

CA GIS Council Charter

Section 1: Finding and Declarations

Whereas:

1. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are a critical tool for improving the quality, accuracy and responsiveness of government services provided in the State of California; and
2. California's local, state and federal jurisdictions, tribal governments, universities, and private sector currently invest significant resources in creating and maintaining GIS data and systems that are independent of one another. Duplication of effort exists among these sectors in the creation and maintenance of California's geographic information; and
3. It is mutually beneficial that GIS data be managed and shared using accepted standards, uniform policies, and standard business practices; and
4. Leveraging resources and coordinating policy through a collaborative endeavor increases the cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of geographic information in California and will have beneficial effect throughout both public and private sectors.

Therefore:

The California GIS Council, hereinafter "Council," will enable the California geospatial community to work together to develop, maintain and share accurate, consistent place-based information that is accessible to the general public and the agencies and organizations that serve them.

Section 2: Mission and Goals

Mission

The purpose of the Council is to promote a greater understanding and use of the benefits of GIS, and facilitate cooperation throughout the State of California by supporting the collection, acquisition, sharing, and dissemination of GIS data, standards, and policies.

The Council, comprised of a diverse body of GIS professionals, will act as an advisory body to members of its constituencies, the State Geographic Information Officer, and agencies and

groups that develop and implement geospatial initiatives, policies, and standards, by providing recommendations, best practices, and expertise.

Goals

1. **Planning and Strategy:** To identify and prioritize California's geographic information needs and priorities, and develop and maintain a Strategic Plan to guide the implementation and completion of the goals and associated objectives expressed in this Charter.
2. **Advisory:** To serve as a trusted advisor to members of its constituencies by reviewing, analyzing, and responding to public policy issues that affect GIS and GIS Professionals.
3. **Collaborative policy development:** To serve as a forum for members to seek input, guidance, and consensus on policies and best practices that support the development of GIS in California and advocating for their adoption.
4. **California Spatial Data Access:** To support the development, maintenance, and access to comprehensive statewide geospatial data for Council constituencies and the general public.
5. **Collaboration:** To promote cooperation and create opportunities for various levels of government to meet identified needs and priorities.
6. **Communication:** To provide a forum where GIS professionals and governments can discuss best practices, identify technology trends, and benefit from others in the GIS field.

Section 3: Membership

Membership

1. Membership in the GIS Council is voluntary, and is comprised of individuals with expertise and experience representing their affiliated institutions (government, academic nonprofit, or private) or professional associations.
2. GIS Council members must self-identify with one of the constituencies listed below.
3. The Council will have the authority to increase or decrease the number of constituencies.
4. Council Members will provide the following information for the Council Contact List:
 1. Member's Name
 2. Title
 3. Organization
 4. Department
 5. Constituency
 6. Email address
 7. Telephone Number

Constituencies

The Council recognizes that there are various constituencies and stakeholders that have common business requirements. Constituencies identified by the Council:

1. State Government
2. Federal Government
3. County Government
4. City Government
5. Tribal Government
6. Regional Government and Regional GIS Councils
7. Special Districts
8. Education
9. Private Industry
10. Professional Associations
11. Nonprofits
12. Public and Private Utilities

Section 4: Structure

Leadership

1. The Executive Committee of the Council will be comprised of a Chair, a Vice Chair, and one representative from each of the constituencies as selected by that constituency.
2. The term of an executive committee member shall be one year, [commencing on October 1 and ending on September 30 of the following year. The term of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year.](#)
3. The Chair will be responsible for scheduling Council meetings, presiding over the Council, and representing the Council in public meetings.
4. The Council will elect a Vice Chair from a different constituency than the Chair for a one year term. The Vice Chair becomes the Chair the following year. The Vice Chair will be responsible for supporting the Chair in his or her responsibilities and fulfilling the Chair's duties when the Chair is unavailable.
5. The Executive Committee votes on internal business matters such as developing agendas for Council meetings, maintaining the Council website, supporting communications, holding elections, [certifying election results](#), responding to requests from Council members or constituencies, and establishing workgroups.
6. Members may designate an alternate if they are unable to attend Council or Executive Committee meetings.
7. When there are vacancies for the Chair or Vice Chair they shall be filled by elections of the full Council.
8. The California State Geographic Information Officer shall be a non-voting, advisory member of the Executive Committee.

Workgroups

The Council will establish workgroups as necessary to accomplish objectives required to realize the Council's goals. Members of the Council can volunteer for workgroups. Workgroups will draft reports and recommendations, and present them to the Council for review, endorsement, or other action. Workgroups shall have clear plans for accomplishing their objectives, with clearly defined deliverables and timeframes for delivery.

The Executive Committee will have the authority to appoint Chairs for the workgroups. Each workgroup Chair will, in turn, have the authority to fill vacancies and increase or decrease the membership of a workgroup under the Council's discretion.

Workgroup members are to recuse themselves on matters where there is a clear conflict of interest or agency guidelines that prohibit their involvement on specific matters.

Section 5: Operations

Meetings

1. The California GIS Council will meet at least four (4) times per year or more often as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee. Locations will rotate throughout California to maximize stakeholder involvement. Every effort will be made to use phone bridges, video conferencing and similar communication technologies to facilitate participation by Council members and interested parties that may not otherwise be able to attend.
1. The agenda for Council meetings will be created by the Chair or Vice Chair and distributed to the Executive Committee members at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting date for review and comment. Changes and modifications will be made by the Chair or Vice Chair accordingly prior to publication and distribution to the Council.
2. Special meetings or project specific sub-group meetings may be held at the discretion of the Chair or leader of specific projects.
3. Workgroups will meet as required by the Council and or their respective Chair.

Communication

Written communications to members and constituencies most often will take place via e-mail. A website will be maintained by the Executive Committee and its location communicated to Council members. Website postings will include:

1. Agendas.
2. Meeting minutes.
3. Council membership.
4. Council and workgroup projects.
5. Other information deemed important by the Council.

Council recommendations, reports, documents, and other items prepared by the Council will be transmitted to the California State Geographic Information Officer and to the Council Chair to facilitate coordination between the Council and the State.

Decision Making

Workgroups will present findings, documents, and recommendations to the Executive Committee for review, who will vote to place them before the Council for approval and publication.

1. For Council votes, the Council will strive to reach consensus regarding decisions. Consensus is defined as a simple majority of members present with no one objecting.
2. If objections are presented, the Chair will table the issue and will work to ensure that all objections are addressed to ensure consensus before a revote.
3. If consensus is not reached, a vote will take place and a two-thirds majority of all votes cast will affirm the decision.
4. Decisions regarding resource allocation outside of the Council's auspices ultimately reside with the individual member's department or organization.
5. Decisions regarding policies, standards, and initiatives that reside within the responsibility and purview of the California State Geographic Information Officer (CA-GIO) may be reviewed by the CA-GIO.
6. The Executive Committee will take formal votes on internal business matters. Each constituent representative will have one vote to cast. A member may specify a designated alternate to cast a vote on his or her behalf. Voting activity will require a quorum of half plus one of Executive Committee members and two thirds majority to affirm a vote.
7. Council members may recuse themselves where there is a clear conflict of interest or agency guidelines that prohibit their involvement on specific matters.

Strategic Plan

The Council shall establish a Strategic Plan to guide the organization's activities. The Strategic Plan shall be updated as necessary to align with Council priorities. The Strategic Plan shall include:

1. Goals to accomplish.
2. Strategies, Objectives, Responsibilities, timelines, and resources required to reach those goals.
3. Progress tracking to help ensure reporting of progress and completion.

Collaborative Projects

1. Any member may propose, and the Council chair can establish a workgroup for the purpose of pursuing a particular project or area of interest.
2. The Council does not manage funds, therefore services and goods will be funded by partnerships independent of the Council.

3. The Executive Committee can place recommendations that result from collaborative projects before the Council for promotion and distribution.
4. The Executive Committee can advise a workgroup on the creation of the project proposal and project management.
5. The Executive Committee will provide web site services and e-mail notification for the posting of Council and Workgroup related documents (e.g. project proposals, working documents, final reports).

Evaluation

The Council and its processes will be re-evaluated from time to time, but at least every five years. During the re-evaluation process, Council members will decide to continue or discontinue the Council and/or make modifications to this charter and the Council's business practices.

Section 6: Amendments

Amendments to this charter can be made at any regular meeting if the amendments are listed in the meeting's agenda and the amendment receives a two-thirds vote of all votes cast.

Section 7: Dissolution

The California GIS Council will continue to function as long as it has the confidence of its members. The Executive Committee of the Council will automatically dissolve should any period of twelve (12) months elapse between meetings of the Council.