



# Agenda Report

March 9, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Public Health Department

**SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE HEALTH OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to state CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption); and
2. Adopt a resolution ratifying the March 4, 2020, Health Officer declaration of a local health emergency in response to COVID-19.

**BACKGROUND:**

An outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan, China was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019, and an illness caused by a novel coronavirus called COVID-19 was soon identified as the cause. During the week of February 23, 2020 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported evidence of community spread of the virus in cases located in California, Oregon, and Washington. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.

CDC response guidance to local health departments, including the City of Pasadena Public Health Department ("PPHD"), requires extraordinary efforts to monitor and manage ongoing COVID-19 risk including monitoring individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19. As of March 4, 2020, there were 100 cases in the United States including ten deaths. There are currently no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Pasadena.

On March 4, 2020, Pasadena Public Health Director and Health Officer Dr. Ying-Ying Goh declared a local health emergency pursuant to California State Health and Safety

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Code recognizing COVID-19 as an imminent and proximate threat in the City of Pasadena. On the same day, the State of California and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health declared health emergencies.

Declaration of a local health emergency empowers the City to more effectively respond to COVID-19, coordinate with partner agencies including Los Angeles County and City of Long Beach Health Departments, seek and utilize mutual aid, and pursue potential federal and state reimbursement for costs related to response efforts. If the local health emergency is to remain in effect longer than seven days, City Council ratification of the local health emergency is required.

The PPHD recommends City Council adopt a resolution ratifying the Health Officer declaration of a local health emergency in response to COVID-19 and review the need for continuing the local health emergency at least every 30 days until the local health emergency is terminated.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

The proposed action is consistent with the City Council's strategic planning goal to ensure public safety by sustaining and enhancing the City's ongoing response to COVID-19 to protect the health and safety of Pasadena residents.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The actions proposed herein have been determined to be exempt from the CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the common sense exemption (formerly the "general rule") that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. The proposed resolution ratification does not involve any direct physical changes in the environment. Therefore, the actions proposed herein are exempt from CEQA per Section 15061(b)(3) (common sense exemption).

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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The future costs of responding to COVID-19 are unknown at this time due to evolving conditions. With the California state declaration of a health emergency, local COVID-19 response efforts may be eligible for state or federal reimbursement. Until there is a final determination on potential reimbursement, all expenditures will be recorded and tracked in the Health Fund and/or General Fund using existing appropriations. To date, less than \$10,000 has been expended in response to COVID-19.

Respectfully submitted,



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