

City of Richmond COVID-19 Online Town Hall

Friday, April 17 | Attendee Q&A

1. **Sean Smith – Can we get a public attendance count prior to the meeting starting?**
 - a. Yes. It may change during the call but we will be making note.
 - b. 117.

2. **Yen Do – Work with ALL labor Unions Tom!**
 - a. Of course!

3. **Kevin Mathieu – Are any city workers or elected officials or even contractors - esp police or fire been tested positive for Covid-19? Are any on stay at home for possible exposure? How many?**
 - a. Live answered.

4. **Sona Mahal – Hi, I'm interested in hearing City's efforts on providing housing for homeless members of the community. Also, please let us know if there are COVID testing sites for healthcare workers. Thank you in advance.**
 - a. Michelle Milam described efforts being taken by the homeless. Healthcare workers should refer to their primary or occupational health care providers for testing options.

5. **Anonymous – Why isn't Laura Snideman email address published on the City of Richmond website? Would you please let us know what it is for communications? Thank you.**
 - a. I had the same question!!!! I had to call to get her email.
 - b. We can send to everyone on the call after the call.

6. **Mandy Swirsding – City of Richmond Corona Virus Site:**
<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3914/Richmond-Coronavirus-Info>
 - a. City of Richmond Corona Virus Site- <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/coronavirus>

7. **Sona Mahal – Hi Chief French, it's good to see you again!**
 - a. We will relay your message.

8. **Kathleen – Where is donations center located-address & requirements please?**
 - a. Items accepted and upcoming dates and times are listed here:
<https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/donations>
 - b. Thank you!

9. **Sean Stalbaum – Is the City lobbying state and federal officials for relief funding given the potential financial impacts of COVID-19 on the City's Budget?**

- 10. Anonymous – What is the expected significant impact on budget in percentage or current estimates? The lack of specifics is not helpful.**
- My best guess is between 10% and 30% reduction in revenue for FY 20-21.
 - Thank you.
- 11. Desiree Heveroh – Courtyard at Marriott is being used to house the Homeless (good job!)- are any other Hotels in Richmond being considered for this same use coming up?**
- Michelle Milam answered live.
- 12. Michael Zephyr – I live in Marina Bay and safely walk the trails (keeping social distance). There are so many people out there on the trails (or even in the city) that are ignoring social distancing...packs or groups of people together. Some even coming close to me on the trail(s). Can social distancing signs be posted on the trails? And also, the same when I have to run necessary errands...I see packs of people together on the streets. Are the police patrolling and monitoring this?**
- We will pass along the concern regarding the trails to the City's Public Works and Police Departments. Police staff are engaged in continually educating the community about the shelter in place and social distancing.
- 13. Will Plutte – Do you have info on how the PPE supply level is at Richmond Kaiser? I've been told they could consider restarting elective surgery, except they lack PPE equipment. Also, how busy is it at Kaiser lately?**
- We do not have available information on the level of PPE at Kaiser Richmond.
- 14. Blanca Hernandez – What is the city doing to take care of the homeless population to make sure they are not unprotected on the streets? Additionally, what is the city doing to make sure that people who have lost, or will lose their income, do not end up evicted?**
- There is information for renters at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3364/Richmond-Rent-Program>.
- 15. Rita Barouch – Public comments about the proposed sewer rate increases were due April 21st. Given the City closures how can we deliver our letters? If they are mailed today will they be included? Please extend the date for submitting comments. Can comments be submitted by email now?**
- Live answered.
 - I didn't hear an answer, can you please tell me what it was?

16. Sean Smith – Are you aware the City of Richmond Rent Program has a surplus of roughly \$300,000 in taxpayer’s funds and is estimated to reach \$1,000,000 shortly? Richmond’s population is estimated to be 110,000. Why is the Richmond Rent Program’s budget on track to EXCEED the budget of Los Angeles’ rental program which serves a population of 4 MILLION people? What oversight measures are in place? Keep in mind this program is scheduled to exceed the annual budget of larger City such as Los Angeles. What oversight does the City council have over the rent board to assure that landlord’s money is not being misappropriated and this is not turning into a for profit business. Can this surplus money be used to help renters? Do the City have a emergency fund to avoid burdening landlords?

- a. The City Council has no control over the Rent Board, which was established by a ballot measure.

17. Anonymous – There are no nearby donations between now and May 5th.

Tuesday, April 21 – Thursday, April 23 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

Ygnacio Valley Library, 2661 Oak Grove Rd., Walnut Creek

Tuesday, April 28 – Thursday, April 30 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Antioch Community Center, 4703 Lone Tree Way, Antioch

Summit Center, 2530 Arnold Dr., Martinez

Tuesday, May 5 – Thursday, May 7 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Summit Center, 2530 Arnold Dr., Martinez

- a. We just held a three day donation event at Richmond City Hall from April 14-16. More donation events will be organized and posted at <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/donations>.

18. Mandy Swirsding – Contra Costa County Health Services Site: <https://cchealth.org>

- a. <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/>.

19. Rebecca Newburn – Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library will be providing free seeds and classes for beginning gardeners. We are working with some community markets and organizations to find locations to provide seeds. Information will be forthcoming at RichmondGrowsSeeds.org.

- a. Bravo! Wondering if new local community gardens are being considered like in Hilltop or other area parks. Is the city helping with such a possible plan?

20. Anonymous – Why are landlords forced to carry the burden for the renters of Richmond and what relieve does the city intent to give landlords?

21. Anonymous – Of the 66 cases of Covid 19 in Richmond reported by the County, are there certain population groups or geographic areas that have been more effected than others? Has the number of repoted cases reached any kind of plateau?

- a. The county provides additional information on their dashboard at <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/dashboard>.
- b. Thank you. That is the source of the information that I have been using. I am curious about Richmond in particular.
- c. They have not provided any of those other details they provide specifically by city.

22. Kathleen – GRIP needs volunteer to help with meal preparation for homeless.

- a. GRIP is running services at Courtyard Marriott. We are servicing Rescue Mission families. Our website is gripcares.org.
- b. Ways to help: <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3923/Stay-Engaged>.
Resources available at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3915/Health-Information-and-Community-Resourc>.

23. Mandy Swirsding – Supervisor Gioia’s Food mapping site:

<https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fea1f3021a50455495b7e7e11325ecd4>.

Call 211 for Medi CAL and MediCare food delivery.

WCCUSD FOOD PICK UP:

<https://www.wccusd.net/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=3328&ModuleIn stanceID=22779&ViewID=6446EE88-D30C-497E-9316-3F8874B3E108&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=67888&PageID=13823>.

- a. <https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fea1f3021a50455495b7e7e11325ecd4>.

24. Yen Do – Has the City tapped into State and Federal funds too? Please work with SEIU 1021 and Local 21 for more info.

25. Michael Zephyr – As for Internet access...Comcast is running specials for low income residents: \$9.95/Mo.

- a. Comcast Site: <https://corporate.comcast.com/covid-19>.

26. Mandy Swirsding – City of Richmond Corona Virus Site:

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3914/Richmond-Coronavirus-Info>.

- a. City of Richmond Corona Virus Site- <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/coronavirus>.

- 27. Sona Mahal – How are the fire fighters doing? Is there any concern about not having adequate response to fire events due to COVID? Do you recommend anything different we should do other than the routine fire prevention strategies in home?**
- We remain fully staffed and operational. The best things that residents can do is help the community flattening the curve by abiding by the shelter in place - and aiding their neighbors when available. For more ways to stay engaged, visit <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3923/Stay-Engaged>.
- 28. Harriet McKechnie – How can seniors who can't leave home get food delivered?**
- One way they can receive food is to sign up for Meals On Wheels: <http://mealsonwheelsofcontracosta.org>.
For Medi CAL & Medi Care seniors, they can call 211. Medi Care and MediCAL is delivering meals to their members.
 - Please contact Meals on Wheels at (866) 669-6697.
<http://mealsonwheelsofcontracosta.org/index.html>
Additional food options: <https://cchealth.org/senior-nutrition/cccafe.php>
- 29. Mandy Swirsding – Health and Community Resources:**
- <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3915/Health-Information-and-Community-Resourc>.
- <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3915/Health-Information-and-Community-Resourc>.
- 30. Sona Mahal – Is there a Town Hall meeting by CCC Health Department?**
- We do not have information about a town hall scheduled by the health department, but they post updates and videos at <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/health-services-updates>.
- 31. Anonymous – Attn Landlords a facebook page is coming soon to help support the Landlords of Richmond. Best wishes to you all!**
- 32. Mandy Swirsding – Click here for information on how you can stay engaged and help:**
- <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3923/Stay-Engaged>.
- <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3923/Stay-Engaged>.
- 33. Mandy Swirsding – City of Richmond Corona Virus Site:**
- <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3914/Richmond-Coronavirus-Info>.
- City of Richmond Corona Virus Site- <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/coronavirus>.

- 34. LauRiece Mills – Will there be a local relief fund created, similar to the microgrants being created in neighboring cities in partnership with workforce development? What date will this funding be available for local businesses?**
- Information on available resources is evolving. Visit the city's economic development site at <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/2766/Economic-Development> or the city's resources site at <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3915/Health-Information-and-Community-Resourc>.
 - This site and the administrative staff (Janet) are not helping small businesses. The only option that they give you is loans. Loans that drive small businesses into further debt. Many businesses that are non-essential have reopened because they know they aren't getting any support if they follow the order to stay closed.
- 35. DeLong – Are volunteers screened for COVID-19?**
- 36. Blanca Hernandez – Following up on the issue of proposed sewer rate increase, will the city delay a vote on this? Considering that people can't pay for food, much less an increase in sewer.**
- Yes, this is not a good time to add to the difficulty of being a homeowner!
 - The increased fees are not due until November of 2020.
- 37. Joey Smith – Thank you for this Tele-Town Hall. Please consider having some of the future forums/Town Halls after usual work hours to make it assessable for our essential employees who are working/commuting during the day.**
- Your request will be shared with the organizing group, following the event.
- 38. LauRiece Mills – It's clear that the City of Richmond has no urgency about helping small local businesses.**
- Economic development resources can be found at <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/2766/Economic-Development>. Free counseling available from Contra Costa Small Business Development Center https://www.contracostasbdc.org/index_contra_costa.
- 39. Valerie Jameson – Are there also a number of allotted hotel rooms allocated to people recently released from county jails?**
- 40. Anonymous – Would it be possible to make it mandatory to wear a mask in the City of Richmond?**
- 41. Aluah Alishlah – Will the City of Richmond still penalize persons/entities who own land/property where homeless encampments are taking place? During the shelter in place its extremely difficult to remove persons from encampments.**

42. Mandy Swirsding – Contra Costa County Health Services Site: <https://cchealth.org>.

a. <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/>.

43. Michael Zephyr – In regards to testing, to accurately track the virus *everyone* needs to be tested. Has the County indicated anything about eventually getting everyone tested? That includes those with or without symptoms.

44. Kevin Mathieu – What are the specific plans with dates for addressing Food Insecurity concerns, before the start of May? What new locations for food bank, food closet, and food pantries are planned for expected needs for citizens? All 3 of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County are closed / suspended. As is Contra Costa College. This issue has now been only very lightly briefly addressed in this event, without any specifics offered - besides a link to the long standing Food bank and Food Closet programs. I do not hear of anything new being announced so far. My concerns come from the release of the “In Harms Way” economic report <https://economicrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/In-Harms-Way.pdf>. I am very about food insecurity for fellow citizens asup to 57% unemployment expected in the area.

a. We are working with the food bank, the school system and private donors to assist and part of the fund established will be to address that issue.

b. What is the schedule with specific dates / deadlines for announcement of new programs or plans? The month of May is only a few weeks away. Thank you.

c. For food services for people in need please take a look at the below interactive map for food pick up options: Supervisor Gioia’s Food mapping site:

<https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fea1f3021a50455495b7e7e11325ecd4>.

45. Sona Mahal – Is there any spike in crime during the pandemic? Mail thefts? House robberies?

a. Don’t expect any specific answers. This is sadly so fuzzy and near useless. Oakland has had a significant rise in home invasions. We don’t know if that is happening here.

46. Leisa Johnson – Will the City do the right thing and postpone the Public Hearing next Tuesday regarding the Sewer Rate Increase until after the Shelter-in-Place has been fully lifted? As of April 14th, the City has not yet provided mechanisms that allows the Public to actively participate (read their own comments into the record) in City Council meetings, let alone Public Hearings. Moreover, the City did not read all Public comments into the record last Tuesday nor provide access to Public comments in real time. Finally, I am hearing mixed reports that some people are being told that electronic protests are being accepted, which contradicts the mandate laid out in the Notice. Can you please clarify for the Public: 1) Will the hearing be delayed; 2) Will electronic protests be accepted. Thank you.

- a. YES!
- b. Yes to both questions?
- c. And if so, how is this information going to be disseminated to the >21,000 impacted properties?
- d. I have been told that the electronic protests are being logged. I don't think the hearing will be delayed because it is time-sensitive. However, the increased fees do not come due until November of 2020.
- e. This is viewed by many as voter suppression when they can't actively participate in a Public Hearing and to date have not provided access to all public comments in real time. And there is much that needs to happen before any sewer increase, including an independent financial audit.

47. Edie Alderette-Sellers – As a landlord who forgave rent for all my tenants to only cover costs and take no funds toward my working reserve for future maintenance, is there any thinking toward providing any relief? Possibly relief or deferrment of costs that the city can adjust, like our license fees or rent board costs? Many of us are doing the right thing by people, and relief for us would not only not incentivize doing the right thing, it penalizes us for doing the right thing?

48. Jan Brown – Thank you. This has been very informative and helpful. I am sorry that I have to exit at this time. Keep up the good work!

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

49. Edie Alderette-Sellers – Good town hall, all.

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

50. Yen Do – Hang in there. IN THIS TOGETHER!

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

51. Melinda McCrary – Many thanks for this important event. It is so good to see our leaders during this uncertain time. I hope everyone stays well. <3

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

52. Anonymous – Best wishes , all & good health!

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

53. Mandy Swirsding – Supervisor Gioia’s Food mapping site:

<https://cocogis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fea1f3021a50455495b7e7e11325ecd4>.

- a. Good resource.

54. Anonymous – Will mask be mandatory in Richmond?

- a. Good question. It has been recommended but has not been formally mandated at this time. That may change as we gradually phase out of shelter in place.

55. Mandy Swirsding – City of Richmond Corona Virus Site:

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/3914/Richmond-Coronavirus-Info>.

56. Kevin Mathieu – When is the next zoom meeting call for updates? Will this be weekly?

57. Michael Zephyr – Thank you Michelle. Another great meeting. Please keep these up. Well done!

- a. Thank you for participating in our event.

58. Deb Letner – Thank you for setting up this online Town Hall! Everybody stay safe and healthy!

- a. Thank you for participating.

59. Mary Lou Herlihy – Thank you for doing this and for recording it. GREAT team. Keep it up. Stay safe!

- a. Thank you for participating.

60. Kevin Mathieu – Please do publish all the questions at the start of the zoom next time, so that we understand what questions will be answered and have been submitted.