COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
Department of Public Works

**Agenda Item #7A: Request to the Board Allowing Remote Meetings**
**DATE: November 18th, 2026**

**To: Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)**
**From: Jake Hudson, Transportation Planner / BAC Secretary**

**Background**
The Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) is an advisory committee appointed by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and staffed by Public Works. It advises the Board on the County Bikeways Plan, the bicycle policies in the General Plan Circulation Element, and the Bikeways Element of the Regional Transportation Plan. It has no authority to take final action on contracts, funding, or entitlements.

Under its bylaws, the BAC meets at least quarterly, generally in February, May, September, and November. A quorum is a majority of filled seats, and meetings follow County practices and Robert's Rules of Order. A member who misses two consecutive meetings, or three meetings in any twelve-month period, is automatically considered for replacement; the bylaw procedures direct the Chair to confer with the Committee before a vacancy is declared.

At its September 9, 2026 meeting, the BAC voted to agendize a request asking the BOS to allow remote BAC meetings and to amend the BAC bylaws accordingly. If the BAC approves the request, it would be the first such request the BOS has received from an appointed advisory body. Public Works, the County Clerk, Information Technology, and County Counsel staff have reviewed the requirements for hosting remote meetings and estimated the associated staffing and equipment costs. This report summarizes that review to inform the BAC's decision.

**Summary**
Fully remote BAC meetings are legally permissible under Senate Bill 707 (Gov. Code §54953.8.6), but only if the BOS approves them and renews its findings every six months. The required BOS approvals and the cost of the added staffing and technology are the primary hurdles.

1. **Legal path:** The BAC qualifies as an "eligible subsidiary body" of the BOS for remote meetings. This path requires two BOS actions per year for a committee that meets four times per year, plus a BAC vote to opt in.

2. **Operational and technical requirements:** Every meeting would still need a staffed, publicly accessible room, two-way public participation, on-camera members, and expanded minutes. If a technical failure interrupts the broadcast or public comment, the BAC could take no further action, and remaining items would be continued to the next meeting.

3. **Cost:** Staff estimates approximately $11,000 in one-time technology upgrades to the meeting room and approximately $16,660 per year in staffing and software licensing. Each meeting would require an additional staff person to operate the remote meeting software and equipment, plus County Clerk resources to process and host meeting recordings.

Cost estimates are provided in the Cost Estimates section below.

**Eligibility & Legal Requirements for Remote Meetings**

**Eligibility**

The BAC is subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act because the BOS created it by formal action. SB 707 (2025), effective January 1, 2026, reorganized the Act's teleconference rules and created a fully remote option for advisory committees (Gov. Code §§54953.8 and 54953.8.6). That option, along with most of the new remote provisions, expires January 1, 2030 unless the Legislature extends it.

To be eligible, a subsidiary body must serve only in an advisory role, have no authority to take final action on legislation, regulations, contracts, permits, grants, or fund allocations, and have no primary jurisdiction over elections, budgets, police oversight, privacy, library materials, or taxes. Based on County staff review, the BAC is eligible, subject to bylaw amendments, BOS findings renewed every six months, and investments in technology and record keeping.

BOS Actions Required

1. Formal BOS action approving remote BAC meetings and the related BAC bylaw amendments.
2. BOS adoption of the following findings initially and every six months thereafter:
    1. The Board has considered the BAC's circumstances.
    2. Remote meetings would enhance public access to BAC meetings.
    3. The public was notified of the type of remote participation proposed (audio-visual or telephonic) and had an opportunity to comment at an in-person BOS meeting.
    4. Remote meetings would promote the attraction, retention, and diversity of BAC members.
3. A BAC vote to use the remote meeting procedures.

Requirements at every remote meeting

1. The public can remotely hear and see the meeting and comment by audio-visual or telephone service.
2. If a technical failure stops the broadcast or prevents public comment, no further action may be taken at that meeting until the technical issue is fixed
3. The BAC adopts a procedure, prepared by County staff, for resolving disability accommodation requests.
4. A physical meeting location is open to the public, with a County staff member present.
5. BAC members appear on camera unless a disability accommodation applies. A member with connectivity problems must announce the reason before turning the camera off.
6. BAC members disclose whether anyone 18 or older is in the room with them and their general relationship.
7. All votes are taken by roll call.
8. The minutes identify each remote member and the specific provision of law relied on for their remote attendance.

Other Teleconference Provisions

The Brown Act also provides the following options, which do not require BOS findings:

1. **Traditional teleconferencing (§54953(b)):** Members may participate from other locations, but each location must be listed on the agenda, have the agenda posted, and be open to the public, and a quorum must participate from within the county. A member using this option would have to publish their location on the agenda and open it to the public.

2. **Just cause (§54953.8.3):** Individual members may participate remotely for specified reasons, such as caregiving, contagious illness, or official travel, generally up to twice a year given the BAC's meeting schedule. A quorum must still meet in person at a public location, and the public must be offered remote participation at that meeting.
3. **Disability accommodation:** A member with a disability may participate remotely as a reasonable accommodation, generally by audio and video. This counts as in-person attendance.
4. **Emergency (§54953(e)):** Available only during a proclaimed emergency, with findings renewed every 45 days.

If the BAC and the BOS approve remote BAC meetings, the related policies, resolutions, and bylaws would need to be updated to reflect the BOS actions, meeting requirements, and teleconference provisions described above.

**Technical Requirements for Remote Meetings**

The BAC meets in Rooms 161/162 of the County Government Center. The technology in this room does not meet the access requirements for Brown Act remote meetings, and staff found no other suitable meeting space under County jurisdiction. The BAC is currently staffed by one Public Works staff member; an additional staff member would be required to operate the software and equipment during remote meetings.

Software and Hardware Requirements

1. A dedicated meeting room computer, with IT installation, configuration, and support.
2. Audio-visual equipment for Rooms 161/162 (cameras, microphones, and speakers), with installation, configuration, and support.
3. Backup systems, including a wired network connection, a hotspot, and battery backup.
4. Integration and testing of all equipment and software.
5. A Zoom public meeting license.

Ongoing Staffing Resource Requirements

1. One additional staff member at each meeting to moderate the Zoom meeting and support the audio-visual equipment.
2. County Clerk resources to process, post, host, and manage meeting recordings and the expanded meeting documentation required by law.

**Cost Estimates**

Staff has prepared the following planning-level cost estimates for full SB 707 remote meetings. They include initial audio-visual equipment purchases and installation, plus ongoing staffing costs based on estimated hours at fully loaded staff rates with overhead. Most of the annual cost comes from staff time to process the required six-month BOS renewals and to assign an additional staff member to operate the Zoom software and audio-visual equipment at each meeting.

| Item | Initial cost | Annual cost | Basis of estimate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Meeting room audio-visual upgrades | $4,000 | — | Equipment list prices |
| Installation, configuration, and testing | $3,000 | — | 16 staff hours at estimated IT and Public Works rates |
| Zoom public meeting license | $1,000 | $1,000 | List price |
| Policy, bylaw, and BOS processing | $3,000 | — | 30 staff hours at estimated Public Works and administrative rates |
| Six-month BOS finding renewals | — | $7,200 | 10 staff hours per renewal, 2 renewals per year, at estimated staff rates |
| Zoom meeting and equipment moderator | — | $5,760 | 12 staff hours per meeting, 4 meetings per year, at estimated staff rates |
| County Clerk processing and data hosting | — | $2,700 | 3 staff hours per meeting, 4 meetings per year, at estimated staff rates, plus hosting fees |
| **Estimated total** | **$11,000** | **$16,660** | |

**Options for Committee Action**

1. **Proceed with the full SB 707 request to the BOS.** Estimated cost: $11,000 initial and $16,660 per year.
2. **Retain in-person meetings and rely on the existing just-cause and disability accommodation provisions for remote participation as needed.** The equipment, license, moderator, and Clerk costs would still apply, but the six-month BOS renewals would not. Estimated cost: $11,000 initial and $9,460 per year.
3. **Continue in-person meetings as they are now,** with no changes to the BAC bylaws and no audio-visual upgrades. No additional cost.