



Mayor's Message – May 6, 2020

As we make some forward progress in returning to our 'new normal' life in our beautiful city, we remain cautious – though optimistic. A few updates relevant to us following the Governor's latest orders:

- Last week the Federal Health task force conducted **75 random tests** in Llano County (and 35 other counties). We were especially interested to see if people without real symptoms might turn out to be carrying the virus at high rates. **The good news is that of the 67 results** (8 of those tested may have driven in from a nearby county or poor samples) – 66 were negative and one is still pending (perhaps to be retested). NO positive results for HSBay. This is wonderful news and helps with some level of confidence that our current protocols are keeping us safe. The Governor reported that overall of the sites tested, they had a 90%+ negative finding.
- This does not mean that the very protocols that have been keeping us safe can be dropped. **We have to continue to assume the virus is alive and well** – and take precautions -recommended to wear a mask in high traffic public areas (grocery stores, etc) mainly to keep you from inadvertently touching your nose/face, sanitizing hands as soon as you leave an area, and keeping your social distancing. When with those you know who have been COVID free for two weeks+, continue safe practices – as we gradually begin enjoying a meal, some social time.
- We are pleased for our community business owners of **salons that they can begin to operate**. They have been hard hit financially as solo business owners. They will need to use safety protocols (appointment only, masks considerations, etc), but it is a small step to help them get back on their feet safely (and help with the 'beautification' of our city!). **It will be important for us to monitor** over the next two weeks to ensure we don't see a rise in virus infections which would trigger some steps back. We know there will always be some infection until a full out vaccine is in place and more wide-spread preventative testing is available. Please continue to pray for (and applaud) our medical workers and first responders who have made this possible. I am so proud of the MANY supportive actions taken by all of you for them.
- We have been so proud to see citizens take responsibility as our restaurants have opened (at limited capacity) and other small retail shops/pro shops begin opening. It has been hard to explain how people can shop for clothes and other items at Walmart, Target, or other big box stores while small businesses had to shut down because they don't have a component that sells grocery item or construction materials. **If we use safety measures, we should be able to support our neighborhood businesses**. We can feel a trust in our local neighbors having safely isolated and taken precautions to not be exposed than perhaps in mobile high traffic city areas.
- **The City Council meeting will remain closed** to physical attendance for May, preparing to return to a socially distanced audience in June. Interested citizens will be able to listen in (see City Website) and the council meeting will be audio taped as always. No special topics are on the agenda – and a summary of the meeting will appear in the Council Comments in the paper.
- Road work on Hwy 2147 continues, baby step progress in discussions for internet stability, development of the Nature Park continues, and the Resort properties/amenities are nearing completion. Our area churches are making decisions for open worship services...and small groups of social games and gatherings are slowly finding confidence. This comfortably paced forward movement, paired with awareness of sanitation practices, is like the fresh air of our spring weather. Hopefully, next month we can see the gradual return of friends/family visitors to share **the blessing of our beautiful city – and our COVID Free hometown**.

