



July 28, 2020

The Honorable Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles CA 90012

**RE: COVID-19 Financial Assistance for Carson**

Dear Chairwoman Barger:

On behalf of the City of Carson, thank you for your diligent leadership on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors during this period of unprecedented instability and concern due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like all municipalities across the nation and in our region, the City of Carson is on the front lines of the pandemic, having experienced major financial revenue losses from continued economic shutdowns while our expenses have increased to address public safety and health service delivery.

Before discussing some of the more significant direct costs Carson has incurred because of the pandemic, it is important to remember that our city has not received any direct funds from the federal government under the CARES Act. And, while the State recently distributed a portion of its CARES Act funding to cities based on population, the amount of money the City of Carson will receive is paltry compared to the losses and costs incurred as a result of the pandemic, including the cost of services we are providing, in some cases, not only to our residents, but to others in the region (e.g., our COVID-19 test facility).

One of the most important efforts being called for nationally to reduce the spread of the virus is to have everyone consistently tested. As far back as April 27, 2020, in partnership with US Health Fairs, the City of Carson began providing free COVID-19 testing to residents and non-residents alike. We were lauded as the first such city in Southern California to do so and the second nationally. Our COVID-19 testing is available for free to anyone without limitation. We do NOT restrict our testing to those with



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Councilmember



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COVID-19 symptoms or a known exposure to COVID-19, as does the County. While free for the individuals who get tested, this unprecedented endeavor comes at a sizeable cost to the City. The City has been paying the cost to staff the operation of the test site since its inception.

A massive amount of personal protection equipment for employees and residents, supplies and cleaning efforts have been purchased to aid the effort to reduce the spread of the pandemic. The City of Carson was one of the first cities in the State to mandate the wearing of masks and face coverings, and to purchase masks for our staff and residents. Like most other entities with public facing functions, we have installed plexiglass at public counters and hand sanitizer throughout our facilities. To ensure that we are eliminating the virus from any surfaces in our facilities, we have retained a professional cleaning company to perform deep cleaning of all 21 of the City's facilities beyond what our custodial staff is able to provide.

To address the recently identified aerial characteristics of the virus, we are making changes to our building operations, including the operation of heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems, to reduce airborne exposures. The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) states, "Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 through the air is sufficiently likely that airborne exposure to the virus should be controlled." In the fight against the pandemic, the City of Carson is in the process of upgrading our air filtration systems. To achieve this, our City Hall and Community Center will require the replacement of the entire Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning systems consistent with CDC specifications. This effort alone is likely to cost about \$5 million.

The City has also been assisting the small business community in Carson through a variety of initiatives using our already depleted General Funds. The City retained the California Community Economic Development Association (CCEDA) to assist Carson businesses in applying for SBA and State loans and grants. Moreover, the City of Carson launched its own Small Business Coronavirus Business Assistance Program to provide support for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 virus and associated restrictions. The City has appropriated \$500,000 of its own General Funds to assist in the funding of this business loan program and expects these funds to be depleted shortly.

By sharing a portion of your funds with local government partners in the County, such as the City of Carson, you will leverage cities to exponentially increase the regional power in our fight against COVID-19. Additional funds will enable the expansion of the number of testing sites serving our communities, secure and distribute personal protective equipment (for health care workers, first responders, and law enforcement), increase services to our residents at risk, and work with community-based organizations to help ensure the public health and safety of all our residents.

**The City of Carson requests that the County allocate a portion of the \$1.22 billion it received from the federal CARES Act to cities in the County that have been**

**developing and implementing programs and services on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Other counties in the State, including Orange and San Diego Counties, have developed programs to re-distribute portions of their federal CARES Act funds to cities in their counties. We urge the County of Los Angeles to follow this lead.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this issue and your favorable consideration of this request. We are all in this together, and together we can combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

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Mayor Albert Robles

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Mayor Pro Tem Jim Dear

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Councilmember Lula Davis-Holmes

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Councilmember Jawane Hilton

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Councilmember Cedric L. Hicks, Sr.

cc: Supervisor Hilda Solis  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Chief Executive Officer Sachi Hamai  
Senator Steven Bradford  
Assembly Member Mike Gipson  
Carson City Council