

## 250620: Preliminary Survey of SF Bay Area City Council meeting Schedules

### Comments:

The goal of this survey was to determine if cities that are similarly situated with Sunnyvale arrange their meeting schedules to accommodate the personal vacation schedules of the council members or make other arrangements to provide more time off from the frequently scheduled meetings.

This preliminary survey looked at the current published scheduled of city councils, city published budgets and population size.

This survey of city council meeting schedules focused upon SF Bay Area cities because all or nearly all are members of various regional wide administrations such as ABAG, VTA, BART, MTC, AQMD, etc.[see fuller list at end of this memo], and those cities' council members have assignments to participate in several of these regional organizations. Thus, besides the size and scope of each council member's city duties, the council member is also participating in these regional organizations. This may not be as true for more rural California council members or those in other regions of California.

This survey is still collecting data for the expenditures of each city. Financial management is considered a fiduciary responsibility of each council member, so the weight of this responsibility may factor into the need for accommodating personal time-off schedules.

Collecting financial data is challenging because the published reports for each city are not uniform. Most of the data herein has been validated by two sources, but further study, if warranted, should be done to validate all entries.

For example, some finance departments use a "Letter of Transmittal" from the finance department to the city council to provide a 'broad brush' overview of income and expenses. Other jurisdictions only post the budget documents which reflect the methodology used by the jurisdiction – some break income and expense in city-wide categories, while others, like Sunnyvale, match income with the expense – so grant money expenditures are separately accounted from general fund expenditures.

Therefore, some cities only publish to the public expenditures from their general fund, with expenditures from grants somewhat hidden from view. Also, the annually required CAFR – Consolidated Annual Financial Report" is very detailed and very complete but made for the accounting profession, not the general public.

In summary, it appears that meeting schedules are customized for the convenience of the public, rather than for the convenience of the council members. Several of the councils schedule time off for specific dates at the time the annual meeting schedule is published, while others seem to skip meetings ad hoc.

In short, this survey does not provide clear direction to the committee to guide recommendations that would conform to a theoretical best practices.

### Summary information

- 27 Bay area cities were surveyed to determine their city council meeting schedules.
- 21 of the surveyed cities regularly meet two times a month, typically two weeks apart and on the same day of the week each month.
  - 21 cities that meet 2X/month had smaller populations than Sunnyvale.
- 6 cities meet either 3 times a week or weekly.
  - Except for Palo Alto, these 6 cities had a larger population than Sunnyvale.
  - Population size does not correlate with the number of meetings/month
- We recorded the number of council members each city elected and the population of each city. Population size does not strictly relate to meeting frequency
  - Population size ranged from 9,947 to 969,655.
  - The number of elected city council members ranges from 5 to 11.
  - The number of elected city council members did not correlate with city population

City	Scheduled Regular Meetings	Special Meetings	Comment	# of Council Members	Population	Annual Budget
Alameda	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday @ 1900 hrs		Schedule published on city website	5	75,353	\$260M
Belmont	<b>2X/month</b> on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs		Schedule published on city website	5	27,174	\$94M
Berkeley	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays @ 1800 hrs		Schedule published on city website. Special & closed sessions outnumber regular open sessions	9	118,962	\$793M
Burlingame	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mondays @ 1900 hrs		Schedule published on legistar	5	30,317	\$160M
Corte Madera	<b>2x/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays @ 1830 hrs			5	9,947	\$24M
Cupertino	<b>2X/month</b> on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday @ 1845 hrs	Ad Hoc	22 meetings scheduled for calendar 2025	5	57,285	\$147M
<b>Fremont</b>	<b>3X/month</b> on first 3 Tuesdays each month.	Ad Hoc	No meetings in August.	7	226,208	\$423M
Gilroy	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday.		Only 1 meeting in July	7	58,250	\$207M
<b>Hayward</b>	<b>3X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs		May add or cancel meetings on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.	7	162,954	\$417M
Los Altos	<b>2X/month</b> on Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs	Scheduled 1 special meeting each in November & December	Schedule published on city website	5	29,990	\$65M
Menlo Park	<b>2X/month</b> on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesdays @ 1800 hrs	Ad Hoc	Schedule published on city website	5	35,790	\$78M
Milpitas	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs	Tuesdays @ 1730 hrs	Schedule published on city website	5	77,321	\$250M
Morgan Hill	<b>2X/month</b> on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays @ 1800 hrs.	Ad Hoc on 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	Schedule published on city website	5	44,478	\$109M
Mountain View	<b>2X/month</b> on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday @ 1700 hrs	Ad Hoc, with 24 hr notice	Schedule published on legistar	7	81,785	\$649M
Oakland	<b>2X/month</b> on Tuesday @ 1730 hrs	Ad Hoc	Schedule published on city website	8	440,686	\$2.2B

City	Scheduled Regular Meetings	Special Meetings	Comment	# of Council Members	Population	Annual Budget
Palo Alto	3X/month on 1 <sup>st</sup> 3 Mondays of each month @ 1730 hrs	Ad Hoc	Adopted a 5-week summer break in 2024 & 3-week winter break in 2023-2024	7	65,882	\$!B
Redwood City	2X/month on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays @ 1800 hrs	Ad Hoc on 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	Schedule published on city website	7	80,996	\$201M
Richmond	2X/month on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays @ 1530 hrs	Ad Hoc special meetings on other Tuesdays	No meetings in August	7	114,106	\$644M
San Francisco	3X/month @ 1400 hrs		City & County Board of Supervisors	11	808,988	\$16B
San Jose	Weekly on Tuesday at 1330 hrs, unless cancelled	Scheduled evening meetings 2X per month	2025-2026 Calendar has 36 planned regular Tuesday meetings	11	969,655	\$6B
San Carlos	2X/month on 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays @ 1900 hrs	Ad Hoc		5	29,864	\$129M
San Mateo	2X/month @ 1900 hrs	Ad Hoc	3 meetings in 2025 cancelled for holiday observance. Schedule on city website	5	101,327	\$80M
San Rafael	2X/month on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mondays	Ad Hoc study sessions	Schedule published on city website	5	59,555	\$112M
Santa Clara	2X/month on Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs.		Schedule published on legistar	7	131,062	\$2B
Santa Rosa	Usually weekly, at least 2X/month, typically on Tuesday @ 1600 hrs.		Schedule published on legistar	7	175,845	\$554M
Saratoga	2X/month on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays @ 1900 hrs		Schedule published on city website	5	26,607	\$30M
Sunnyvale	2X/month on 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays @ 1900 hrs.		Schedule published on legistar	5	151,967	\$780M

## **Major San Francisco Regional Governmental Organizations**

- **Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)**: Serves as the region's council of governments, focusing on regional planning, collaboration, and providing services to local governments.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)**: Responsible for planning, financing, and coordinating transportation in the Bay Area.
- **Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)**: Works to protect air quality in the region.
- **Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)**: Regulates and plans for the San Francisco Bay and its shoreline.
- **Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC)**: A collaboration of ABAG, MTC, BAAQMD, and BCDC, working together on regional issues.
- **Caltrans (California Department of Transportation)**: Oversees transportation infrastructure and services across the state, including the Bay Area.
- **Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District**: Manages the Golden Gate Bridge and related transportation services.
- **Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain)**: Operates the Caltrain commuter rail service.
- **Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)**: Operates the BART regional rapid transit system.
- **San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA)**: Provides ferry service in the Bay Area.
- **Transbay Joint Powers Authority**: Manages the Salesforce Transit Center.