



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

VACANT  
First District

JOEL ANDERSON  
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER  
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE  
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND  
Fifth District

**DATE:** June 3, 2025

**21**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### SUBJECT

### CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

#### OVERVIEW

On April 22, 2025 (9), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to investigate the potential to adjust the current process for publicly posting Board meeting agendas to provide the public additional time to review items that will be considered and voted on during Board meetings, including an assessment of additional public notice times up to, and including, 30 days before consideration at a Board meeting.

The County's current review, noticing, and location for Board meetings is codified in the Board of Supervisors Rules of Procedure and Board Policy A-72, "Board of Supervisors' Agenda and Related Processes." The Board generally meets at the County Administration Center on Tuesdays for the General Legislative Session and Wednesdays for the Land Use Legislative Session, unless otherwise noticed. The agendas for the meeting (both sessions) are published the Wednesday prior to the meeting, which is six or seven calendar days prior to the sessions, respectively.

This item presents the staff analysis of the Board direction and provides options to the Board to consider.

#### RECOMMENDATION(S)

##### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Provide direction on which method, if any, related to the publishing of agendas for San Diego County Board of Supervisors meetings. Five potential directions are:
  - a. Maintain current docket and publishing schedule.
  - b. Extend publishing timeline to 30 days for Board member generated items.
  - c. Extend publishing timeline to 14 days for all items.
  - d. Post a summary of agenda items 30 days in advance.
  - e. Change Board Letter template to include community impact statement.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to return to the Board of Supervisors on September 9, 2025, with changes to the Board's Rules of Procedures and applicable Board policies to

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

implement the changes that are directed in Recommendation #1, effective for Board of Supervisors meetings occurring after January 1, 2026.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The County of San Diego (County) prioritizes transparency and accessibility to improve public understanding of how the County operates and participation in shaping future priorities. These efforts towards accessibility are particularly important to reach those communities that have been previously disconnected from the County civic process. The County continues to ensure that the diverse voices of the community can be heard in an equitable and civilized manner, and as such, can provide input that is vital to a healthy democratic institution.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The analysis provides options for the Board to enhance stakeholder participation to plan for community engagement and identify meaningful ways to continually seek input to foster inclusive and sustainable communities.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

On April 22, 2025 (9), the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to investigate the potential to adjust the current process for publicly posting Board meeting agendas, including an assessment of additional public notice times up to and including 30 days before consideration at a Board meeting. The Board's discussion included a variety of options that should be analyzed, including publishing agendas 14 calendar days prior to the Board meeting and holding Board meetings at alternative locations. Those examples are specifically analyzed below with an explanation of the impact to County processes, though the Board may consider any other time frame that modifies the publication date of its agendas.

**Current Process**

The County of San Diego's (County) current review and noticing process for Board meetings is codified in the Board of Supervisors Rules of Procedure and Board Policy A-72, "Board of Supervisors' Agenda and Related Processes." The current process is designed so that once the agenda is public, there is rarely a need to amend the meeting agenda prior to a meeting.

Board Policy A-72 requires that agenda items, facilitated through written reports called Board Letters, include various statements and information, including fiscal impacts, so that the Board may make a fully informed decision. Board Policy A-72 also requires the Office of Financial

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

Planning, County Counsel, and department(s) with the most subject matter expertise to review Board Letters prior to docketing.

To ensure timely processing and review, agenda items for the Board of Supervisors meetings must follow defined filing deadlines that are described in Board Policy A-72 and the Board's Rules of Procedure. Items for the regular General Legislative Session must be submitted to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors on Mondays, eight days before the session, with exceptions for holidays. For the Land Use Legislative session, agenda items are due on Thursdays, 13 days in advance of the meeting, with similar holiday adjustments. The difference in the due dates is because land use items often require advanced notice by publishing a legal advertisement.

In alignment with Board policy A-72, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) sets internal review timelines, requiring Board Letters from Board Members or County elected officials to be submitted at least five business days before the docket deadline for routine matters, and ten business days in advance for complex matters or those involving appropriations, ordinances, or resolutions. Below is a visual illustration of the current deadlines:

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	<i>M-22</i> Deadline for Review of Complex Board Letter	<i>M-21</i>	<i>M-20</i>	<i>M-19</i>	<i>M-18</i>	<i>M-17</i>
<i>M-16</i>	<i>M-15</i> Deadline for Review of Routine Board Letter	<i>M-14</i>	<i>M-13</i>	<i>M-12</i> Land Use Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	<i>M-11</i>	<i>M-10</i>
<i>M-9</i>	<i>M-8</i> Legislative Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	<i>M-7</i>	<i>M-6</i> Agenda Release	<i>M-5</i>	<i>M-4</i> Agenda Amendments & Urgent Items Added	<i>M-3</i>
<i>M-2</i>	<i>M-1</i>	Board Meeting: Legislative Session	Board Meeting: Land Use Session			

Note: *M-#* shows the number of days in advance of the start of the meeting.

<sup>1</sup>Docketing is the internal process of submitting a Board Letter to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors so it can be included on the meeting agenda. The information in the Board Letter is required to prepare the agenda. Once the agenda is finalized, it is published along with the related Board Letters.

Additional timelines are built in for County departments to ensure that staff-generated items are complete and thoroughly vetted across the enterprise. For example, the staff-generated items being considered for the June 24, 2025 Board Meeting are already being routed for review by the first week in May. This process ensures that the items before the Board have a complete operational, fiscal, and legal analysis so that the policies are ready for implementation upon passage.

The County differs from the State Legislature and other local governments as it has a Council-Manager form of government between its elected body (the Board) and its manager (the CAO).

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

The County does not have a chief elected official (such as a Mayor) nor a committee process. In addition, there are County policies and ordinances that require County staff to bring administrative items to the Board for authority and direction. These items often need the Board's consideration in a timely manner to ensure County services are being provided for the community.

Extending the publishing timeline for Board agendas will mean that they are public concurrent or prior to the previous Board meeting taking place. There are specific instances for administrative items, such as ordinances that require two readings, or for any item that faces a continuance to a future hearing, where publication of the agenda would have already occurred and would require an errata, or other similar process, for the future agenda to be amended.

While most items presented to the Board require only a simple three-member majority to approve, several types of routine and non-routine items require a supermajority vote (2/3, 4/5 or unanimous), such as certain decisions related to bonds, taxes, budget amendments, real property, emergency repairs, and urgency ordinances. Given the current vacancy in a Supervisorial seat—a scenario the County has faced twice in the past two years—there is a narrow margin for scheduling flexibility when it comes to Board deliberation and voting on essential administrative items critical to County operations. To implement changes to the docket schedule, staff would need the ability to strategically schedule agenda items to meet state or federal deadlines, procurement needs, and accept grant funds, among other critical needs. In many cases, this may limit the County's ability to continue items and still meet external deadlines and requirements, underscoring the importance of thoughtful advance planning and schedule alignment. To mitigate such risks with extended agenda release dates, staff would propose amendments to the Board's Rules of Procedure to add the following language: "To facilitate the timely placement of matters requiring a 4/5 vote on the Board's agenda, Supervisors shall notify the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of impending absences as far in advance as possible, but no later than two weeks in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting, barring an emergency or illness." Currently, there is no requirement for Board members to notify the Chair or County staff if they will be absent from a Board meeting.

**Other Similar Local Government Processes**

*Survey of other Counties*

The Brown Act requires that agendas be published at least 72 hours before a regular meeting. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors conducted a survey of counties to identify their agenda release timelines. The survey found that on average the County provides an extra day than others, with most counties releasing their agendas five calendar days before the meeting. The County of Orange had the longest lead time, releasing their agendas 13 days before the meeting.

*Survey of other Cities*

The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors conducted a survey of cities in the region to identify their agenda release timelines. Like with the survey of counties, the survey found that on average the County provides an extra day than incorporated cities within San Diego County, with most cities releasing their agendas five calendar days (Thursdays) before the meeting. The cities of Encinitas and Solana Beach had the longest lead time, releasing their agendas seven days before a meeting.

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

*County of Los Angeles Board Letter Process*

In conducting the survey, the County of Los Angeles shared that their Board of Supervisors recently implemented a new process to increase public participation where the County is posting an online log of upcoming agenda items two weeks prior to a Board meeting. The log lists the departments and the titles of the agenda items. (See links under “Upcoming Meetings,” at: <https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas/>)

Additionally, the County of Los Angeles has held a formal, public review process for Board Letters since 2002. The County refers to the process as “Cluster Meetings.” The Clusters are groups of departments, organized into policy subject areas. Each Cluster Meeting is chaired by a member of the Board of Supervisors’ staff and is facilitated through the County’s Chief Executive Office (CEO). Before departments can submit items for the Board’s agenda, the items must be presented at a Cluster Meeting. Cluster Meetings can also include items such as department briefings and other items requested by the Cluster Meeting chair.

Board Letters authored directly by a Board member were previously excluded from this process. However, the Board of Supervisors approved a pilot program to include Board Letters originating from a County Supervisor. The pilot program is set to end in August unless it is extended or made permanent. Under this pilot process, Board offices must submit their Board Letters for cluster agendas approximately three weeks before the corresponding Board meeting.

Before Board Letters are posted on a Cluster Meeting agenda, they are submitted for approval to the CEO analyst assigned to the respective subject matter area. For example, the CEO analyst covering the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) receives the draft Board Letter directly from LASD to review and approve. Board Letters are generally submitted to the CEO analyst several weeks before the target Board agenda date to facilitate a thorough review.

Each Cluster Meeting can differ in the way it operates, based on the Cluster Meeting Chair’s discretion. Additionally, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has required that Cluster Meetings be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, regardless of whether or not the Brown Act covers such meetings. (Refer to online agendas at: <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/agendas/>)

In general, after a CEO analyst approves a Board Letter, the facilitator (CEO staff) receives and reviews it in preparation for a weekly planning meeting with the Cluster Chair (Board staff). The facilitator is responsible for briefing the Chair on each item submitted by each respective department and ensuring items are ready to be posted on the agenda. The proposed agenda is then presented to the Cluster Chair for approval or modification.

Cluster Meetings are open to the public and allow for public comment. Although not required, one of the 11 cluster meetings is recorded by audio; however, transcripts of the recordings are not generated or distributed.

Los Angeles County has considerably larger staffing than the equivalent County departments, with 590 positions in the CEO’s Office and 501 positions under the Board of Supervisors and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. Other counties that responded to the survey do not have the extensive review process currently deployed by the County of Los Angeles.

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

**California State Legislature Process**

The California State Legislature requires bills before the Legislature to be “in print” 30 days prior to being heard by the Legislature.

The State’s Legislative Process deviates from the County’s in three key areas. They are:

1. The Committee Process: The California State Legislature has two houses and multiple committees that hear legislation prior to passage. Bills are introduced in January or February, move through the committee referral and hearing process for several months, and either pass or fail on the floor of the second house by late summer/early fall. Each committee has staff that compose a robust analysis along the way. In addition, bills are “in print” but not necessarily on a committee agenda. Each committee has its own agenda, which is separate from the agenda of the floor of each house.
2. Amendment Process: Over the course of the committee process, multiple amendments are proposed and taken as proponents and opponents work with various committees to negotiate terms of the legislation to minimize unintended consequences. The version that was in print for 30 days prior to the first committee hearing is typically very different from the resulting piece of legislation. Therefore, bills are often introduced with concept language and the bulk of the details are added along the way. And lastly, absent an urgency clause, the pieces of legislation signed into law go into effect on January 1 the following year and not immediately.
3. The Role of the Administration: The State Legislative Committee Process hears only bills authored by Legislators. The rest of the State’s government functions are handled by the executive branch. Many State departments have commissions or other boards that are subject to the State’s other open meeting law, the Bagley-Keene Act, which is similar to the Brown Act but it only applies to state agencies. Those State boards and commissions must publish an agenda at least ten (10) calendar days prior to any public meeting. With a few exceptions, including the Budget Process, the Administration does not have to bring their items before the Legislature. They can enter contracts, leases, distribute grant funding, and administer their programs at the discretion of the Governor and their administration, with any required public meetings subject to the Bagley-Keene Act. In addition, the Governor also signs or vetoes all legislation giving the final check and balance of the laws prior to enactment to a chief elected official apart from the Legislature.

**Analysis of Options**

*Alternative Locations for Board of Supervisors Meetings*

Holding a Board of Supervisors meeting at an alternate location—outside the County Administration Center Board Chamber or the County Operations Center Campus Chamber—requires significant technical and staffing resources to ensure the meeting runs effectively. This includes temporarily relocating the voting system, speaker timer, production cameras, and microphones; establishing a direct connection to the broadcast studio; and providing enterprise-grade internet to support stable streaming and connectivity. Additional logistical needs include agenda posting, ADA compliance, adequate parking, public transit access, and coordination of security and public participation (e.g., seating and speaker podium setup).

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

A recent example of such an offsite meeting is the joint County-City session held in October 2022, where the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors and the San Diego City Council met at Montezuma Hall in the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union at San Diego State University. The total cost for this event was \$14,981, shared between the County, the City of San Diego, and the San Diego Foundation. Future meetings at alternate sites are expected to cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000. A funding source will need to be identified for these costs if the Board directs staff to organize offsite meeting locations.

Alternatively, some Board Members could meet at the County Administration Center while allowing other Board Members and the public to participate in person from alternate locations within their District. While feasible, this approach requires duplicating all technical, staffing, and security services at multiple locations, resulting in significant additional costs. Additionally, to comply with the Brown Act, the alternative locations would need to be open to the public, accessible, and meet all the requirements described above.

Although many County-owned and private facilities are capable of hosting virtual or hybrid meetings, the Brown Act imposes strict requirements on public meetings. If a hybrid meeting experiences any technical interruption, the entire meeting must be paused until the issue is resolved. Therefore, relying on consumer-grade technology—such as a laptop and webcam in a library conference room—is not practical, given the risk of disrupting the meeting.

*Option: Publish Agendas 30 Calendar Days Prior to Board Meeting for Board of Supervisors-initiated items*

Longer introductory process may be feasible for Board member-initiated items that are focused on policy; however, it should be noted that applying the principle of publishing agendas 30 calendar days prior to the Board's meetings would result in items being noticed for future sessions prior to the previous meetings occurring. This could introduce procedural ambiguity and affect the clarity of public communications and participation. To mitigate any potential confusion, a new process for noticing would need to be developed and implemented.

For operational and administrative items, a longer introductory process is not recommended. Many administrative items that are staff-generated for Board consideration are at the direction of various State laws, and certain data for these Board Letters may not be available in sufficient time to publish the item within the proposed 30-day timeframe. In addition, County policy requires staff to submit Board Letters for many administrative items in nature, including grant applications and acceptance, certain contracting actions, and revenue agreements that may be impacted by the proposed 30-day timeframe.

Should the Board direct that all agenda items for Board of Supervisors meetings be published 30 calendar days prior to the Board meeting, it is recommended that the Board consider exceptions to the items that are presented for Board consideration, including, but not limited to, grant applications and acceptance, certain contracting actions, certain budget-related actions, and revenue agreements. If the Board selects this option, staff will include proposed revisions to policies on September 9, 2025.

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

*Sample Timeline for Releasing the Agenda 30 Days in Advance of a Meeting*

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	M-43	M-42	M-41	M-40	M-39	M-38
M-37	M-36 Land Use Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	M-35	M-34 Legislative Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	M-33	M-32 Agenda Release	M-31
M-30	M-29	M-28	M-27	M-26	M-25	M-24
M-23	M-22	M-21	M-20	M-19	M-18 Amendments & Urgent Items Added	M-17
M-16	M-15	M-14	M-13	M-12	M-11	M-10
M-9	M-8	M-7	M-6	M-5	M-4	M-3
M-2	M-1	Board Meeting: Legislative Session	Board Meeting: Land Use Session			

Note: M-# shows the number of days in advance of the meeting.

<sup>1</sup>Docketing is the internal process of submitting a Board Letter to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors so it can be included on the meeting agenda. The information in the Board Letter is required to prepare the agenda. Once the agenda is finalized, it is published along with the related Board Letters.

*Option: Publish Agendas 14 Calendar Days Prior to Board Meeting (or other timeframe)*

An alternative consideration would be to extend the agenda release date by 14 days (or another timeframe determined by the Board) before the regular scheduled meeting, rather than 30 days. This would allow community members, as well as Supervisors, more time than is currently provided to study the agenda items. This extended timeline would also enable focused community workshops on specific agenda topics, fostering greater public engagement and input on Board Letters.

However, this approach requires the additional consideration that lengthening the docketing timelines could slow down the processing of routine items. Furthermore, it might necessitate the addition of late items or revisions to existing agenda items due to the extended deadline. In some cases, urgent matters may require the scheduling of Special Meetings or increase the amount of late additions to a published agenda.



**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

*Sample Timeline for Releasing the Agenda 14 Days in Advance of a Meeting*

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			M-20 Legislative Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	M-19 Land Use Session Docket <sup>1</sup>	M-18	M-17
M-16	M-15	M-14 Agenda Release	M-13	M-12	M-11	M-10
M-9	M-8	M-7 Agenda Amendments & Urgent Items Added	M-6	M-5	M-4	M-3
M-2	M-1	Board Meeting: Legislative Session	Board Meeting: Land Use Session			

Note: M-# shows the number of days in advance of the meeting.

<sup>1</sup>Docketing is the internal process of submitting a Board Letter to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors so it can be included on the meeting agenda. The information in the Board Letter is required to prepare the agenda. Once the agenda is finalized, it is published along with the related Board Letters.

*Option: Post Summary of Agenda Items 30 Days in Advance*

A third option would be for staff to develop a template that would be used to post information on a County web page about upcoming agenda items—a working agenda that would be subject to change. Board Members and departments would be required to submit their upcoming agenda item summaries at least 30 days in advance of the meeting to be posted online. Departments could utilize the feedback to shape the agenda item for docketing.

Implementing a 30-day advance summary of agenda items offers several benefits, including increased community engagement, more time for the public to review and understand upcoming issues, and opportunities for focused workshops or discussions. It can also leverage existing online tools without disrupting the current agenda timeline. Considerations for this option such as requiring extended docketing timelines, slower processing of routine items, and the possibility that agenda items may change before the meeting, necessitating the public to understand the preliminary nature of summaries should be taken into account. The web page would have to include a reminder of actual agenda publication dates and clear instructions to check the official agenda. Additionally, protocols would be needed to ensure compliance with the Brown Act, such as prohibiting early commentary from three or more Supervisors.

**SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS**

*Sample Web Page Content*

***Upcoming Board of Supervisors Agenda Items***

*October 21, 2025*

- ***AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR THE PARK PROJECT***
  - *Overview:*
  - *Recommended Action:*
  - *Equity Impact:*
  - *Sustainability Impact:*
  - *Fiscal Impact:*
  - *Feedback Opportunities: [provide links to eComment or other engagement tools]*
- ***APPROVAL OF THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODES FOR AGENCY***
  - ....

*Option: Add a Section in the Board Letter that Describes Community Engagement Efforts for the Agenda Item*

The Board could direct staff to add a section to the Board Letter template that details the community engagement conducted for each agenda item. This could be paired with a policy change that mandates a specific timeframe for such engagement. The change could offer several advantages: it allows for greater flexibility in how departments engage the public, creates a written record summarizing outreach efforts, and maintains the existing timeline for agenda processing without introducing delays.

Considerations for this option include the potential for community members who were unaware of or missed the engagement opportunities might feel excluded from the decision-making process. The proposed policy change may necessitate revisions to Board Policy A-72 to define new engagement standards, though it would not affect the Board of Supervisors' Rules of Procedure.

**Recommendations and Associated Actions**

Implementation of any of the options presented in this Board Letter are recommended to be effective for Board meetings occurring after January 1, 2026. This is in alignment with the Board's process for establishing an annual calendar of its meetings and provides sufficient planning timelines for County staff to prepare items for the Board's consideration and publish and advertise the changes to the Board's processes with the community. It is recommended that the Board consider whether any of the above options would increase accessibility and engagement for San Diego County Board of Supervisors meetings, that the Board provide direction on whether to revise its Board meeting preparation procedures, and that the Board direct the Chief Administrative Officer to return to the Board of Supervisors on September 9, 2025, with any changes to the Board's Rules of Procedures and applicable Board policies to implement the Board's direction.

**SUBJECT:** CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS TO EXTEND THE PUBLISHING  
TIMELINE FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING AGENDAS

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

The proposed action supports the Strategic Initiative of Community Engagement in the County of San Diego's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan by providing information, programs, public forums or other avenues that increase access for individuals or communities to use their voice, their vote, and their experience to impact change.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ebony N. Shelton', written in a cursive style.

EBONY N. SHELTON  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A