



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 4/11/2020**

**El City Council Approves City Manager Recommendation to Cancel the  
Annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival for 2020 Due to COVID-19 Concerns**

**El Cerrito, Calif:** At the City Council meeting on April 7, 2020, the Council approved City Manager Karen Pinkos' strong recommendation that the 4th of July/worldOne Festival this summer be cancelled due to concerns around COVID-19.

Like the rest of the state, El Cerrito's City Hall has been closed since Governor Newsom issued the orders to shelter at home. Pinkos told the City Council that at this point, it would be nearly impossible to secure the necessary sponsorships and vendors during the shelter-in-place order and too late, once the order is lifted, to ensure a cost-neutral event. Additionally, even if the shelter-in-place order is lifted, she questioned the practice of planning for an event where large numbers of people would be in close proximity to each other so soon after the global pandemic emergency.

After the meeting, City Manager Pinkos said: "This is a painful decision to make, because the 4<sup>th</sup> of July/worldOne Festival is such a wonderful annual celebration of our community. However, I believe it is in the best interest of our community to cancel the event this year. At a time when we are facing such uncertainty with respect to this public health crisis, we want to do what is necessary to protect our residents, visitors, and City staff. I want to thank the City Council and our residents for their understanding as we continue to do our best to respond to these unprecedented times."

This decision comes at a time when the City is looking at a number of budget cuts to balance the City's already tight budget. The COVID-19 public health crisis has only deepened the budget challenges as many businesses remain closed and threaten to impact local revenue sources. Staff is considering making additional recommendations to the City Council ranging from reductions in services, reductions in staff and management personnel, and restructuring City operations. The City Council will continue to discuss the City budget at its next meeting on April 21, 2020.

**CONTACT:**

Maya Williams, Assistant to the City Manager  
City of El Cerrito  
(510) 215-4318  
mwilliams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

**###**