



CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

East Palo Alto, CA (March 13, 2020) – The City is taking further actions on its COVID-19 (Coronavirus) public safety response by implementing a reduction in public interaction at City Hall and other city facilities and a temporary reduction in city services. The goals of these service changes are to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community and limit exposure to our highest risk community members while supporting the community and continuing essential services.

“The City has taken measures that focus on preventing the spread of the virus, as well as, protecting populations that are most vulnerable in the event the virus does enter East Palo Alto,” said Regina Wallace-Jones, Mayor of East Palo Alto, “I care deeply about your well-being and ask you to please take the guidelines provided to our community by the San Mateo County Health Department seriously.”

The City has taken steps to mitigate the possible spread by reducing face-to-face customer service interaction between the public and staff; procuring pandemic mitigation equipment essential for personnel; increasing the cleaning of public areas, bathrooms, offices, equipment, and anything under the City’s jurisdiction; hiring a contractor to supplement current cleaning efforts; minimizing contact with the public for essential city personnel; establishing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for city staff; and participating in daily briefings with regional emergency management staff.

The City will be implementing service changes to slow the spread of COVID-19 for a temporary period. The City may announce other service and operations changes as this situation evolves. The City’s Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfEastPaloAlto/> will have a full list of service changes, and will be updated whenever a change occurs.

City Hall: City Hall may consider closing to the public for a temporary period. If this occurs, you can still call the main line 650-853-3100 or email mail@cityofepa.org and you will receive assistance from staff. The City will continue to provide public safety and core services.

Police Operations: The Police Department will be doing business as usual. Officers and staff will use all methods available to ensure best practices are taken when interacting with the public.

Community Programs and Senior Center: The Senior Center will be closed until further notice. However, support services for the senior lunch program will be in place and meals will be delivered to seniors’ homes. All events of over 50 people are greatly discouraged until further notice. However, if the event includes several people who are more vulnerable (ages 50+, cardiovascular issues, diabetes, allergies) then the City asks to take precaution.

Public Works: The front desk in the Corp Yard at 150 Tara Street will close to the public. All inquiries will be consolidated by calling 650-853-3189. Public Works will continue to provide services but are urging staff to limit public interaction.

Community and Economic Development: The office at 1960 Tate Street will be closed and the City will not be accepting new Planning or Building permit applications. Staff will continue to process existing applications and can be reached at 650-853-3189.

Code Enforcement Division: The City will respond to emergency inquiries only. Community members can call 650-853-3189 to speak with a City representative who will then determine if the situation warrants a Code Enforcement Officer to investigate the situation.

City Council Meetings and Commission Meetings: City Council meetings are currently scheduled to proceed in Council Chambers on the first and third Tuesday of the month. The public is encouraged to watch the live broadcast of the meeting on local channel 29; on the City's website <http://eastpal Alto.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx>, or on Facebook Live <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfEastPaloAlto/>. If you decide to attend a meeting, please follow meeting etiquette and social distancing that includes sitting six feet away from others; avoid physical contact; and waiting until the podium is clear to speak; and making comments as brief as possible. The City will place seats six feet away from each other and may consider a separate room for a staging area. Similar approaches will be implemented for all Commissions meetings and if a meeting is deemed non-essential then it may be cancelled. You can go to the City's website at <http://eastpal Alto.iqm2.com/Citizens/default.aspx> for all meeting updates.

Latest Local Developments

San Mateo County Public Health Department is the lead agency focused on public health and responding to the COVID-19 outbreak. Earlier today, San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow issued a School Operations Modification Order that will take effect on Monday, March 16, 2020, and remain in force until through Friday, April 3, 2020, unless amended by the county or state health officer. The order requires all schools to dismiss students from regular attendance and encourages schools and school districts to implement at-home learning models if feasible. You can call the County's call center at 2-1-1 if you have any questions about COVID-19.

Contact Information for Other Agencies

Ravenswood City School District	650-329-2800 or 650-325-3015
Sequoia Union High School District	650-369-1411
East Palo Alto Sanitary District	650-325-9021 or 650-688-0495
Eastside College Prep	650-688-0850

For agencies not listed, please make a web search for more information.