

Briefing Materials

Prepared for the California Agricultural
Land Equity Task Force Meeting

Dec. 11, 2025

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California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) Staff Report

To California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Members, Dec. 11, 2025

Announcements & updates

Written communications to the Task Force

Since the November 2025 meeting, the Task Force has received additional written public comments that are available for review on Google Drive (note that the most recent submissions are at the end of the document).

One-on-one meetings

SGC staff met one-on-one with twelve Task Force members between November 18 and 24. Input from these conversations has been incorporated into the meeting materials as appropriate and will inform meeting facilitation on December 11.

Updated Task Force budget table

Current as of Oct. 31, 2025.

Category	FY 22-23, 23-24, & 24-25 expenditures	FY 25-26 expenditures thru 10/2025	Total obligated	Total budgeted	Total remaining
Personnel (SGC staff)	\$477,151	\$144,452	\$1,100,760	\$1,100,760	\$0
Operating expenses (travel, facilitator, language access, etc.)	\$365,473	\$7,913	\$290,579	\$884,240	\$220,275
Research and technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$270,000	\$270,000
Local assistance (e.g., grants, pilot projects, research)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Total	\$842,624	\$152,365	\$1,406,284	\$3,255,000	\$1,490,275

Refresher on Voting and Consensus in Task Force Bylaws and Charter

In advance of the December 11 meeting, staff prepared the following refresher on voting and consensus policies in the Task Force bylaws and charter. The Task Force may wish to review this language in advance of taking action on the submission of the Final Report.

Bylaws

Section C: Motions

1. All actions of the Task Force shall be expressed in the form of a motion and/or resolution.
2. When a motion has been made, the Task Force shall strive to reach a consensus (i.e., unanimity). All votes on matters before the Task Force shall be by roll call.
3. Voting when there is a Recusal or Abstention:
 - a. "Recuse" shall be defined as the act of not voting on or participating in the discussion of a matter before the Task Force to avoid a conflict of interest or to comply with a disqualification by law.
 - b. "Abstain" shall be defined as the act of not voting when present and entitled to vote for any reason not indicated in subsection (a), including, but not limited to, not voting for personal reasons.
 - c. Abstentions and recusals by Task Force members shall have the following effects on meeting proceedings:
 - i. Task Force members who recuse themselves may not be counted toward a quorum, and their recusal may not be interpreted as support for, acquiescence in, or opposition to any actions taken by the Task Force.
 - ii. Task Force members who are present but abstain are counted toward a quorum.
 - iii. Task Force members who abstain are deemed to acquiesce in the resolution reached by Task Force provided that the Task Force may not act without support from at least a simple majority of Task Force's quorum.
 - d. All motions and resolutions shall be recorded in the summaries.

Section D: Manner of Voting

All votes on matters before the Task Force shall be by roll call.

Charter

B. General Principles of Collaboration

Using the following general principles of collaboration, Task Force members agree to:

- Seek to develop inclusive solutions that meet the range of interests around the table. Disagreements will be viewed as conditions to be managed or problems to be solved rather than battles to be won.

D. Consensus–Seeking Decision–Making

Consensus signifies agreement among all members. A member is in consensus if they strongly support, “can live with,” are neutral on, or choose to stand aside from weighing in on a given recommendation. The Task Force will seek consensus when developing its recommendations. Seeking consensus means that members will make a determined, good-faith effort to participate consistently, explore issues, share and understand information, and work to understand and meet everyone’s interests. If the group cannot reach a consensus after a good faith effort, it may make more than one recommendation to the Legislature on a subtopic within its report.

Summary of Revisions: Nov.–Dec. 2025

Prepared by SGC staff for the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

Dec. 2, 2025

Revisions since November 2025 meeting

The following revisions were made after the November 13, 2025 meeting and are included in the Final Report that the Task Force will discuss during the December meeting.

- Accepted revisions made during the November meeting.
- Conducted another round of copyediting with minor edits to language for clarity.
- Made minor revisions to definitions (reordered wording or clarified source) recommended during one-on-one meetings (Appendix A).
- Added two sentences of additional historical context on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and landowners' exploitations of tensions between farmworkers in the "Historical injustices and contemporary disparities" section (pages 16–17).
- The graphic design template was updated per the feedback received in the November meeting, including:
 - New title and title page
 - Changes to section icons
 - Addition of cover pages for each section
 - Photos changed or moved

The following pages show significant changes to recommendations 2.3 (page 53) and 4.4 (page 72).

On December 11, Task Force members will have the opportunity to request that the Task Force discuss these revisions or any other section of the report that must be addressed before the report is approved for submission.

Significant revisions to recommendations

The recommendations below were revised significantly to reflect the conversation in the November 13, 2025 Task Force meeting and input from one-on-one meetings. 2.3 was revised to emphasize funding for organizations that directly benefit priority producers and land stewards. 4.4 was reordered and revised to emphasize the need for fair and equitable lease structures before considering an increase in public landholdings.

The tables below (pages 7-12) compare the November 2025 Draft Report language with the revised language in the Final Report for Task Force members' review in advance of the December meeting. There will be time provided in the December meeting for Task Force members to bring up any revisions that should be discussed before the report is approved for submission.

November 2025:

2.3 Provide funding for the purchase and lease or transition of agricultural land to priority producers and land stewards

- a) Fund resource conservation districts, land trusts, California Native American Tribes, and nonprofits to purchase and then lease or transfer agricultural land to priority producers and land stewards. Ensure California Native American Tribes are exempt from the requirement to lease or transfer the land.
 - i) Prioritize community agricultural projects that facilitate long-term stewardship and tenure of the land by priority producers and land stewards, including cooperatives governed by producers and farmworkers who co-own and co-steward land.
- b) Encourage conservation tools such as buy-protect-sell+ programs that conserve agricultural land while prioritizing equitable and affordable land access. Require that priority producers and land stewards are prioritized for the lease or transfer of these properties.

Final Report:

2.3 Provide funding for the purchase and lease or transition of agricultural land to priority producers and land stewards

- a) Fund organizations that directly benefit priority producers and land stewards to purchase and then lease or transfer agricultural land to priority producers and land stewards.
 - i) Eligible applicants must have a proven track record of working with and directly benefiting priority producers and land stewards and may include Resource Conservation Districts, land trusts, nonprofits, California Native American Tribes, and tribal-led or serving organizations. Require applicants to demonstrate their commitment through community letters of support.
 - ii) Exempt awarded California Native American Tribes from the requirement to lease or transfer land acquired through the fund to another entity.
 - iii) Prioritize community agricultural projects that facilitate long-term stewardship and tenure of the land by priority producers and land stewards, including cooperatives

	<p>governed by producers and farmworkers who co-own and co-steward land.</p> <p>b) Encourage, incentivize, and strengthen conservation tools that conserve agricultural land, such as buy-protect-sell+ programs, while prioritizing equitable and affordable land access. Require that priority producers and land stewards are prioritized for the lease or transfer of these properties.</p>
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Continued onto the following page.

November 2025:**4.4 Leverage publicly held agricultural land to enable affordable access and secure stewardship**

- a) Identify, track, and increase the state-owned agricultural land base that is suitable to lease to priority producers and land stewards.
 - i) Reference and build on the data compiled by the Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program and collaborate with the Land Market Monitoring Program once established (see 3.4).
 - ii) Expand the state's capacity to hold land and administer leases to priority producers and land stewards.
- b) Fund support for nonprofits, Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), land trusts, and other community-based organizations in serving as intermediaries between public landholding agencies and lessees, to ensure the terms of the lease and conservation goals are followed and that priority producers are appropriately supported in accessing agricultural lands.
- c) Direct a collaboration of state agencies, local governments, and technical assistance providers with knowledge of equitable contracts to develop

Final Report:**4.4 Expand state and local government capacity to effectively and fairly lease publicly held land**

- a) Establish structures for effective and fair land access agreements on publicly held land by funding nonprofits, Resource Conservation Districts, land trusts, and other community-based organizations to serve as liaisons and facilitators between priority producers and land stewards and landholding agencies. Task funded organizations with the following:
 - i) Serve as the legal entity holding the primary lease that is accountable for major land management and maintenance responsibilities.
 - ii) Establish effective and fair sublease agreements for appropriately sized parcels that are tailored to the needs of priority producers and land stewards.
 - iii) Facilitate effective negotiation between all parties and manage the intricacies of relationship management between priority producers and land stewards and the landholding agency to ensure mutual benefit and understanding of contracts and conservation-focused land management.

models and templates for secure, long-term leases on publicly held land.

- i) Ensure fair leasing terms based on the recommendations included in this report. Encourage and educate public landholders to adopt the new model template agreements when leasing lands.
 - ii) Examine existing public land leases and the administrative barriers that make leasing from public agencies inaccessible and prohibitive.
- d) Incentivize and support local governments to make publicly held land accessible to priority producers and land stewards by providing secure, long-term leases at low or no cost through partnerships with community-based organizations. Develop these incentives in consultation with local agencies and organizations.
- e) Fund counties and cities to hire agricultural land liaisons whose purpose is to work with local governments, community-based organizations, and priority producers and land stewards to track available publicly held land, publicize available lands in an accessible way, and support all parties in facilitating lease agreements.

b) Direct a coalition of state agencies, local governments, and technical assistance providers with knowledge about equitable contracts to develop and make available models and templates for fair, secure, and long-term lease agreements on publicly held land.

- i) Ensure fair leasing terms based on the recommendations included in this report. Encourage and educate public landholders to adopt the new model template agreements when leasing lands.
 - ii) Examine existing public land leases and resolve or remove the administrative barriers that make leasing from public agencies inaccessible and prohibitive.
 - iii) Direct the coalition to establish standards for transparency of agencies' leasing processes and create clear, accessible information about leasing processes and timelines. Publicly accessible information should include details about appraisal processes and timelines, required documentation, due diligence, and the lease negotiation development and approval process.
- c) Fund counties and cities to hire agricultural land liaisons whose purpose is to work with local agencies, community-based organizations, and priority producers and land stewards to track

available publicly held land, publicize available lands in an accessible way, and support all parties in establishing fair and effective lease agreements.

- d) Incentivize and support local governments to make land that they already hold accessible to priority producers and land stewards by providing secure, long-term leases at low or no cost through partnerships with community-based organizations. Develop these incentives in consultation with local agencies and organizations.
- e) Identify and track state-owned lands that are suitable for leasing to priority producers and land stewards. Make these lands available under balanced, long-term, and easy-to-navigate lease agreements (5.1).
- f) Once recommendations above are implemented, acquire Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide importance that is at risk of being sold for non-agricultural purposes or consolidated, preserve it through an agricultural conservation easement and enhancement designed to facilitate equitable and affordable land access (4.2.a.i), and lease or sell acquired land to priority producers and land stewards.
 - i) To identify viable parcels, reference and build upon the data compiled by the Department of Conservation's Farmland

	Mapping and Monitoring Program and collaborate with the Land Market Monitoring Program, once established (3.4).
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