



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council **DATE:** June 28, 2021
FROM: Matthew Bronson, City Manager
PREPARED BY: Matthew Bronson, City Manager
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Response Update

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update on the countywide and City response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 regular Council meeting on June 14. Staff would note that this is the final regular COVID-19 status update report planned for distribution at each Council meeting given the waning nature of the pandemic. Staff will bring future items related to COVID-19 to the Council on an as-needed basis.

Countywide Status

As of June 22, San Luis Obispo County has 21,448 confirmed COVID-19 cases with four current hospitalizations and 27 individuals at home and 21,156 individuals recovered (approximately 99%). This is only a 0.2% increase in cases over the past three weeks and a 30% decrease in the number of active cases. These numbers continue the positive trends in case numbers and as a reference, there were approximately 3,500 active cases at the peak of the holiday surge in mid-January compared with 31 currently. Approximately 38% (8,075) of the confirmed cases in this county are in North County with 4,204 in Paso Robles and 3,871 in Atascadero, Templeton, and elsewhere. Approximately 33% (7,113) of cases are in the central part of the county with the vast majority (4,045) in San Luis Obispo.

In South County, there has been a total of 5,021 confirmed cases (approximately 23% of countywide cases) with 1,507 in Arroyo Grande, 1,586 in Nipomo, 890 in Grover Beach, 693 in Oceano, and 345 in Pismo Beach. Case numbers in Grover Beach per 1,000 residents (65) continue to be lower than Arroyo Grande (83) and Oceano (96) though higher than Pismo Beach (42). There has also only been an increase of three cases in Grover Beach over the past two weeks similar to the countywide trends in case numbers.

As the Council is aware, the State used an approach called the *Blueprint for a Safer Economy* for much of the past year to determine what businesses can and cannot open safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every county was assigned to a tier based on its test positivity and adjusted case rate and counties were moved to less or more restrictive tiers based on changing metrics including a "health equity" metric for census tracts with lower health conditions that must be met to move to a less restrictive tier. However, on June 15, the State ended the *Blueprint* tiers and

lifted remaining restrictions for businesses and other activities including the face coverings mandate. These changes include allowing fully vaccinated employees at workplaces including City facilities to not wear a face covering if they choose based on a self-attestation by employees. With these restrictions lifted, the City has effectively ended its code compliance efforts in helping achieve community compliance with State and local orders. The City continues to promote the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine as the vaccine has been instrumental in bringing the pandemic to a close in our county and throughout California. As of now, 56% of eligible individuals in zip code 93433 (which comprises Grover Beach) has received at least one dose of the vaccine with 48% fully vaccinated.

Business Assistance Update

The City continues to work with the South County Chambers of Commerce on the “#BuyLocal” gift card program launched on February 10 to support businesses in the continued economic recovery from COVID-19. The City committed to providing up to \$50,000 to purchase gift cards to participating Grover Beach businesses given to customers who spend at least \$100 at a retailer, restaurant, or other business within the city and submit receipts to the Chamber. There are 28 businesses participating in this program with the list of businesses available on the Chamber’s website where people can submit receipts ([Grover Beach #BuyLocal Program \(jotform.com\)](http://groverbeachchamber.com/jotform.com)). As of June 22, there have been 1,678 individual receipts submitted representing approximately \$166,500 in customer spending. Counting the \$41,625 spent to date purchasing gift cards at participating businesses, there has been approximately \$208,125 in additional spending at local businesses since the program began. The #BuyLocal program continues to provide significant economic benefit by incentivizing customer spending at local businesses by residents and visitors. The City and Chamber plan to continue this program through July 31 using available funds with a goal of generating at least \$250,000 in additional spending at local businesses.

City Response Update

Lastly, the City continues to provide services to our community in accordance with statewide orders and public health guidelines. Public access to City Hall was reopened on May 24 with limited hours initially of 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. These hours were expanded beginning June 21 to 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. City employees continue to work both remotely and in the office for the time being based on work responsibilities and family/childcare needs. The public can contact the City at (805) 473-4550 or cityhall@groverbeach.org or through specific City departments to ask questions or get more information about City services or projects. The first in-person Council meeting will be held on July 26 with a continued ability for the public to call in with comments along with providing comments in person at the meeting. Future Commission meetings will also be in person following this July 26th Council meeting.

Lastly, the City is resuming special events this year starting with the recent “Paint and Play with Mom” event in May following COVID protocols. The summer concert series will resume at Ramona Park on July 4 and consist of six concerts in July and August with applicable COVID protocols for special events. Future events this summer and fall will be announced at a later date.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

ALTERNATIVES

The Council has the following alternatives to consider:

1. Receive an update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic; or
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.