



City of Rialto

Legislation Text

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For City Council Meeting [May 26, 2020]

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

APPROVAL: Rod Foster, City Manager

FROM: Sean Grayson, Fire Chief

Request City Council to 1) Receive an Update on and Confirm the Continued Existence of a Local Emergency Throughout the City of Rialto in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak; and 2) Approve the City Reopening Plan Including Transition Dates, Event Scheduling, Employee and Customer Service Safety Practices, and City Council Meeting Processes.

BACKGROUND

On March 12, 2020 the City Council adopted Resolution 7600 declaring a local emergency in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. In the action staff indicated that the item would be brought back to the City Council for updates at each City Council meeting for the duration of the local emergency. The City Council received an update on and approved continuation of the local emergency on March 24, 2020; April 14, 2020; and May 12, 2020. In the April 14, 2020 action the City Council confirmed the continued closure of City facilities to the public through May 31, 2020 and the cancellation of all City events through the end of fiscal year 2019/2020 June 30, 2020. The City Council also provided direction with regard to follow-up action with grocery stores for COVID-19 safety.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION

On March 16, 2020 the City of Rialto cancelled all City events and activities and closed all City facilities to the public. City facilities remain open to provide services via phone, email, fax and scheduled meetings through means other than face-to-face.

Since the City's declaration of a local emergency and actions on March 16, 2020 there have been significant directives from the State of California and the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health. Effective March 18, 2020 the County of San Bernardino Health Officer ordered the cancellation of gatherings of any number of people within the County through at least April 6, 2020. The order also requires the closure of all movie theaters, gyms, health clubs, bars, adult entertainment establishments, and other businesses that serve alcohol but do not serve food. Food and beverage establishments must follow guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health that requires restaurants to be closed for dining and open only to drive-through, pick-up and delivery.

On March 19, 2020 California Governor Gavin Newsom issued a Stay-At-Home order for all of California. This order limited the continued operations of businesses and entities to those that are critical infrastructure as defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. After the order the

City made modifications to the work environment, has provided work from home assignments and moved to a platoon staffing model rotating personnel weekly outside of police, fire and public works field which maintain normal staffing and operations.

Effective May 8, 2020 San Bernardino County rescinded their previous COVID-19 orders and put in place regulations supportive of the State of California Roadmap to Modify the Stay At Home Order and the Governor's actions for the State to enter early Stage 2 reopening. In this stage manufacturing and logistics sectors can reopen as can most retail by curbside pick-up and offices that cannot telecommute. All businesses that can reopen are subject to modifications to the work and/or customer service environment to account for social distancing and other measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Based upon direction at the April 14, 2020 City Council meeting staff has visited all grocery stores within the City and shared standards previously communicated through the Community Development Department as well as presented the City's expectations for facility, staff, and patron safety related to COVID-19. Relevant enforceable standards from the State of California and County of San Bernardino as well as City of Rialto best practices were promulgated to help ensure continued social distancing practices, capacity limitations, employee safety procedures, and patron safety procedures in grocery stores. On May 12, 2020 the City Council adopted a Resolution Urging Employers to Implement Protective Measures for Grocery and Pharmaceutical Workers and Members of the Community.

The reopening timeline bridges the current and next fiscal year and the closest holiday event is the Fourth of July. Most cities in San Bernardino County have already cancelled their Fourth of July events and fireworks shows. The County of San Bernardino is evaluating the potential for a regional fireworks show which the City of Rialto may have the opportunity to participate in. No City in the County that allows the sale of Safe and Sane fireworks has taken action to prohibit sales this year.

City Reopening Recommendations

As more sectors open, City staff have evaluated the current facility closures and staff measures. All recommendations assume there are no changes in directives or orders from relevant health authorities. Modifications to the reopening plan may be authorized by the Director of Emergency Services or the City Council at a later date. These are recommendations for a stepwise citywide reopening:

Dates for Reopening

- Effective June 1, 2020 most City of Rialto employees will return to their pre-COVID-19 schedule. The platoon staffing configuration and work from home assignments will be discontinued with the exception of high risk employees (by age or other underlying health condition) which may result in a working from home status until at least July 1, 2020.
- Effective June 29, 2020 City of Rialto facilities other than those under Community Services will reopen to the public with modifications to employee and customer service safety practices in place. Community Services Administrative Offices at 214 N. Palm Avenue will reopen with other city facilities while the Rialto Community Center, Grace Vargas Senior Center, Fitness & Aquatic Center and Tom Sawyer Swimming Pool will be scheduled for a future reopening timeline.
- Protective barriers will be installed by Public Works staff beginning the week of May 25, 2020

and completed prior to opening of any customer service environment.

- HEPA filters will be installed by Public Works staff beginning the week of June 1, 2020 beginning with Council Chambers with all other buildings to follow.

Employee Safety Practices

- Masks will be required at all times by all employees except for reasonable practices (e.g. masks may be removed when eating or drinking as long a social distancing is adhered to).
- Social distancing among employees will be maintained including adherence to existing separation of work areas.
- Routine janitorial and scheduled deep cleaning sanitization will be continued.
- HEPA filters will be installed for in-building heating and air conditioning systems.
- Established practices to keep sick employees home will be maintained.

Customer Service Safety Practices

- Plexiglass barriers will be placed between employees and customers in designated facilities. Interaction with the public will be handled through these barriers and include distance maintained between the barriers.
- Social distancing practices will be in place for customers including signage (**Exhibit A**), floor marking and modification of maximum occupancy of the customer service area.
- Customers will be required to wear face covering when entering City buildings or conducting business with City employees.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be provided in designated locations.
- The current elimination of public restroom access at City facilities will be maintained.
- All services remain available by phone, fax, email or other means that may allow customers or the public to avoid travel to City facilities.

City Events

- All City events through August 31, 2020 will be cancelled and/or rescheduled.
- The City's regular fireworks celebration 4th of July event at Jerry Eaves Park will be cancelled in 2020 and a parade or other socially distanced celebration will be scheduled in lieu of the fireworks show.
- Safe and Sane fireworks sales will be allowed in the City per the municipal code restrictions with additional social distancing and sale protective measures required at each fireworks stand location.
- The City will plan for a hybrid September 11, 2020 event with in-person presentation to a socially distanced audience.
- The City will plan for the first full in-person gathering event to be National Night Out on October 6, 2020 which is rescheduled from August as recommended by the national group.

The following are department/division specific recommendations unique to their services provided to the community:

City Council

- City Council meeting scheduling and process will be amended beginning with the June 9, 2020 meeting. Pending approval of this item, the City Council would return for in-person meetings with social distancing among elected officials and staff. Public comment opportunities will be afforded from the public podium in the City Hall lobby facing the Council

Chambers. City Clerk staff will be in the lobby to assist with each speaker after they speak at the podium, by cleaning with sanitizing wipes. **(Exhibit B)**

City Manager's Office / Council Chambers

- With the exception of the public counter in the lobby, all portions of the City Manager's Office / Council Chambers will remain closed to the public.

City Clerk's Office

- Passport Services will be offered only by appointment to decrease overcrowding.
- Other Services will continue as normal with changes to the customer service desk.
- Farmers Market will continue practicing social distancing and require face coverings and other customer safety practices already in place.

Finance / Treasurer's Office

- All services remain available by phone, fax, and email that may allow customers to avoid having to come to the Finance/Treasury Building.

Cemetery

- Burials and funeral / memorial activities will resume and comply with the guidelines established by the County of San Bernardino to provide for social distancing.

Community Compliance

- Customer activities will continue to be performed at City Hall with scheduled appointments available to reduce occupancy and travel for customers.

Community Development

- All permitting services will remain available electronically to provide customers the option to conduct business remotely.

Community Services

- City parks, including parking lots at City parks will open to the public with select amenities remaining closed including play equipment and restrooms.
- The Rialto Community Center, Grace Vargas Senior Center, Fitness & Aquatic Center and Tom Sawyer Swimming Pool will remain closed to the public for routine operations. Modified activities such as curbside food programs and cooling centers will continue with social distancing and other in-place protections.
- In-person programming will remain closed.
- Community Services will offer expanded television, online, and other than in-person programming.

Fire Department

- Enhanced Personal Protective Equipment for responses will remain in effect.
- Temperature monitoring and surveillance will remain in place.
- Decontamination procedures will remain in place in each station.
- Fire stations will remain closed to the public to ensure safety and welfare of personnel and the public.
- The common entrance to Administration and Fire Station 201 will be modified to limit traffic to fire personnel only.
- Residential apartment inspections have been completed for fiscal year 2020. Fiscal year 2021 inspections will be assessed after the completion of second phase weed abatement inspections.
- All other on-site inspections will resume unless social distancing cannot be accomplished on site.
- Other than face-to-face inspections (e.g. FaceTime, Zoom, Skype) may continue where applicable to the project or specific inspection.

- Weed abated notification and inspections have occurred under the normal timeline. Abatement will be altered to focus on high risk areas and may include fire use (burn away the vegetation), contract services, or other means to expedite compliance.

Human Resources / Risk Management

- Modification to recruitment processes to allow for social distancing will continue.

Police Department

- Enhanced Personal Protective Equipment for responses will remain in effect.
- Temperature monitoring and surveillance will remain in place.
- Decontamination procedures will remain in place.
- Area command meetings will be rescheduled to allow for social distancing and other protective measures.

Public Works

- Teleconferencing and web-based meetings will continue.
- Electronic submittals will continue for encroachment permit applications.
- Public works will establish rotations for servicing of HEPA filtration and sanitizer stations in City facilities and continue janitorial and deep cleaning services.

Rialto Water Services (Water / Wastewater)

- Online and telephone customer service will remain available.

Continue the Local Emergency

The number of COVID-19 cases and deaths has continued to grow throughout the world. Additional cases are reported daily in California and San Bernardino County specifically with cases reported in Rialto. The increased number of cases and compliance with state and county orders have generated citywide impacts including: the closure to all City facilities to the public, the closure of specific City facilities and their related programs and services, the closure of a variety of businesses, the closure of County facilities and resources within the City, limitations on access to county and state resources including the closure of County courts. With increasing cases and profound impacts on the community a local emergency still exists in Rialto in response to COVID-19.

Staff recommends maintenance of the local emergency declaration without modification and that the City Council adopt all presented reopening activities which principally include:

- The return of City staff to normal work scheduling on June 1, 2020 to accommodate increased customer service capability and continued modification of the work environment.
- The reopening of most customer service facilities in the City on June 29, 2020.
- The implementation of Employee and Customer Service Safety Practices.
- The cancellation / rescheduling of City Events through the summer and planned reintroduction of events in the fall.
- Modification to the processes to conduct City Council meetings beginning June 9, 2020 for modified in-person attendance of the City Council in coordination with the City Clerk.
- Future expansion of reopening to be authorized by the City Council, or Director of Emergency Service where appropriate, aligned with the State of California Reopening Stages, and the County of San Bernardino Recovery and Resiliency Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The requested City Council action is not a "Project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to Section 15378(a), a "Project" means the whole of an action, which

has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. According to Section 15378(b), a Project does not include: (5) Organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

The requested action is consistent with General Plan goals 5.7 “Maintain a high level of emergency response capability” and 5.8 “Provide effective and comprehensive policing services that meet the safety needs of Rialto.”

LEGAL REVIEW

The City Attorney reviewed and supports this staff report.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The financial impact remains unknown at this time. Expenditures related to the event to date have been accomplished within existing purchase orders and the City Manager’s authority and have been attributed as an event expenditure.

Any additional expenditures using the Director of Emergency Services authority under the local emergency will be presented in subsequent reports to the City Council for the duration of the local emergency.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council:

- Receive the update on and confirm the continued existence of a local emergency throughout the City of Rialto in response to the COVID-19 outbreak; and
- Approve the City Reopening Plan including transition dates, event scheduling, employee and customer service safety practices, and City Council Meeting processes.