



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO:

MEETING DATE: September 21, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: September 21, 2020

**From: Kevin Gardiner, Community Development Director – (650) 558-7253
Joseph Sanfilippo, Economic Development & Housing Specialist – (650) 558-7264**

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Send a Letter to the Governor Requesting Consideration of Organized Hotel Meetings of Up to 50 Persons

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Mayor to send a letter to Governor Newsom on behalf of the City's hoteliers requesting consideration of allowing organized meetings for up to 50 persons.

BACKGROUND

The City Council's Economic Development Subcommittee (comprised of Vice Mayor O'Brien Keighran and Councilmember Ricardo Ortiz) convened with Burlingame's hoteliers and the San Mateo County/Silicon Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau (SMCCVB) on September 9, 2020. During that meeting, the hoteliers described the dramatic reduction in occupancy rates they have faced, with rates falling from nearly 90% in the previous year, to approximately 20% currently (draft meeting minutes attached). As San Mateo County progresses on the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy tier list, these occupancy rates will increase, albeit at a much slower rate than previously anticipated.

Given Burlingame's proximity to the San Francisco International Airport, Burlingame hotels have traditionally served corporate travelers and hosted corporate events. As the State currently prohibits gatherings, the sector is suffering. At the subcommittee meeting, the hoteliers requested that the City Council send a letter to the Governor requesting that organized gatherings of up to 50 people be permitted.

DISCUSSION

The hoteliers are confident that they can provide a safe experience and will follow all State guidance for social distancing, face coverings, frequent cleanings, and prohibition of shared food and drink. In addition, all gatherings would only accept registered attendees in an effort to minimize community spread and assist with local contact tracing efforts. The request would be in keeping with the standards for places of worship, which are currently permitted to host gatherings for 25% of their maximum capacity, or 100 people (whichever is less).

Given that the City's budget is historically bolstered by transient occupancy tax (TOT) revenues, the unprecedented downturn in travel and leisure spending is likely to pose difficulties in the future. Being able to safely host meetings of up to 50 persons would presumably allow hotels to increase occupancy.

The resolution and draft letter to the Governor requesting consideration of organized hotel meetings of up to 50 persons are attached.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

Exhibits:

- Resolution
- Draft Letter
- Draft September 9, 2020 ED Subcommittee Minutes