



COVID-19 Actions Due to Shelter-in-Place Order

as of January 8, 2021

The City of Morgan Hill is working hard from home and satellite locations to continue to provide high quality services and support to the Morgan Hill community. Below is an update on the many efforts our dedicated City teammates have been working on in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

City Attorney

- Suspended enforcement of minimum parking requirements in shopping centers and commercial districts to allow the use of outdoor areas for retail merchandise and pick-up, and for expanded restaurant space.
- Suspended enforcement of limitations on hours of operation in order to allow commercial and industrial operations to continue with social distancing—this suspension does not apply to hours of operation for bars and restaurants that serve alcohol.
- Suspended enforcement of construction hours beginning at 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday for certain large construction projects, except in public rights-of-way. Home remodels in residential neighborhoods are not included.
- Created streamlined processes to modify design review approvals for projects impacted by COVID-19. This will allow developers to value-engineer approved projects and to modify designs to allow social distancing. Fees for this streamlined process will be waived.
- Drafted emergency order prohibiting rent increases
- Providing guidance to City departments and local businesses on shelter-in-place orders

City Manager

- Conducting COVID-19 video conference calls with Leadership Team
- Hosting Zoom Town Hall meetings with the Community
- Participating in regular meetings with City Managers in the County to discuss local responses and participating in calls hosted by the County
- Advocating for funding at all levels
- Working with County on plans for DePaul Health Center

Community Engagement and Messaging

- Curating content and regularly updating the [City of Morgan Hill COVID-19 webpages](#) and website newflashes

- Creating and sending hundreds of e-mail updates to over 18,000 community members with significantly high open rates, frequently over 50%
- Hundreds of hours spent monitoring and responding to COVID related emails, social media posts, and other inquiries
- Many hours spent ensuring accurate and complete understanding of new orders, changes to orders in order to effectively communicate with our residents
- Providing and sharing COVID Information translated to Spanish whenever possible
- Routing agreements electronically to keep City business moving
- Participating in weekly and biweekly regional calls for Public Information Officers to share information, ideas, and best practices, and ensure consistent messaging
- Preparing and broadcasting videos created by the City Council and Leadership Team
- Managing a virtual information call center fielding and responding to hundreds of calls and text messages
- Coordinating and executing virtual City Council, Planning Commission, and Town Hall public meetings
- Partnering with the City of Gilroy, Community Groups and the County to more effectively reach the Spanish speaking community through targeted bilingual virtual community meetings and bilingual press conferences

Development Services

- Coordinated with Development community to determine construction eligibility
- Instituted safety practices for Building Inspectors
- Staff remotely processing all projects including virtual meetings with applicants
- Virtual Planner on Duty to respond to emails and phone calls
- Implemented virtual application process to accept Planning, Building and applications via email
- Established electronic systems for stamping plans, issuing permits, and accepting fees

Economic Development

- Implemented an Economic Development Business Recovery Plan to support recovery of the restaurant industry, retailers, and small businesses, to encourage tourism, and support new investment
- Launched a Morgan Hill al Fresco program to encourage restaurants to expand outdoor dining onto public sidewalks and parking areas through an expedited process at no charge
- Providing information to businesses and employees affected by COVID-19 through dedicated web page
- Hosting Zoom meetings with business owners and key City officials to share COVID-19 information, answer questions, and assist them with successful operation

- Deployed a Business Impact Survey that was emailed and mailed to all businesses
- Coordinating Business Resiliency Roundtables to provide technical information and support to businesses
- Relaxed on-street parking regulations and supplied signage to support curbside pick-up activity
- Offered Place Branding grant opportunities for streetscape activation projects through art, landscaping, and beautification projects
- Created a Guide to Recovery, “Morgan Hill Ready” with information about reopening from the State, County, and Industry-specific recommendations and requirements
- The City partnered with the Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce to launch a “Buy Local Morgan Hill” campaign offering the business community a platform for increasing product awareness and educate residents of the importance of shopping local and to encourage more business-to-business transactions through product matchmaking
- Coordinated “Sidewalk Saturdays”, an outdoor popup retail event for retailers that do not have a storefront to join an outdoor retail market opportunity in Downtown

Engineering

- Began managing encroachment permits and work in the public right of way in accordance with the shelter-in-place order, cancelling all work not allowed per the Order
- Created a streamlined process for encroachment permits to allow the use of City rights-of-way and other public spaces to expand retail and restaurant operations to allow social distancing. Fees for this streamlined process will be waived
- Moved towards online contract management and online bidding to allow essential contract work to continue relating to significant street maintenance and wastewater projects
- Continued to provide public works inspection services on essential projects

Finance

- Continuing to monitor and analyze the impact to City’s finances from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Recommended Budget which is anticipated to be released on April 17, 2020 will include some steps that staff has taken to address the anticipated revenue shortfalls. In addition, staff intends to bring to the City Council additional proposals and adjustments to the budget to ensure the City’s fiscal sustainability.
- Implemented virtual credit card processing and online receipting for permits for teammates working from home
- Establishing COVID-19 related expenditures tracking to submit for reimbursement from FEMA
- Implemented Lockbox Services for Utility Billing Payments
- Added Ring Central phone service so UB customer service calls could be answered remotely

- Continued to promote paperless billing and electronic payment enrollment. Over 67% of Citywide accounts are now enrolled online, of which, 66% are enrolled in paperless statements and 54% are now enrolled in autopay

Fire

- Prepared an Incident Action Plan (IAP) detailing all COVID-19 related decontamination and operational readiness
- Prepared a Pandemic Plan outlining how we will adjust if we have limited operational resources
- The City and South Santa Clara County Fire District were jointly awarded:
 - \$5,749 in FEMA reimbursement for COVID-related PPE purchases
 - \$9,919 in FEMA funding for additional COVID-related PPE purchases
 - As a result, the City will receive \$7,834 in FEMA revenues
- Deconned each station 3 times using an EPA registered disinfectant
- Responded to approximately 200 COVID-related calls for service
- Established relationships and agreements to provide rapid employee testing results and contact tracing
- Collaborated with all Fire Departments in the County to establish response guidelines necessary to ensure the safety of our employees and the public
- Increased daily disinfecting of stations and equipment using an EPA registered disinfectant
- Continued to operate a comprehensive Annual Fire Inspection Program during COVID-19 Pandemic
- Assisted local businesses with outdoor operating requirements during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- Created a web map for City teammates so that they can access MHMaps layers, including a new senior care facilities layer, remotely without City network access
- Provided methodology, source data, and formatting requirements to consultant tasked with developing the new City address database
- Rolled out a new web map service called CityMaps for City teammates to replace the old MHMaps with an updated, enhanced web map that uses current GIS technology, and can be accessed remotely
- Supported GIS integration with Sedaru and POSM utilities business systems
- Continued to provide mapping support to teammates Citywide

Housing

- Collaborated with regional partners and community-based organizations to assist families and individuals in need of rental assistance and/or hotel vouchers for homeless families with health conditions
- Created and manage a local list of Food and Community Resources available to the community during COVID-19
- Collaborated with [Silicon Valley Strong](#) and Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to gather ideas, resources, volunteer opportunities, and needs to create a regional website for all Silicon Valley residents
- Sending resource emails and COVID-19 updates related to State and County Eviction Moratorium Ordinances, and Morgan Hill Rent Freeze information to the School District, Charter Schools, local Apartment Communities, Faith Based Community, Mobile Home and RV Parks, local Community Based Organizations, South County Farmers, Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Morgan Hill, and South County Collaborative
- Requested essential sanitation items for Safe Park and Inclement Weather Shelter from Santa Clara County EOC
- Housing team has coordinated and worked every COVID-19 testing event in Morgan Hill. As of December 16, 2020, 3,411 tests have been administered.
- The City funded a County isolation quarantine program (\$154,917) and to date:
 - \$21,752 for rental assistance
 - approximately \$6,000 for in home support (groceries and supplies)
 - 5 households were placed in a hotel/motel for isolation

Human Resources

- Administering and managing the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) for our City teammates
- Finalized, developed, and implemented COVID-19 Facility Use Policies and Procedures to follow when entering and working within City facilities to ensure employee safety through the shelter-in-place
- Regularly update COVID policies to follow CDC and County guidelines, rules and regulations
- Provided COVID-19 training to all teammates covering policies and procedures

Information Technology

- Issued 30 laptops to City teammates so they can work remotely
- Increased internet connectivity by 5x to support additional teammates working remotely simultaneously
- Deployed a new scalable Virtual Private Network (VPN) solution for teammates to access City resources securely
- Transitioned network users from the old VPN to the new VPN: installed the new VPN on almost all city issued laptops

- Procured new laptops and headsets to support increased remote work capabilities
- Securely deployed Eden Web to users without the need for VPN for timecards submittal
- Deployed outdoor WiFi to support the transition of CRC classes to a virtual format

Maintenance and Utilities

- Installed traffic safety barriers in Downtown parking spaces to create additional outdoor dining spaces called “parklets”
- Continue to provide essential services to the community in the areas of water, wastewater, street maintenance, storm drain maintenance, and maintenance for fire prevention
- Supported the closure of specific amenities within park areas in accordance with the shelter-in-place order
- Developed use guidelines for park facilities allowed to remain open in alignment with County and State guidelines
- Supported maintenance of park facilities through significant increased use of facilities
- Supported physical improvements to City facilities allowed and required to remain open through COVID-19
- Implemented an operational plan to ensure continuity of operations to support essential services during the COVID-19 emergency
- Supported COVID-19 decontamination response at City facilities to ensure safety of City employees

Police

- Resource Request to Santa Clara County EOC for COVID-19 sanitizing supplies
- COVID-19 pre-shift screening stations and set-up 4 sign-in stations at the Police Department
- Police Department Lobby implemented screening prior to any member of the public entering
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) virtually activated in response to COVID-19
- Proclaimed Local Emergencies for COVID-19 and SCU Lightning Complex Fire
- Mobile Command Vehicle deployed and disinfected for 7 events: SWAT, SCU Lightning Fire, non-violent protests
- Investigated over 300 COVID-19 order complaints
- Misdemeanors cited and released in field to minimize potential exposure in Police Department
- Implemented disinfecting procedures for the Police building including holding cells, booking area, and all vehicles following COVID-19 exposures
- Filmed community safety message video

- Participated in a dozen plus Birthday visits
- Patrol and Traffic Divisions have been assisting the Morgan Hill Unified School District with traffic control and food distribution
- Social Distancing Protocol for Public and City Employees implemented for Police and IT facilities
- Santa Clara County Public Health Social Distancing Protocol submitted, implemented, and updated for Police Department
- Implemented less contact between Officers and Dispatchers by going paperless
- Acquired filtration system for Dispatch
- Social Media outreach during COVID-19; Facebook (average 5,000 views per post), Twitter, Instagram
- Implemented a MHPD COVID-19 Response Policy for Positive Cases

Recreation

- Opened a virtual membership to Centennial Recreation Center (CRC) Members and the community
- Partnered with the YMCA to provide for the pickup of nearly 100 meals a day to Seniors
- Provided well check calls to Seniors formally participating in programs at the Senior Center
- Continuing to offer health and wellness programs as the County Order allows
- Developed a policy to allow local businesses to use outdoor park spaces for health and wellness programs
- Supported the use of City outdoor facilities for permissible uses in alignment with County and State guidelines

Morgan Hill, we are here for you! We will get through this together!