



The Week in Review

City Manager Grace K. Leung

March 12, 2021

Upcoming Events

Monday, March 15

Library Lecture Hall Design Committee Meeting

[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)

1 p.m.

Monday, March 15

Board of Library Trustees Meeting

[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)

5 p.m.

Monday, March 15

Aviation Committee Meeting

[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)

5 p.m.

Wednesday, March 17

Housing Element Update Advisory Committee Meeting

[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)

6 p.m.

Thursday, March 18

District 1 Virtual Town Hall Meeting

[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)

5 p.m.

Community members,

Great news this week: The new, and much improved, COVID-19 metrics place Orange County squarely in the Red Tier. As a result, Newport Beach will be able to expand and resume certain activities – including indoor dining with reduced capacity – very soon. Also, as you have no doubt heard by now, the State announced that outdoor stadiums, ballparks and theme parks can reopen with restricted capacity beginning April 1.

The State made other adjustments to the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) that could help Orange County transition more quickly into less-restrictive tiers.

An additional metric was added to account for vaccinations among lower-income communities that have been hardest hit by the virus. This new metric adjusts case counts so that at certain vaccination milestones – 2 million and 4 million doses administered within those communities – counties may be able to move faster through the tiers. Fortunately, the state is nearing the 2 million mark for vaccine distribution to low-income communities.

For Orange County, it means that we could enter the Red Tier by the middle of next week, or sooner if the vaccination number is reached. [Please click here](#) for the updated list of permitted activities and allowed capacities within each tier.

This week, Orange County's 7-day average daily case number decreased to 6.0, down from last week's 7.9. The other two key metrics are also trending down; in fact, those numbers remained within the even less restrictive Orange Tier threshold. The County's positivity rate (the percentage of positive tests among those tested) dropped to 3.2%, down from 3.9% last week. The health equity metric decreased from 5% to 4.1%.

Visit the City's website for a complete listing of meetings and events at newportbeachca.gov/events.

Thursday, March 18
Planning Commission Meeting
[\(See agenda for instructions on how to participate\)](#)
6:30 p.m.

Here is updated vaccine information and resources as of March 12:

- Through the County's Othena platform, pending vaccine supply, you can now select the vaccine type you would like to receive (Moderna, Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson) as you schedule an appointment. Vaccine selection depends on which vaccines are available on open appointment dates.
- The Disneyland Super POD (point of disbursement) is now only dispensing vaccines through American with Disabilities Act (ADA) lanes/in-car vaccinations. The site will have less capacity than the County's other POD sites and is intended to serve people who require an ADA-accessible option.
- The County is now accepting vaccination registrations by phone for those who lack access to technology. The Orange County Health Care Agency hotline, (714) 834-2000 can provide assistance with Othena registration and support. Those with computer and smartphone access are still encouraged to register through the Othena.com platform.
- Vaccine eligibility in Orange County remains in [Phase 1B](#), under state guidelines, a group that includes educators, food service, grocery and agriculture workers, child care providers and emergency services workers. The County will reevaluate expanding eligibility to more populations weekly as more vaccine doses become available.
- The County's Othena system is not the only vaccination option, as distribution to hospitals, clinics and pharmacies increases. Even if you are registered with Othena, you can also register with the state's "My Turn" system, administered by Blue Shield, and find other resources at [this link](#). Orange County has developed a similar [vaccine resource web page](#).
- You can subscribe to Orange County's weekly OC COVID19 Vaccine Facts newsletter [at this link](#). Scroll down until you see the subscribe button and enter your email.

COVID-19 Cases in Newport Beach

As of March 11, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Newport Beach was 3,645 and the total cases in Orange County was 248,217. The number of recovered COVID-19 patients countywide as of March 11 was 238,305. These figures are provided to Orange County by the California Department of Public Health.

Initial Draft of Housing Element Now Available

City staff and its consultant team have been working with the Housing Element Update Advisory Committee (HEUAC) and the community over the past eight months to prepare an initial draft of the updated General Plan Housing Element. As a reminder, this effort is required by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in response to the 6th Cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation of 4,845 new housing units for Newport Beach.

The initial draft is now available online. Please click [here](#) or visit www.NewportTogether.com to download and view it! The entire community is invited and encouraged to review the document and to provide comments. Please provide your comments on this initial draft no later than Friday, April 30, 2021. All comments and questions should be submitted to GPUUpdate@newportbeachca.gov.

The HEUAC will also be discussing this draft version at its Wednesday, March 17, 2021, meeting and its March 31, 2021, meeting.

A virtual public workshop will be held on Monday, March 22, 2021. The Planning Commission and City Council will review the draft document in a study session at their April meetings. In May 2021, the City will transmit a progress draft to HCD for a preliminary 60-day review and comment.

This is the very first draft of the document. There will be plenty of opportunities to help shape it before its State-mandated adoption date in October 2021. The entire community is encouraged to participate and review it.

The City greatly appreciates the community's continued participation and engagement in this challenging and unprecedented update process.

Initial Draft of Circulation Element Now Available

Much like the Housing Element update, City staff and its consultant team have been working with the Planning Commission and the community over the past eight months to prepare an initial draft of the updated General Plan Circulation Element. The Circulation Element is being updated simultaneously with the Housing Element to comply with new mandates, such as "complete streets." It is also being refreshed to reflect the community's vision on trending transportation matters, including electric vehicles (EV), rideshare services (e.g., Uber and Lyft), public transportation, telecommuting, as well as parking and parking lot management.

The initial draft will be available online. Please click [here](#) or visit www.NewportTogether.com to download and view it! Please note, at this time, the draft does not include the technical appendices, as those documents are still in progress. The entire community is invited and encouraged to review the document and to provide comments. Please provide your initial comments on this initial draft no later than Friday, April 30, 2021. All comments and questions should be submitted to GPUUpdate@newportbeachca.gov.

The Planning Commission will also be discussing this draft in a study session at its Thursday, March 18, 2021, meeting. A virtual public workshop will be held on Monday, April 5, 2021, for additional community feedback. Along with the Circulation Element update, City staff and its consultant team will be working on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will provide for additional public input opportunities.

This is the very first draft of the document. There will be plenty of opportunities to help shape the document. The entire community is encouraged to participate and review it.

Homelessness Update

Addressing homelessness continues to be a priority in the City's ongoing COVID-19 response, and City staff works closely with our contractor City Net, and our regional partners throughout the county and state. The City Net hotline number is (714) 451-6198. Those who call the hotline may leave a detailed voicemail message for themselves or others in need and City Net staff will respond within 48 hours. For immediate assistance, call the County's Crisis Prevention Hotline at (877) 7-CRISIS or (877) 727-4747.

City staff presented an update on homeless strategies at a City Council Study Session on February 23. You can view the presentation [at this link](#).

The City discourages panhandling in favor of targeted assistance through the Good Giving Program. Donations received through the program enable staff to purchase items such as bicycles, work boots,

and small household items for newly housed people. All donations are tax deductible. If you would like more information, or to donate, please visit our [Good Giving Program web page](#).

Success Stories:

- The City's Homeless Liaison Officer placed 16 people, several of whom had been staying by the Newport Pier, into the new Yale Transitional Center in Santa Ana. The County of Orange opened the center last month. The facility provides shelter for as many as 425 people experiencing homelessness and provides case managers who locate appropriate housing, assist with job searches, and provide other on-site services.
- City Net staff placed one person into the County's Yale Transitional Center. The person was staying by the Newport Transportation Center.
- City Net staff facilitated an early retirement interview with the Social Security Administration for a man staying by the Balboa Pier. He is now receiving monthly income and is seeking permanent housing
- The Homeless Liaison Officer placed an honorably discharged veteran into a motel as he awaits a housing voucher. The veteran qualifies for a Housing and Urban Development Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) voucher. The HUD-VASH voucher provides rental assistance for homeless veterans, with supportive case management.
- City Net staff met with a newly housed couple in their apartment to provide support and household items. City Net collaborated with American Family Housing to place the couple. American Family Housing, founded in Santa Ana in 1985, provides housing assistance and an array of services for those in need. The couple expressed their gratitude to the City of Newport Beach and City Net for the housing navigation assistance.
- City Net staff continues to provide food gift cards, support, and case management to several people sheltering in motels while they await placement into permanent, supportive housing.

Treasury Report

The January 2021 Treasury Report is available on the City's website at: www.newportbeachca.gov/treasury.

As of January, the City's portfolio totaled about \$317.1 million. Approximately \$88.3 million of the portfolio was invested in very liquid investments available for day-to-day operations and major construction expenditures.

The short-term portfolio (\$217.1 million) had a weighted average effective maturity of 1.84 years. The trailing twelve months' total return was 2.84%. Our benchmark for the same period, the ICE BofA 1-3 Year Treasury index, returned 2.56%. The income return on the portfolio, a better measure of income earned from the portfolio, was 2.09%.

Caltrans Street Closure Advisory

An overnight street closure is planned by Caltrans for Coast Highway through Mariner's Mile, from Newport Boulevard to Dover Drive, on Monday, March 15 from 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. Tuesday, March 16. Motorists in the area will be detoured around the closure and the map showing the detour can be found on the City's website under [Traffic Advisories](#).

Rainfall Update

We received a total of 0.69 inches of rain this past week (Wednesday and Thursday) as measured at the County rain gauge in Anaheim. This brings the season total (since the beginning of July) to 5.53 inches with 12.81 inches being the average through the end of this month and 13.93 inches being the annual average. All of the river flow, upstream in the Anaheim area is being captured and is being placed in the groundwater recharge system. This rainfall season is very likely to be stay below average and could lead to drought conditions in the near future. Utilities Department crews were out and about Wednesday morning at 4:30 a.m. to pump during the high tide and rain.

