

AB 1572 Landscape Transition Roadmap Packet

A practical workbook for HOA boards and commercial property managers to organize landscape transition work, document site conditions, and prepare for phased design, installation, and establishment care.

Begin with what you know

Gather your available records and identify your three biggest concerns. You do not need to complete this workbook before contacting Soilogical. The worksheets organize preliminary information; a site-specific professional plan requires assessment and an agreed scope of work.

Prepared by
Soilogical Sustainable Landscape Solutions
Planning and Assessment | Landscape Design | Phased Installation | Establishment and Stewardship

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THE LANDSCAPE TRANSITION ROADMAP

A BOARD-READY PATH FROM COMPLIANCE TO LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP

1

Organize & Prepare

Clarify roles, gather records, and set the decision process.

2

Landscape Assessment

Identify turf, irrigation, trees, access, burdens, and risks.

3

Vision & Identity

Define what the landscape should become—not only what to remove.

4

Design Standards

Set plant, irrigation, mulch, soil, and maintenance standards.

5

Budget & Prioritize

Rank areas by urgency, visibility, cost, water use, and impact.

6

Design & Planning

Create drawings, scopes, rebate-ready areas, and project phases.

7

Implementation

Install while protecting soil, plants, irrigation, and residents.

8

Maintenance & Evolution

Establish, monitor, and improve the landscape over time.

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AB 1572 LANDSCAPE PLANNING FOR HOAs & COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

How to Use This Packet

Use selected pages over several meetings, not all at once. Start with the Property and Board Intake Snapshot and three concerns. Share the same numbered area map across worksheets. Commercial managers can substitute owner or authorized decision-maker for board and use the commercial deadlines.

Important note

This packet is not legal advice and does not replace local water agency guidance, legal counsel, or site-specific landscape planning. Use it as a practical organizing tool and verify compliance details with the appropriate water supplier or legal advisor.

Best use cases

☐ Prepare for a board discussion on AB1572

☐ Document likely functional and nonfunctional turf areas

☐ Gather the records a landscape professional will need

☐ Rank which areas should be addressed first

☐ Prepare clearer bid requests and reduce scope confusion

☐ Create continuity when board membership changes

Suggested meeting flow

Step	Action
1. Before the meeting	Manager: gather available maps, water bills, maintenance contracts, prior proposals, and rebate information. Mark missing records as unknown.
2. First board review	Allow 30–45 minutes. Review the Quick Reference and Roadmap, complete the intake, identify three concerns, appoint a coordinator, and schedule a site walk. Record decisions in the log.
3. Site walk	Committee or manager with Soillogical: use the turf worksheet, a numbered map, and photos. Flag uncertain classifications and irrigation constraints for follow-up.
4. Planning session	With professional input, use standards, priorities, phasing, and bid-readiness worksheets. Leave with an agreed next action, responsible person, and due date.
5. Implementation review	Use the maintenance and establishment pages to confirm the project will be cared for after installation.

Where Soillogical fits

Bring your intake and questions to an introductory consultation. Under an agreed scope, Soillogical can develop an area-by-area assessment, design standards, a phased plan, and installation documents. Confirm legal interpretations with the water supplier or counsel. Contact: soillogical.com/contact/ | (707) 992-7155.

AB1572 Quick Reference

Use this snapshot to identify the applicable timetable, then confirm property-specific requirements with your water supplier.

References: California Water Code sections 10608.12 and 10608.14. Verified September 11, 2026. This is planning guidance, not a legal determination.

Topic	Planning reference
Main requirement	Covered properties must stop using potable water to irrigate nonfunctional turf by the applicable date. This is not a blanket requirement to remove every lawn.
Functional turf	Turf within a designated recreational use area or community space. Permanent barriers preventing human recreation or assembly exclude turf from this definition. See the site worksheet.
Nonfunctional turf	Turf outside the functional definition, including turf in street rights-of-way and parking lots. Verify uncertain boundaries and classifications.
HOA common areas	Irrigation prohibition begins January 1, 2029 for common areas of HOAs, common interest developments, and community service organizations or similar entities.
Commercial and other CII	January 1, 2028 for commercial, industrial, and other institutional properties. Most specified public properties begin January 1, 2027; certain disadvantaged-community public properties have a separate timetable. Cemeteries are excluded from this section.
HOA certification	More than 5,000 sq ft of irrigated common area: certify to the State Water Resources Control Board beginning June 30, 2031, then every three years through 2040.
CII certification	More than 5,000 sq ft of irrigated area, excluding cemeteries: certify beginning June 30, 2030, then every three years through 2039.
Threshold distinction	The 5,000 sq ft threshold concerns certification. Smaller covered properties are not exempt from the irrigation prohibition on that basis.
Limited exception	Potable irrigation remains allowed to the extent necessary for tree and perennial nonturf plant health or immediate health and safety needs. Document the need; do not assume blanket turf coverage.
Enforcement and timing	Section 1846 or local water-supplier penalties may apply. Phasing does not extend deadlines. Only the State Water Board, not the HOA board, may grant a statutory postponement for good cause.

Before approving work

Confirm the property category, water source, local rules, tree protection, and rebate sequence. Do not shut off shared irrigation without a plan for trees and perennial plantings. Record who verified each requirement and when.

Board discussion prompts

- ☐ Which common areas may be nonfunctional turf?
- ☐ Which areas are highly visible or politically sensitive?
- ☐ Which areas are expensive or inefficient to irrigate?

- ☐ Which areas can be phased without disrupting residents?
- ☐ Who is responsible for checking the local water supplier policy?
- ☐ What records will support future self-certification?

The Roadmap at a Glance

The roadmap keeps the board from jumping straight from compliance anxiety to contractor bids. Each stage builds the information needed for the next decision.

1 Organize & Prepare	2 Landscape Assessment	3 Vision & Identity	4 Design Standards
5 Budget & Prioritize	6 Design & Planning	7 Implementation	8 Maintenance & Evolution

Stage	Name	Purpose
1	Organize & Prepare	Clarify roles, gather records, and set the decision process.
2	Landscape Assessment	Identify turf areas, irrigation conditions, tree issues, access, maintenance burdens, and risk points.
3	Vision & Identity	Define what the landscape should become, not just what turf should be removed.
4	Design Standards	Set plant, irrigation, mulch, stone, soil, and maintenance standards before projects are bid.
5	Budget & Prioritize	Rank areas by compliance urgency, visibility, cost, water use, and community impact.
6	Design & Planning	Turn priorities into drawings, scopes, rebate-ready areas, and implementation phases.
7	Implementation	Install in a way that protects soil, plants, irrigation, and resident experience.
8	Maintenance & Evolution	Establish the landscape, monitor performance, and refine standards over time.

The roadmap rule

The purpose is not to make every decision at once. The purpose is to make sure each decision supports the next one.

Property & Board Intake Snapshot

Complete this page first. Record unknowns and your three biggest concerns. Bring a copy to Soilogical; an incomplete intake is enough to start a conversation.

Association / property name

Property manager

Board contact

Water supplier

Property type and irrigated area

Rebate program and status

Maintenance contractor

Irrigation controller type

Known records

☐ Site map / parcel map

☐ Irrigation plan

☐ Valve map

☐ Recent water bills

☐ Maintenance contract

☐ Reserve study

☐ Prior proposals

☐ Tree inventory

☐ Rebate program details

☐ Board minutes on landscape topics

Initial board concerns

Concern	Who raised it?	Why it matters	Follow-up needed

Stage 1 - Organize & Prepare

Create the planning structure before design, budgeting, or construction decisions begin.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Who owns this process on the board? - Does the board need a landscape committee? - Who communicates with residents? - Who communicates with contractors and the water supplier? - What decisions require board approval?	☐ Maintenance contract ☐ Irrigation maps ☐ Water bills ☐ Prior bids ☐ Reserve study ☐ Current rebate information	- Appoint responsible people - Set meeting cadence - Define communication process - Create a shared document folder - Schedule site walk

Common mistake

Starting design conversations before the board has organized records, roles, and decision authority.

Soillogical support

Planning and Assessment: we can organize your records and concerns into an initial project brief, missing-information list, and next-step plan. The board retains decision authority.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Stage 2 - Landscape Assessment

Document what exists before deciding what should change. This includes turf, irrigation, trees, soil, access, slopes, visibility, maintenance, and resident use.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Where is turf currently present? - Which areas are used versus decorative? - Where is irrigation inefficient or unknown? - Which trees or shrubs need protection? - Where are weeds, erosion, or access issues present?	☐ Site photos ☐ Irrigation zone notes ☐ Valve/controller info ☐ Tree locations ☐ Problem-area notes ☐ Maintenance observations	- Name and number each landscape area - Document likely compliance areas - Identify irrigation constraints - Flag tree/perennial protection needs - Create photo record

Common mistake

Assuming all lawn areas are the same. Some areas may be functional, tree-protection related, or more complicated than they look.

Soilological support

Planning and Assessment: a scoped site review can produce numbered landscape areas, photo observations, irrigation constraints, and issues requiring supplier or specialist review.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Functional vs. Nonfunctional Turf Worksheet

Record preliminary observations, not final legal conclusions. Match each area ID to your map and photos. Confirm uncertain cases with the water supplier or counsel. See Water Code section 10608.12(j), (m), (u), and (aa).

What to document

Identify owner-designated recreation or community gathering uses and supporting records or observations (for example, play, picnics, pet exercise, or community events). Occasional passage alone is not proof. Narrowness, slope, or low use alone is not decisive. Record tree needs separately from turf status.

Area ID	Location	Designated use / evidence	Potable water?	Likely status	Photos / tree needs

Quick status codes

Code	Meaning
Likely NFT	Preliminary finding: does not appear to meet the statutory recreational/community definition. Note the evidence and verify uncertain cases.
Likely functional	Preliminary finding: appears to be within a designated recreational use area or community space. Record the designation, use, and access evidence.
Tree / perennial flag	Separate irrigation flag, not a turf classification. Record shared zones and protection needs. Assess the extent of necessary irrigation before changes.
Needs review	Classification, water source, or evidence is uncertain. Name the reviewer and follow-up date; do not treat uncertainty as approval.

Stage 3 - Vision & Identity

Define what the community wants the landscape to become. Compliance should trigger a better long-term landscape, not a patchwork of unrelated projects.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- What should residents feel when entering the property? - Should the landscape feel native, Mediterranean, formal, meadow-like, woodland, or mixed? - How much seasonal change is acceptable? - How important are habitat, water savings, shade, fire awareness, and visual neatness? - Where do residents expect color or screening?	☐ Resident feedback ☐ Board aesthetic preferences ☐ Existing architectural style ☐ Photos of landscapes the board likes/dislikes ☐ Maintenance budget expectations	- Choose desired landscape character - Identify non-negotiables - Define neatness expectations - Clarify resident communication language - Decide where the landscape should feel more formal or more natural

Common mistake

Treating the project as turf removal only. Without a shared vision, each phase can look disconnected from the last.

Soilological support

Landscape Design: we can turn resident input and board preferences into a shared landscape direction, with plant character, seasonal expectations, and maintenance goals.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Design Standards Starter

Record board preferences here. Have the landscape professional validate site-specific technical requirements before approval or bidding, including plant suitability, irrigation capacity, soil needs, and maintenance demands.

Standard area	Questions to answer	Board preference / notes
Plant palette	Native / climate-appropriate / pollinator / low-water / fire-aware / formal / mixed	
Irrigation	Drip type, emitter spacing, valve organization, controller expectations, inspection standards	
Soil care	Observed soil condition, infiltration and testing needs; compost, mulch, or other treatments only where assessment supports them	
Mulch and stone	Mulch type, depth, rock size, boulders, edging, weed-control approach	
Maintenance	Pruning style, weed tolerance, seasonal cleanup, plant replacement, irrigation review	
Resident experience	Sightlines, access, parking visibility, pet areas, gathering spaces, signage zones	

Soil health in context

Soilological integrates soil health with plant selection, irrigation, and establishment care. Specify each treatment by purpose and site need. Compost extracts or teas, amendments, and fertilizer are optional tools, not a universal program for every property.

What future contractors should avoid

Avoid this	Why it matters	Standard to use instead

Stage 4 - Design Standards

Convert the board vision into practical standards for plants, irrigation, materials, soil care, maintenance, and phasing.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Which materials should become standard across the property? - What plant qualities matter most? - What irrigation methods are acceptable? - What maintenance practices are required? - What should future proposals include by default?	[] Preferred plant examples [] Material photos [] Irrigation notes [] Maintenance standards [] Past project problems	- Approve draft standards - Define installation baseline - Set maintenance expectations - Clarify soil and establishment requirements - Create contractor scope language

Common mistake

Approving projects without standards, then trying to fix consistency and maintenance problems later.

Soilological support

Landscape Design: we can develop a standards sheet covering plants, irrigation, materials, soil care, and establishment, then translate approved standards into measurable scope requirements.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Stage 5 - Budget & Prioritize

Rank landscape areas so the board can phase work intelligently instead of reacting to the loudest complaint or the cheapest bid.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Which areas have the greatest compliance urgency? - Which areas are most visible? - Where is water use likely highest? - Where is irrigation failing? - Where are resident concerns strongest? - What can be phased within the budget?	[] Estimated area sizes [] Rebate rates [] Reserve/budget info [] Water bills [] Maintenance cost notes [] Rough implementation costs	- Set priority areas - Choose planning track - Decide whether to phase - Identify areas for professional design - Confirm rebate strategy

Common mistake

Asking for bids before the board knows which areas matter most and what success should look like.

Soillogical support

Planning and Assessment: we can help separate urgent needs from design opportunities, compare cost and feasibility, and develop a phased plan with dependencies and decision dates.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Priority Ranking Matrix

Score the five need and benefit criteria from 1 to 5 using the anchors below. Use U for unknown, not 3. Keep cost and difficulty separate. Do not total a row with unknowns. Scores support discussion, not a compliance determination.

Area	Compliance urgency	Visibility	Water-saving opportunity	Irrigation problems	Resident concern	Need total 5-25	Cost / difficulty / next step

Criterion	1 Low	3 Moderate	5 High
Compliance urgency	No identified affected turf	Affected turf; lead time remains	Affected turf; short lead time or major dependency
Visibility	Rarely seen	Seen by some users	Main entrance or widely seen area
Water-saving opportunity	Low estimated saving	Moderate estimated saving	High estimated saving; record basis
Irrigation problems	Working as intended	Repairs or adjustments needed	Major failures or shared-zone constraints
Resident concern	Few documented concerns	Recurring concerns	Widespread documented concern

Choose the sequence

Note cost range, difficulty (low / medium / high), missing information, and dependencies separately. Safety, legal deadlines, tree protection, and prerequisite work can override the score. Record the chosen order and reason in the decision log. Revisit after assessment and cost estimates.

Budget & Phasing Worksheet

Choose a planning track, then copy this worksheet for each proposed phase. Separate immediate irrigation compliance from longer-term landscape improvements. Record funding and establishment care before approval.

Planning track	Scope
Minimum compliance	Address prohibited irrigation by the applicable deadline while protecting trees and perennial plantings. Assess shared irrigation first.
Practical improvement	Convert priority areas to water-wise landscapes in achievable phases, with a compliant interim irrigation plan where needed.
Long-term transformation	Coordinate a property-wide landscape direction, design standards, phases, and establishment program.
Phase / area IDs / goal	
Target start / completion / legal deadline	
Prerequisites and responsible person	
Design and installation estimate	
Contingency / establishment allowance	
Ongoing annual care estimate	
Rebate amount / estimated or confirmed	
Preapproval / inspection / payment timing	
Gross budget / net after confirmed rebate	
Funding source / cash needed before rebate	
Board decision / owner / next review date	

Before starting a phase

Phasing does not extend statutory deadlines. Verify rebate eligibility and any required preapproval or inspections before work begins. Do not budget unconfirmed rebates as guaranteed funding. Soilogical can help connect the scope, sequence, and establishment needs.

Stage 6 - Design & Planning

Turn priorities into buildable plans, bid-ready scopes, rebate-ready documentation, and realistic implementation phases.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Which areas need a formal design? - What should be included in the scope? - How will irrigation be modified? - What documentation is needed for rebates? - What resident disruptions should be anticipated? - What does success look like after 12 months?	[] Area measurements [] Photos [] Design standards [] Budget track [] Priority rankings [] Water agency requirements	- Approve design scope - Define bid package - Choose phasing sequence - Confirm rebate tasks - Clarify maintenance/establishment standards

Common mistake

Letting contractors define the scope independently, which often results in bids that cannot be compared fairly.

Soilological support

Landscape Design: under an agreed scope, we can prepare planting and irrigation plans, material quantities, phase boundaries, and bid documents. Rebate coordination is subject to the supplier's requirements and approval.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Contractor Bid Readiness Checklist

Many expensive landscape mistakes happen before construction begins, when the scope is unclear. Use this checklist before requesting or comparing installation proposals.

- ☐ Area boundaries and quantities are identified
- ☐ Existing turf removal or sheet mulching method is specified
- ☐ Irrigation modification is included
- ☐ Controller/valve responsibilities are clear
- ☐ Soil preparation is specified
- ☐ Mulch type and depth are specified
- ☐ Plant sizes and substitutions are controlled
- ☐ Completion and acceptance criteria are defined
- ☐ As-built irrigation map and controller settings required
- ☐ Rebate paperwork responsibility is clear
- ☐ Establishment watering is addressed
- ☐ Maintenance after installation is defined
- ☐ Plant warranty terms are clear
- ☐ Warranty terms and start date are clear
- ☐ Access, staging, and cleanup are addressed
- ☐ Proposal follows board design standards
- ☐ Optional items and change approvals are clear
- ☐ Maintenance handover and training assigned

Bid comparison notes

Contractor	Included scope	Missing / unclear items	Questions before approval

Stage 7 - Implementation

Install the work in a way that protects the long-term landscape, not just the installation date. Implementation should follow the scope, standards, and maintenance plan.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Who inspects installation quality? - How will changes be approved? - How will residents be notified? - What happens if unknown irrigation or soil issues appear? - How will completion be documented?	☐ Approved scope ☐ Design drawings ☐ Irrigation plan ☐ Plant list ☐ Change-order process ☐ Resident notices	- Assign inspection role - Confirm change-order rules - Document installation photos - Confirm irrigation startup - Schedule first maintenance review

Common mistake

Treating installation as the finish line. Establishment can span multiple seasons. Define inspections, acceptance, replacement responsibilities, and continuing care before construction.

Soillogical support

Phased Installation: we can implement approved designs in coordinated phases with tree and soil protection, irrigation startup, documented changes, and a defined handover. Confirm deliverables in the installation agreement.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Stage 8 - Maintenance & Evolution

Make sure the new landscape is cared for correctly during establishment and improved over time. A water-wise landscape is not automatically low maintenance in year one.

Board questions	Documents / inputs	Decisions to make
- Who adjusts irrigation after planting? - How often are new plantings inspected? - What weeds are expected and how will they be managed? - What pruning style is acceptable? - How are plant failures handled? - How will lessons inform the next phase?	[] Maintenance scope [] Irrigation schedule [] Plant warranty [] Establishment checklist [] Soil assessment and any treatment rationale [] Water-use and plant-survival records	- Approve establishment care - Set irrigation review schedule - Define weed threshold - Clarify replacement protocol - Schedule seasonal board updates

Common mistake

Using conventional maintenance practices on a young ecological landscape. Over-pruning, under-watering, poor weed timing, and missed irrigation reviews can damage results.

Soilological support

Establishment and Stewardship: we can define irrigation reviews, plant and weed inspections, maintenance practices, and seasonal reporting. Select soil treatments only where assessment supports a documented purpose.

Working notes

Observation / issue	Responsible person	Next step	Target date

Maintenance & Establishment Checklist

Use this page to confirm that the landscape has a real establishment plan. This is where many projects either become successful or quietly decline.

- ☐ Initial irrigation schedule confirmed
- ☐ Irrigation checked after first heat event
- ☐ Drip system inspected for leaks or clogs
- ☐ Mulch depth checked after settling
- ☐ Plants inspected for water stress
- ☐ Dead or failing plants documented
- ☐ Water-use baseline and review dates recorded
- ☐ Soil treatments justified by assessment, if needed
- ☐ Amendments or fertilizer used only if indicated
- ☐ Pruning standards communicated
- ☐ Maintenance contractor trained on new areas
- ☐ Seasonal review scheduled
- ☐ Resident complaints tracked
- ☐ Plant survival and lessons recorded for next phase

Date	Area	Observation	Action taken / needed	Owner / due date

Board Decision Log

Board membership changes. Property managers change. Contractors change. A clear decision log keeps the roadmap from being lost.

Date	Decision	Reason / context	Vote / authority	Owner / due date / follow-up

Continuity note

For each major landscape decision, record the reason behind the decision. Future boards need to understand not just what was approved, but why it was approved.

From Packet to Action

This workbook helps you organize questions and preliminary observations. A completed professional roadmap adds site-specific assessment, recommendations, technical scope, and a practical sequence for implementation. You can engage Soilogical at the stage you need; deliverables and fees are agreed before work begins.

Your service path	What Soilogical can help produce
Planning and Assessment	A property brief, area-by-area site observations, irrigation constraints, priority areas, and a phased planning strategy. Support for identifying local rebate requirements and needed records.
Landscape Design	A cohesive landscape direction, site-appropriate plant and irrigation plans, design standards, material quantities, and bid scope appropriate to the agreed project.
Phased Installation	Implementation of approved work in coordinated phases, protection of existing assets, documented changes, irrigation startup, and completion handover.
Establishment and Stewardship	A care plan with irrigation reviews, plant and weed inspections, soil-health considerations, maintenance guidance, and seasonal evaluation appropriate to the agreed scope.

Start with an introductory consultation

Request a free 45-minute introductory consultation. Share your property location, intake page, available photos, and three concerns. We can discuss the right first step and whether a site visit or a separately scoped assessment is appropriate. The introductory consultation is not a full property assessment, engineered design, or legal compliance certification.

Contact Michael at Soilogical Sustainable Landscape Solutions
(707) 992-7155 | michael@soilogical.com

You do not need a completed workbook to get started. Bring what you know; we will help identify what needs investigation.

Request a consultation: soilogical.com/contact/

Source Notes & Verification

Statutory references below were checked September 11, 2026. Use the current Water Code and confirm property-specific requirements with the water supplier or legal counsel. Record local verification separately; state-law review does not confirm local rebate eligibility.

Source	Used for	Where to verify
AB 1572 chaptered bill	Legislative background	Open official source https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB1572
Water Code 10608.14	Covered properties, dates, exceptions, certification, and enforcement	Open official source https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WAT&sectionNum=10608.14
Water Code 10608.12	Definitions, especially (j), (m), (u), and (aa)	Open official source https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WAT&sectionNum=10608.12
Local water supplier	Local policies, evidence requirements, rebates, and inspections	Supplier / contact: _____ Date / reference: _____
Save Our Water	State outreach and landscape-conversion resources	Open official source https://saveourwater.com/

Keep the packet current

Before formal decisions, record the source, contact, verification date, and remaining questions. Local rules, rebate funding, and certification procedures can change. Seek legal or specialist review where needed; this workbook does not certify compliance.