

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS
AGENDA ITEM
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: Mayor and Council

AGENDA DATE: May 12, 2020

CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER: Representative Cassandra Hernandez 212.0003
Representative Alexandra Annello 212.0002
Representative Peter Svarzbein 212.0001

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:

STRATEGIC GOAL:
Goal - Set the Standard for

SUBJECT:

**APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what?
Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.**

Discussion and Action on adopting Resolution regarding COVID-19 policy directives

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:

Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?

Resolution describes entire action

PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:

Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

Yes, discussion regarding COVID-19 by City Manager

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

How will this item be funded? Has the item been budgeted? If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

*****REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION*****

DEPARTMENT HEAD:

(If Department Head Summary Form is initiated by Purchasing, client department should sign also)

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020 the Mayor issued a Local Emergency Directive, more commonly known as the “Work Safe, Stay Home” Directive; and

WHEREAS, the County Judge and the Mayor of El Paso have repeatedly urged El Pasoans to follow social distancing and CDC guidelines;

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2020 Congresswoman Veronica Escobar and Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top expert on infectious diseases, discussed El Paso as a vulnerable community in regards to spreading the Coronavirus;

WHEREAS, Dr. Fauci stated minority communities, such as El Paso, have been disproportionately impacted and based on our underlying health and socio-economic conditions of population, El Paso is a high risk community;

WHEREAS, concerns over reopening Texas prematurely is concerning to experts in the White House, especially in El Paso where virus testing rates are low, while number of cases and hospitalization are currently on the rise;

WHEREAS, the recommendation from Dr. Fauci is to significantly increase testing and contact tracing;

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso has increased testing to all residents with COVID-19 related symptoms at our local drive through testing site;

WHEREAS, the federal government has opened up additional testing sites for symptomatic patients and health workers, in a partnership with private labs;

WHEREAS, the City and County of El Paso are planning on moving towards the states rapid testing and have a plan to integrate antibody testing by the summer of 2020;

WHEREAS, the Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, stated on April 27, 2020, "We need to see two weeks of data to confirm no flare-up of COVID-19," in response to his first round of reopening the Texas economy;

WHEREAS, over the past several days, Abbott has warned the state could see a jump in cases as it reopens, both due to the increased testing and the transmission that comes with allowing more people out into the open.

WHEREAS, Governor Abbott said the state’s surge response teams will be prepared to address any spikes. The teams will be spearheaded by the Texas Division of Emergency Management, the state Health and Human Services Commission and the National Guard. The teams will be able to do things like provide more personal protection equipment and testing supplies, as well as work with local officials to put in place additional standards to contain the outbreak.

WHEREAS, the State of Texas has one of the lowest documented testing rates in the United States and El Paso, County testing rates are less than 2% of our population and the State of Texas will begin to reopen the economy in phases

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to initiate policy directives in its entirety to read as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO, ON MAY 12, 2020 HEREBY FIND AND DIRECT:

1. The City of El Paso, Mayor and City Council urges residents to continue to practice social distancing, wear face coverings, avoid public and social gathering and to adhere to CDC guidelines;
2. Direct the City Manager to develop testing strategies and contact tracing to increase the testing to 5% of the population within the next 30 days and show exponential testing growth thereafter.
3. Direct the City Manager to bring stakeholder activities and updates bi-weekly to City Council meetings.
4. Direct the City Manager and City Attorney to report any and all COVID-19 information, activities and efforts to City Council within reasonable time.
5. Direct the City Manager to receive input from stakeholders and City Council regarding the use of CARES Act funding to support persons who have been impacted financially and who are experiencing financial hardship, in accordance with the CARES Act and the Treasury Department Guidelines, to include but not limited to:
 - a. Rental assistance support
 - b. Utility assistance support
 - c. Wage assistance support
 - d. Grocery assistance support
 - e. Small business grant and loan support
 - f. Testing expansion and access
 - g. Hiring and training contact tracers at volumes recommended by White House Guidelines
 - h. Any public health projects that would qualify for funding

Dated this ____ day of May, 2020.


CITY OF EL PASO

Dee Margo
Mayor

ATTEST:

Laura D. Prine
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Karla M. Nieman
City Attorney