

Mid-Sized City Case Study

How a U.S. City Transformed Civic
Engagement with Real-Time Translation



Case Study

Challenge: Promoting Inclusion Through AI Translation While Overcoming Public Misunderstandings

With a population exceeding 250,000, this fast-growing, culturally diverse city in the Southwest faced a unique challenge: meeting the needs of a multilingual community. Nearly 40% of residents spoke a language other than English at home, with Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese among the most common.

The linguistic diversity posed significant hurdles to ensuring equitable access to civic life. The city previously relied on live interpreters for public meetings, but the approach was costly and inconsistent. It often supported only one or two languages per event and required advance scheduling.

City leaders were in search of a more scalable, tech-based solution that would:

- Be cost-effective and easy to implement
- Support for simultaneous interpretation
- Eliminate the need for special equipment
- Ensure real-time, accurate access to public meetings

Solution: Scalable, Inclusive AI Translation with Wordly

After extensive research and evaluation of available options, city leaders determined that live AI translation offered the most scalable and cost-effective path to improving language access. However, before adopting an AI solution, the city first had to address several key concerns from residents.

Many community members worried that the technology would be difficult to use, require complicated equipment, or feel impersonal, especially to non-English-speaking residents who were already underrepresented in civic life. Others feared AI translation might result in inaccuracies or introduce unintended bias that could distort public discussions. Addressing these perceptions and building public trust was a critical step in ensuring successful adoption.

To address these challenges, the city adopted Wordly, a cloud-based live translation platform that delivers real-time translation in dozens of languages. The solution requires no interpreters, headsets, or complicated setup, making it easy to deploy and accessible for all residents.

With Wordly, attendees at public meetings can instantly access live translations on their own devices simply by scanning a QR code displayed at the venue. There's no need for special apps or downloads. Whether the meeting is held in person, online, or in a hybrid format, Wordly delivers instant, simultaneous translation—enabling full participation for residents in their preferred language. This not only simplified the experience for users but also reinforced the city's commitment to inclusive governance.

Results: Greater Access, Stronger Engagement, and a New Perspective on AI Translation

Wordly was instrumental in making local government more accessible to all residents. The city successfully implemented the government translation solution across 14 city councils and adopted it for all board, commission, and committee meetings. Initial scepticism about AI translation quickly gave way as both residents and city leaders experienced its ease of use, accuracy, and ability to foster greater inclusivity.

Misconceptions Debunked

- **Easy-to-Use:** Early concerns about using AI for translation have faded as residents have come to appreciate the simplicity, accuracy, and inclusiveness of the experience.
- **Increased Participation:** On-demand translation in dozens of languages significantly boosted multilingual participation and engagement in non-English-speaking residents.
- **Cost-Effective and Easy to Use:** The city has reduced its reliance on expensive, hard-to-schedule interpretation.
- **Built Public Trust:** Transparency and trust in local government have grown.
- **Accurate and Customized:** Wordly's custom glossary improves the clarity and consistency in the translation to accurately recognize and translate names, acronyms, and local terminology.
- **Neutral and Unbiased:** Wordly translates exactly what's said, nothing more, nothing less.
- **Real-Time and Lag Free:** The platform handles fast-paced conversations in real time across multiple languages and without lag.

By breaking down long-standing language barriers through real-time translation, the city created a more inclusive environment where residents feel heard, involved, and empowered to participate in decisions that impact their families and neighborhoods. This effort goes beyond translation, it's about ensuring every voice has a place at the table.

Future: Expanding Access Across City Services

An increasing number of cities are using Wordly to break down language barriers, promote civic inclusion, and build a more connected community. They are exploring how to expand the use of AI translation beyond city council meetings to other public service areas, such as public service announcements, town halls, and frontline departments like passport offices.

As a pioneer in real-time multilingual communication since 2019, Wordly continues to partner with forward-thinking cities to create inclusive, accessible experiences for all.

Wordly offers multiple ways to access translation in dozens of languages – on a phone, tablet, or computer. Read transcripts or listen to audio in your preferred language in real-time.



Live Translation + Limitless Integrations

Wordly generates live, translated text and audio for events, webinars, or broadcasts, empowering attendees to engage seamlessly. Integrates with all major meeting platforms. RTMP, iFrame, and APIs available for custom setups.

Multilingual Subtitles

Wordly is known for its best-in-class accuracy and translates English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Japanese, and dozens of other languages to expand accessibility across diverse audiences. Export subtitles, captions, transcripts, and summaries in all relevant formats.

Customizable Display Options

Admins can control font size, text color, and background color for in-room displays, monitors, and third-party caption overlays. Users can control text and background color on their phone, tablet, or computer.

Post-Meeting Support

In addition to real-time features, Wordly helps teams stay compliant with asynchronous support. We offer post-event transcripts, subtitles / caption* files, and summaries – all can be translated and mass exported in seconds.

Wordly's unified solution makes every touchpoint more accessible, engaging, and inclusive across every major language and meeting format. Listen to translated audio; read translated subtitles; read same language captions; access text transcripts and summaries. Wordly does it all for one affordable price.

Whether you're streaming a city council meeting, supporting school events, or having 1-1 customer discussions, Wordly ensures your is accessible to everyone.

In addition to powerful features, high scalability, and ease of use, Wordly has built strong security and privacy protection into our products and processes - including SOC 2 Type II and ISO 27001 compliance - and continuously test and optimize our infrastructure.

Wordly launched in 2019 and is the most trusted **AI translation** and **captioning** tool on the planet

Millions of
Users

60+
Countries

Ready to see Wordly in action?

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