



Brown Act Updates

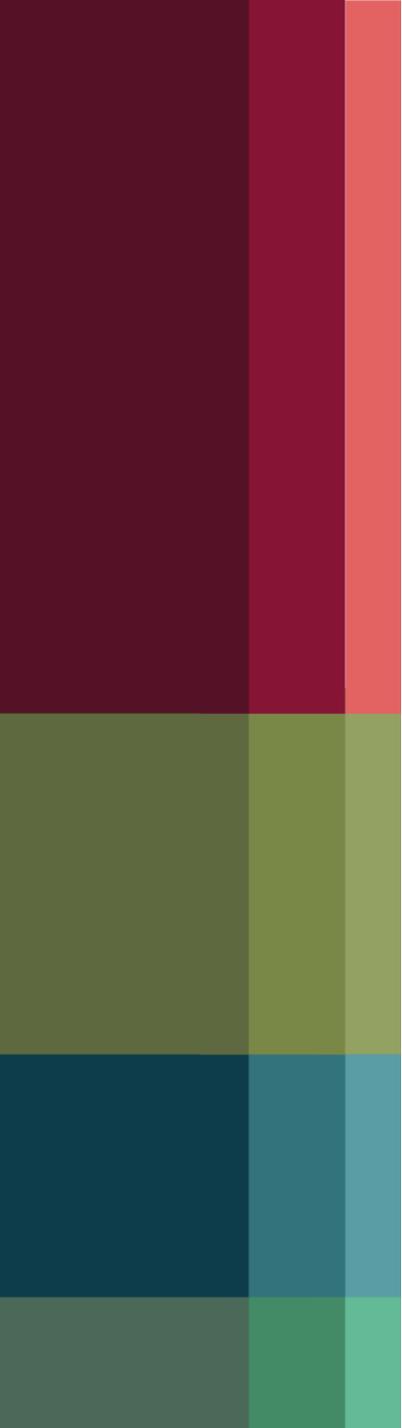
SB 707 Open Meeting Law Amendments

March 10, 2026

Teresa Stricker, City Attorney
Dina Manis, City Clerk

Today's Presentation

- New Rules Applicable to All Brown Act Bodies
- Additional Remote Option Council May Adopt for Certain Limited Advisory Bodies
- New Requirements SB 707 Imposes on City Council Meetings Only as of July 1, 2026
- Direction Needed.



**New Rules Applicable to All
Brown Act Bodies –
Effective January 1, 2026**

Miscellaneous SB 707 – Effective January 1, 2026

A copy of the Brown Act and list of meeting locations must be provided to:

- ✓ All elected officials
- ✓ All appointed officials serving on legislative bodies

Social Media Communication provision updated to remove 2026 sunset.



Miscellaneous SB 707 – Effective January 1, 2026

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Updated Disruptive Behavior Language

- Explicitly Applies to virtual attendees too.



Expanded Prohibition on Special Meetings for **Executive Compensation**

- Now Includes Council Compensation



Staff recommends amendments to City Council Manual of Procedures and Protocols related to removal procedures.

Reasonable Accommodation SB 707 – Effective January 1, 2026

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Member of Council or Board/Commission may participate remotely as a reasonable accommodation for a qualifying disability.

Staff recommends adoption of Reasonable Accommodation Policy for Council and Boards/Commission Members and amendments to SRCC 1-10.070 regarding related minute requirements.

Teleconferencing Rules

SB 707 – Effective January 1, 2026

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Traditional Teleconferencing Rules are Unchanged

- New Remote Public Comment requirement for Council - eff. July 1 - (discussed later)

Alternate teleconferencing framework under “Just Cause”

Streamlined into single framework

- Personal emergency circumstances are now part of “just cause.”
 - No need for motion for personal emergency circumstances

Staff recommends amendment to SRCC 1-10.070 regarding related minutes requirements.

Just Cause Applies to

- Caregiving needs for qualifying family members
- Contagious illness
- Physical or mental condition (non-ADA)
- Official business travel
- New: Care for immunocompromised family member
- New: Physical or family medical emergency
- New: Military service preventing attendance

Eligible Subsidiary Bodies – Option to allow 100% remote

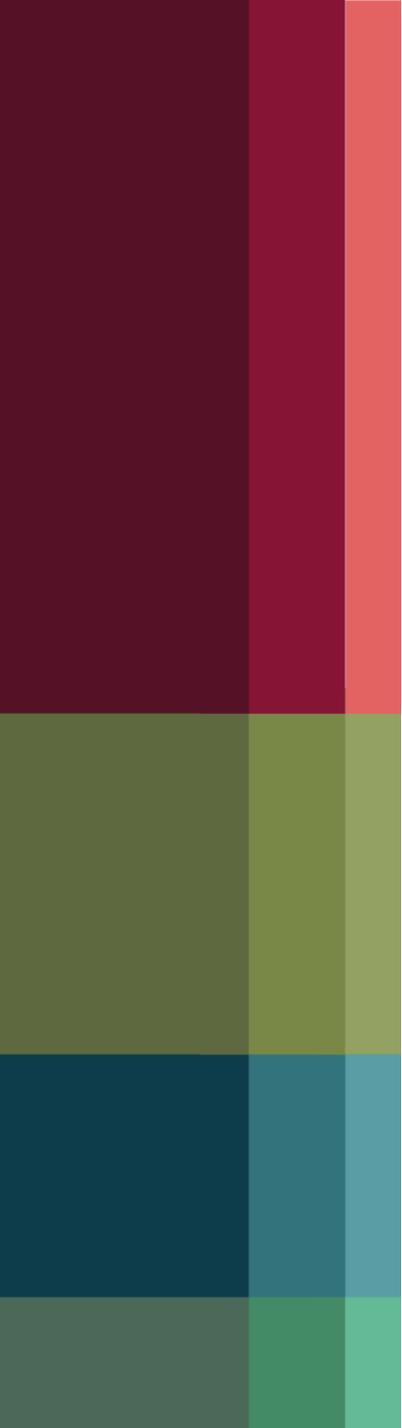
- **Requires Council and the subsidiary body to authorize every 6 months based on certain findings made by Council**
- Limited application to certain purely advisory bodies
 - Bic/Ped. Adv. Bd., Com., Bd. Parks & Rec., Waterways Adv. Com.
 - **Does not apply to Council subcommittees: Electeds cannot participate remotely under this provision.**
- A staffed physical location for meeting must be provided open to public
- Requires camera on for remote member, subject to exceptions.
- Requires remote public participation option:
 - 2-way audio-visual (public comment OK by audio only), or
 - 2-way telephonic and live webcasting.

Eligible Subsidiary Bodies – Ongoing Requirements

If an approved subsidiary body requests opportunity to present its recommendations to Council:

- Council must hold a discussion about the recommendations at a regular meeting within 60 days
- Discussion item may not be on consent calendar
- Council may not take any action on recommendation sooner than the next regular meeting; action requires two Council meetings.

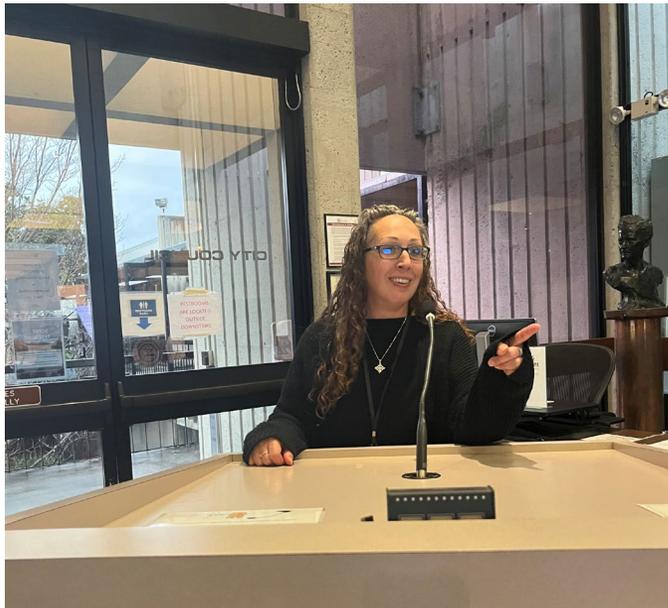
Staff recommends no action -- not approving use of this optional teleconferencing mechanism for “Eligible Subsidiary Bodies”.



Council-Specific Provisions Effective July 1, 2026

Council Meetings Only: Mandatory Remote Public Participation Opportunity

STARTING JULY 1



Staff recommends amendments to City Council Manual of Procedures, Protocols related to public comment time, repeal of outdated CP 000-34, and SRCC.

Council Meetings Only: Disruptions of Internet/Telephonic Service



No Internet Connection

- **Procedure Requirement If Disruption in Internet/Telephone Service Occurs:**
 - Council must recess open session for at least 1 hour while staff attempts to restore service.
 - If service is not restored, Council may reconvene and proceed with meeting but only after making specific findings, by motion, that there is good cause to proceed.

Direction Needed: Policy for Disruption of Telephonic/Internet Service

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Does Council want to create an exception Spanish Interpreter requirements in SRCC in the case of an internet disruption which may result in no Spanish interpretation in chambers?

1. No action. Council will not be able to use the Brown Act provisions permitting Council meetings to continue with its meeting during internet/telephone service disruption following unsuccessful efforts to restore and make appropriate findings by Council. This is because an internet disruption disables the City's ability to provide Spanish interpretation. Interruptions in internet services in those situations could result in lengthy recesses, continued meetings, and no ability for Council to move forward with time-sensitive items.

OR

Direction Needed: Policy for Disruption of Telephonic/Internet Service

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2. Amend SRCC 1-10.030: Create an exception to the City's current Spanish interpretation requirement for Council meetings to allow Council discretion to move forward with a Council meeting, or with certain specific items on the agenda, without Spanish interpretation where Council makes findings similar to those required by the Brown Act when there is an internet/telephone disruption.

OR

3. Other option provided by Council.

Council Meetings Only: Agenda Translation Requirements

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New Brown Act Requirement:

- ✓ Starting 7/1/26, **Council Meeting agendas** must be translated into languages that are:
 - ✓ Spoken by 20% or more of the City's population if at least 20% of those speaking the language speak English less than “very well”
- ✓ Up to 3 languages

Existing Santa Rosa City Code Exceeds New Brown Act Requirements!

Direction Needed: Agenda Translation Requirements

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1. Continue to translate City Council agendas as currently identified in SRCC, leaving open the possibility that the City may need to translate City Council agendas in more than 3 non-English languages should the population speaking each of those languages reach 5% of the City's population; or
2. Retain the City's current 5% population criteria for triggering the City's obligation to provide a translated City Council agenda, but limit the number of non-English agendas to a maximum of 3 in alignment with Brown Act; or
3. Other direction provided by Council.

Council Meetings Only: Interpretation Assistance

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Effective 7/1/26, Brown Act requires reasonable access to translated agenda requests and interpretation assistance for City Council meetings

- May include arranging for sufficient space, extra time, use of personal equipment
- Does NOT require City to provide interpretation services

Santa Rosa goes farther - SRCC 1-10.030(N)

- Provides interpretation services in Spanish at all regular Council meetings.
- As matter of practice, staff accommodates language access requests whenever possible.

Recommend no action as City Council is exceeding Brown Act Requirements

Outreach to Underrepresented and Non-English-Speaking Communities 19

- Reasonable efforts to encourage participation by groups that do not traditionally participate in meetings
- Broad Council discretion
- Only applies to City Council agendas.



Outreach to Underrepresented and Non-English Speaking Communities

Adopted CP 000-20
Citizen Participation

Adoption of OG
Ordinance, CIRO Formed,
CE Director hired

2013

2021

1987

2020

Formation of OG Task
Force

Amended OG SRCC
OG Implementation

Outreach to Underrepresented and Non-English Speaking Communities 21

Currently:

- Current Outreach Plan
- Council Policy 000-20 – Outdated.

Community Type	Number of Events 2024	Number of Events 2025	Percentage 2024-2025 %
Elected Officials & CBOs	4		11
General Public	14	20	45
LGBTQ+ Community	1	1	3
Neighborhood	1	4	7
Older Adults	1		3
People with Disabilities	1		3
Small Business	2	1	4
Underserved Communities	12	9	28
Underserved Youth	1	2	4
Unhoused	1		3
Total	38	37	100

Outreach to Underrepresented and Non-English-Speaking Communities



City Connections
Newsletter

Jan. 8, 2026

[Leer en Español](#)

[View as a webpage](#)



Greetings from Your Interim

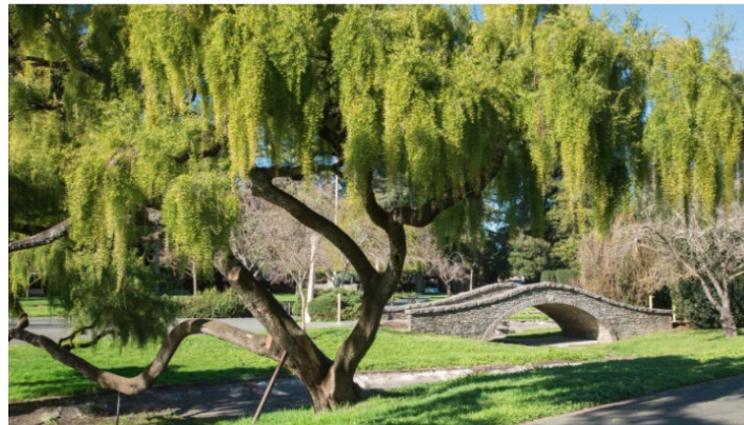


Conexiones de la Ciudad
Boletín

8 de enero de 2026

[Read in English](#)

[Ver como página web](#)



Saludos de su Gerente Municipal Interina

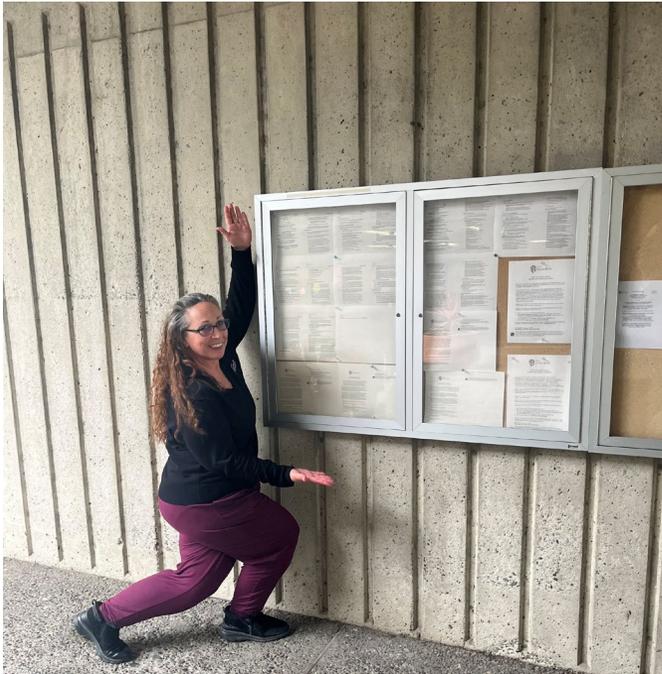
Staff recommends amendments to CP 000-20 for modernization and alignment with current organizational structure.

Continue efforts as already established in SRCC, Council Policies, engagement plan.



Public Location for Council Agenda Translations ²³

- By 7/1/26, the City must provide a physical location near the City Council agenda posting site for the public to post translated City Council agendas



City Clerk rendering (not a professional digital artist)

Recommendation

- The City Clerk's and City Attorney's Offices present this study session to provide the Council with an overview of recent Brown Act changes adopted under Senate Bill 707 (2025). Council will take no action except provide direction to staff. This item has no impact on the current fiscal year budget.

100% Remote Participation by Eligible Subsidiary Bodies

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- Eligible Subsidiary Bodies =
 - Waterways Advisory Committee
 - Board of Parks and Recreation
 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board
- Option requires Council to prioritize hearing recommendations of body within 60-days of request at a Council meeting without Council voting to add to agenda/workplan.
- ***Staff recommends no action. Affirm or provide different direction***

Remote Public Attendance/Comment

Amend CCMPP

- Section II. Agenda - to Update public comment time to "no less than 1 minute" in anticipation of increased number of public comments from online participants.
- Section IV. Addressing the Council - subsections B for removal of reference to CP 000-34 if repealed.

Amend SRCC 1-10.070 – Minutes, to simplify public comment summary requirements

Affirm or provide different direction.

Internet and Telephonic Service Disruption Provisions

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Does Council want exceptions to Interpreter requirements in SRCC?

- 1. No action. Council continues without language access exception due to interpretation service interruption, resulting in continuation of meetings;**
- 2. Amend SRCC 1-10.030:**
 - a. To provide exception to move forward with Council meeting without Spanish interpretation; or
 - b. Make certain good cause findings similar to those required in the internet and telephonic service disruption policy, to proceed with the meeting or limited items on the agenda.
- 3. Other option provided by Council**

Language Access Requirements for City Council Meetings

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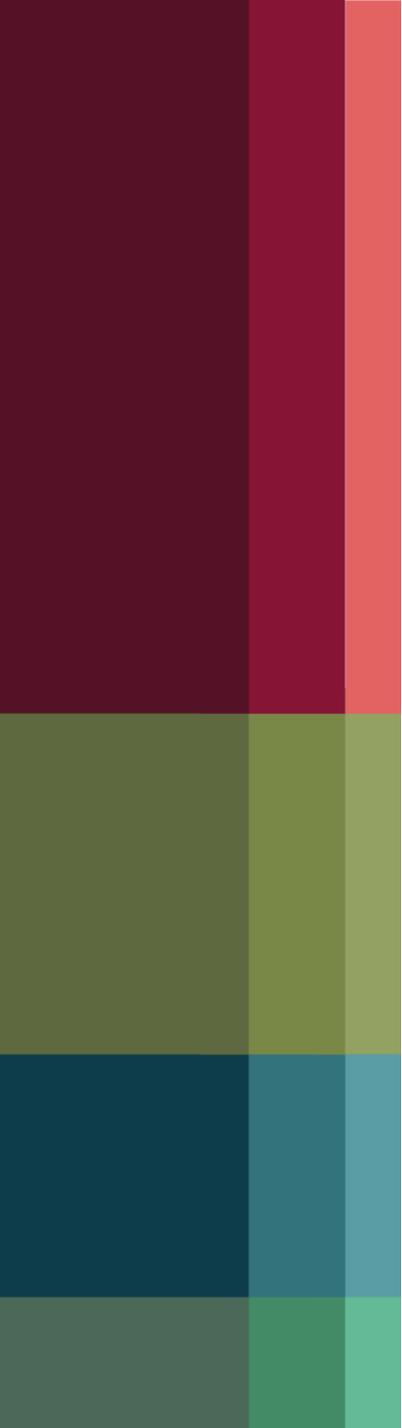
- 1. Continue to translate City Council agendas as currently identified in SRCC, leaving open the possibility that the City may need to translate City Council agendas in more than 3 non-English languages should the population speaking that language reach 5% of the City's population (*far exceeds Brown Act*); or**
- 2. Retain the City's current 5% population criteria for triggering the City's obligation to provide a translated City Council agenda, but limit the number of non-English agendas to a maximum of 3 in alignment with Brown Act; or**
- 3. Other direction provided by Council.**

Direction Needed.

Outreach Efforts

1. Update to CP 000-20
2. Continue outreach efforts as set forth in existing code, policies, engagement plan.

Affirm or provide different direction.



Questions?