



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

May 14, 2020

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To the Citizens and Businesses of Solvang:

As we move through the first full week of California's "Stage 2" of re-opening, I would like to remind all businesses within the City of Solvang (www.CityofSolvang.com) about the current orders, as pertain to our County and City.

Last Thursday (May 7, 2020), California Governor Gavin Newsom updated the State's "Resilience Roadmap" ([covid19.ca.gov/roadmap](https://www.covid19.ca.gov/roadmap)), allowing certain California locales and businesses to progress to Stage 2 of our phased, State-wide re-opening. **Under Stage 2, lower-risk workplaces may gradually re-open – while adhering to COVID guidelines and modifications to service** – such as certain retail, albeit with curbside pick-up *only*. The manufacturing and logistics sectors which back up a good portion of that retail may also re-open with COVID modifications.

Specifically, what this means is that as of last Friday, May 8, 2020, a portion of Solvang's retail was allowed to re-open – again, **with curbside pick-up and delivery only**, until further notice. Bookstores, jewelry stores, toy stores, clothing boutiques, shoe stores, home and furnishings shops, sporting goods stores, antique stores, music stores, and florists may re-open, but **are not allowed to host customers inside their storefronts**. Higher-risk businesses like hair salons and gyms, offices and dine-in restaurants, will not be allowed to re-open until later in the phased plan.

While these types of businesses need to immediately adapt practices to reduce the risk of further spread of infection, we still urge *other* Solvang businesses to also start their own modification processes so that they are ready to re-open for business the moment that Stage 2 progresses at a County level.

During Monday night's Regular Meeting of the [Solvang City Council](#) (May 11, 2020), we heard from our Sheriff with regards to the enforcement of which Solvang businesses could currently be open, and in what capacity. At this time, our law enforcement is trying to keep businesses in willful compliance, trying to work with the businesses towards that compliance by further explaining what is, and isn't, allowed under the current orders. If businesses refuse to comply, then law enforcement will need to move to other measures, which do include fines.

The City has received a number of complaints about businesses being open and shops accepting customers inside their stores. We do not want these businesses to be penalized, especially now, when we are on the path to recovery. Please familiarize yourselves with [the current guidelines for re-opening](#), and please do ask the City if you have any questions as to what is, and isn't, allowed under the first part of Stage 2.

We also heard Monday night, from community leaders regarding the Santa Ynez Valley's current state of emergency food distribution. In light of the food supply shortfalls which are occurring on a Valley-wide

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basis, Monday night the Council acted to set aside \$40,000 (give or take \$10,000) to be used at the City Manager's discretion, to work with volunteer, non-profit and church organizations to purchase food for those in need. A distribution site will be set up by the Veterans Memorial Hall, including refrigerated trailers to facilitate these efforts.

In addition, the City Council deliberated and confirmed support to institute the State's "Great Plates Delivered" program (covid19.ca.gov/restaurants-deliver-home-meals-for-seniors) within Solvang. The City has established a plan with People Helping People (PHP) on the administration of this program. Through this program, the City will be helping our vulnerable population of seniors by providing them with three meals per day paid for by Federal (75%), State (19%) and City government. The City will be fronting the cost of food for the select Solvang restaurants that qualify to provide meals for Solvang seniors under this program's very specific guidelines. PHP's administrative cost for this program will not exceed 5% of the City funding, and the City will dictate a maximum cost per meal, per senior, for each of the restaurants. While the administrative costs of this program are reimbursable by FEMA, given the City's current financial situation the Council decided to enter into this program on a trial basis, and has only authorized funds for this purpose to carry the program through June 10, 2020, which is also the State's current end-date for the overall program.

More information about enrollment in the Great Plates Delivered program, will be released by the City in the coming days. Please watch www.SolvangResources.com for updates and alerts.

We also discussed during Monday night's Council Meeting, [a campaign](#) which the [League of California Cities](#) has started on behalf of interested City members: a grassroots coalition of local government, labor, and business, launching a new campaign "Support Local Recovery: Vibrant Cities. Strong Economies." in an effort to kick-start economic recovery in local communities. The coalition is calling on the State to provide \$7 Billion in direct and flexible funding to cities to support critical local services, as well as a portion of the State's CARES Act funding to help cities address COVID-19-related expenditures. The coalition is also calling on the Federal government to provide \$500 Billion in direct and flexible funding to local governments nationwide, to support essential services including police, fire, public works, permitting, and planning. The Solvang City Council voted to support this initiative during Monday night's meeting, and to send a letter to Governor Newsom and our legislative representatives requesting direct funding support to our City from State and Federal government, to compensate for revenue loss and additional expenditures due to the COVID-19 emergency.

The next [Regular Meeting of the Solvang City Council](#) will be held on **TUESDAY, May 26, at 6:30 PM.** In that meeting, we will discuss the current City of Solvang rental moratorium, and will consider community-voiced issues which currently exist on this topic. City staff will be presenting Council with recommendations for remedying some of the issues which pertain to the current moratorium on evictions.

On a lighter note, IDK Events also spoke during Monday night's Council meeting, on the topic of Solvang's new events permitting process. All proposed events will now be run through an automated and streamlined approval process, which categorizes all proposed events based on an under-500 person attendance or a 500+ attendance number – which would then require street closures.

The City and IDK also continue to work on a READY plan for the City of Solvang for Re-Opening of our economy. We were very hopeful last week, working on a Countywide re-opening plan with the County of Santa Barbara. The Governor has set forth a plan for Counties to move forward with Phase 2, Part 2 re-opening, which includes re-opening of most industries with modified social distancing guidelines. Each County has to prepare a plan for re-opening and self-certify that the County meets State guidelines. The County of Santa Barbara is well poised for certification "but for" the Governor's health guidelines on COVID-19 cases. In our situation, the case count includes a major outbreak in the Lompoc Prison which will continue to delay the ability of our economy to set forth on the path of economic recovery, unless we are allowed to remove the prison case count from our statistics.

As we look forward to the next steps in getting to a "new normal", and the State and County easing restrictions, we are actively preparing to assist our businesses to be able to get back to work. At the next Council meeting, the Council will be considering modifications to zoning regulations to expand outdoor

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spaces. On a more temporary basis, IDK is working with our business community to develop options to comply with modified social distancing guidelines as we come out of this epidemic. Some of the considerations include expanding outdoor patio or storefront space onto Copenhagen Drive, or utilizing the public parking lot by Solvang Park to provide expanded space for businesses to set up temporary retail and restaurant spots, with more appropriate social distancing in place.

Another topic for Council to consider at the next Council meeting will be Economic Development and specific site development at the Veterans Hall. We recognize the importance of Economic Development to our City and maintain a vibrant character to our community, making it a desirable place to live, play and do business. The Council will be considering moving forward with proposed conceptual development at and near the Veterans Hall site and will be discussing citywide economic development opportunities.

We hope that you can join us (virtually) for the next [City Council](#) meeting, May 26, 2020. All Regular Meetings of the Solvang City Council may be viewed via live stream, on the City's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UC15ThpbeQv6NkgYrup61SfA.

Instructions for remote Council meeting participation are located here:

www.cityofsolvang.com/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/03302020-509. Once again, ***we welcome public comment in advance of the meeting, for presentation during the session.*** While we have not had many public comments submitted to us since the beginning of the shelter-at-home orders, we still see public feedback circulate post-Council meetings. Please, if you have a comment or questions of any sort, submit it to the Council prior to the meetings.

Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint