

MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office



DATE: March 29, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
THROUGH: Steve McHarris, Interim City Manager *Steve McHarris*
FROM: Ashwini Kantak, Assistant City Manager
SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Update #4

The health of our employees, residents, and businesses remains the highest priority for the City of Milpitas.

Overview:

The City of Milpitas continues to implement its response regarding the outbreak of the novel coronavirus/COVID-19 disease in Santa Clara County in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health. The previous March 24 Council update discussed new process for public meetings, updates on business assistance from the City, updates from Fire and Police Departments, and the anticipated fiscal impacts of COVID-19.

On March 24, the Council's newly established Economic Development Council Subcommittee met for the first time. Per Council direction, the purpose of this Subcommittee is to explore small-business loans and relief programs. The Subcommittee received a presentation from the City's Director of Finance on the projected impact of the economic slowdown on the City's budget and discussed a preliminary Work Plan regarding small-business loan and relief programs, small business preservation, and other relevant strategies.

Also on March 24, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors [voted to ban](#) all housing and small business evictions across the County due to nonpayment of rent related to the loss of income and medical expenses resulting from COVID-19. The ban on evictions takes effect immediately and lasts through May 31, 2020.

The appeal hearing for the La Quinta hotel project is scheduled for the April 7 Council meeting. The City anticipates a high level of community interest in this item and given the virtual nature of the Council meetings, staff is working to provide clear guidance to the public and the appellant on the procedure for the hearing. Guidance will be publicly available on Monday March 30.

The project appeal was filed with the City on January 27. Per the Milpitas Municipal Code section I-20-5.06, an appeal hearing had to be set within 60 days of the filing of the appeal, which fell on March 27.

The original hearing date was set on March 17, within 60 days of the appeal being filed with the City. However, due to COVID-19 related concerns, and the fact that March 17 was the first day of the County's shelter-in-place order, the appellant was willing to extend the date to April 7. The City Council approved a motion at its meeting on March 17 to continue the hearing until April 7. The appellant is not willing to extend the date any further.

Given the high level of community interest, staff understands the community may have questions about information shared by the project proponents and opponents. All comment letters and e-mails are part of the project record and will be submitted to the Council prior to public hearing(s) as well as made available to the public as part of the Council agenda packet. Any written comments submitted after the agenda packet is posted will be made available to the Council via email immediately prior to the meeting.

City staff are also working with the County and the City of San Jose on the Silicon Valley Strong Initiative, an [Information Memo](#) on this was sent to Council separately on March 28.

This is a rapidly evolving situation that is changing daily. As the lead agency on public health, the County is regularly updating its guidance, which can be viewed [here](#).

Milpitas Response and Preparations:

The City of Milpitas continues to operate at Stage 5 (Extremely High Response) of our Pandemic Management Plan. Operating at Stage 5 translates into the suspension of all non-essential City programs and services, the closure of City facilities, and full activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Our City's response will enable us to fulfill the four priorities of our Pandemic Response Plan:

1. **Protecting Our People:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees.
2. **Continuity of Essential City Operations:** Sustaining delivery of critical City services.
3. **Effective Communication:** Ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with our employees and externally with our community.
4. **Support the Santa Clara County Public Health Department:** Provide resource and communication support to assist the County Public Health Officer, the County, and all our partners in mutual commitment to protect the people of our communities.

Community Partnerships:

On March 26, Summitpointe Golf Club generously donated 1,000 surgical masks and 200 HAZMAT gowns to the Milpitas Police and Fire Departments. The City continues to look for community partners to assist first responders with needed protective equipment, including hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, non-latex gloves, N95 face masks, and simple face masks in their original packaging. All donations can be dropped off at any City Fire Station.

Current Status on City Services and Operations:

All City facilities are closed to the public until further notice. The Office of Emergency Services continues to operate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a full activation level.

- **Public Meetings:** City Council meetings will continue to be set up for Council and required staff to call in. Due to the State's current requirements related to the Brown Act, there will be no public location for gathering and viewing City Council meetings. The public may livestream the meeting on the City's website, Facebook, and Youtube and virtually provide [public comments](#) during the meeting. The majority of Board, Commission, and Committee meetings are cancelled or postponed until further notice. Accommodations are being made to hold any essential meetings virtually.

- **City Employees:** The City is continuing to have employees work in person or remotely on essential services and other City functions. For those employees who are unable to work, the City is providing Temporary Emergency Pay through April 7, 2020.
- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for all in-person service, staff continues to provide permit and plan review services via online, email, website information, telephone, and web conferencing. Building inspection and fire inspection services continue to be available for new housing construction, healthcare-related facilities, and emergency or life safety installations. Please see detailed service options [here](#).
- **Recreation and Community Services:** All Park playgrounds and sport courts are closed to the public until further notice. Information about these closures was posted on the City's Social Media pages and signs are posted at each site. Parks are still available for passive recreation. All community programs and gatherings are cancelled until further notice, including private rentals in city facilities and park picnic areas. The Senior Nutrition Program continues to provide To-Go lunches to seniors. Social distancing measures for the Nutrition Program are being observed. Staff is also coordinating with Milpitas Unified School District to provide information and request services through the Silicon Valley Strong effort.
- **Public Works:** Water, sewer, stormwater, and traffic signal operation services continue to operate at normal levels. Staff also continues to provide maintenance services for facilities, fleet, parks, enhanced cleaning for some City facilities, emergency services for trees and streets, and Underground Service Alert services for construction projects. Staff also continues to work with Milpitas Sanitation to ensure adequate staffing is available for solid waste collection in the City. Public Works staff are also working to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations for all public works services.

Federal Stimulus:

On March 27, President Trump signed the H.R. 748, also known as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ('CARES') Act. The Act is anticipated to provide Federal emergency aid to multiple American private and public agencies, including states and municipalities. Staff is reviewing the Act details and will provide more information to Council shortly on potential implications for Milpitas.

Public Information:

The City will continue to update its [COVID-19 webpage](#) that has been established specifically for information about coronavirus. We will also be providing regular public updates through our social media accounts on Facebook, Nextdoor, and Twitter.