



# CITY OF CARSON

## Legislation Text

File #: 2020-258, Version: 1

### Report to Mayor and City Council

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Discussion

#### **SUBJECT:**

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A DRIVE-THRU COVID-19 TESTING SITE AT THE JUANITA MILLENDER-MC-DONALD COMMUNITY CENTER IN THE CITY OF CARSON (CITY COUNCIL)**

#### **I. SUMMARY**

This item is being introduced at the request Mayor Albert Robles.

The novel coronavirus currently designated COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province in China in December 2019. Since then, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern. On January 31, 2020, The United States Health and Human Services Secretary declared this global outbreak a public health emergency for the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced on February 25, 2020 that community spread of COVID-19 was likely to occur in the United States.

The State of California proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020, and Los Angeles County declared a Local Health Emergency as well that same day. On March 12, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-25-20, declaring that state and local public health officials may, as they deem necessary in the interest of public health, issue guidance limiting or recommending limitations upon attendance at public assemblies, conferences, or other mass events, which could cause the cancellation of such gatherings through no fault or responsibility of the parties involved, thereby constituting a force majeure. On March 13, 2020, President Trump Declared a National State of Emergency.

As a result of Governor Newsom and President declaring State and Federal Emergencies, the City of Carson Council declared a local state of emergency on March 17, 2020. Inclusive of the local state of emergency being declared, the City Council directed several health and safety actions for its residents and employees. In particular, the City Council unanimously voted (5-0) directing staff to contact appropriate agencies offering city locations for drive by testing and temporary hospitals.

## **II. RECOMMENDATION**

DISCUSS and PROVIDE direction.

## **III. ALTERNATIVES**

Take another action City Council deems appropriate.

## **IV. BACKGROUND**

The declaration of a local emergency enables the City to be more efficient and effective in its response to the outbreak, puts in place a framework that supports the continuity of essential public safety services, seeks and utilizes mutual aid, and ensures the City has all available tools at its disposal to keep the community safe. The declaration will also allow the City to seek reimbursement of funds from the State and Federal governments.

One of many actions directed by the City Council has been to seek a Drive-Thru testing site at the Juanita Millender-McDonald Community Center in the City of Carson. This need is underscored by the fact that Carson has the highest rate of infection per capita as documented by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LA County).

Several sources including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have released staggering data regarding COVID-19 case by race and ethnicity, showing that one-third of those who have died from the virus are African American while African Americans represent only about 14% of population in the United States. The City of Carson has the largest representation of African Americans of all 88 cities in Los Angeles County, with African Americans comprising almost 25% of our population.

The City Council has been in contact with the LA County and others on several occasions during the past month. The City of Carson received confirmation only last week that a test site located at Harbor ULCA Medical Center (HGH), 21840 Normandie Ave., Torrance, CA 90502, has been made available. While not in the City of Carson, it is nearby in an unincorporated area of West Carson with a City of Torrance zip code. Although this provides some relief for the residents of Carson, the City has continued to champion a testing center in our own city.

Staff has worked diligently to locate a private contractor to conduct mobile testing for the City of Carson as the County's option will not be sufficient enough to meet the needs of the 100,000 population of Carson. The proposed testing site in Carson would provide administration of testing up to 1000 residents a day compared to the 350 clients that HGH

(LA County) can provide.

Testing will be available to all Carson residents via a website portal that will allow registration and appointment times. Once a resident receives confirmation of testing availability, they will be given a confirmation number of their appointment time and date. The registration number will be required at the testing site along with proof of valid ID or a utility bill confirming residence. The testing location is drive-up and clients stay in their vehicles for tests -- though pedestrian clients with appointments can be tested, as well. The test is a self-administered oral swab, meaning clients must swab their own mouths/throats using instructions provided to them at the site. The testing process takes between 5 and 10 minutes, however waiting times may vary.

The City has identified an outside resource to underwrite the cost of a temporary drive-thru testing center and medical personnel for a period of time to be determined based upon the number of days per week of operation. The sponsorship is expected to cover 7 days a week for one month or a longer period if testing is not offered every day. To continue the testing center's operation, additional funding sources would need to be secured prior to this sponsorship concluding.

The remaining cost associated with the testing center is the testing kits, which are priced at \$125 per person. Staff is currently pursuing several options for funding of the testing kits through Federal, State and County services. Our goal is to raise funds to subsidize the cost of the testing kits to provide free testing without cost to Carson residents. In addition, staff would provide a scheduling solution that would allow non-residents to apply online, get an appointment based upon limited availability and pay the full testing kit price of \$125.

## **V. FISCAL IMPACT**

To continue the testing center beyond the initial sponsorship, either outside or City funds would need to be identified. Similarly, to cover the cost of test kits for Carson residents, either outside or City funds would need to be allocated. To the extent that City funds are used, reimbursement will be sought using Federal, State and County emergency funds.

## **VI. EXHIBITS**

N/A

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