and/or the NRIS has added significant value to the content dataset.

The report also recommends that the DofA, ITSD be designated as the State's primary (but not exclusive) GIS Data Warehouse and that the GIS Service Bureau be the lead entity to work with all federal, state, local, private and tribal entities to coordinate, develop and maintain data and standards for GIS information.

The report also recommends that consumers of GIS data content have multiple paths available to retrieve the information they seek.

And finally, the reports recommends that the MLIA Council actively support efforts to secure and ensure the funding and other resources necessary to carry out these proposals.

The report also urges the CIO to move quickly towards execution of these recommendations.

2. What are the benefits of supporting the issue?

The report:

- \* Recommends to the State CIO a general, coordinated long-term strategic direction for geospatial activities within Montana State government;
- \* Raises the recognition of geospatial activities within State government to the same level as currently reserved for more traditional information technology activities;
- \* Anticipates the hiring of a State Geographic Information Officer, thereby focusing State geospatial activities towards a single, high-level individual within the State information technology hierarchy;
- \* Recommends a federated GIS organizational model, where geospatial activities are integrated into the very heart of an agency's business processes;
- \* Clarifies the relationship between the MSL and ITSD, and provides for an authoritative individual who can resolve disputes;
- \* Is a roadmap, an initial step, with detailed planning, timing and costs for implementation of each recommendation determined as that individual proposal is undertaken; and
- \* Provides a springboard to propel State government geospatial activities to the next level of acceptance by State of Montana decision makers and the more general Montana GIS community.

3. What are the costs or resource requirements to support the issue?

The initial cost is to support one FTE (GIO). The cost is being absorbed within the current ITSD rate structure, not from MLIA funds. The report is a roadmap, an overall direction for State government geospatial activities, and therefore, detailed costs and funding sources to implement the recommendations have not yet been determined, but will be delineated as those proposals are further defined and planned for implementation.