

# MEMO



**Date:** December 11, 2023  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Myra Maravilla, City Clerk  
**Re:** 12/12/23 Agenda, Item 14e – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSIONS AND DIRECTION TO CITY STAFF REGARDING REMOTE PARTICIPATION AT CITY MEETINGS AS WELL AS OTHER FORMAT AND OPERATIONAL CONCERNS RELATED TO CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

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The purpose of this memo is to provide an updated attachment “Allowance of Remote Participation Survey” containing additional information and clarification regarding the use of remote (Zoom) participation.

To ensure uniform interpretation, cities and towns indicating discontinued use of remote (Zoom) participation since the end of the COVID-19 emergency were further analyzed. An additional analysis was conducted to determine whether those cities continue to offer the platform as an additional viewing/streaming option for members of the public. Staff manually reviewed each city's agenda to identify whether it offered remote participation (i.e. receiving comments) or remote streaming and viewing only.

Additionally, staff manually verified survey results for accuracy and several cities were moved under the correct highlighted response for one or more questions. Some of the cities updated by staff include San Bernardino, Hesperia, San Rafael, and Laguna Beach.

In addition to minor updates within the survey, the attachment includes the additional analysis on page 8 of the attachment.

# Zoom Public Participation Survey

Conducted by the Office of the City Clerk

## Introduction:

The City Clerk's office created a five-question survey to gauge the use of Zoom as a public participation tool amongst California cities. The survey was sent to the South Bay City Clerks directly and separately sent to the Cal Cities City Clerk Listserv, a monitored email distribution, which includes member cities. The Cal Cities Listserv does not include non-member cities. We received 73 responses from unique cities, towns, and special districts as of December 6, 2023, the date on which this report was written. However, the survey will remain open until December 12, 2023 at noon. Supplemental entries received after the date this report is written will be added to the agenda as a supplemental item.

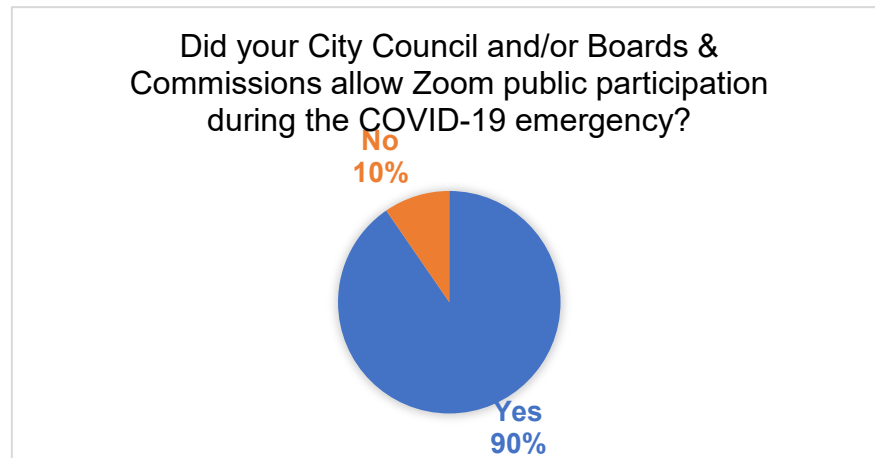
**Survey Start Date:** November 27, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.

**Survey End Date:** December 12, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

The list of respondents is found below. South Bay Cities are bolded.

1. Bakersfield	25. Hesperia	49. Plymouth
2. Berkeley	26. Inland Empire Utilities Agency	50. Port Hueneme
3. Brentwood	27. Irwindale	51. <b>Rancho Palos Verdes</b>
4. Buena Park	28. Kingsburg	52. Red Bluff
5. <b>Carson</b>	29. Laguna Beach	53. <b>Redondo Beach</b>
6. Citrus Heights	30. Laguna Hills	54. <b>Rolling Hills</b>
7. Coachella	31. Lake Elsinore	55. Salinas
8. Coronado	32. Lakeport	56. San Anselmo
9. Costa Mesa	33. <b>Lawndale</b>	57. San Bernardino
10. Cotati	34. Lemon Grove	58. San Bruno
11. Danville	35. Live Oak	59. San Dimas
12. Desert Water Agency	36. Loomis	60. San Fernando
13. East Bay Regional Park District	37. Los Angeles	61. San Jose
14. El Centro	38. <b>Manhattan Beach</b>	62. San Luis Obispo
15. <b>El Segundo</b>	39. Monterey	63. San Rafael
16. Emeryville	40. Morgan Hill	64. Santa Cruz
17. Fairfax	41. Mt. Shasta	65. Saratoga
18. Farmersville	42. Napa	66. Scotts Valley
19. Firebaugh	43. Newark	67. Sebastopol
20. Fremont	44. Norwalk	68. Sonoma
21. Fresno	45. Oceanside	69. St. Helena
22. Fullerton	46. Patterson	70. Sunnyvale
23. <b>Gardena</b>	47. Perris	71. Thousand Oaks
24. Glendora	48. Petaluma	72. Tulare
		73. Victorville

**Question 1:** Did your City Council and/or Boards & Commissions allow Zoom public participation during the COVID-19 emergency?



**Question 1 Responses:**

**Response: No**

1. Bakersfield
2. Hesperia
3. Kingsburg
4. Laguna Hills
5. Lemon Grove
6. San Bernardino
7. Tulare

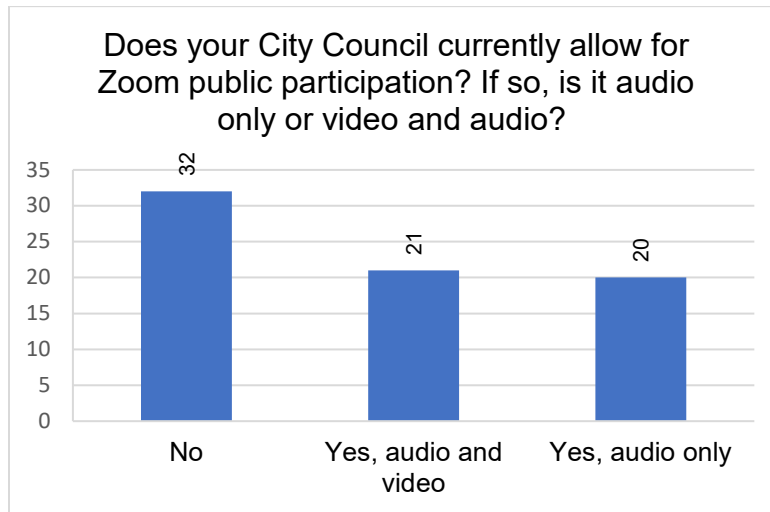
**Response: Yes**

1. Berkeley
2. Brentwood
3. Buena Park
- 4. Carson**
5. Citrus Heights
6. Coachella
7. Coronado
8. Costa Mesa
9. Cotati
10. Danville
11. Desert Water Agency
12. East Bay Regional Park District
13. El Centro
- 14. El Segundo**
15. Emeryville
16. Fairfax

17. Farmersville
18. Firebaugh
19. Fremont
20. Fresno
21. Fullerton
- 22. Gardena**
23. Glendora
24. Inland Empire Utilities Agency
25. Irwindale
26. Laguna Beach
27. Lake Elsinore
28. Lakeport
- 29. Lawndale**
30. Live Oak
31. Loomis
32. Los Angeles
- 33. Manhattan Beach**
34. Monterey
35. Morgan Hill
36. Mt. Shasta
37. Napa
38. Newark
39. Norwalk
40. Oceanside
41. Patterson

42. Perris
43. Petaluma
44. Plymouth
45. Port Hueneme
- 46. Rancho Palos Verdes**
47. Red Bluff
- 48. Redondo Beach**
- 49. Rolling Hills**
50. Salinas
51. San Anselmo
52. San Bruno
53. San Dimas
54. San Fernando
55. San Jose
56. San Luis Obispo
57. San Rafael
58. Santa Cruz
59. Saratoga
60. Scotts Valley
61. Sebastopol
62. Sonoma
63. St. Helena
64. Sunnyvale
65. Thousand Oaks
66. Victorville

**Question 2:** Does your City Council currently allow for Zoom public participation? If so, is it audio only or video and audio?



**Question 2 Responses:**

**Response: No**

1. Bakersfield
2. Citrus Heights
3. Danville
4. **El Segundo**
5. Farmersville
6. Firebaugh
7. Fremont
8. **Gardena**
9. Hesperia
10. Irwindale
11. Kingsburg
12. Laguna Hills
13. Lake Elsinore
14. **Lawndale**
15. Lemon Grove
16. Morgan Hill
17. Napa
18. Newark
19. Oceanside
20. Patterson
21. Perris
22. Petaluma
23. Port Hueneme
24. **Rolling Hills**
25. San Bernardino
26. San Bruno

27. San Dimas

28. San Rafael
29. Scotts Valley
30. St. Helena
31. Tulare
32. Victorville

**Response: Yes, audio and video**

1. Berkeley
2. Buena Park
3. **Carson**
4. Coachella
5. Desert Water Agency
6. East Bay Regional Park District
7. El Centro
8. Fresno
9. Glendora
10. Lakeport
11. Live Oak
12. Loomis
13. Norwalk
14. Plymouth
15. **Rancho Palos Verdes**
16. Red Bluff
17. San Jose
18. San Luis Obispo

19. Sebastopol

20. Sonoma
21. Thousand Oaks

**Response: Yes, audio only**

1. Brentwood
2. Coronado
3. Costa Mesa
4. Cotati
5. Emeryville
6. Fairfax
7. Fullerton
8. Inland Empire Utilities Agency
9. Laguna Beach
10. Los Angeles
11. **Manhattan Beach**
12. Monterey
13. Mt. Shasta
14. **Redondo Beach**
15. Salinas
16. San Anselmo
17. San Fernando
18. Santa Cruz
19. Saratoga
20. Sunnyvale

## Question 2 Analysis:

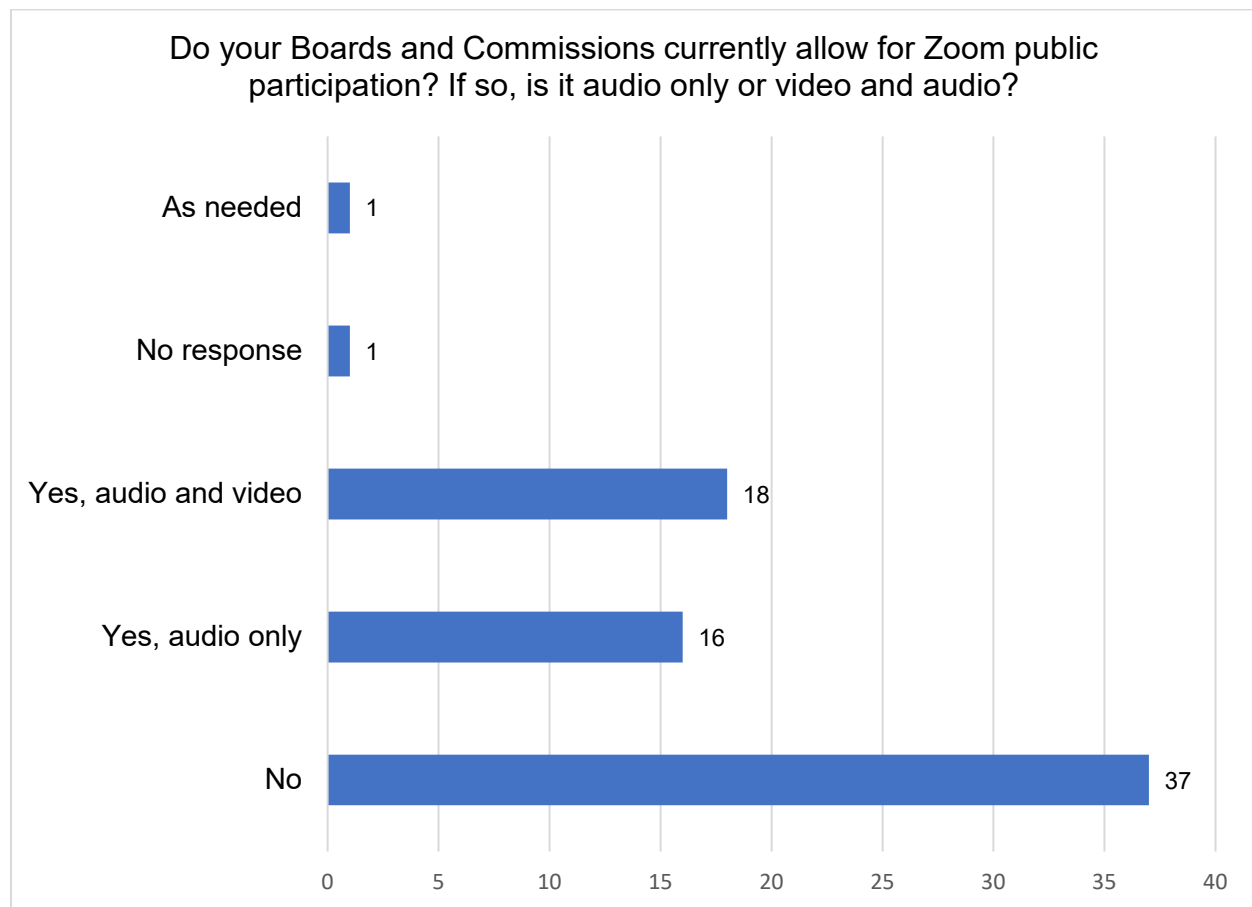
Of the 66 jurisdictions that indicated they offered Zoom during the COVID-19 emergency, 25 have since discontinued the use of Zoom for public participation. Some jurisdictions that indicated they have discontinued the use of Zoom for public participation added, without being prompted, they continue to offer the Zoom platform as a viewing option and is available for staff and consultants to provide virtual staff presentations (*see SUPPLEMENTAL data on page 8*).

One jurisdiction, unprompted, indicated they discontinued Zoom public participation option due to hate speech. Another jurisdiction, also unprompted, indicated they discontinued their use of Zoom public participation due to the threat of Zoom bombing.

The City of Scotts Valley temporarily discontinued Zoom for Council meetings, but not for Boards and Commissions. They did not indicate the reason.

The Cities of Brentwood and Saratoga only take in-person public comment at the beginning of the meeting for non-agenda items. They take Zoom comments at the end of their meetings for non-agenda items.

**Question 3:** Do your Boards and Commissions currently allow for Zoom public participation? If so, is it audio only or video and audio?



### Question 3 Responses:

#### **Response: No**

1. Bakersfield
2. Berkeley

#### **3. Carson**

4. Citrus Heights
5. Danville

#### **6. El Segundo**

7. Farmersville
8. Firebaugh
9. Fremont

#### **10. Gardena**

11. Hesperia
12. Inland Empire Utilities Agency

#### **13. Irwindale**

#### **14. Kingsburg**

#### **15. Laguna Hills**

#### **16. Lake Elsinore**

#### **17. Lawndale**

#### **18. Lemon Grove**

#### **19. Morgan Hill**

#### **20. Napa**

#### **21. Newark**

#### **22. Oceanside**

#### **23. Patterson**

#### **24. Perris**

#### **25. Petaluma**

#### **26. Port Hueneme**

#### **27. Rolling Hills**

#### **28. Salinas**

#### **29. San Bernardino**

#### **30. San Bruno**

#### **31. San Dimas**

#### **32. San Luis Obispo**

#### **33. San Rafael**

#### **34. Santa Cruz**

#### **35. St. Helena**

#### **36. Tulare**

#### **37. Victorville**

#### **Response: Yes, audio and video**

#### **1. Buena Park**

#### **2. Coachella**

#### **3. Desert Water Agency**

#### **4. East Bay Regional Park District**

#### **5. El Centro**

#### **6. Fresno**

#### **7. Glendora**

#### **8. Lakeport**

#### **9. Live Oak**

#### **10. Loomis**

#### **11. Norwalk**

#### **12. Plymouth**

#### **13. Rancho Palos Verdes**

#### **14. Red Bluff**

#### **15. San Anselmo**

#### **16. San Jose**

#### **17. Sebastopol**

#### **18. Sonoma**

#### **Response: Yes, audio only**

#### **1. Brentwood**

#### **2. Coronado**

#### **3. Costa Mesa**

#### **4. Cotati**

#### **5. Emeryville**

#### **6. Fairfax**

#### **7. Fullerton**

#### **8. Laguna Beach**

#### **9. Manhattan Beach**

#### **10. Monterey**

#### **11. Mt. Shasta**

#### **12. Redondo Beach**

#### **13. San Fernando**

#### **14. Saratoga**

#### **15. Scotts Valley**

#### **16. Sunnyvale**

#### **Response: No response**

#### **1. Los Angeles**

#### **Response: As needed**

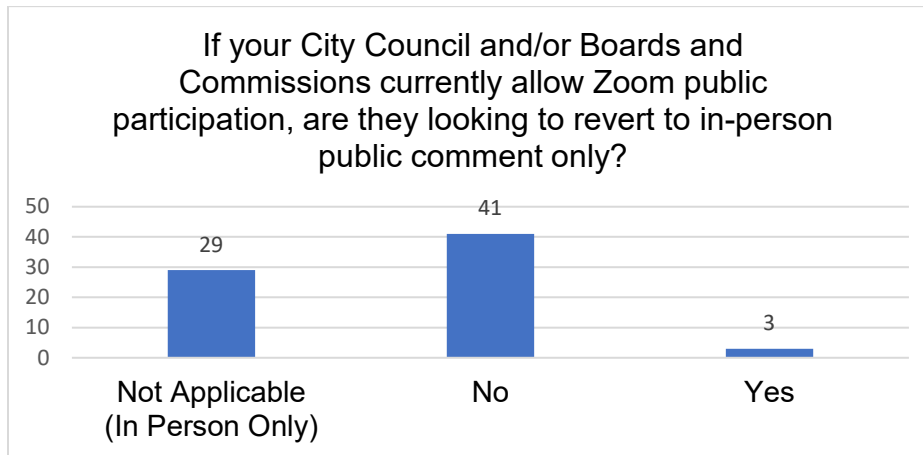
#### **1. Thousand Oaks**

### Question 3 Analysis:

The Cities of Berkeley, Carson, San Luis Obispo, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Salinas, San Bernardino, and Santa Cruz indicated they do allow Zoom public participation for City Council (or governing board) meetings (audio OR audio and video), but not for their Boards and Commissions.

The Cities of Fairfax, Loomis, Morgan Hill, and Mt. Shasta indicated that only their Planning Commission allow for Zoom public participation.

**Question 4:** If your City Council and/or Boards & Commissions currently allow Zoom public participation, are they looking to revert to in-person public comment only?



**Question 4 Responses:**

**Response: No**

1. Berkeley
2. Brentwood
3. Buena Park
4. **Carson**
5. Coachella
6. Coronado
7. Costa Mesa
8. Cotati
9. Desert Water Agency
10. East Bay Regional Park District
11. El Centro
12. Emeryville
13. Fairfax
14. Fresno
15. Fullerton
16. Glendora
17. Inland Empire Utilities Agency
18. Lakeport
19. Laguna Beach
20. Live Oak
21. Loomis
22. Los Angeles
23. Monterey
24. Mt. Shasta
25. Plymouth

**26. Rancho Palos Verdes**

27. Red Bluff
28. **Redondo Beach**
29. Salinas
30. San Anselmo
31. San Fernando
32. San Jose
33. San Luis Obispo
34. San Rafael
35. Santa Cruz
36. Saratoga
37. Scotts Valley
38. Sebastopol
39. Sonoma
40. Sunnyvale
41. Thousand Oaks

**Response: Not Applicable (In Person Only)**

1. Bakersfield
2. Citrus Heights
3. Danville
4. **El Segundo**
5. Farmersville
6. Firebaugh
7. Fremont
8. **Gardena**
9. Hesperia

10. Irwindale
11. Kingsburg
12. Laguna Hills
13. Lake Elsinore
14. **Lawndale**
15. Lemon Grove
16. Morgan Hill
17. Napa
18. Newark
19. Oceanside
20. Patterson
21. Perris
22. Petaluma
23. Port Hueneme
24. **Rolling Hills**
25. San Bernardino
26. San Bruno
27. San Dimas
28. San Rafael
29. St. Helena

30. Tulare
31. Victorville

**Response: Yes**

1. **Manhattan Beach**
2. Norwalk
3. San Bernardino

**Question 4 Analysis:** City of Saratoga changed their practice after receiving hate speech to in person comments at the beginning of the meeting and Zoom public participation for non-agendized matters at the end of the meeting. They did not indicate the reason. City of Scotts Valley's Planning and Parks and Recreation Commissions opted to continue using the Zoom option and not return to in-person only. The City Council and their other Boards and Commissions have opted to return to in-person meetings only.

The Cities of Manhattan Beach, Norwalk, and San Bernardino are actively reviewing the option to revert to in-person meetings only. The City of Redondo Beach City Council recently voted to continue offering Zoom public participation option.

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**Question 5:** Please indicate when public participation is allowed.

The vast majority of cities indicated they allowed Public Comment at the start of the meeting and after every item is heard.

The following agencies indicated they only allowed Public Comment at the start of the meeting: Desert Water Agency, Cities of El Centro, El Segundo, Farmersville, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, San Bernardino, San Fernando.

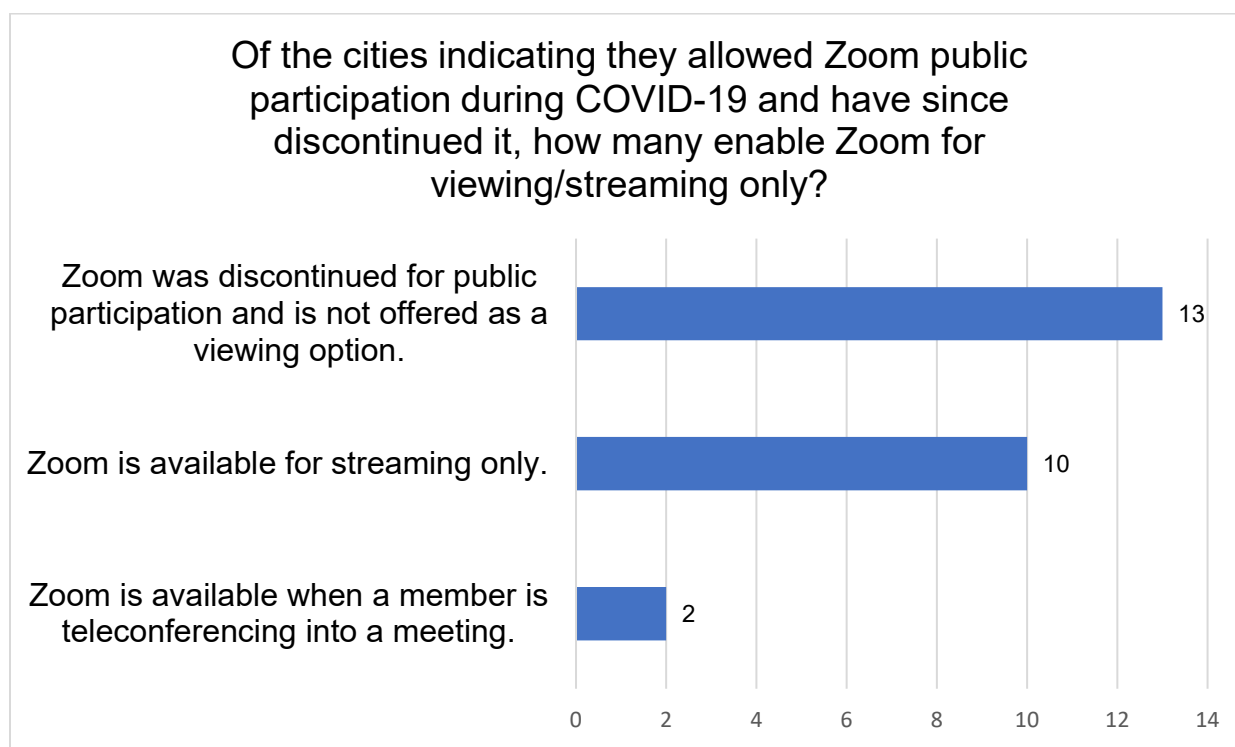
The following agencies indicated they allowed Public Comment after each item and general public comment was heard at the end of the meeting: Cities of Norwalk and Coachella. Coachella indicated they pause to take public comments if the meeting is going past 8:00 p.m.

*Also indicated under Analysis of Question 2:* Cities of Brentwood and Saratoga indicated the Public Comment opportunity at the beginning of the meeting for non-agenda items is in-person only. At the end of the meeting, they allow for Zoom comments.

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**SUPPLEMENTAL:** Of the 25 cities indicating they allowed Zoom public participation for City Council during COVID-19 and have since discontinued it, how many enable Zoom for viewing/streaming only?



**Zoom was discontinued for public participation and is not offered as a viewing option.**

1. Citrus Heights
2. Danville
3. Firebaugh
4. **Gardena**
5. Lake Elsinore
6. **Lawndale**
7. Napa
8. Perris

9. Port Hueneme

**10. Rolling Hills**

11. San Dimas

12. St. Helena

13. Victorville

**Zoom is available for streaming only.**

1. Farmersville
2. Fremont
3. Irwindale
4. Morgan Hill
5. Oceanside

6. Patterson

7. Petaluma

8. San Bruno

9. San Rafael

10. Scotts Valley

**Zoom is available when a member is teleconferencing into a meeting.**

1. **El Segundo**
2. Newark

**SUPPLEMENTAL Analysis:** The supplemental information provided was manually researched by the City Clerk's office and was not a part of the survey. Of the 66 cities or jurisdictions that offered Zoom public participation during COVID-19, 25 have discontinued its use. 10 of the 25 cities or jurisdictions have maintained Zoom as an additional viewing/streaming option for members of the public.

This survey provides information on how other governing bodies have navigated Zoom public participation post COVID-19. However, the total responses have not been verified for statistical significance. This survey collected responses from 71 of 482 California cities/towns (14.94% response rate) and 2 of 3,300 California special districts (.06% response rate) respectively. Even among South Bay cities, there is variance in how the use of the Zoom platform has evolved.