



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

MEETING DATE: 3/16/2020
SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
SUBMITTED BY: Oliver Chi, City Manager
PREPARED BY: Scott M. Haberle, Fire Chief
SUBJECT: Request for Approval of COVID-19 Response Plan

Statement of Issue:

The Federal Government has communicated that the time for trying to contain the COVID-19 virus (also referred to as the *Coronavirus*) has passed, and that our efforts now should be directed towards mitigating transmission of the disease. Of note, the mitigation effort are important because large scale transmission of the coronavirus among the populations most vulnerable to COVID-19 (the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions) could overtax and overrun our health care system.

Given the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 situation, there are no currently developed plans or best practices to help guide the overall policy response. In an effort to ensure that we are HB Ready in Surf City to address the evolving pandemic, City staff has developed a proposed COVID-19 Response Plan framework for City Council consideration. This policy document, shown as Attachment 1, is recommended for approval to guide our activities in the coming weeks and months.

Financial Impact:

Staff has been closely monitoring and tracking the fiscal impacts associated with the COVID-19 situation. Previously, we had been projecting that the City would end FY 2019/20 with a \$4.7 million surplus. However, given the dramatic economic impacts we've seen in response to the coronavirus situation, we've been consistently updating our fiscal projections.

Based on the most recent information available, we are projecting a significant decrease in TOT revenues, along with modest reductions in Sales Tax and Charges for Services.

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| ▪ Transient Occupancy Tax Decrease – | \$2.5 - \$3.0 Million |
| ▪ Sales Tax / Charges for Service Decrease – | \$1.0 - \$1.5 Million |
| ▪ TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUE DECREASE: | \$3.5 - \$4.5 Million |

At the staff level, we are still working to refine our estimates, and will have more detailed projections available within the next month. However, at this point in time, based on worst-case scenario projections, we do anticipate being able to finish FY 2019/20 with a balanced budget. To help facilitate that reality, we are currently developing financial response measures, the most significant of which involves holding non-essential vacant positions open (there are currently 65.5 vacant FTE positions in the City). This will be an important measure, especially given the lack of clarity as it relates to the current state of our economy.

Recommended Action:

Approve the attached COVID-19 Response Plan to minimize the risk of transmission of this virus.

Alternative Action(s):

Do not approve the COVID-19 Response Plan and direct staff accordingly.

Analysis:

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. A pandemic is a disease that is spreading in multiple countries around the world at the same time. They also called on governments to take urgent and aggressive action to suppress and control the spread of this disease.

The federal government has also determined that the time for containment of this virus is past, and an emphasis must now be placed on mitigating the transmission of the disease. The mitigation effort is critical because large scale transmission of COVID-19 among the populations at risk to this virus could overtax and overrun our existing health care system. The vulnerable population includes the elderly and those whose health is compromised.

In order to decrease the prevalence of this disease across California, the State has issued new guidance, directing Californians to implement aggressive strategies to address the current situation. On March 2, 2020, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an emergency declaration and heightened training of health care providers and first responders as they prepare for a potential increase of COVID-19 patients.

Given the unprecedented and evolving nature of the current situation, City staff have developed a local COVID-19 Response Plan. It includes three phases, with detailed response protocols in each stage. A summary of the plan includes:

▪ **Phase I Response – Preparedness**

○ ***Threshold for enacting Phase I response***

- The County of Orange declares a local state of emergency in the county

○ ***Key Phase I response protocols***

- Activate the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to Level III
- Implement cleaning/sanitation/safety protocols at all City facilities
- Increase public education and outreach efforts, especially to the most vulnerable, high-risk communities
- Establish and deploy a public information strategy
- Review, develop, and update plans to account for reduction in available City personnel
- Cancel all large gatherings/events that involve more than 250 people
- For parts of the organization that serve high-risk populations, cancel any gathering/event/program that gathers more than 10 people

▪ **Phase II Response – Minimal to Moderate Community Transmission**

- ***Threshold for enacting Phase II response***
 - Federal, State, or County governments change in declaration
 - Community transition of COVID-19 in Orange County
- ***Key Phase II response protocols***
 - All Phase I protocols stay in place
 - City Council declares a local emergency
 - Activate EOC to Level II, establish unified command
 - Close all non-essential recreational City services
 - No City special events with more than 50 people

▪ **Phase III Response – Substantial Community Transmission**

- ***Threshold for enacting Phase III response***
 - Increased community transmission in Orange County
 - Community transmission cases in Huntington Beach
- ***Key Phase III response protocols***
 - All Phase I & II protocols stay in place
 - Activate EOC to Level I
 - Close all non-essential City facilities. The Police Department, Fire Department, Water, Sewer, and certain backend functions in the Finance Department, Information Systems and Administration would be operational
 - Cancel all contract classes and close all recreational centers
 - Cancel all City Council, commission, and community support meetings

Based on the pace of the current situation, City staff has identified and implemented the majority of the protocols in the Phase I Response described above. The COVID-19 situation is quickly changing and updates will be provided moving ahead.

City Council approval of the COVID-19 Response Plan is requested.

Environmental Status:

None.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Enhance and modernize public safety service delivery.

Attachment(s):

1. COVID-19 Response Plan