

Costa Mesa prepares for anticipated surge of COVID-19 patients in Orange County

COSTA MESA, CA – As the number of coronavirus cases rises sharply, the City of Costa Mesa continues its pro-active approach to the COVID-19 crisis and is actively working with local, state and federal officials to prepare for a projected surge in cases that could overwhelm local hospitals.

Governor Newsom announced this week that California will need as many as 50,000 additional hospital beds to address the anticipated rise in COVID-19 cases and is assessing all surplus properties throughout the state to make sure all resources are deployed to handle the surge.

Nationwide, 30 sites are being evaluated to address the need for additional hospital beds and in California, eight to 10 sites are being considered, including all state surplus properties, which in Costa Mesa includes Fairview Developmental Center and the OC Fairgrounds.

“Much has changed since the Fairview Developmental Center was being considered as a site for COVID-19 patients several weeks ago,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “The federal, state, and local governments are now all actively engaged on the COVID-19 response in a coordinated, collaborative effort. We are in constant communication with all levels of government, including federal and state agencies, who have taken the lead. With the rise in COVID-19 cases in Orange County to 431 with 4 deaths, most from community transmission, it is imperative that we have the resources to care for those needing medical treatment, including our loved ones. No one is immune from this disease.”

Many communities throughout California and the nation are getting prepared for the surge, including an evaluation of multiple sites located in Orange County. Governor Newsom also requested that the Department of Defense deploy the U.S. Navy's Mercy ship, a Naval hospital with 1,000 beds, to assist with this effort, now docked at the Port of Los Angeles. Other once-shuttered hospitals are also now being assessed for re-opening and officials are preparing the Los Angeles Convention Center for potential use to house patients as part of the planning for needed medical surge capacity in the region.

City leaders have learned that the Army Corps of Engineers is assessing both Fairview and the Fairgrounds to determine how to best plan for the expected medical surge as well.

Mayor Katrina Foley has maintained constant contact with local, state and federal officials, while working closely with mayors both locally and nationally to respond effectively to this public health emergency. In a sense of urgency, Mayor Foley urged residents to heed the message:

"Our early preparations and planning now will ensure that we save more lives and provide better care for patients in Costa Mesa and across Orange County if our hospitals fill up," Mayor Foley said. "But you can help by staying home except for essential activities. We are all in with our county, state and federal partners to limit the chaos and lack of beds we see in other states and countries."

Costa Mesa has been ahead of the curve in responding to this crisis from the beginning.

- **Friday Feb. 28** – Federal Government Abandons Plans to Use Fairview For Diamond Princess COVID-19 Positive Passengers.
- **March 12, 2020** – Costa Mesa becomes first City in the county to declare an emergency.
- **March 13, 2020** – The City implemented protective

measures including outright ban of large gatherings, cancellation of all special events, cancellation of youth sports, adult recreation classes, closed the senior center to only essential meal provisions, and transitioned to teleconferencing for City Council meetings. Cancellation of city committee meetings, more frequent disinfecting of city facilities and apparatus.

- **March 16, 2020** – City Hall and other City facilities have been closed to the public and City employees are telecommuting where possible and staying at home.
- **March 17, 2020** – The City orders closures of fitness clubs, theaters and limited restaurants to take out or delivery only.
- **March 23, 2020** – The City ordered the closure of all city parks and the public golf course closes Council meeting to the public.

These actions serve to protect the Costa Mesa community from intensifying the community spread of COVID -19. City officials are working together with all levels of government to be ready and well prepared to respond to this crisis and make necessary decisions to slow the spread of COVID-19.

For more information, please follow the city on social media and visit our website at www.costamesaca.gov/covid19.