



January 21, 2005

**US Public Library Geographic Database Advisory Committee Meeting
Annual American Library Association Midwinter Meeting
Sunday, January 16, 11:30 – 1 pm**

Attending:

Christie Koontz (Director GeoLib); Renee Blalock (Birmingham Public and PLDS); Darren Hoerner (Gates Global Libraries Program); Keith Curry Lance (Colorado LRS & FSCS); Denise Davis (ALA/ORS); Barratt Wilkins (retired State Librarian); Bob Molyneux (NCLIS); Joe Matthews (Consultant); Mary Chute (IMLS - Liaison)

Absent/Excused:

Chuck McClure, John Bertot & Dean K. Jue (FSU); Karen Bosch Cobb (Fresno County Public Library); Angela Lee (ESRI); Jeff Williams (NCES); Alison Denton (UM)

1. Introductions

Introductions were made. New members include Sherry Lee (Huntsville Public Library, AL, not attending) and Bob Molyneux.

2. Current Status of PLGDB

Handouts were dispersed introducing three new tools of the PLGDB including: multiple layer ID; measure distance tool; and the query tool. The multiple layer ID allows the user to extract up to 5 demographic variables at one time (rather than one). The measuring distance tool, allows the user to actually measure the walk/or drive from a point (such as a facility) to a point. The Query tool is a powerful tool which can be used to analyze data within the database, i.e., how many libraries have children's circulation over 100,000 annually? These tools will be available within six weeks, along with a generic online help tool.

The current status of the PLGDB was discussed and explained by Koontz. The sources of feedback and 'real' feedback from users was summarized. This feedback is being used to enhance the PLGDB currently, and in the future as partnerships and funding are identified.

3. Review of Information Institute's Evaluation Report

The FSU Information Institute's evaluation report for the final IMLS project report for 2002-2004 was summarized. This evaluation indicates that the help tools developed for situational uses would be most effective. Continued work on programming easier user interfaces is also desirable, as well as simpler data presentation.

4. Dissemination Review

A review of the conferences, workshops and programs that have communicated the PLGDB was offered. We had three publications in 2004. Koontz conducts workshops for state organizations and regional groups. The FSCS State Data Coordinators continue to be key stakeholders. The PLGDB has been presented at the annual FSCS conference for the past three years. These workshops are excellent for reducing the learning curve for using the PLGDB. Lance suggested that more workshops take place, supported by local and state funds. ALA annual programs 2003 and 2004 have also presented the PLGDB, and PLA and ALA programs are planned in 2005 and 2006.

5. Sustainability

Sustainability activities include a new partnership with SIRSI, to develop an application for its customers. Customers draw their own market areas within the PLGDB, and extract demographic data used in conjunction with SIRSI neighborhood level data. This partnership will help support the maintenance of the PLGDB, and partially facilitate its mission of being 'free and desktop.' Another sustainability partnership was developed through the Information Institute of FSU with the Gates' Global Libraries Program. Funds from the project will allow updating the PLGDB from 1999 to 2002 level. Lance discussed the challenge of funding—is getting people at the local level to use it and 'buy into' its value. It was suggested that individual libraries of the Urban Libraries Council may also provide support through contractual applications, as well as state libraries for public libraries within their states. Denise Davis discussed the costs of private sector GIS projects—an estimate from Civic Technologies to conduct a study within Oregon for \$300,000. THE PLGDB as a 'free and desktop' tool was said to be a 'national treasure.'

It was agreed that more situational tutorials need to be provided. We know from the feedback that students are using it to find jobs, faculty and students for research, and public librarians for community analysis and long range planning.

Lance also suggested that the PLGDB be used in national planning projects such as LSTA funding applications, and the possibly in any such efforts as a new 'Planning Process for Public Libraries.' Chute of IMLS said she would look into the possibility of use for LSTA applications. Davis of ALA is pursuing use for identifying public libraries by congressional district.

A new IMLS grant is being applied for in the 'Advancing Learning Communities,' to develop help tools and tutorials for the PLGDB. This would augment partnerships that were developed this year with SIRSI and GATES—and are being sought with WebJunction and COSLA, and ULC.

The group will meet at ALA annual in Chicago.