

March 27, 2020

Mayor James Butts and Inglewood City Council
1 W Manchester Blvd
Inglewood, CA 90301

RE: Public Comments Submitted for the March 27, 2020 Council Meeting

The Healthy Inglewood Coalition is a group of community members, housing advocates, labor unions, clergy and congregations that have come together to assist our community during this devastating COVID-19 health crisis. As numbers of cases go up (1,216 including 21 deaths) in Los Angeles County, we are reminded that the pandemic is going to get worse before it gets better. Public health officials are beyond the point of stopping the spread into preparing for what happens when our hospitals and clinics reach their capacity to treat people who are infected.

These are scary and anxious times for us--not only are our lives and the lives of our families at risk by this highly infectious and deadly disease but we are starting to feel the economic impact of public health orders to self-quarantine resulting in massive layoffs, cut hours, and loss of wages. As schools close down and non-essential services shutter, Inglewood residents – especially those most vulnerable among us – need our City Government to take swift and decisive action to maintain the basic quality of life for Inglewood residents. To ensure that people don't lose their homes during this crisis, essential workers like healthcare workers on the frontlines are protected, people have access to healthcare regardless of status, no added financial stress is added to laid off workers or (now) part time workers, seniors can receive the support they need, and the houseless can have their sanitary needs met.

As you deliberate how best to serve our City, we respectfully submit a number of policy priorities we consider essential in this dangerous and uncertain time:

Quality of Life

1. Suspension of parking tickets
 - We believe recommendation #3 on the Agenda doesn't go far enough. People should be staying inside and observing social distancing, not forced to move their cars to crowded parking lots weekly, risking exposure. The City should suspend ticketing and towing of vehicles unless there is a true public safety emergency (parked in front of a fire hydrant, etc.)
2. Fund social services
 - The City should provide childcare for essential workers either directly or through aid to local organizations.
 - Increase delivery support of the Inglewood Senior Center food and supply distribution, and expand access to children, families, and people experiences homelessness.
3. Student support
 - The City should provide free, reliable broadband internet access so students can learn from home

- Ensure that adequate protections exist for unhoused students to continue their education

Housing Stability

1. Amend the eviction moratorium to provide meaningful help
 - The current moratorium does not go far enough to protect renters, homeowners, or landlords. The City should use its broad emergency powers to suspend the obligation to pay rents and mortgages during the state of emergency. The massive economic fallout means that, even once the emergency is over, residents will struggle to repay these debts, leading to widespread foreclosures and evictions.
 - Alternatively, the City could ban all evictions (not just COVID-19 related nonpayment), convert any unpaid rents or mortgages into consumer debt, and base the repayment on a percentage of the debtor's rent or mortgage payment, rather than a fixed period of time.
2. The City should use public funds to provide emergency assistance
 - To prevent evictions and foreclosures, the City should create an emergency assistance fund to provide residents with necessary payments to avoid eviction or foreclosure.
3. Set up public health infrastructure for residents experiencing homelessness
 - According to the CDC, proper hygiene is essential to preventing the spread of COVID-19. The City should keep public restrooms and facilities open so people experiencing homelessness can avoid catching or spreading COVID-19. The City should also provide dumpsters, showers, hand washing stations, vermin abatement, laundry vouchers, soap, and water to every informal settlement in Inglewood.

Worker Protections

1. Mandate 14 paid sick days for all Inglewood workers
 - The number of residents who are or should be self-isolating to avoid catching or spreading COVID-19 is growing exponentially. The City should require all employers to offer universal 14 days (80 hours) of paid sick leave with the understanding that in a public health emergency all workers have immediate access to their paid sick time regardless of approval by a doctor.
2. Ensure public health protections for all essential workers
 - All employers should be required to give breaks every 30 minutes for handwashing, regardless of how shifts are structured or scheduled, and to provide all necessary protective gear and sanitary cleaners.
3. Adopt worker retention and right of recall policies for businesses affected by the crisis
 - Many businesses are temporarily closing or will be sold due to the economic effects of the crisis. Workers should not suffer due to this. The City should require that businesses that reopen prioritize hiring laid off workers. Any business sales should require the retention of existing or laid-off workers as well.

We look forward to discussing these priorities with you and are ready and willing to work with the city to ensure our community is safe and protected. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Healthy Inglewood Coalition

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