

Meeting Notes:

GAC Parcel & Land Records Committee (PLRC)

Date: June 10, 2026

Time: 3:00 PM – 3:47 PM

Chair: Preston Dowell, St. Louis County Deputy County Surveyor

Attendees

- Preston Dowell – St. Louis County
- Norman Anderson – MnGeo
- Christy Christensen – McLeod County
- Jennifer Ward – Pro-West & Associates
- Greg Kohler – MnGeo
- Tanya Mayer – Metropolitan Council
- Pat Veraguth – Douglas & Grant County Surveyor
- Ryan Stovern – St. Louis County Auditor's Office
- Stephen Krech – Washington County
- Sam Giebner- St. Louis County
- Kory Thurnau – MnGeo

1. Welcome and Introductions

Preston Dowell welcomed participants and facilitated introductions. Members shared their organizational affiliations and interests, particularly regarding parcels, boundaries, PLSS, and right-of-way data management.

2. MnGeo Updates

Statewide Parcel Program Update

Norman Anderson- MnGeo

Key Updates

- Quarterly parcel data collection and aggregation continues.
- Data is received through open data portals, downloads, and direct county submissions.
- MnGeo maintains:
 - Internal statewide parcel dataset.
 - Public opt-in parcel dataset available through Minnesota Geospatial Commons.
- January 1, 2026 changes to the Minnesota Data Practices Act regarding judicial officials have affected publication of ownership-related attributes.

- MnGeo is exploring future enhancements using Department of Revenue PRISM data.
- Continued emphasis on improving attribute completeness and consistency among county datasets.

Government Lands Dataset (Link)

- Derived from statewide parcel data.
- Updated quarterly following parcel updates.
- Public opt-in version available through Minnesota Geospatial Commons.
- Dataset continues to evolve through ongoing refinement and county data improvements.
- Users should recognize limitations due to inconsistencies in source ownership records.

govt_own	
☐ State	46.51%
☐ Tax Forfeit	23.48%
☐ Federal	20.63%
☐ County Fee	6.54%
☐ Tribal	2.84%

Minnesota Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) Update

Kory Thurnau- MnGeo

Key Updates

- MnGeo is updating Minnesota's Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) theme plans. Two of the themes should be reviewed for input by the PLRC:
 - Cadastral/ Parcels
 - Government Boundaries
- Hope to present and have drafts for review for next PLRC meeting in December.

Discussion Topics

- Whether the cadastral theme should include:
 - Parcels only, or
 - PLSS and other related cadastral datasets.
- Development of government boundary theme plans.
- Ongoing efforts to improve county boundary datasets and align government boundary layers.
- Coordination with Census Bureau efforts regarding boundary alignment and census geography.

Action Item

- MnGeo will seek PLRC review and input on draft SDI theme plans, with an initial review targeted for the next committee meeting.

3. Census and Boundary Alignment Coordination

Ryan Stovern- St. Louis County (Greater MN County Rep on the GAC)

- Recent discussions with:
 - Legislative Commission
 - State Demographers Office
 - Secretary of State's Office
- Focus on improving alignment between government boundaries, census geography, and election data.
- The PLRC Boundary Alignment Subcommittee may play a role in developing future workflows and standards supporting these efforts.

4. Committee Structure and Current Priorities

Preston Dowell- St. Louis County (Chair)

Existing Subcommittees

1. Boundary Alignment Subcommittee
2. PLSS Legislative Subcommittee

These groups have conducted most committee work over the past several years while advancing Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) priorities.

5. New GAC Priority: Statewide Right-of-Way Data

Priority Statement

A standardized, cross-government statewide dataset for public right-of-way and permanent transportation easements.

Discussion Highlights

Participants identified several challenges:

- Wide variation in documentation and recordation practices.
- Recorded and unrecorded rights-of-way.
- Prescriptive easements.
- Cartways.
- Railroad corridors.
- Water transportation easements.
- Platted rights-of-way that were never constructed.
- Fee ownership versus easement interests.

Cristy Christensen described McLeod County's experience discovering and recording previously unrecorded right-of-way documents and emphasized the importance of clear public communication regarding right-of-way information.

Proposed Approach

- Establish a Right-of-Way Subcommittee.
- Initial efforts should focus on defining:
 - Desired outcomes.
 - Scope of work.
 - Potential deliverables.

Potential products discussed:

- Standards
- Guidance documents
- Inventory framework
- Statewide dataset

Leadership

- Pat Veraguth volunteered to serve as interim chair and help launch the effort.
- Stephen Krech is interested in working with the group as well.
- Participants recommended outreach to:
 - MnDOT staff
 - MCGISA
 - MACS
 - Metropolitan Council Real Estate Office (One individual has already expressed interest)
 - Additional right-of-way professionals

Action Items

- Form Right-of-Way Subcommittee.
- Pat Veraguth to coordinate initial discussions and outreach.
- Identify additional participants and stakeholders.

6. Membership Review

Discussion

The committee roster has not been formally reviewed in several years.

Goals:

- Update membership records.
- Confirm participant interest.

- Identify active versus informational members.
- Improve communication and SharePoint access management.

Action Item

Kory Thurnau will:

- Distribute a membership survey.
- Confirm participation preferences.
- Identify subcommittee interests.
- Update contact information and roster.

Membership Survey

7. Meeting Schedule

Decision

The committee agreed to meet:

Twice annually (approximately every six months).

Next Meeting

December 9, 2026

Subcommittees will continue meeting independently as needed.

8. PLRC Work Plan Update

Discussion

The committee work plan has not been updated since 2022.

Action Items

- Preston Dowell & Ryan Stovern will draft a new PLRC workplan.
- Draft work plan will be circulated for review and shared with the PLRC for input.

9. Boundary Alignment Subcommittee Update

Preston Dowell- St. Louis County (Chair)

Status

- Significant effort has recently focused on development of the PLSS Point Data Standard.
- The standard has now been approved by the Geospatial Advisory Council.

Next Steps

- Resume regular Boundary Alignment Subcommittee meetings.
- Develop implementation guidance for the PLSS Point Data Standard.
- Continue advancing county boundary alignment efforts.
 - Focus primarily on county boundary datasets.

Action Item

- Subcommittee meetings will resume in the coming months.

10. PLSS Legislative Subcommittee Update

Pat Veraguth- Douglas County (Surveyor Rep. GAC)

Legislative Update

- No PLSS-related legislation was approved during the recent legislative session.

Current Focus

- Pursuing modifications to the \$10.50 recording surcharge distribution structure.
- Seeking additional support and engagement from county recorders.

Future Considerations

- Identify legislative authors for future bills.
- Monitor impacts of upcoming elections.
- Consider potential state budget constraints affecting future proposals.

Upcoming Meeting

- PLSS Legislative Subcommittee scheduled to meet June 22, 2026.

11. Additional Updates

PLSS Point Data Standard Outreach

Pat Veraguth reported:

- The recently approved PLSS Point Data Standard has been forwarded to MACS for consideration.
- Discussion is expected at the upcoming MACS meeting on June 17, 2026.
- Potential adoption by MACS will be explored.

Summary of Action Items

Action Item	Responsible Party
Draft MnSDI theme plans for PLRC input	Kory Thurnau / MnGeo
Establish Right-of-Way Subcommittee	Pat Veraguth
Recruit additional right-of-way stakeholders	Pat Veraguth and others
Distribute membership survey and update roster	Kory Thurnau
Update PLRC work plan	Preston Dowell & Ryan Stovern
Resume Boundary Alignment Subcommittee meetings	Preston Dowell
Report on MACS consideration of PLSS Data Standard	Pat Veraguth

Next PLRC Meeting: December 9, 2026.