



MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office

DATE: May 15, 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 #12

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 to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease in Santa Clara County in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health. The previous Council update on May 7 discussed updates to the statewide stay-at-home order, COVID-19 testing in Milpitas, the Planning Department's online public forum, the Milpitas Volunteer's Program, and updates from the Recreation and Community Services Department.

On May 12, the State [issued updated guidance](#) for limited personal services industries, including pet grooming, car washes, and landscaping, with adoption of the guidance within jurisdictions being subject to County approval. The State also authorized the reopening of dine-in restaurants and shopping malls in counties that have received State approval to do so. The City will continue to follow the more conservative guidance when there is a conflict between the County and the State, and as such, this new guidance will not change the situation in Milpitas.

Face Covering Required While in Court

Santa Clara County Superior Court has issued an order that everyone, including Court staff and judicial officers, who enter the courthouses must wear a face covering in all public areas of the court and shared workspaces. For more information, read the [Court Order](#) and [Press Release](#) or visit the [Superior Court's COVID-19 response webpage](#).

The County has also issued new testing guidelines and information about testing locations, which is available [here](#). As the lead agency on public health, the County is regularly updating its guidance, which is available in five different languages and can be viewed [here](#). The County also has a [data dashboard](#) that is updated with all the latest information. The City continues to work closely with the County to ensure the safety and security of our community.

Key Updates:

Volunteer Efforts

Milpitas Office of Emergency Services (OES) staff are working on two volunteer programs to assist with the Coronavirus efforts.

The Social Bridging Project is a CalOES program to outreach isolated individuals in vulnerable populations to ensure their needs are being met. Seven (7) Milpitas OES Community Emergency Response Team

(CERT) members have volunteered to be a part of a state of California call bank system that connects volunteers with these populations to provide them with information on housing support, food, medical needs, or just to “lend an ear”.

A second program, the Contact Tracer Program, is being led by the Santa Clara County Operational Area. This effort is intended to interrupt the chain of transmission and slow the spread of the virus by tracking the persons that COVID-19 infected individuals have come into contact with. The County has sent out a [letter](#) requesting volunteers to help with this effort. The County is seeking individuals willing to donate 32-40 hours a week for a 6-12-month period. OES staff will be reaching out to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and Recreation and Community Services staff are also reaching out to the 833 volunteers currently registered in the City’s volunteer database to solicit interest in volunteering.

COVID-19 Mobile Testing

Since Council provided direction on May 5 for staff to move forward with mobile COVID-19 testing, some key milestones have been achieved to enable program start. City EMTs and paramedics have received approval from the County to administer the COVID-19 tests and the process for test certification has also been approved. The City and IGeneX are close to executing an agreement and staff will be starting an initial pilot before coming back to the Council with comprehensive outreach and testing plan. This mobile testing model is intended to ensure local businesses and residents, particularly those most vulnerable, have easier access to testing.

Proposed Budget

At a Special City Council Meeting, City staff [presented the proposed FY20-21 budget](#), along with a three-year fiscal strategy to counter projected revenue losses due to COVID-19. The proposed budget includes a combination of strategies, including implementation of refined budgeting methodologies, reduction of non-personnel expenditures, and delay of non-essential projects. The proposed budget is scheduled for a public hearing and adoption on June 2, 2020.

Employee Self-Check Protocols

City staff has developed a self-check protocol that upholds the safety of all employees. The protocols will only apply to all employees who are regularly coming to work to perform an essential service and may interact with the community or with other employees. Employees will be asked to respond to a questionnaire before entering their worksite as part of this safety protocol, and each department will be responsible to coordinate the process for their respective employees. The self-check protocols are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and are subject to change according to any new CDC guidance.

Drive-Through Food Distribution

On Saturday, May 16, the Second Harvest Food Bank will be opening a new [Drive-Through Food Distribution site](#) at the Milpitas High School. This has been a collaborative effort between the City, Milpitas Unified School District, Second Harvest Food Bank, and volunteers from the Milpitas Food Pantry and other organizations. The operation is expected to distribute food to 500-700 local families in need, with the site open on the first and third Saturdays of each month through August 1. The site reached maximum capacity of volunteers for the first Saturday within 24 hours of putting out a call for assistance.

Community Partnerships

The City has received more donations of personal protective equipment and perishable meals from the Tu Lam Buddhist Temple, Fossa Apparel, Green Thumb Garden Club, Las Vegas Taqueria, Ring, Red Lobster, TeamRubiconUSA and other community members.

The City continues its community partner outreach to provide 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 for first responders can be dropped off at any Milpitas fire station.

Milpitas Assistance Program Update

To serve the many families newly experiencing financial hardship, the Milpitas Assistance Program, which discounts City fees for qualified low-income residents, is accepting applications through June 30. The program currently serves 503 families. In addition, there are currently 86 incomplete MAP applications on file. Staff is working with those customers to help them understand what is needed and submit the required income documents. Some applicants have indicated that they are new to requesting assistance, having recently lost jobs due to the pandemic. To apply online, residents can visit www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov/MAP.

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.

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.

- **City Facilities:** Starting the week of May 11, the public lobby in the police department reopened to the public, with strict protocols. This will increase safety for Records staff, who are able to remain behind a glass shield rather than interact with the public outside of the building. Only four visitors may enter the lobby at a time, and masks and gloves are provided for visitors at the entrance.
- **Public Meetings:** City Council meetings will continue to be set up for Council and required staff to call in. Due to the State's relaxation of the Brown Act, there will be no publicly accessible gathering space arrangements. The public may livestream the meeting on the City's Facebook 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 meeting virtually.
- **City Employees:** The City is continuing to have employees work in person or remotely on essential services and other City functions. City staff has developed a self-check protocol that upholds the safety of all employees. The protocols will apply to all employees who are regularly coming to work to perform an essential service and may interact with the community or with other employees. Each City

Department will be responsible to coordinate the process for their respective employees. The self-check protocols are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and will updated according to any changes to CDC guidance.

- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for all in-person services, staff continues to provide permit and plan review services via email, website information, telephone, and tele or web conferencing. All construction is currently allowed as indicated in the latest Santa Clara County Public Health Order. Construction activities must comply with either the [Small Construction Project Safety Protocol](#) or [Large Construction Project Safety Protocol](#) depending on which category the project is in.
- **Recreation and Community Services:** All Park playgrounds are taped off and closed to the public. All sport courts continue to be closed to the public. 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 Center remains closed for programming. The center offers “to-go” lunches, as a continuation of its Senior Nutrition Lunch Program. Staff continues to make phone calls and assist Milpitas seniors in registering for the Meals on Wheels Programs. Over 130 seniors have signed up through this effort. Staff has also begun signing up seniors for “Friendly Visitor Calls” to those seniors who might feel isolated and in need of social contact during the Shelter In Place order.
- **Other City Services:** 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 that are allowed under the County order. Staff 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. The City has established a virtual Utility Call Center from employees’ homes to ensure continuity of services. Meter reading staff will continue to respond to water service calls and maintain the City’s meter reading schedule.
- **Volunteers:** The City's Milpitas Volunteer Program (MVP) is assisting in recruiting volunteers for various community support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Current volunteer opportunities include sewing face coverings, assisting with food distribution, and contact tracing. There are currently over 800 registered volunteers. To register as a volunteer and receive regular monthly updates on local volunteer needs, [visit our volunteer page](#).

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.