



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

March 26, 2020

Media Contact: Anna Ferguson-Sparks, 1-877-327-2656, media@cityofsolvang.com

Public Contact: media@cityofsolvang.com, www.CityofSolvang.com

To the Citizens and Businesses of Solvang:

During the March 20, 2020 [Special Emergency Meeting of the Solvang City Council](#) the Council declared a COVID-19 Public Health and Safety and Economic Cessation Emergency, in an effort to access all emergency funding and reimbursement which might be available for our region. We understand and acknowledge the incredible impacts that this pandemic is having on our local tourism economy. We are seeing those impacts firsthand, on a daily basis.

During the March 20 City Council Meeting, we also announced the establishment of a \$250,000 Emergency Loan Assistance Program for Solvang small businesses suffering COVID-19-related losses due to the economic cessation surrounding the pandemic. **Funding for this loan program will come from the City reserves.** The program is meant to meet emergency cash flow needs of Solvang small businesses while they wait for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan applications, or similar loans, to be processed.

It is our hope, that these City-funded micro-loans will help our local businesses to continue to keep more workers employed. The loans are aimed at recovery, making sure that there's something left to recover when the time comes.

We are currently working on gathering loan package request forms and distributing application packages. If your business has submitted a loan package request form through the new Solvang Resources website (www.SolvangResources.com/resources/business-resources), you should have received your loan application package. If you have NOT received your loan application package, please contact us at BusinessQA@cityofsolvang.com. You may also email any City loan program questions to that address.

To date, we have had approximately 85 loan requests, and are still accepting loan request forms through our Solvang Resources website: www.SolvangResources.com/resources/business-resources

Residents looking for ways to support our local small businesses will also find a listing of merchants, services and restaurants which are still open and/or offering curbside order pick-up, delivery or otherwise, on the new Solvang Resources site: www.SolvangResources.com/resources/current-open-businesses

We strongly encourage both locals and visitors to purchase gift cards from Solvang businesses which can be used at a later date. Gift card purchases will help businesses which might not be able to operate during this time – like some of our restaurants, wine tasting rooms, hotels and shops – and will give everyone something to look forward to, once businesses are able to re-open and recovery has begun.

In unrelated news, I'd like to take this moment to remind all Solvang residents and businesses to **#keepwipesoutofpipes.**

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The toilet paper shortage in our area, as well as the increase in sanitation practices due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, has caused an influx of non-flushable items flowing to the Solvang Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Solvang plant is already in a challenged state, so please: **DO NOT FLUSH ANYTHING OTHER THAN TOILET PAPER** down residential or commercial toilets connected to the City's sewer system.

Items **NOT** allowed to be flushed into our sewer system are napkins, paper towels, tissues, feminine products, dryer sheets, hair, diapers, baby or disinfecting wipes, or wipes of **any** sort – including “flushable” wipes. Please, place these items in the trash. Disposing of these items in toilets will cause severe problems in your home or business, in our sewers, and for our Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Placing non-flushable items as listed above, in our toilets, will clog sewers and cause back-ups and overflows at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, creating an additional public health risk in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. Many sewer system and treatment plant spills go to our lakes, rivers, and oceans, where they have broad-ranging impacts on public health and the environment – and the additional costs incurred due to these spills only increase our water and sewer rates.

Thanks in advance, for your cooperation! Stay safe, healthy, and positive.

Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint