

CALIFORNIA GIS COUNCIL GOVERNANCE WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

# 1	Provide for direct private sector representation on the Council by forming a Private Sector Technical Advisory Committee (PSTAC). The PSTAC chair is to serve as a Council member and a member of the Council Executive Committee. The PSTAC would be made up of representatives from commercial providers of geospatial software, data and services. This group would be self regulating with respect to nomination of their chair and membership.
Comments	An informal survey (see attached file) of councils for other states reveals that private sector involvement is seen as very valuable to the council process. The issue of conflict of interest is moot with informal councils. In any event, members are expected to recuse themselves on matters where there may be a conflict of interest.
Changes to the Charter	Add the following language to the GIS Council Charter: The Council shall form a Public Sector Technical Advisory Committee whose members will include representatives of commercial providers of GIS software, data and services. The PSTAC shall be self regulating with respect to membership and the election of their chair. The PSTAC chair shall sit as a voting member of the Council and a member of the Council's Executive Committee.

# 2	Change the Council Charter to allow any member from a government agency to serve as any elected Council official including Chair. Private sector members should not be able to serve as Chair in order to avoid any potential for conflict of interest in matter that may affect or influence government agency actions or decisions.
Comments	<p>The California GIS Council is intended to foster the communication, coordination and collaboration for the development of geospatial resources needed by government agencies to meet the needs of their citizens. While State agencies have a valuable role to play, the Council is not a "state show." Other government interests should have the opportunity to direct and support Council efforts.</p> <p>The now approved State IT Strategic Plan indicates that the State will eventually appoint a Geospatial Information Officer (GIO) with staff. The State GIO can help support the Council and participate as a member, but not the Chair, of the Council. The Chair should be someone that represents a "business unit" and not the technical side of the house to help ensure that Council initiatives will be aligned with business needs.</p> <p>The idea that any member could be elected Chair and that there may be members from private sector organizations resulted in</p>

	<p>much discussion. One view was that only members from government agencies should be eligible to serve as chair. Positions on this issue were as follows:</p> <p>Background: The current wording of the Council Charter is... “The Council will elect a Chair and two Vice-Chairs one each from the constituencies not represented by the Chair (e.g., if the Chair is from the Federal constituency then the Vice Chairs would be from the State and Regional constituencies) for a two-year term. The Chair will be responsible for presiding over Council and representing the Council in public meetings. The Co-Vice-Chairs will alternate responsibility for fulfilling the Chair's duties, when the Chair is unavailable.”</p> <p>The Charter clearly assumes that only members representing government agencies will be on the Council. However, if other recommendations are followed regarding providing for public sector representation and offering seats for members at large, there is a good chance that members representing non-governmental organizations will be on the Council. This may happen now as some local government agencies may be represented by consultants as they are too small to have their own, full time, public sector staff.</p> <p>Argument for limiting to government agencies: The Council is, in essence, a government-to-government organization and as such should maintain some distance from other non-governmental entities especially in those cases where matters of the public trust are involved. Having a Private Sector Technical Advisory Committee is acceptable due to its 'advisory' role. This allows the Council to get valuable input while retaining a healthy distance between private sector interests and government actions. The lack of State leadership has often been cited as a big impediment and the Council should be structure to promote this along with the involvement of other kindred government levels. Public sector input is very important but not to the extent that it engenders issues of conflict of interest by too much blurring of the lines between the public and private sectors. The “separation of church and state” issue needs to recognize the legitimate interest of both, provide for the interaction of both, but not get everyone into the same 'pew.' Finally, we do not want to provide an incentive for government agencies to withdraw from the Council.</p> <p>Argument for opening to all members: These positions should not be limited to the 3 government sectors (Federal, State and Regional/Local). We either limit it to the State sector or we leave it open to all sectors. There are some very talented, energetic,</p>
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	<p>intelligent people from other sectors who would likely have the capacity and the drive to successfully lead the GIS Council. It would be very unfortunate to see the Council limited to the extent that these individuals could not be considered for the Chair position. Broadening eligibility for these elected positions enhances the Council's legitimacy and engagement. It becomes truly representative of all stakeholders.</p> <p>In conclusion it was felt that with the formation of the PSTAC and the make up of Regional GIS Councils, there was ample opportunity for private sector involvement on the Council. The Governance Work Group is recommending a compromise solution where private sector members may serve as Vice-Chair but not the Chair.</p>
<p>Changes to the Charter</p>	<p>Modify the Charter as follows:</p> <p>The Council will elect a Chair and two one Vice-Chairs one each from a different constituency or sector (e.g., if the Chair is from the Federal constituency then the Vice Chairs would be from the State and/or Regional constituencies) for a two-year term. The Chair will be responsible for presiding over the Council and representing the Council in public meetings. The Co-Vice-Chairs will alternate be responsible responsibility for fulfilling the Chair's duties, when the Chair is unavailable.</p>
<p># 3</p>	<p>Elect an Executive Steering Committee that meets or otherwise communicates as a group monthly to maintain momentum on Council activities between main Council meetings. The Steering Committee would be made up of the Chair and one member each from those groups not already represented by the Chair to include the regional councils, state agencies, federal agencies, the Private Sector TAC chair and the State GIO.</p>
<p>Comments</p>	<p>This would result in a larger, more diverse group to take on the work of keeping the Council going.</p>
<p>Changes to the Charter</p>	<p>Modify the Charter as follows:</p> <p>B. Council Leadership</p> <p>2. The Executive Officers (e.g., the Chair, and the two Vice-Chairs) and elected members from the other "core" sectors (e.g., federal, state or regional government, private and academic sectors) not represented by the Chair and Vice Chair will form an Executive Steering Committee to manage the affairs of the Council and develop agendas for Council</p>

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	<p>meetings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The Executive Steering Committee, or The Council, will establish Council sub-committees and working groups as necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Council and will appoint chairs for each sub-committee and working group. The Executive Steering Committee will have the authority to fill vacancies in, increase or decrease the membership of such committees and working groups. 4. The Executive Steering Committee shall meet or otherwise communicate as a group as often as it deems necessary, but at least once monthly annually. The Chair may call special meetings of the Executive Steering Committee or of The Council. 5. Council members are expected to recuse themselves on matters where there is a clear conflict of interest.
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# 4	The Council should meet quarterly with working groups meeting or communicating as a group at least monthly or more frequently if needed.
Comments	It is very difficult to maintain momentum on a group that only meets once a year. Most GIS councils meet at least quarterly. Every effort should be made to encourage participation in these meetings.
Changes to the Charter	<p>Modify the Charter as follows:</p> <p>F. Meetings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member agencies will host the Council's meetings. The Council will meet at least two (2) four (4) times per year or more often as deemed appropriate by the Council. 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.

# 5	Open up Council membership to all regional GIS collaboratives.
Comments	To date, the Council has not had the problem of too much participation but of too little. It was also made clear early on that regional involvement was critical to Council success. The Council currently offers 11 seats for regional collaboratives. We know of 16 such collaboratives.
Changes to	Modify the Charter as follows:

<p>the Charter</p>	<p>c. Local and Regional Government (11 members):</p> <p>The Council will ask the following local government associations to nominate representatives to broadly represent California's geographic diversity and differing levels of GIS resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) California Council of Governments (2 representatives-- rural and urban) 2) County, city and tribal governments, resource conservation and other special districts, private and public utilities, local colleges and universities and whatever private sector organizations the local government agencies deem appropriate will be invited to form regional GIS councils or collaboratives. There will be nine (9) Seats will be made available as needed to achieve full participation for one (1) representatives each from all Regional GIS Councils or collaboratives (RGCs) to sit on the Council. If the number of Regional GIS Councils exceeds the number of seats available to them, then the RGCs will form and meet as a subcommittee to select the RGCs that will represent them for these seats on a regular rotating basis (period to be determined by the RGCs). Upon invitation by the RGCs, state and federal government agencies with regional or district offices shall participate on their local RGC. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Regional GIS Councils shall be self forming and composed of representatives from county, city and tribal governments, resource conservation and other special districts, private and public utilities, local colleges and universities and whatever private sector organizations the RGCs deem appropriate. b) RGC members are free to form partnerships and alliances with parties in other RGCs as they deem appropriate and desirable. c) If gaps occur in statewide coverage by RGCs, The Council will temporarily assign unaffiliated counties to an established RGC until such a time as these counties decide which RGC to join. d) As a general rule, RGCs would be made up of two or
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	<p>more counties.</p> <p>e) A single county or any other region may petition the Council for consideration as an RGC based on unique, compelling or exceptional circumstances or considerations.</p>
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# 6	Offer no guidelines for regional collaboratives beyond the general intent already stated in the Charter that these groups are expected to represent GIS interests within their region. Expect regional collaboratives to be self designating and self policing.
Comments	The question of if the Council should offer criteria for what constitutes a regional council or collaborative has come up a number of times and needs to be put to rest especially in light of the recommendation to offer Council seats to all RGCs. The Charter indicates that these regional groups are to be “self forming.” It is also recommended that they be self regulating so that if an entity steps forward representing itself as a “collaborative” but is not seen as such by other RGCs, then it is up to the RGCs to work this out among themselves. RGCs should be able to substantiate that they, in fact, represent multiple parties and interests within their declared region. California’s population and infrastructure is distributed unevenly so that some counties or even cities could make a convincing case to be considered as a “region” for the purposes of the Council.
Changes to the Charter	No changes are needed.

# 7	Employ a regional collaborative profile process like that used by the CGIA to capture and maintain information about these groups. Make the completion and maintenance of a regional profile a requirement for Council membership by regional groups. Use the CGIA process until this process can be transitioned to a state GIO function. This is a core membership responsibility of the Council that should not be outsourced.
Comments	It is appropriate that the Council should obtain basic information about regional groups that seek membership. The Council should know what areas and interests these groups represent to help gauge Council effectiveness. The State has not yet appointed a GIO and so is not prepared to take on this duty. Until that happens, the Council can take advantage of the process already put in place by the CGIA. Eventually, however, the Council should take on this activity as it relates directly to a core membership responsibility.
Changes to the Charter	Add the following to the section of the Charter that addresses regional membership:

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	Groups interested in joining the Council as a Regional GIS Council or Collaborative shall complete a Regional GIS Council Profile as part of their application process. The Council will formally recognize and acknowledge the completion of said profile and acceptance of a regional group as a Council member.
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# 8	To better address issues of legitimacy, breadth of support and functional size, consider allocating a limited number of Council seats for “at large” members.
Comments	This provides a way for the Council to expand its membership to include interested parties that represent disciplines and interests important to the Council but not otherwise represented. Council members may nominate parties for these seats or interested parties may petition the Council directly for membership. At large members would have fully voting rights and privileges including election as a Council official.
Changes to the Charter	Add the following to the section of the Charter that addresses membership: The Council shall allocate five (5) seats for at large members. Interested parties may petition the Council directly for membership or Council members may nominate parties for these at large seats. Acceptance of candidates as at large members shall be done by a simple majority vote of a Council quorum during a Council meeting.

# 9	Form a working group to develop a communication plan that addresses outreach to key stakeholders not yet represented on the Council (e.g., utilities, State Office of Homeland Security, etc.)
Comments	The Council should carefully consider its membership to make certain that key stakeholders are represented. A communication plan is warranted. The Council should form a working group to take on this task at its next meeting.
Changes to the Charter	None required.

# 10	Make it explicit in the Council Charter that the Council can by vote drop members for non-participation.
Comments	Participation is critical to Council success. It is important that the Council have its seats filled by those that are ready, willing and able to contribute to this collaborative effort. It is incumbent on the Council that it does all that it can to facilitate participation. In addition to the proper locating and scheduling of Council meetings, the Council should fully exploit communication technologies like phone bridges and video conferencing.

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Changes to the Charter	<p>Add the following to the section of the Charter regarding membership:</p> <p>The Council may vote to drop members that fail to participate in at least ½ of all main Council meetings in a given year. The dropping of a member due to lack of participation shall be done by a simple majority vote of a Council quorum during a Council meeting.</p>
# 11	Form workgroup to examine issue of funding Council.
Comments	<p>How basic Council needs can be funded or otherwise supported must be carefully considered. There are government agency members that are willing to sponsor the Council outside of any fixed membership dues. However, there may be an expectation and certainly a perception that “he who pays calls the tune.” Undue or disproportionate influence by any member or sector may seriously jeopardize Council credibility, effectiveness and participation. Governance and funding are interrelated and how the Council is funded has far reaching implications. If monies are collected from government members willing to sponsor the Council, who decides how to spend these monies? What are the Council’s basic operating costs? If monies beyond those needed to cover basic operating costs are collected, on what else may they be spent? Could travel costs for some members be compensated?</p>
Changes to the Charter	None required at this time. Note existing language regarding rotating responsibility for hosting of meetings among member agencies.