

**CALIFORNIA GIS COUNCIL  
MEMBERSHIP DUES SURVEY**

Bruce Joffe

I would be willing to pay \$ 40 to be considered an individual member.

I can't speak for CGIA, but I don't believe they have the financial resources to be able to afford a \$ 4,000 membership fee.

As a Board member of BAAMA (but expressing my personal opinion here), I would endorse spending \$ 100 for BAAMA to join as an institutional member.

Is there no way the state budget can include the Council in its funding of boards and commissions? The operating expense is peanuts to the State budget, but expensive to individuals and small organizations.

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Bob Davies  
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I need a little clarification. Are you asking for;  
\$4000 per year total for the council  
\$4000 per year per agency  
\$4000 per year per member ( I assume this is not the case.)

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Volunteers on the Council are contributing significant in-kind resources to keep the Council running. Credit should be given to this in-kind participation as a part of setting the membership fee even if it is just attending meetings. 40 hours in meeting preparation and attendance per year, or 2-percent of a typical person year, is worth roughly \$3,000 to \$4,000 w/overhead, travel, etc. If members were required to pay a membership fee and/or provide in-kind services and staff time roughly equal to 2-percent of a person year, that might be a good way for the "haves" and "have-nots" to be able to participate on equal footing. The haves would hopefully see the value of the organization and contribute all cash, while the have nots would only contribute in-kind. If the haves are not forth-coming (or non-existent), after one year make it a requirement

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that a certain minimum cash membership fee be paid. I would suggest 1 to 10 percent depending on the need.

Policing the In-kind contribution would be measured by meeting attendance, co-hosting a meeting, or providing technical staff reports, presentations, etc. Non-participation after 1-year would mean that the membership fee is overdue and must be paid in cash with prior to the next meeting or loss of voting membership is lost subject to a consensus of the council.

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Gilbert B. Dalit, PE  
Founder/President  
GEODAC Corporation

Some sort of dues would be acceptable to us with well defined benefits in return as both a contributing participant on a voluntary basis and as a financial supporter of the CA GIS Council.

The amount would best be determined by having a detailed list of expenditures the Council is expected to spend on an annual basis. Then divide the cost in two parts: One portion of the fund is from the government which should be a legislated funding allocation (eventually) and the other portion from the private enterprises. Since this is on a voluntary mode at this time (hopefully not for very long), most of the funding should be covered by the government. The balance could be covered by private organizations. The split could be 70/30 or 60/40.

The \$4K per year does not appear too much for government agencies but it does appear somewhat exorbitant for private organization like us which is a small business. And most GIS business are small businesses all across the country. Big business such as ESRI, Intergraph, MapInfo, etc. who would have a vested interest in participating most probably wouldn't mind the cost with expectation of greater return. This definitely is not a workable formula for success when there is too much influence from just a few. What I would suggest is to make sure that we have an even playing field for all of the participants and that we all have a win-win proposition regardless of size of the organization.

I would caution that the government does not loose its focus and intent why such programs such as this GIS Council. In the big picture, this is supposedly to promote economic growth in the state of California. This could be best achieved, in my opinion, by fostering growth to businesses who operate in the state of California. I've seen cases where GIS Departments in local cities and counties think and behave like private enterprises and become competitors to private organizations when they are supposedly expected to provide services and assistance to their surrounding communities. As a small business owner, I expect to grow and hire more people from the local communities and provide tax dollars to the local city and county. As of this time and has been for quite some time, it is quite difficult in our area even to acquire public

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information to meet the needs of my business. When data cost in the tens of thousands of dollars, this not exactly what it meant by public information. I am hopeful that someday things will change as the financial reality in local governments become more pragmatic and diligently serious in managing their financial affairs.

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Michael Byrne  
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I believe that dues of this nature would be fine with us. I do not think this would be a hindrance. Amount exceeding 5k might however, due to discretionary funding limits.

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Any amount over \$1000 would be probably be viewed as prohibitive to us.

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Barry Waite  
City of Carson

The Southern California Government GIS Users Group is the L.A. and Orange County member agency. We collect no dues and have not a penny of funding. Cities and agencies host our meetings and provide everything for the meeting. Labor is donated for the web site. To pay for the domain name, we take up a collection every couple of years. As such, we have no way of paying into the state council. I guess we could hold a map sale.

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Marc Vayssières

I do not know what to tell you. Since we at DRW are part of the Resources Agency, can't this be arranged without us seeking the funding?

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Jim Brass [[jbrass@mail.arc.nasa.gov](mailto:jbrass@mail.arc.nasa.gov)]

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I believe membership dues are a reasonable thing to ask. It was discussed at great length before the Council was formally formed. The only issue is the mechanism to get funding to the GIS Council. As a member of a federal agency, I find it very difficult logistically to send funding to the state. It is a long, drawn out agreement process to make funding available. NASA/Ames Research Center currently has an agreement with the state that may be used as the vehicle to get funding to the Council. As I remember, this agreement took months to get in place. The delay was mostly due to our legal office.

Hope these comments help. If you have any other questions feel free to call me at 650 604-5232.

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A small fee might be acceptable (hundreds, not thousands) but a \$4,000 fee would not.

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Tony Lafferty, ESRI

The one thing Nate, Ken and Dean discussed via email was the hope that a flat fee would be preferred so we (the private sector) would not make this into a contribution contest. From my standpoint if you want to have different fee between private and nonprofit sectors that would be fine, just a level system.

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Bill Welty,  
Air Resources Control Board (CalEPA)

How about \$2,000.....or pro rate based on dept size.

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Rich Mader

I don't know where a Regional GIS Council would come up with any funds.

I think most of these councils are professionals who get together to talk about GIS issues, and really have no funding. SoCalGIS passes a hat occasional to maintain their

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web service, but that's the extent of their funds. CIRGIS is about the best organized and I don't think they have a funding structure. They have received grant money, but those funds are dedicated to a particular project.

So, I do not think RGCs should be charged a fee.

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Chuck Johnson, CPSS

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When the GIS Council concept was first floated and funding dues were discussed, many of us at the Federal agencies viewed this proposed forum to more or less follow the model of the CA Biodiversity Council. We also consider both councils to be state lead entities where the Feds participate and support in whatever manner they can, but not necessarily with the fervor or funding priorities that state and local members may have.

That said, Reclamation has been paying dues to the Biodiversity Council since its inception, so there is precedence within my agency. However, I am not so sure \$4,000 a year to sit the GIS table will be as easy a sell. I will float the trial balloon with our Regional Director's Office, but I suspect that they are more apt to agree to a smaller annual dues amount and continue as we have been with in-kind services, etc. on specific projects.

And there are the more practical questions that I will be asked such as:

- What does the money "buy" the member organization?
  - What is the proposed annual budget?
  - How many dues paying members can realistically be expected to materialize?
  - Best guess as to the year-to-year funding stability of these core members?
  - Who will be the money manager?
  - What will the money manager's overhead cost be?
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Brian Fulfrost

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the idea of dues to pay for Council Membership. As Chairs and past Chairs of the Central Coast Joint Data Committee, we have the following reactions/observations:

(1) The CCJDC believes that voluntary participation would better serve its members and the GIS council. Ours is a regional roundtable which charges no dues; we depend upon signatories to contribute meeting space and other facilities and services to the common benefit of the members, and we also depend upon a regional sponsor for minimal administrative support. Even so, we have been able to accomplish some rather significant regional collaborative projects as have other similar groups around the state; these have resulted in cost savings and increased cooperation on projects. To pay dues on the order suggested would frankly be difficult for the CCJDC; we would have to demonstrate considerable benefit to our participants and devise a method of equitably charging the 50+ agencies that belong. In addition, we wouldn't want to exclude any members who might be unable to pay the dues.

(2) The original Council had a focus on state and federal agencies and it was unclear how local and regional interests would be addressed. Has the mission of the Council changed enough that our partners would see benefit?

The CCJDC is committed to supporting statewide GIS efforts. We are excited to see that there are continuing efforts at the state level for developing statewide GIS cooperation. At the same time, we continue to support the idea that the time, experience and expertise that members of regional and local groups like the CCJDC provide to each other and other groups serves as the best working model for participation in such efforts. Feel free to contact the co-chairs of the CCJDC or Mary Tsui if you have any questions. We look forward to attending the GIS council meeting in October.

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