

**California Strategic Plan Phase 2: Regional Participation
Final Project Report**

**NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program
Institution Building and Coordination Project**

**California Strategic Plan Phase 2: regional Participation
Final Project Report**

Agreement Number: 07HQAG0038

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Project Narrative

In April 2006, California convened a work group to develop a strategic plan for the comprehensive development of a spatial data infrastructure in California, making liberal use of the Fifty States Initiative templates. This group presented a draft plan to the California GIS Council in September 2006. In addition, this draft required input from California Regional Collaboratives, particularly with respect to the creation of specific strategies needed to reach the long-term goals.

Regional Collaboratives are an important part of California's efforts to foster collaboration among regional GIS groups, networks, consortiums, and associations throughout the state. Some of these organizations have formal charter arrangements that make them a council, while others are more of an informal federation of organizations, referred to here as "collaboratives."

This comprehensive network of regional GIS collaborative groups is one of California's unique and compelling strengths. Each of these groups has taken a leadership role in establishing methods and standards for sharing geographic information across typical administrative boundaries. These regional groups serve as a model for further integration and coordination at the State level and provide an excellent opportunity to develop and evaluate best practices, and establish state standards for interoperability.

Summary of Project Activities

An FGDC Fifty States CAP Grant was applied for and awarded to California. The purpose was to obtain feedback from the sixteen Regional Collaboratives to supplement the Phase 1 initial effort.

Baker, working closely with representatives from the CGIA and CGC, developed a Regional Collaborative Participation plan to maximize regional participation while working within CAP Grant funding constraints. Five primary forms of regional participation and data collection were conducted:

- Outreach 1: Validation of primary point-of-contact with each Regional Collaborative and updated statewide register.
- Outreach 2: An online survey, distributed to each Regional Collaborative. 100% feedback was achieved.
- Outreach 3: Regional participation Workshops at seven regional locations. Broad outreach to the California geospatial community resulted in +100 participants that were not previously registered in the CGIA or CGC outreach lists.
- Outreach 4: An interactive web forum, designed to further explore concepts gained from the Workshops.
- Outreach 5. Present pre-final Plan and recommendations at CalGIS 2008 as a Live Forum for additional feedback.

Results of the Project

Through all stages of the regional participation project, the information collection was oriented around four major topic areas intended for Phase 2 focus within the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) Strategic Planning Template:

- 1) Current Situation,
- 2) Requirements,
- 3) Organizational Needs, and
- 4) Implementation.

Detailed action within the four topic areas are listed below:

1) Current Situation

During the seven regional Workshops, participants provided direct feedback on the perceived strengths, weakness, opportunity, and threats (barriers/constraints) facing California in the development of a Spatial Data Infrastructure. The feedback was categorized into four topic areas: Communication/Participation, Awareness/Education, Data Sharing/Data Accuracy, and Funding.

2) Requirements

During the Pre-Workshop Survey, an inventory of existing data sets was collected using the core seven and California-centric eleven data themes prioritized in the “California Geospatial Framework Draft Data Plan”. All regional collaboratives responded and a summary chart was developed to depict their initial survey feedback. For the purposes of the Plan we have captured regional feedback into four requirements areas: existing infrastructure, data sharing, technology, and data standards.

3) Organizational Needs

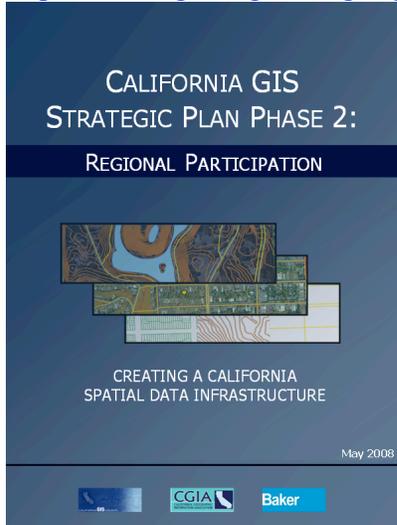
The development of a CA-SDI must work within the organizational structure of the state, regions, and counties. It is essential that there be executive support within both the regions and state for the development of successful and active statewide SDI. For the purposes of this Plan we have captured regional feedback on organizational needs into five organizational areas: executive support, staffing, coordination & oversight, budget requirements, and outreach & community development.

4) Implementation Program

With the NSGIC Strategic Planning template as a guide, Baker refined the implementation section to better reflect the regional participation feedback. We categorized that feedback into four components: Governance, Data, Finance, and Marketing. Each of the components is critical for the development of a CA-SDI.

Feedback collected during this phase of the strategic plan provided insight into how the California counties envision the CA-SDI moving forward.

The final Phase 2 GIS Strategic Plan was published in May 2008 and is available at: <http://www.cgia.org/strategic-gisplanning.htm>



Next Steps: Recommendations

Recommendations presented in the Plan were action items that both Baker and CGIA developed from Regional Collaborative input from the pre-workshop survey, the seven regional workshops, the post-workshop web forum, and the CalGIS 2008 Live Forum. The recommendations focus on the most salient Regional Collaborative input. The recommendations are not prioritized.

Governance

- GR1: CGIA to collaborate with Counties who have designated Geographic Information Officers to understand how they are organized, funded, and staffed.
- GR2: CGC develop Regional Collaborative Coordination Criteria as a variation on the NSGIC State Coordinator nine coordinating criteria to evaluate Regional Collaboratives. The evaluation criteria will clarify how the CGC can assist each Collaborative.
- GR3: CGIA to increase advocacy role of key California needs that the CGC is unable to promote.
- GR4: CGC and CGIA to discuss, prioritize, and communicate the key GIO support areas that the Regional Collaboratives have requested assistance.
- GR5: CGC and CGIA to continue promotion of a state Geospatial Information Office with a Geospatial Information Officer.

Data

- DR1: CGC and CGIA to collect/ review/ refine/ and distribute Data Sharing Best Practices template to Regional Collaboratives.

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- DR2: CGC and CGIA to re-evaluate functionality of CaSIL to load, discover, and download framework data.
- DR3: CGC to evaluate, document, and promote the availability of state agency third party data licensing agreements.
- DR4: CGC to form a Technology Work Group to investigate the most applicable distribution model for the CA-SDI data sets.
- DR5: CGC to explore the use of GIS Centers and Academic Centers as data hosts.
- DR6: CGC to vet the concept of libraries as historical geospatial data repositories to enable future temporal analysis.
- DR7: CGC to pursue implementation of CA Geospatial Framework Data Plan prioritized data sets published in September 2006. Discussed approaches are 1) Following funding, begin development/compilation of a data set or, 2) Without funding prototype a small geographic area with most/all prioritized data sets.
- DR8: CGC and CGIA promote educational sessions with the Regional Collaboratives and four California URISA Chapters on the Imagery Business Plan and Best Practices Report.

Finance

- FR1: CGIA to deliver additional Financial Sustainability education sessions, in collaboration with URISA chapters, throughout California.
- FR2: CGIA, collaborating with the CGC, to apply for multiple 2009 FGDC CAP Grants to address initiatives as discussed in the April 2008 CA GIS Council meeting and captured in this Plan in Section 7.5 CalGIS 2008 Live Feedback Forum.
- FR3: CGC to form an Infrastructure Work Group to develop concept of the CA-SDI framework data sets as a critical infrastructure necessary to meet numerous policy and business needs across California.
- FR4: CGC and CGIA to form a Grant Work Group focused on identifying and applying for regional and state funding.
- FR5: CGC and CGIA to evaluate how to obtain larger sustainable funding for the development/compilation of the CA-SDI.

Marketing

- MR1: CGC and CGIA work in cooperation to take the June 2008 Executive GIS Event to the Regional Collaboratives. The event is focused on the business value of GIS as opposed its value as a technology:
MORE THAN A MAP: HOW GOVERNMENT AGENCIES ARE COLLABORATING ON GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR BETTER PUBLIC SERVICES
 - A Safer California
 - A Growing California
 - A Healthy California
 - A Well Mobilized California

An Open California
A Greener California

- MR2: CGC and CGIA interact with the four California URISA Chapters to increase awareness of the prioritized CA-SDI as published in the CA Geospatial Framework Draft Data Plan in September 2006, and promote the recommendations in this GIS Strategic Plan Phase 2: Regional Participation.
- MR3: CGC and CGIA to assess the value and ability of representatives to outreach to other relevant organizations to promote adoption of CA-SDI.
- MR4: CGC and CGIA to re-assess, re-define, and re-promote CaSIL as the central repository to post, discover, and download CA-SDI data.
- MR5: CGC and CGIA should update “The state of GIS in California” tri-fold annually in advance of the NSGIC annual conference and both email push and post to their respective web sites to increase the awareness of geospatial activity in California.
- MR6: Develop and post on CGC and CGIA web sites geospatial contact directories:
- 1) Variation on the CGC Members list to show key GIS contact information per represented agency or entity.
 - 2) Regional Collaborative contact list.
 - 3) Evaluate re-instating an updated California-wide Geospatial Yellow Pages for all GIS practitioners
- MR7: Create and maintain directory of geospatial-oriented academic programs on CGC and CGIA web sites.

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

The greatest strength of the CAP funding for this project was to be a catalyst for enabling the California GIS Council and CGIA to have a current and relevant ‘living document’ that will supplement a California GIS Strategic Plan that was recently initiated. This CAP grant made a difference for the state because of the report on the findings and recommendations for framework data would not have been developed in 2006 without the CAP grant funding. Moreover, the report will become an organizing focus for California’s future strategic planning activities. Finally, California will pursue future grant CAP opportunities as well as ongoing sustainable funding to foster the staffing and networking capacity for development and sharing California spatial data that integrates with NSDI.

The most significant challenge was to implement the project with the minimal amount of funding provided. Another challenge was to conduct a sufficient number of outreach workshops to be fairly representative of a large state such as California. Fortunately, CGIA selected a vendor who could afford to provide value-added professional services that often went beyond the scope of the grant’s capacity. In short, the funding assistance was insufficient to meet the actual program requirements, but we obtained an effective product with significant pro-bono support from California’s GIS community, which

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cannot be guaranteed with each grant award. We therefore recommend that CAP grant funding be *doubled* over a three year period to meet the actual needs of California and other states. If California had more grant funding for this CAP grant, we would have conducted at least three more outreach workshops given the size of California.

Finally, we have no additional factors that should be considered nor do we have any additional recommendations in the program management area.