

MEMORANDUM

Office of the City Manager



DATE: September 18, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager *Steve McHarris*

FROM: Ashwini Kantak, Assistant City Manager *Ashwini Kantak*

SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Update #23

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 September 11 discussed updates to the State's "Blueprint for a Safer Economy" (replacing the prior "County Monitoring List") and food distribution.

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:

State Legislation and Funding

On September 17, Governor Gavin Newsom signed two bills as part of his worker protection package. SB 1159 expands access to workers' compensation and makes it easier for first responders, health care workers and people who test positive due to an outbreak at work to get the support they need, including necessary medical care and wage replacement benefits. AB 685 ensures timely notification to employees, their exclusive representative (if applicable), subcontractors and local and state public health officials of possible COVID-19 exposures at workplaces, while guaranteeing confidentiality to the qualifying individual who has COVID-19 or who has been asked to quarantine due to COVID-19. This notification will help workers take necessary precautions such as seeking testing, getting medical help or complying with quarantine directives.

Governor Newsom also announced the first round of awards for Homekey, California's nation-leading \$600 million program to purchase and rehabilitate housing – including hotels, motels, vacant apartment buildings and other properties – and convert them into permanent, long-term housing for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Nearly \$76.5 million was awarded by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), which administers Homekey, for 10 projects in seven California communities totaling 579 units. These projects, and future Homekey awardees, must all complete their purchases by December 30th of this year.

In early August, the County of Santa Clara and affordable housing developer Jamboree Housing Corporation submitted a Homekey application for a proposed project in Milpitas. City staff has been working collaboratively with these partners as well as Destination: Home. The proposed project is to convert the Extended Stay America hotel located at 1000 Hillview Court into a permanent supportive housing facility, providing a safe, effective solution for addressing chronic homelessness. This project did not receive funding in the first round but continues to remain competitive for future award rounds.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the allocation of the remaining \$2B in CARES Act funding for the CDBG program. The allocation focuses funds on communities facing higher risk of eviction. The CDBG-CV3 allocation for the City of Milpitas is \$582,236. City staff are closely tracking development of guidance related to this funding and will provide additional information as it becomes available.

The Governor also recently signed new state bills to help small businesses with economic recovery. The bills include:

- [AB-1577](#) protects business who accepted Paycheck Protection Program loans under the CARES Act from potentially having to pay thousands of dollars in unexpected California state income tax on their forgiven loans. Many Milpitas based small business applied and received funding through the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), AB-1577 would prevent surprise tax bills and ease administrative burdens for local small businesses.
- [SB-1447](#), also known as the Main Street Hiring Tax Credit, allows businesses with 100 or fewer employees to receive a tax credit of \$1,000 per net new hire after July 1, 2020, compared to their workforce in the second quarter of 2020. This credit can be applied against personal and corporate income tax liabilities or sales and use tax liabilities for the 2020 tax year. Eligible small businesses must have experienced a 50% decline in gross receipts between 2020 and 2019 (second quarter). Businesses will have five years to claim the credit and apply it to taxes that they owe. SB-1447 allows Milpitas businesses with 100 or fewer employees who experienced at least a 50% drop in gross receipts due to COVID-19, to receive tax credits for new hires. Businesses have 5 years to use the credit and can apply it to any taxes owed, including sales and use taxes.

County Updates

The County of Santa Clara issued a Healthcare Testing Accountability [Order](#) on September 16, which requires healthcare providers to give COVID-19 tests to people who:

- Have symptoms
- Were exposed to someone who tested positive
- Are referred by Santa Clara County Public Health Department to their healthcare provider for COVID-19 testing
- Are essential workers (includes teachers, healthcare workers, grocery store clerks, and workers in agriculture or food manufacturing)

It is important to note that providers cannot question eligibility for a COVID-19 test, cannot delay testing and must provide results within three calendar days of the test. Also, providers cannot charge directly for the testing.

If anyone has trouble obtaining a COVID-19 test through their healthcare provider, share your concerns at www.scccovidconcerns.org.

As more businesses reopen under the State's "Blueprint for a Safer Economy" residents are encouraged to look for the checkmark dated July 2, 2020 before entering any establishment. The checkmark means that the business is following the Social Distancing Protocol required by the County Order and these include the following:

- Face coverings for employees and customers
- Enforced social distancing
- Handwashing or provide hand sanitizer stations

Santa Clara County continues to be in the Red Tier (Tier 2), which is defined as a substantial risk category per the State's updated framework. The modified tier assignment now allows indoor operations at reduced capacity that are permitted under both State and County Orders. Additionally, schools, personal care services, gyms and fitness centers and shopping malls are now allowed to resume under the State's framework as well as the County's [Risk Reduction Order](#). Businesses and activities must be in compliance with all industry-specific mandatory directives set forth by the County and State, including having a Social Distancing Protocol displayed. Under the County Public Health Order, movie theaters, indoor gatherings, and indoor dining are still not permitted to operate.

COVID-19 Testing

The City of Milpitas halted its mobile testing unit due to the urgent response required by the SCU Lightning Complex fires. Other fires burning across the state have also required deployment of fire personnel from the City of Milpitas. On Monday, September 21 Santa Clara County's Pop-Up COVID-19 Testing returns to the Milpitas Sports Center. Testing is available all day and is intended for people who are not showing symptoms. Testing is free to everyone, with no doctor note required and no impact to immigration status. Those aged 12 and under need parental consent. Per the County's website, those testing positive will receive a call in as soon as 24 hours and no later than four days. Those testing negative are notified by email within five days. The County also operates a fixed testing site at the Milpitas Library, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. For more information about Santa Clara County testing options in Milpitas, visit the County's COVID testing website: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/Pages/covid19-testing.aspx#milpitas>.

Recreation Services

Virtual Programs

The City is debuting a new list of Fall Virtual classes and programs for all ages and abilities. Offerings include fitness, life skills, arts, theatre, and the return of virtual afterschool programs. The popular After the Bell afterschool program is going virtual. This program starts on Monday, September 28th and will run through December 17th. Customers have the option to select programming month by month or sign up for the entire duration. Milpitas Assistance Program (MAP) customers may use their discount toward this program.

The Sports Center is excited to be launching fitness classes through Zoom the week of September 21, 2020 through the Sports Center. We are offering virtual classes, Monday through Saturday throughout the day.

LYFE Online is a program with a similar structure to the Teen Center. It will provide a virtual place for middle school students to drop in and attend workshops, social events, and be a part of virtual clubs. This program will give middle school students a place where they can socialize with friends and be given the platforms and resources to do so.

The Virtual Teen Center will continue providing a series of classes, workshops and resources to the Teens of Milpitas. First up is a Workshop on how to start their own checking and/or savings accounts, provided by Patelco Credit Union on Wednesday September 23rd from 5pm-6pm. Then on Wednesday September 30th from 5pm to 6pm, our Teen Center staff will be presenting our: Volunteer Workshop, covering volunteer opportunities for our high school students to assist them in completing their required community service hours for graduation and/or college applications.

In Person Services and Programs

With the announcement of the State's new COVID-19 Framework, Recreation and Community Services staff began evaluating closed recreation spaces and programs that could potentially open under the Tier 2 directives. The following areas and programs were identified and have been scheduled to re-open under the approved directives and acceptable protocols of the State or County (whichever is stricter):

- Park Playgrounds – Opening Monday, September 28
- Milpitas Sports Center Pools – Opening Thursday, October 1
- Outdoor Fitness Classes – Beginning Monday, October 12

In preparation for reopening, outdoor public signage will be updated, as well as notification to the public on the change of services and amenities via the City's website, social media accounts, and Recreation and Community Services customer emails.

Community Partnerships

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 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.

- **Police Department Public Lobby:** The Milpitas Police Department lobby is open during business hours, 8 AM to 5 PM. Supplemental safety measures are in place to ensure the safety of our staff and visitors. Community members can contact the non-emergency number (408-586-2400) for any further questions.
- **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 [Website](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube channel](#), as well as 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 enables the safety of all employees. The protocols 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 is 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 be updated according to any changes to CDC guidance.
- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for 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 in Santa Clara County. However, construction activities must implement mandatory risk reduction measures and comply with the [Mandatory Directive for Construction Projects](#). For detailed City service descriptions, refer to the latest [Permit Center and Inspection Services Information Flyer](#).
- **Recreation and Community Services:** All community programs and gatherings remain 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.
- **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) continues to recruit volunteers for various community support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members looking to register as a volunteer and receive regular monthly updates on local volunteer needs can [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.