



Board-Level Policy Explanation Summary

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Policy

Purpose of this summary: This document provides plain-language, Board-level explanations of the policy documents presented for consideration. It summarizes what each policy governs, why it matters to MSD, and the key safeguards established. It does not replace the full policy language.

At-a-Glance Summary

Policy Document	Board-Level Purpose	Primary Risk Addressed	Board-Level Outcome
Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy	Controls MSD drone use for inspections, mapping, planning, and member community business.	Safety, FAA/state compliance, privacy, critical infrastructure protection, and drone data handling.	MSD can use drones for legitimate public purposes while reducing legal, safety, and privacy risk.
Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Policy	Sets governance standards for MSD geospatial data, maps, GIS services, sharing, and archiving.	Data accuracy, ownership, sensitive data access, GRAMA/HIPAA compliance, contractor controls, and public map consistency.	MSD and member entities have more reliable, secure, and consistent GIS data for operations and decisions.



1. Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Policy

Board-level explanation: The UAS Policy establishes a safe, lawful, and privacy-respecting framework for MSD drone operations. It authorizes drone use only for legitimate MSD or member community business and requires compliance with FAA rules, Utah law, airspace authorization requirements, and MSD operating procedures. At a Board level, it allows MSD to use drones for inspection, mapping, planning, and related public purposes while placing clear controls around safety, operator qualifications, privacy, critical infrastructure, records, and incident reporting.

What it governs	MSD-owned, contractor-operated, and MSD-requested drone operations for MSD or member community business.
Key safeguards	Mission review, FAA-compliant operators, preflight/risk assessment, required airspace permissions, maintenance and insurance controls, privacy protections, approved data storage, and incident reporting.
What is prohibited	Unauthorized flights, personal or unrelated use, routine or unauthorized surveillance, impaired operation, and use of UAS data outside the approved mission purpose.
Board relevance	Provides governance for a useful operational technology while reducing legal, safety, privacy, and public-trust risk.

Suggested Board-level talking points:

- Makes drone use an approved, controlled activity rather than an informal practice.
- Requires trained and authorized operators, documented approvals, and compliance with FAA and Utah requirements.
- Limits drone data collection to approved mission needs and ties retention/access to MSD records requirements.
- Requires prompt reporting of accidents, damage, near-misses, and other significant events.



2. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Policy

Board-level explanation: The GIS Policy governs how MSD creates, maintains, secures, shares, publishes, and archives geospatial data and map products. GIS information supports planning, engineering, public works, boundaries, infrastructure understanding, and member-entity decision-making. At a Board level, this policy strengthens the quality, consistency, security, and reliability of MSD GIS data by setting standards for data ownership, access approval, sharing, metadata, map review, archiving, and legal compliance.

What it governs	MSD GIS datasets, users, map products, web GIS services, external sharing, contractor access, and archiving.
Key safeguards	Controlled access to sensitive GIS data, written approval for sharing, creator control over distribution, authoritative data review, data standards, metadata requirements, and map-review controls.
What it improves	Data quality, source documentation, map consistency, coordination, external distribution controls, long-term preservation, and defensible decisions.
Board relevance	Helps MSD and member communities rely on accurate, secure, and well-documented GIS information while managing GRAMA, HIPAA, contractor, and public-release risks.

Suggested Board-level talking points:

- Treats GIS data as an authoritative public-sector asset that requires governance.
- Sets standards for who may create, change, share, and publish GIS data and map products.
- Protects sensitive or confidential GIS data while allowing appropriate sharing with member entities and public agencies.
- Replaces the 2022 GIS policy and adds stronger expectations for data standards, training, metadata, review, and archiving.

How the Policies Work Together

Together, these policies strengthen MSD governance over location-based technology. The UAS Policy controls drone operations; the GIS Policy controls the geospatial data and map products that may result from field work or drone-supported projects. The combined effect is better operational capability with clearer safeguards for compliance, privacy, data quality, and public trust.

Board action framing: Approval would formalize governance over two important operational capabilities: drones for public-sector work and GIS data management for MSD and member communities.

Source documents reviewed:

- 2026-07-06 UAS_Policy reviewed by Anderson.docx
- 2026-07-06 Updated_GIS_Policy_02122026 reviewed by Anderson.docx