

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: DINA MANIS, CITY CLERK
TERESA STRICKER, CITY ATTORNEY
SUBJECT: SB 707 ACTIONS – ADOPTION OF COUNCIL POLICY ENTITLED
REQUESTS FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION ACCOMMODATION
FOR LEGISLATIVE BODY MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES AND
REPEAL OF COUNCIL POLICY 000-34

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

The City Clerk's and City Attorney's Offices recommend that the Council, by two separate resolutions: 1) adopt a new Council policy entitled, "Requests For Remote Participation Accommodation for Legislative Body Members with Disabilities"; and 2) repeal outdated Council Policy 000-34 – "Establishing Policy for Citizen Public Appearances and Addressing the Council on Agenda Items." This item has no impact on current fiscal year budget.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item requests Council adopt a new Council policy as it is directly related to new provisions in the Brown Act, and repeal Council Policy 000-34 as upon review of new Brown Act rules and compared to existing City Council policies, it is outdated and has been superseded by a more current and detailed text within the City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols.

GOAL

This item is related to **Goal #4 - Foster a Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive Community** as the expanded new Brown Act requirements have a direct impact on the inclusion of community members in local government decision-making processes.

BACKGROUND/PRIOR COUNCIL REVIEW

In 2025, Senate Bill (SB) 707 was adopted. The bill made significant changes to the Brown Act (Attachment 1) to increase participation opportunities at certain local

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legislative body meetings and modernize rules to reflect advances in technology. Some provisions were effective January 1, 2026 and others take effect on July 1, 2026.

The City Clerk and City Attorney presented an overview of SB 707 at the March 10, 2026, regular City Council meeting and received directions on necessary policy adoption, amendments, and repeals, and amendments to the Santa Rosa City Code that staff will bring forward to Council for consideration. This item is one part of that implementation process.

ANALYSIS

I. Adoption of a Requests For Remote Participation Accommodation for Legislative Body Members with Disabilities Policy

Effective January 1, 2026, the Brown Act now expressly allows for a member of Council or a board or commission to participate remotely as a reasonable accommodation for a qualifying disability under applicable law. Government Code (GC) § 54953(c). Members participating under such approved accommodations must comply with certain rules:

- The member must be on audio and video, unless the particular accommodation allows the member's camera to be off.
- The member must disclose other adults present in the room and their relationship to the member.

A member who participates remotely based on disability accommodation is considered to be participating in the meeting "in-person" for all purposes, including special quorum rules that otherwise apply under the Brown Act when members participate remotely in meetings of the legislative body.

Staff recommends Council adopt a new Council Policy entitled Remote Participation Accommodation for Legislative Body Members with Disabilities (Exhibit A to Resolution 1) which outlines procedures for members of Council, Boards or Commissions to request and the City to process accommodations to participate remotely in public meetings of that body.

II. Repeal of Council Policy 000-34

Effective July 1, 2026, GC § 54953.4(b)(1)(B) will require the City to include an option for the public to attend and participate remotely in **all City Council meetings**.

The City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols (CCMPP) (Attachment 2) outlines public comment procedures for Council meetings and references Council Policy 000-34 - Citizen Public Appearances and Addressing the Council on Agenda Items (Exhibit A to Resolution 2). Policy 000-34 was adopted in 1993 and last amended in 2005.

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All requirements in Council Policy 000-34 have now been memorialized, and/or strengthened in the CCMPP or Santa Rosa City Code Chapter 1-10 on Open Government. Staff recommends repealing the outdated and superseded Council Policy 000-34 which contradicts the more up to date CCMPP and City Code provisions that reflect current with City operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378, the recommended action is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not have a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. In the alternative, the recommended action is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the recommended action may have a significant effect on the environment.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Brown Act Full Text
- Attachment 2 – City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols
- Resolution 1 – New Policy
 - Exhibit A - Council Policy – Requests For Remote Participation Accommodation for Legislative Body Members with Disabilities
- Resolution 2 – Repeal of Council Policy 000-34
 - Exhibit A - Council Policy 000-34 - Citizen Appearance and Addressing the Council on Agenda Items

PRESENTER(S)

Dina Manis, City Clerk
Teresa Stricker, City Attorney

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