



City of Gilroy Mayor's Office

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May 21, 2020

The County of Santa Clara California
Board of Supervisors
70 West Hedding Street East Wing, 10th Floor
San Jose, CA 95110

RE: Request to Sensibly Relax Shelter in Place Restrictions.

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the City of Gilroy, the City Council, and our residents, I write to request your assistance in working collaboratively in sensibly relaxing the shelter-in-place order in the City of Gilroy and other less-dense areas of the County.

We recognize the County's difficult position of having to balance public health with the livelihood and mental health of our residents and the economy of our communities—the County is burdened with significant additional costs to support our economic recovery and to ensure that it moves forward without prompting the rapid spread of the disease through our community. We appreciate the leadership of the County in being one of the first to take swift and decisive action to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This decision, albeit difficult, saved lives and protected the long term future of our community.

Because of the order to shelter in place, and the tenacity of our citizens, Gilroy's rate of COVID-19 cases have drastically reduced with our Fire Department recently reporting only two known cases in the last 37 days.

We understand that the Bay Area is moving to the early stages of Phase 2 of Governor Gavin Newsom's statewide reopening plan, which allows for the return of curb-side retail and increased manufacturing with physical distancing measures in place. In the State's plan, there is a process for Counties to apply for a variance from some of the restrictions and to re-open sooner. In fact, our close neighbor to the South, San Benito County, has received such a variance as they have met the readiness criteria.

As you are aware Gilroy is geographically isolated from the dense major population centers of the Bay Area proper, of which may yet still have some community spread COVID-19. Gilroy, in some regard, is more similar to the rural areas, like San Benito, that have reopened allowing in-person shopping and dining.

While the re-opening of Gilroy must remain a data-driven endeavor, based on indicators of health, we cannot ignore the economic and fiscal impact that the shelter in place is having on our residents and public budgets. Additionally, like residents, many businesses continue to suffer extreme hardship as a result of the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders. For many, revenues have almost completely evaporated.

Firefighters, law enforcement, city staff, and city officials remain on the frontline helping residents stay safe and in their homes, delivering emergency services, and supporting their local businesses and community organizations. However, as emergency costs continue to grow, city revenues to fund local services are plummeting. COVID-19 is having devastating impacts on city budgets and services statewide. The City of Gilroy is estimating a crippling \$7 million shortfall for this fiscal year and a \$4 million shortfall next fiscal year.

While our residents will never be able to recoup their lost wages, relaxing the shelter in place order would allow our community to begin the slow process of recovery. These actions will greatly assist with jumpstarting the economy, helping local families continue to thrive once again.

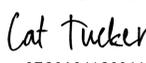
The City of Gilroy appreciates your assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or our Interim City Administrator, Jimmy Forbis at jimmy.forbis@ci.gilroy.ca.us .

Sincerely,

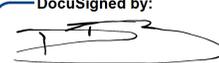
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Roland Velasco
Mayor, City of Gilroy

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Cat Tucker
Mayor, Pro Tempore

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Dion Bracco
Council Member

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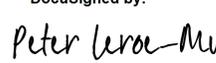
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Fred Tovar
Council Member

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Carol Marques
Council Member

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Peter Leroe-Munoz
Council Member

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Marie Blankley
Council Member

cc:

California Senator Bill Monning, California State Senate District 17
Assemblyman Robert Rivas, California State Assembly District 30
League of California Cities Regional Public Affairs Manager Seth Miller
Cities Association of Santa Clara County Executive Director Andi Jordan