MEMO

To: Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council

From: Erin Fashoway, State GIS Coordinator

Subject: Montana Geospatial Information Plan Update

Date: 9/11/2025

The Montana Geospatial Information Plan was originally opened for public comment from May 27- June 26. The Montana State Library received four public comments via the online survey and one public comment submitted via email. The July 11th, meeting was cancelled due to a lack of Council quorum and public comment for the Plan was reopened until 12:00 p.m., September 5, 2025.

Attached you will find the submitted public comment.

Below is a list of where minor medications were made based on the suggested public comments from May 27- June 26.

- Page 7/12 – Updated Goal 1.2
- Page 7/12 – Updated Goal 1.3
- Page 7/12 – Updated Goal 2.1
- Page 8/12 – Goal 3.2, Bullet 2

Link to the Montana Geospatial Plan with updates:
https://docs.msl.mt.gov/MGIA/GeospatialPlans/20250515_FinalDraft_FY25_27GeospatialInfoPlan.pdf

GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION PLAN [ARM 10.102.9104.2]: By September 1 of each fiscal year, the State Library will complete a review of the geospatial information plan.

Name:	Maureen Celander
City/Town:	Miles City
Date of Comment:	5/28/2025

Comment: Very good plan and well put together. Very much appreciate all the hard work. Just a couple housekeeping notes. Page 7 at paragraph 1.2, " Implement a scalable geospatial architecture to support the of the MSDI & geospatial information." Should there be the word data here or eliminate "the of"? On this same page at paragraph 1.3, "Collaborate and coordinator with stakeholders from state, local, tribal, federal, nonprofit, private, university, and professional associations on the development of standards, best practices, tools, and training opportunities for the preparation and implementation of NSRS modernization. Might sound better as coordinate, and universities. Also, on this same page at paragraph 2.1, "The GIS Coordinator, Theme Leads, MSDI Working Groups, & Council will work to define datasets, value measures, & assess value measure for each MSDI Framework Theme. Does this sound repetitive? I know one is definition, and one is assessment, just sounds repetitive to me. Maybe this wording, "…work to define the value measures and datasets and the assessment of the value measures for each…"? Thank you for all you do. I know local government benefits greatly from all the hard work.

Name:	Teresa Olson
City/Town:	Lewistown
Date of Comment:	5/29/2025

Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft FY25–27 Montana Geospatial Information Plan. The plan clearly shows a strong commitment to improving the state's geospatial infrastructure, and it's encouraging to see steps already being taken to restore MGIA funding through House Bill 192 and recording fee adjustments.

That said, I would like to see the plan adopt a stronger position toward exploring funding diversification. With federal and state budgets under pressure, there's always the risk that programs like MGIA could face cuts down the line. Rather than waiting for that to happen, this could be a good time to explore supplemental options. I'd like to suggest including a resilience strategy in the plan to help protect the program from future funding uncertainty.

Examples include: public-private partnerships with industries that rely on spatial data, establishing endowment or trust fund models for long-term geospatial investment, developing revenue from specialized services for commercial users or private entities and stakeholders, and expanding research collaborations with Montana's academic institutions to access competitive federal and private grants. Partnerships and/or cost sharing with other state agencies, local governments, and tribal entities and community-driven data collection efforts may also serve to broaden both participation and resilience.

The alternative funding sources mentioned are compatible with MSL's policies and statutory authority and could help safeguard from future funding uncertainty. I appreciate the opportunity to provide input and applaud the forward-looking work of the MGIA planning team.

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Submitted respectfully by a Montana-based GIS professional

Teresa E. Olson, MGIS

Name: Clint Whittle-Frazier
City/Town: Missoula
Date of Comment: 5/29/2025

Comment: I support the Montana Geospatial Information Plan and hopefully the increased fees will help!

Name: CTVA Action Committee
City/Town: Helena
Date of Comment: 6/26/2025

Comment:

We would like to see the plan make available to the public in user friendly formats, including shp and gpx, all of the existing motorized routes and trails on all public lands. The public needs a one stop source for this information and all public land management agencies will benefit from this GIS and mapping resource. There should be a choice of base maps including topographic and aerial. Printing options should include different scales, extents, pdf, and jpeg. A starting point could be similar to the State of Idaho tools shown at https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/motorized-trails/

Thank you for considering our input.

Name: Jason Strouf

City/Town: Miles City

Date of Comment: 6/26/2025

Comment:

I have reviewed the proposed plan and do not have any suggestions or concerns.

Name: Lisa Rieger

City/Town: Baker

Date of Comment: 6/28/2025

Comment:

This was a very comprehensive plan. Thank you for including me in the feedback group.

Name: Mark Kindsfather

City/Town: Billings

Date of Comment: 8/28/2025

Comment: The one thing I'd like to see improved is more accurate placing of lot lines. I have heard from taxpayers how frustrating it is to them.

Name: Tara Moorehead

City/Town: Miles City

Date of Comment: 8/29/2025

Comment: The cadastral boundary representation is inconsistent with the recorded legal description and survey of the property.

Name: Gerianne Livingston
City/Town: Miles City
Date of Comment: 8/29/2025

Comment: The Montana GIS made redistricting legislative voting districts and voter addressing much easier. Custer County GIS Manager Maureen Celander is very knowledgeable and wonderful to work with.

Name: Candice Lemieux
City/Town: Miles City
Date of Comment: 8/29/2025

Comment: When using Montana Cadastral, I would like to see better defined boundary lines. Currently most lines run through the buildings on the property.

Name: Meghan Burns
City/Town: Helena
Date of Comment: 8/29/2025

Comment: 1. Page 10/12: Figure 5.1 does not appear to be referenced in the text; consider addding (dollar) units to Millions.
2. Page 10/12: the link to the msl.mt.gov/mgiagrants is absent (you cannot click on the link to go to the page).
Thank you for the opportunity to comment!