

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

July 24, 2025

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: SBCCOG Steering Committee

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Audio-Visual System for New Board Room

BACKGROUND

SBCCOG staff has been working with Sharp to develop audio-visual (AV) solutions for the new Board room. Sharp's AV specialist designed a system based on direction from SBCCOG staff which factored in the significantly larger room size as well as comments and feedback received from staff, members of the Board, and guests about the existing AV system over the years in the current office. Two main issues were identified:

- Although the microphones at the Board table are sensitive and pick up voices very well, if the speaker is not sitting at the table, it can be difficult to hear the person speaking when listening online. For example, when staff reports on an item from anywhere except the Board table, virtual participants have a harder time hearing them. The same issue occurs if somebody is providing public comment as well.
- For those participating in-person, it's been a frequent comment that soft-spoken people can be hard to hear within the room.

Sharp's AV specialist was also able to make a site-visit to the new office to verify the initial proposed elements. The new Board room is approximately one and a half times as big as the current space, and the existing issues would only be exacerbated by the larger space. Therefore, Sharp is proposing a system that includes the following:

- Three monitors (two on the long wall, and one on the short wall)
- Two cameras
- Ceiling mounted microphones (for teleconferencing)
- Ceiling mounted speakers
- Wireless microphones for the tables (for in-room sound)
- Control panel
- PC
- Miscellaneous mounts, switches, and devices to manage the integrated system.

Also included in the proposal is system testing after installation as well as staff training.

SBCCOG staff and Sharp believe this system would create a more executive level system that addresses the two main issues described previously. In order to create a system in which there is no feedback or poor-quality audio for those online, an integrated system is necessary. If the two systems – one for teleconferencing and one for in-room audio – are not integrated, those participating online would hear a person's voice going through the in-room audio microphone, coming out through the in-room speakers, going back in through the teleconference

microphones, and then out through their computer speakers. This would create an opportunity for feedback and poor audio quality.

Although there are significant material and labor costs with the proposal (Exhibit 1), the Board room AV system is a significantly more complex system and requires a multi-day installation. Even though it is not a simple plug-and-play installation, it is user-friendly. No additional staff are required to operate the system during meetings.

In addition to working with Sharp, SBCCOG staff surveyed member cities to learn more about systems they use. The cities of El Segundo and Lawndale replied to the survey. SBCCOG staff reviewed the responses and determined that city council chamber systems are significantly different than the SBCCOG's system and serve different needs. For example, council chambers are largely stationary while the SBCCOG's Board room operates more like a multi-purpose space that can be reconfigured based on the specific meeting needs. Additionally, council chamber systems also integrate into cities' streaming platforms (such as city cable channels, YouTube channels, Granicus/agenda management platforms) and require multiple dedicated staff to operate. The SBCCOG's system is simpler in this regard as virtual meetings are recorded via Zoom and the video file is posted to the SBCCOG YouTube page afterwards and does not require integration into any cable networks or agenda management systems.

SBCCOG staff also researched alternatives to Sharp, including the AV company used for General Assembly (GA) needs. The GA vendor does not design/install systems and only provides services to events like the GA. Several other local AV firms provide a similar event-only service. SBCCOG staff submitted requests for quotes from two nationwide AV companies and one local, but did not have satisfactory experiences with any and ultimately did not receive proposals.

SBCCOG staff believes that this one-time investment, although costly at \$68,114.85 plus tax, is a worthwhile investment to make in the new office at the start of the seven-year lease. It would make significant strides towards creating a high-quality experience for the Board, staff, as well as guests attending both in person and virtually. Although the room may not be as large as the shared conference room in the former Western Avenue office building, it will be a major upgrade from the Crenshaw Boulevard space and be much closer in overall experience to the Western Avenue space.

Sharp has supported the SBCCOG's IT and AV needs for several years and has consistently provided quality service and made sound recommendations for equipment and service needs. The price of this new system has not been budgeted; however, SBCCOG staff believes it is an appropriate one-time use to come from the organization's fund balance.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Steering Committee recommend Board approval of the proposal from Sharp for the new AV system at a cost of \$68,115.85 plus tax and that the fund should be removed from the budget fund balance.

Attachment: Exhibit 1 – Sharp AV proposal