



## CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council                      **DATE:** August 24, 2020  
**FROM:** Matthew Bronson, City Manager/Emergency Services Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Matthew Bronson, City Manager/Emergency Services Director  
**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Response Update and Approval of Continuation of  
Emergency Declaration

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive information on the updated response to the COVID-19 pandemic and approve the continuation of the City's local emergency declaration.

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### **BACKGROUND**

The City continues its work in addressing the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic following the direction of the County Public Health Department in coordination with other local agencies. The following is an update on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the county as well as the City's continued response since the last Council meeting on July 20. This update is provided for the Council's information and staff can address questions that the Council may have.

#### **Countywide Status**

As of August 19, San Luis Obispo County has 2,579 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 14 current hospitalizations and 408 individuals at home and 2,131 individuals recovered (approximately 82%). The number of confirmed cases has more than doubled over the past month though the number of hospitalizations has remained relatively constant. Surrounding counties continue to have significantly more cases including Monterey (6,662), Santa Barbara (7,481), Kern (26,968), and Kings (3,487). Just under half (1,198) of the confirmed cases in this county are in North County with 667 in Paso Robles and 531 in Atascadero, Templeton, and elsewhere. In South County, there has been a total of 725 confirmed cases with 294 in Nipomo, 173 in Arroyo Grande, 122 in Grover Beach, 85 in Oceano, and 49 in Pismo Beach. The County continues to operate a testing site in Grover Beach with an average of 100 tests conducted daily. There has continued to be a significant increase in the number of cases countywide in recent weeks which has coincided with an increase in cases statewide. This increase has also been seen in Grover Beach as our case numbers have more than doubled over the past month with a higher per capita case rate per 10,000 residents (82) than neighboring Pismo Beach (59) and Arroyo Grande (56).

Overall, California remains in early Stage 2 of the State's Resilience Roadmap for reopening businesses and activities on a statewide basis using a four-stage approach with related industry sector guidelines. The County has information about the Resilience Roadmap including the businesses allowed to operate posted on the [Ready SLO website](#). On July 13, the State issued a statewide order that closed indoor business operations for restaurants, wineries and tasting rooms, movie theaters, and other categories and closed all indoor and outdoor operations at bars, brewpubs, and breweries. Further, the State issued an order with further closures of indoor uses

or activities for counties on a “monitoring list” including San Luis Obispo County given the case numbers in these particular counties. These additional closures include gyms and fitness centers, places of worship, protests, offices for non-essential sectors, personal care services, hair salons and barbershops, and malls along with schools. SLO County is currently one of 40 counties on the State’s monitoring list and counties can be removed from the list if the county falls under the required threshold for the required public health metrics including a 14-day rolling average of a case rate of less than 100 per 100,000 population. Three counties have been removed from the monitoring list since August 14 with more counties hopefully to follow shortly.

The City is monitoring these trends carefully and working with the County and other local agencies. County Public Health continues its work in serving as the lead enforcement agency countywide including carrying periodic inspections to ensure that businesses comply with State guidance. The City continues to provide active enforcement of this guidance primarily through the Code Compliance Officer along with Police resources as needed. The City remains committed to helping achieve community compliance with State and local orders focused on education and awareness with enforcement action as a last resort if other steps are not successful. This approach includes frequent communications through social media and other platforms to inform the community of public health guidance and encourage compliance. Staff’s assessment continues to be that businesses overall are complying with the public health requirements including the updated face coverings urgency ordinance that mirrors the State’s guidance mandating face coverings usage in high risk environments including indoor public spaces.

Staff is also implementing the Council’s direction provided at the July 27<sup>th</sup> special meeting to help businesses affected by the State order to use outdoor spaces and to date the City has approved 15 temporary use permits for outdoor business use and set up an outdoor dining parklet on West Grand Avenue near 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Council also allocated up to \$50,000 in CARES Act funding to assist businesses in this transition to outdoor spaces such as funding safety rails for parklets and matching grants for constructing permanent outdoor spaces on private property. Staff does not believe that this entire amount will be needed and thus is intending to use \$15,000 of this allocation along with the remaining \$110,000 in the CARES Act funding for \$125,000 in funds for a second round of business microgrants. This second round of microgrants is proposed to be up to \$5,000 rather than up to \$10,000 as in the first round to increase the number of business who may receive funds. The City would again work with the Chamber on the application and review process for local businesses to apply for these grants based on demonstrated need and usage.

### **City Response Update**

The City continues to provide services to our community in accordance with the statewide “stay at home” order and public health guidelines though City facilities including City Hall and Community Centers remain closed to public access. Given the current case numbers, City employees are working predominantly remotely as was done this spring while the City continues to provide services for the public. The public can continue to call the City’s main telephone line at (805) 473-4550 or send an email to [cityhall@groverbeach.org](mailto:cityhall@groverbeach.org) to ask questions or get more information about the City’s response or services during this time. Though the City’s sports courts and skate park are open under distancing requirements, playgrounds remain closed as playgrounds are not yet allowed to be open by the State. Staff is working with fitness instructors on providing outdoor fitness classes at City parks with a goal of beginning these classes in September. Also given the current case numbers, there is no specified timeframe for resuming public access to City facilities including the public counter at City Hall, in-person Council and Commission meetings, and walk-in visits to the Police Station and Community Center.

With regards to parks and recreation facilities and services, the Ramona and Community Centers will reopen for use when allowed by the State though limited to groups of no more than 10 people with the Tiny Tots preschool program reopening as a childcare facility at some point under public health guidelines for day care facilities. The City canceled the Sizzlin' Summer Concert Series and will likely cancel fall and winter events as well given the expected continued limitations on community gatherings. The City will provide ample communication in advance about these potential cancellations.

Lastly, staff is seeking the continuation of the local emergency declaration (shown in Attachment 1) which was previously extended for 60 days at the July 6<sup>th</sup> Council meeting with an expiration before the next Council meeting on September 21. The action at this time is to approve the need for continuing the local emergency declaration without specifying an expiration which would then allow the declaration to automatically be continued until the Council takes action to terminate it. Continuing the declaration is beneficial in enabling the City to seek reimbursement of COVID-19-related costs and coordinate City resources for any immediate issues that arise during the reopening process. Similar declarations remain in place at both the State and County levels and in other cities. Staff will continue to review the COVID-19 situation through this status report at each Council meeting and bring a recommended termination of the emergency declaration at the appropriate time.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact from this item.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The City Council has the following alternatives to consider:

1. Receive information on the updated response to the COVID-19 pandemic and approve the continuation of the City's local emergency declaration; or
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Local Emergency Declaration

**DECLARATION OF THE EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY  
CITY OF GROVER BEACH  
March 16, 2020**

**Whereas**, Grover Beach Municipal Code Article 5, Chapter 3, section 5034(A)(1) empowers the City Manager, acting as the Director of Emergency Services, to proclaim a local emergency when the existence or threatened existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons or property within the City exists and the City Council is not in session; and

**Whereas**, the City Manager, as Director of Emergency Services of the City of Grover Beach, does hereby find that:

1. Threatened existence of conditions of extreme peril to the health and safety of persons in Grover Beach could result from the increasing spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) across the state; and
2. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed numerous cases of individuals who have severe respiratory illness caused by COVID-19 as well as deaths caused by this illness; and
3. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic; and
4. On March 4, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency to make additional resources available, formalize emergency actions already underway across multiple state agencies and departments, and help the state prepare for broader spread of COVID-19; and
5. On March 13, 2020, the County San Luis Obispo County Health Officer declared a public health emergency and the County Emergency Services Director proclaimed a local emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
6. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
7. The declaration of a local emergency will assist in a coordinated public health response to reduce transmission and illness severity, provide assistance to health care providers, coordinate and mitigate public services that may be disrupted from this emergency, enable reimbursement of related City costs, and mitigate any other effects of this emergency on the citizens of the City of Grover Beach; and
8. Under California Government Code section 8630(b) and Grover Beach Municipal Code Article 5, Chapter 3, Section 5304(A)(1), a declaration of local emergency must be ratified by the City Council of Grover Beach within seven (7) days to remain in effect.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DECLARED**, that a local emergency now exists throughout the City of Grover Beach; and

**IT IS FURTHER DECLARED AND ORDERED** that during the existence of said local emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the emergency organization of the City of Grover Beach shall be those prescribed by state law, by ordinances and resolutions of the City of Grover Beach and that this emergency declaration shall expire in seven (7) days after issuance unless confirmed and ratified by the City Council of the City of Grover Beach.

March 16, 2020



MATTHEW BRONSON  
City Manager/Director of Emergency Services

**APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:**



DAVID P. HALE  
City Attorney