



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (CDD)

### MEMORANDUM

To: CDD Staff

From: Marlene Subhashini, Community Development Director

Date: March 17, 2020

Re: CDD Continuity Of Operations (COOP) Directive During COVID-19 Shelter In Place Order from March 16, 2020 – April 7, 2020<sup>1</sup>

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On March 12, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a New Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Summary of Order is linked [here](#) and the Actual Order is linked [here](#).

On Monday, March 16, the San Mateo County Health Officer joined five other counties in issuing a Shelter In Place Order. The Press Release is linked [here](#) and the Order [here](#). In addition to directing their respective residents to shelter at home for three weeks beginning March 17<sup>th</sup>, the legal order limits activity, travel and business functions to only the most essential needs.

*The Order states – “nothing in this Order shall prohibit any individual from performing or accessing “Essential Governmental Functions,” as determined by the governmental entity performing those functions. Each governmental entity shall identify and designate appropriate employees or contractors to continue providing and carrying out any Essential Governmental Functions. All Essential Governmental Functions shall be performed in compliance with Social Distancing Requirements as defined in this Section, to the extent possible.... For purposes of this Order, “Social Distancing Requirements” includes maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands.*

On March 16, 2020, City Manager, Jeff Moneda invoked his authority as the designated Director of Emergency Services and officially proclaimed a local emergency for the City of Foster City to address the growing spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). It is anticipated that the City Council will ratify the Proclamation at the Council Meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The Press Release is linked [here](#) and Proclamation is linked [here](#).

Per the Proclamation, City facilities including the Front Counter will be closed to the public, from March 16 through April 7, for the health and safety of city staff and our patrons. The City will continue to provide essential services as outlined in the memo.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to change based on the evolving nature of COVID-19 situation

Based on recent developments around the COVID-19 situation and County Directive, HR sent a memo (attached) to all City Hall employees on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 regarding stricter limitations on non-essential interaction with others and city operations during this pandemic. This Directive is effective as of March 17, 2020. In addition, City Manager, Moneda issued a memo to all employees on March 16, 2020 (attached).

Based on the direction received by HR and City Manager's office, we encourage anyone that can work effectively remotely to do so and limit in-person interactions. Anyone who does need to attend work in-person should therefore continue to do so, while minimizing close contact with colleagues as much as possible, and also remaining vigilant as to potential symptoms of coronavirus and taking appropriate action if symptoms develop.

To limit disruption to essential business, the expectation is that all employees who are working remotely to:

- Be online and available by phone during their normally scheduled work hours
- Attend meetings virtually
- Meet project and work deadlines as if they were working in the office
- Maintain open lines of communication between immediate supervisors and other staff members of CDD

In light of the current and evolving situation, the Community Development Department needs to adjust its operations, processes and procedures temporarily. All essential city services will continue uninterrupted; however, we will modify operations out of an abundance of caution to promote the safety of our staff. These operational modifications strive to create internal equity among City employees while balancing the need to continue or modify City services while keeping everyone's health, welfare and safety as our utmost priority. Transition of these functions are to facilitate social distancing to the maximum extent practicable while striking a balance to provide the critical city functions that we are expected to provide during this period.

1. City employees that are able to and can effectively work remotely will begin transitioning to telecommuting/teleworking schedule starting this week until such time as directed by City Manager, HR and/or the CDD Director. Please see the attached Limited Telework City Policy. CDD Staffing Telecommuting Schedule for the next 2-3 weeks is attached to this memo. All CDD staff need to sign and return the Limited Duration Telework Application attached to the memo. For non-exempt employees, if you are not in a position to telework, or cannot telework for your full normal schedule, please code those unworked hours as **standby/COVI19** and submit your hours to the Management Assistant by the EOD.
2. For employees unable to telework OR when they are in the office during their non-telework schedule, social distancing needs to be maintained and all non-essential in-person interactions need to be avoided.
3. Email and Phone Call Inquiries

All email and phone call inquiries related to Planning, Building, Code Enforcement and Housing need to be answered within 24 hours

- a. Email and Phone Call inquiries related to Planning, Code Enforcement and Housing inquiries will be distributed by the CDD Director to Planning staff.

- b. Email and Phone Call inquiries related to Building and Inspection will be distributed by the Chief Building Official and/or Principal Building Inspector to Building Division staff.
- c. The above operation will be conducted by the following means:
  - Forwarding email inquiries
  - Forwarding voice messages directly to cell phones
  - Forwarding Mitel voice messages via email
  - Communication via Slack

#### 4. Building Permits

- a. Applicants will be able to apply for online permits for permits related to residential repairs, roof repairs, electrical services, wireless permits, fire damage, sewer repairs, water heaters, and furnaces and other permits as deemed essential by the Chief Building Official and as specified in the Shelter In Place Order. These permits shall be reviewed per current turn-around times. Examples of non-essential permits may include residential remodels, photovoltaic permits, window/door modifications, EV charging stations, room additions etc.
- b. Building Permits that are deemed non-essential may still be submitted online. However, review of these permits may be delayed and the permits will not be issued until after the Shelter In Place Order is lifted.
- c. Applicants of existing housing construction projects (Lennar, Waverly, PTPIII, ADUs, New Homes) can also apply and/or amend existing permits.

#### 5. Plan Checks

- a. Plan Checks and processing of all existing and pending Planning and Building permit applications will continue as normal through electronic submittals only. No in-person interactions/meetings with the applicant will be allowed.
- b. Projects that have received their Planning Entitlements would also be able to apply for Building Permits online.
- c. Plan Checks related to critical life/safety permits as described above will be processed in a timely manner.

#### 6. Planning Projects

- a. Project Planners should continue to review all current and pending Planning Projects as they would normally.
- b. Project Planners shall continue to intake applications that are deemed essential. Examples include: ADU applications, any new applications related to Housing development, Use Permit Modifications that are deemed urgent by the HOA such as tree removals for safety, fence permits (when fence is failing and poses a safety issue), wireless and small cell site applications. The timeline for review of all new applications would still need to adhere to all legal requirements such as the Permit Streamlining Act, Shot Clock requirements etc,
- c. New Planning applications that are not deemed essential such as room additions, sign permits, etc. will not be accepted during this period.
- d. Project Planners will continue to review all current major development project applications during this time.

## 7. Inspections

- a. Building inspections for critical life/safety situations or essential project inspections as determined by the Building Official will be prioritized over the non-essential inspections for existing projects depending on the total number of inspections scheduled for the day and staffing availability. Non-essential inspections will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.
- b. Emergency inspections will be performed as determined necessary by the Building Official.
- c. Building Final Inspections that require a Planner and considered essential for existing projects will be limited to 3 days a week and for a limited schedule. TCOs for essential projects may still be granted pending Planning Final Inspection.
- d. Projects requiring Planning Final Only and are non-essential shall be deferred to a later date. Project Planners shall coordinate with the applicant/owner directly to reschedule the inspection to a later date.
- e. All inspectors shall wear a mask, gloves and protective equipment during the inspection and shall follow all the practices outlined in the CDC guidelines.
- f. Should any person at the site of inspection show symptoms, the inspection shall be rescheduled or done by an alternate means such as video inspections.

## 8. Housing Related Items

- a. Submit the APR to HCD by April 1, 2020.
- b. Staff will continue to respond to all affordable housing/BMR related inquiries.
- c. Items pertaining to the expiring affordable covenant for Foster's Landing will continue to remain a top priority.
- d. Items pertaining to the AHOZ may be temporarily postponed unless otherwise directed by the City Manager and/or the Council.
- e. All activities related to the Home Is Foster City Initiative is placed on hold.

## 9. Administrative/Support Staff Duties

- a. Continue processing of Payroll, SPDs, POs, PRA, Credit Card Processing WMP refund requests, Petty cash, updating the website as needed.
- b. Continue to keep a track of all expenses related to COVID-19 including timecard for non-exempt employees for reporting purposes.
- c. Planning Commission meeting noticing and electronic packets/mailing including preparing Action letters, Cancellation Notices, Minutes and Resolutions.
- d. DocuPhase – plans/files uploaded from LR Hines

## 10. Code Enforcement

- a. Conditions/problems that pose an immediate or serious threat to the health, safety or welfare of the public will be prioritized during this time.
- b. All existing and pending active Code Enforcement cases shall be processed as normal. However, given the current situation, leniency will be exercised and homeowners will be given additional time to bring their properties into compliance.
- c. Proactive code enforcement will not be taking place during this time unless the Code Enforcement officer determines that a situation presents an immediate public health and/or life/safety issue or poses a threat in a short period of time.

## 11. Other Items

- a. Business License applications will be reviewed as normal.
- b. Planning and Building Staff may continue to use this temporary 'down-time' to catch up on pending items, close-out project files, scanning, record-keeping etc. on the limited days they are in the office.
- c. Planning and Building Division Staff may use this time to work on Camino-related items remotely
- d. Only essential items will be scheduled for Regular Planning Commission meetings via Zoom teleconference.
- e. IDEC meetings will be conducted only for essential items as deemed by the CDD Director and shall take place via video conferencing.

Note: All instructions pertaining to working remotely such as accessing webmail, permitting software, connecting to the Foster City Terminal including retrieving voicemails will be sent by the IT Department.

I would like for each one of you to use this standard messaging when emailing your applicants/property owners during this time:

*Thank you for your email. Please note that effective March 17, 2020, the Planning, Building and Code Enforcement Division has modified its operations in response to the evolving COVID-19 situation. All City facilities including the Front Public Counter will be closed to the public, from March 16<sup>th</sup> through April 7<sup>th</sup>, for the health and safety of our staff and patrons. The City will continue to provide essential services however, they may be limited at this time due to our modified staffing and operations. We appreciate your patience and flexibility during this time. Please stay healthy and safe!*

- Applying, scheduling building inspections and viewing status of permits [permit.fostercity.org](http://permit.fostercity.org)
- Access building forms and handouts - [www.fostercity.org/commdev/page/building-division](http://www.fostercity.org/commdev/page/building-division)
- Email inquiries and questions, building permit applications, plans, and supplemental documents to [building@fostercity.org](mailto:building@fostercity.org) or call (650) 286-3227
- For affordable housing related inquiries, email [housing@fostercity.org](mailto:housing@fostercity.org) or call (650) 286-3225
- Access planning forms and handouts - [www.fostercity.org/commdev/page/planningcode-enforcement](http://www.fostercity.org/commdev/page/planningcode-enforcement)
- Email inquiries and questions, planning applications, plans and supplemental documents to [planning@fostercity.org](mailto:planning@fostercity.org) or call (650) 286-3225
- For code enforcement inquiries and questions or to report a violation, call (650) 286-3238, email [kmcgill@fostercity.org](mailto:kmcgill@fostercity.org) or visit [www.fostercity.org/community/page/foster-city-access](http://www.fostercity.org/community/page/foster-city-access)

## Attachments

- Attachment 1: County Health Directive Regarding COVID-19 from HR Director
- Attachment 2: Memo from City Manager to all City Staff
- Attachment 3: Limited Telework Policy
- Attachment 4: Limited Duration Telework Application
- Attachment 5: Team Schedule