



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OPERATIONS AND REVENUES NOT IMMUNE TO EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Covington, WA – While residents work to manage stay home orders, social distancing and school closures, the City of Covington is preparing for impending revenue losses as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The city anticipates the biggest hit to its budget due to the COVID-19 crisis will be in sales tax revenues due to the closure of many commercial businesses as a result of orders issued by the governor. Other revenue losses will come from the lack of parks and recreation program fee income and aquatics center revenues during the closures, as well as decreased gas taxes as most citizens are ordered to stay home and less cars are on the roads.

Back in March, to prepare for the impending revenue losses, city departments immediately identified areas to freeze spending, variable hours staff including lifeguards and referees went on standby unemployment, and a decision was made to leave vacant positions unfilled until further notice. On Monday, April 13, after the governor had extended the stay home order, the city placed 50 percent of full time employees on standby unemployment.

“Many of our affected full time employees volunteered to go on standby unemployment and we hope that we can get them back to work as soon as possible,” said Regan Bolli, Covington’s City Manager. “In the meantime, we will work hard to continue to provide at least the basic services needed for the city to operate.”

Many of the staff now on standby are from the parks and recreation department as recreation classes, athletic leagues, special events, aquatics programs and the pool had to be canceled or closed to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Another large part of the employees now on standby are maintenance workers in the Public Works department. While on standby, employees are eligible for unemployment benefits but may be called into work at any time if the need arises.

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