

FY 2023-2024 BUDGET QUESTION
Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Communications and Public Information

CBQ NO.: 242

REQUESTED BY: Vela

DATE REQUESTED: 08/07/2023

DATE POSTED: 08/10/2023

REQUEST: How much funding would it be required to have an employee be present and available at every Council meeting (excluding work sessions) to provide Spanish language support to members of the public?

RESPONSE:

The cost for one employee dedicated to serve as a Spanish interpreter for every Council meeting, excluding work sessions, would be \$95,566 in on-going costs and \$1,500 for one-time expenses. This estimate assumes the following:

1. Consecutive Interpretation* would occur during public comment on consent agenda, general public communication at 12pm, and zoning. The employee would also be responsible for providing a brief orientation to speakers so the speakers are comfortable with the process and feel welcome. Duties could also include Sight Reading during public comments.**
2. Interpretation would be limited to interpreting for speakers who prefer to communicate in Spanish to Council.
3. All Spanish speakers would be taken at the beginning of each public comment period, which is the current practice and allows the interpreter to provide service during a concentrated time frame.
4. On days that the employee does not provide interpretation services at a Council meeting, they would be assigned to assist with other CPIO Language Access Program needs.

It is important to note when interpretation is one hour or longer, best practice requires two individuals to interpret. The City should remain ready to utilize existing CPIO Language Access staff or a contracted vendor in the event the employee is sick, on vacation, unable to provide interpretation assistance for a meeting, and if interpretation assistance extends beyond 1 hour.

During FY 2022-23, CPIO received and recently hired an additional position to support language access throughout the City, including providing interpretation and translation services, timelier turnaround during emergency activations, and assisting with training City staff about language access policies and practices. This position could also assist in providing interpretation services for Council meetings.

If we continue the current practice of utilizing vendors under the citywide contract, the estimated cost for 24 City Council Meetings would be up to \$23,040, and assumes the following:

- 2 individuals to interpret one language
- Cost per hour per interpreter ranges between \$35/hr to \$60/hr, depending on the vendor
- 8-hours of interpretation

*In consecutive interpreting, the interpreter starts to interpret after the speaker pauses; thus more time is needed.

**Sight Reading is a hybrid form of interpretation when a written source text is turned into an oral-or signed-target text in another language in real time. The interpreter is expected to render the contents of the written text, often without time for even a cursory reading, at a consistent, fluent pace.