



**TO:** Mayor and Councilmembers

**SUBMITTED BY:** Deborah Lopez, City Clerk  
David Cutaia, Senior Deputy City Clerk

**SUBJECT:** Policy to Implement New Brown Act Amendments Regarding Meeting Disruption Procedures Pursuant to Senate Bill 707

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution No. 26-\_\_ entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Goleta, California, Adopting a New City Council Policy Addressing a Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meeting."

**BACKGROUND:**

On October 3, 2025, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 707 (SB 707) into law. The intent of this bill is to increase public engagement in local government and modernize the Ralph M. Brown Act. Some SB 707 provisions went into effect on January 1, 2026, however the most significant changes will become effective on July 1, 2026.

Among the various new requirements under SB 707, all "eligible legislative bodies," as defined, must now offer hybrid meetings through a two-way phone or video platform. The City of Goleta has already been providing qualifying hybrid meetings via Zoom (Webinar) since April 2020.

Proponents of the bill, and SB 707's requirement for two-way remote public participation in City Council meetings, believe the changes significantly enhance accessibility, transparency, and civic engagement. By allowing residents to both observe and actively participate from remote locations, the law reduces barriers related to mobility, work schedules, caregiving responsibilities, and transportation limitations. This expanded access can broaden the diversity of voices contributing to public discourse, leading to more representative decision-making.

SB 707 requires the City to formally adopt a policy, on or before July 1, 2026, that outlines how the City will restore any broadcast disruptions that prevent the public from virtually attending and participating in a qualifying meeting.

## DISCUSSION:

As mentioned above, effective July 1, 2026, SB 707 requires “eligible legislative bodies,” including the Goleta City Council, to meet new public meeting requirements, including formally adopt a policy that outlines how to restore any broadcast disruptions that prevent the public from virtually attending and participating in a qualifying meeting.

The proposed Council Policy Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meetings (Policy) establishes a framework for responding to a disruption in telephonic or internet services when providing the required two-way remote public access to City Council meetings (Exhibit A to Attachment 1).

The Policy is intended to:

- Comply with the requirements of Government Code section 54953.4.
- Clarify procedures for the Presiding Officer, City Clerk and staff to follow in the event of telephonic or internet service disruption.
- Ensure staff make and document good-faith efforts to diagnose and restore two-way remote public access as quickly as possible.
- Define how and when the City Council may reconvene, either by continuing the meeting or adjourning, if service is not restored.

Of note, these provisions of SB 707 apply only to City Council meetings and do not apply to Council-appointed boards and commissions (“subsidiary bodies”). The City Council may, in its discretion, choose to extend the Policy to subsidiary bodies, which is not required by Senate Bill 707. At this time, staff recommends limiting the policy to the City Council, consistent with Government Code section 54953.4. Staff further recommends City Council revisit whether to expand the policy after implementation, once the administrative impacts are better understood.

Attached is a resolution that adopts the Policy to satisfy this new State requirement for disruptions to two-way remote attendance. The Policy mirrors the meeting disruption guidelines outlined in SB 707, which requires the legislative body to take a recess and try to restore service for at least one hour. If service cannot be restored within one hour, the legislative body must conduct a roll call vote confirming that good faith efforts were made, and the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the disruption to remote access. (Cal. Gov. Code § 54953.4(b)(1).)

Please note that the public would still be able to view City Council meetings live on Goleta Channel 19, the City’s livestream on its website, and the City’s YouTube channel; the public may also view and participate in person at the meeting location.

The attached draft Policy outlines the procedures and accommodations that will take place if disruptions were to occur. If adopted, the Policy will go into effect before the July 1, 2026, compliance deadline under State law.

Staff recommends adopting the new Policy to reflect the recent legislative changes under SB 707.

**GOLETA STRATEGIC PLAN:**

**City-Wide Initiative:** 8. Enhance the Efficiency and Transparency of City Operations  
**Strategic Goal:** 8.3. Continually strive to improve customer service

**FISCAL IMPACTS:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Council could choose not to adopt the policy; however, this will not be in compliance with legislative guidelines in accordance with SB 707.

**LEGAL REVIEW BY:** Isaac Rosen, City Attorney

**APPROVED BY:** Robert Nisbet, City Manager

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution No. 26-\_\_ entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Goleta, California, Adopting a New City Council Policy Addressing a Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meeting."

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

Resolution No. 26-\_\_ entitled, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Goleta, California, Adopting A New City Council Policy Addressing a Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meeting."

**RESOLUTION NO. 26-\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GOLETA, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A NEW CITY COUNCIL POLICY ADDRESSING A DISRUPTION OF TELEPHONIC OR INTERNET SERVICE DURING CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**WHEREAS**, the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code § 54950 et seq.) establishes requirements for open and public meetings of local legislative bodies; and

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 707 (SB 707, 2025) amended the Brown Act to update teleconferencing and accessibility requirements, including provisions related to remote participation in public meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, Government Code § 54953.4(b)(1)(A) requires eligible legislative bodies, on or before July 1, 2026, to adopt at a noticed public meeting in open session, and not on the consent calendar, a policy addressing disruption of telephonic or internet service during meetings conducted with remote participation; and

**WHEREAS**, the required policy must address procedures for recessing and reconvening a meeting in the event of a disruption and the efforts the legislative body will make to attempt to restore service; and

**WHEREAS**, if telephonic or internet service has not been restored upon reconvening, the legislative body must make findings by roll call vote that good faith efforts to restore service have been made and that continuing the meeting is appropriate despite the disruption to remote public access; and

**WHEREAS**, adoption of a technology disruption policy is required to ensure compliance with state law and to promote transparency and continuity of public meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed City Council policy addressing disruption of telephonic or internet service during City Council meetings has been prepared in accordance with Government Code § 54953.4 and is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GOLETA, AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** The City Council of the City of Goleta adopts the City Council policy entitled “Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meetings,” in the form presented and attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference, with such minor modifications as may be

required or approved by the City Attorney, a copy of which shall be kept on file in the Office of the City Clerk

**SECTION 2.**

The City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution and enter it into the book of original resolutions.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this \_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2026.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PAULA PEROTTE  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEBORAH S. LOPEZ  
CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
ISAAC ROSEN  
CITY ATTORNEY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA            )  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA    )     ss.  
CITY OF GOLETA                 )

I, DEBORAH S. LOPEZ, City Clerk of the City of Goleta, California, DO  
HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Resolution No. 26-\_\_ was duly adopted by  
the City Council of the City of Goleta at a regular meeting held on the \_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2026, by the following roll call vote of the Council:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

(SEAL)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DEBORAH S. LOPEZ  
CITY CLERK

## **Policy: Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During City Council Meetings**

### **1. Background**

Senate Bill 707 (2025) amended the Brown Act to require eligible legislative bodies to adopt, on or before July 1, 2026, a policy addressing how the agency will respond to disruptions in telephonic or internet service that prevent members of the public from participating remotely.

### **2. Purpose**

This policy establishes procedures for responding to a disruption in the telephonic or internet services that provide two-way remote public access to meetings of the City Council of the City of Goleta, as required by the Brown Act (Government Code section 54953.4). The policy ensures transparency, public participation, and the continuation of meetings during technological disruptions.

### **3. Definitions**

“Service Disruption” means any failure, outage, or other interruption to the agency’s remote access services that prevents members of the public from participating in a City Council meeting through the remote access service.

“Disrupting” means engaging in behavior during a meeting of the City Council that actually disrupts, disturbs, impedes, or renders infeasible the orderly conduct of the meeting and includes, but is not limited to one of the following:

- a. A failure to comply with reasonable and lawful regulations adopted by the City Council of the City of Goleta
- b. Engaging in behavior that constitutes use of force or a true threat of force.

“Remote access services” means the two-way telephonic service and/or two-way audiovisual platform used to provide real-time remote public attendance and observation of meetings.

“Two-way audiovisual platform” means an online platform that provides participants with the ability to participate in a meeting via both an interactive video conference and a two-way telephonic service.

“Two-way telephonic service” means a telephone service that does not require internet access and allows participants to dial a telephone number to listen and verbally participate.

“True threat of force” means a threat that has sufficient indicia of intent and seriousness, that a reasonable observer would perceive it to be an actual threat to use force by the person making the threat.

#### **4. Applicability**

This policy applies to all open and public meetings of the City Council at which remote public participation is required under the Brown Act. Consistent with the Brown Act, this policy shall not apply to the following meetings:

- a. Meetings held to attend a judicial or administrative proceeding to which the City of Goleta is a party.
- b. Meetings held to inspect real or personal property provided that the topic of the meeting is limited to items directly related to the real or personal property.
- c. Meetings held to meet with elected or appointed officials of the United States or the State of California, solely to discuss a legislative or regulatory issue affecting the City of Goleta and over which the federal or state officials have jurisdiction.
- d. Meetings held to meet in or nearby a facility owned by the City of Goleta, provided that the topic of the meeting is limited to items directly related to the facility.
- e. Meetings held in an emergency situation pursuant to Government Code section 54956.5.

#### **5. Remote Public Access Generally**

When remote public access is required under the Brown Act, the City Council shall provide members of the public with an opportunity to attend and participate in the meeting using a two-way audiovisual platform or a two-way telephonic service, provided that adequate telephonic or internet service is operational at the meeting location.

If adequate telephonic or internet service is not operational at the meeting location, the City Council shall not be required to provide remote access. If adequate telephonic or internet service is operational for only a portion of the meeting, the City Council shall provide remote access during that portion of the meeting.

If a two-way audiovisual platform is used, the City Council shall:

- a. Publicly post and provide a call-in option as well; and
- b. Activate any automatic captioning function that is available in the audiovisual platform.

If a two-way audiovisual platform is not provided, the City Council shall provide a two-way telephonic service.

Members of the public participating remotely shall be provided the same opportunity to provide public comment as members of the public attending in person, including the same time allotment.

#### **6. Response to Service Disruption**

If the Presiding Officer or Clerk becomes aware of a service disruption:

- a. The Presiding Officer or Clerk shall immediately announce the service disruption to the public.
- b. The Presiding Officer shall call for a recess of the open session and may convene the legislative body in an authorized closed session, consistent with the Brown Act. The recess shall last for one hour or until service is restored, whichever is earlier.
- c. During the recess, Goleta staff shall make a good faith effort to diagnose and restore the disrupted service.

### **7. Reconvening the Open Session**

After the expiration of the hour, if service has not been restored, the Presiding Officer or Clerk shall report on the status of staff's efforts to restore remote access services, and the City Council may reconvene to:

- a. Adjourn the meeting;
- b. Extend the recess to allow staff more time to make a good faith effort to restore remote access services; or
- c. Continue the open session portion of the meeting by adopting, by roll call vote, the following or a substantially similar finding:

“The City of Goleta has made good faith efforts to restore telephonic or internet service in accordance with its adopted policy, and the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.”

Upon adoption of the finding, the City Council may continue the open session portion of the meeting despite the fact that remote access services have not been restored.

### **8. Recordkeeping**

The Clerk shall enter a brief statement into the meeting minutes, including:

- The nature and time of the service disruption;
- The time the meeting was reconvened (if applicable);
- Any finding adopted pursuant to Section 7.

### **9. Response to Members of the Public Disrupting a Meeting**

If the Presiding Officer or Clerk becomes aware of a member of the public who is attending the meeting through remote access services and is disrupting the meeting or otherwise preventing other members of the public from attending or observing the meeting remotely or in-person:

## Resolution No. 26-\_\_ – Exhibit A

- a. The Presiding Officer or Clerk shall warn the person who is participating through remote access services that he or she is disrupting the meeting and his or her failure to cease that behavior may result in his or her removal.
- b. If the person to whom the Presiding Officer gave the above warning persists in disrupting the meeting, the Presiding Officer shall order staff to:
  - i. mute or otherwise limit the individual's ability to disrupt the meeting, while allowing the individual to continue to observe and attend the meeting; or
  - ii. remove the individual from the meeting if paragraph (a) does not address the disrupting behavior or is not available using the remote access service.

### **10. Review and Updates**

This policy may be amended by the City Council at a noticed public meeting in open session and may not be placed on the consent calendar.