



Date June 4, 2020

To Mendocino County Board of Supervisors; Mendocino County Public Health Officer

From Mendocino County Lodging Operators

Subject Reopening Lodging Requested Action

REQUESTED ACTION

That the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and our Public Health Officer support the opening of leisure travel, so as to meet the health, safety and economic needs of our county. This support may mean implementing a policy that 1) is no more restrictive than the State of California or 2) exercises County authority to open leisure travel should the State provide this option.

RECOMMENDED PLAN

We hope to embark on a process together whereby we work to reopen tourism in our community in a thoughtful and viable way. We seek this partnership with the County to practice solutions that keep our citizens safe and address the economic needs of both the tourism industry and the County as a whole. In order to make progress, we recommend three core principles to carefully reopen. The three principles are:

1. **HEALTH & SAFETY**
2. **STABLE PARTNERSHIP**
3. **ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

BACKGROUND

HEALTH & SAFETY

As we navigate our way forward, the overriding concern that must remain top of mind is public health. COVID 19 is among the health issues that should be addressed, but we must also weigh the non-COVID health consequences, including increased rates of depression, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, food poverty, and suicide, all exacerbated by job, housing and shelter insecurity.

Nationwide, this pandemic has hit marginalized populations the hardest: to our south, 97% of the COVID 19 cases in Sonoma County are in the Hispanic community. The vast majority of jobs in the tourism industry can be performed by people with little formal education, which provides a means for Mendocino County residents in the lower economic sector to earn a living. The longer tourism is closed, the more exposed this portion of our population becomes. Lodging is already accustomed to training our staff according to OSHA safety regulations; it is no different with the OSHA guidelines for COVID 19.

If we allow more of our community to slip into economic depravity, the long-term public health consequences will be severe. There are inadequate resources to combat the desperation being brought about by the pandemic and its economic consequences. We need to get our people back to work as soon as possible; tourism in Mendocino cannot wait, or we risk the permanent destruction of our community.

QUESTIONS:

- Will you please consider the big picture of our public health crises and include non-COVID health consequences as important factors in the conversation?
- At the State level, how much consideration is being given to the non-virus effects of this pandemic (specifically, mental health, economic well-being and the increasing poverty, and therefore exposure, of marginalized populations)?

STABLE PARTNERSHIP

We are your permanent partner in reopening the economy in a safe and responsible way. Over the past several months, lodging has worked to prepare processes for safely opening as soon as permitted by the State of California. We have developed detailed protocols for a safe reopening, have ordered PPE in large quantities and are in the process of retraining our employees to operate in a more responsible and deliberate way. We have direct and consistent communication with our guests. This makes us uniquely situated to partner with the County to deliver critical messages to our visitors in a way that is positive, constructive, and reinforces our commitment to community welfare.

Additionally, out-of-county visitors are already coming to Mendocino in large numbers - growing each week- and driving unlawful, irresponsible, unmonitored behaviors. By and large, they illegally camp, stay in private homes, or are day visitors, clearly leading to greater community health risk for everyone. Realizing that visitation to and through Mendocino is inevitable, a thoughtful and customized plan to reopen for our region is essential.

QUESTIONS:

- Will you accept our role as economic and community partners by allowing our industry to be the conduit through which safe and responsible visitation is allowed?
- At the State level, will you advance the idea that lodging is a safe portal for tourism, as opposed to the unchecked and uneducated travel that is currently happening?

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Economically, the coronavirus has shattered our public and private budgets — and has sent thousands of dedicated tourism and hospitality workers to the unemployment line across the county. Of course,

this is not news to you, as you are painfully aware. But because our economy is less diverse, and heavily dependent on tourism to survive, we need to be treated with greater urgency to ensure our survival.

Mendocino lodging has been shut down since mid-March, and this presents long term fiscal challenges for the County to be able to deliver basic services including law enforcement, firefighting, parks and trail maintenance, community development, code enforcement, engineering, economic development and administration.

If we do not reopen tourism soon, more small businesses will fail, many of the properties belonging to or rented by these businesses will go back to the banks and potentially remain vacant for years to come. Permanent job loss will decimate our communities, and the community fabric will be torn apart as people leave these areas in hopes of finding jobs in more economically viable locations. Our businesses, livelihoods, and the jobs of thousands of employees-our friends and neighbors-remain in peril.

QUESTIONS:

- Will you support us in allowing Mendocino County to reopen leisure travel as soon as it is permitted by the State of California or as soon as the State gives counties the authority to do so?
- How can we support your efforts to reopen leisure travel as soon as possible?

SUMMARY

We believe this core principles approach puts public health first, allows the Mendocino County lodging to reopen, and reinforces a stable partnership that is essential to the long-term health and vibrancy of our community.

On behalf of the undersigned lodging owners in Mendocino County, we thank you for your leadership and guidance during the COVID-19 crisis. Balancing the myriad challenges facing our community is very difficult in the best of times, let alone under the current circumstances.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request and remain ready to engage with the County as a partner on this journey back to a healthy and resilient community.

Respectfully,

[LIST OF ALL LODGING PROPERTIES IN SUPPORT WILL GO HERE]

Name

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Alyssa Cisneros
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Barbara Hurst
Beatriz Laguans
Bella Campos
Bhavesht Patel
Bianca Resto
Bonnie Noble
Brian Genao
Bridgette Zunino
Brooke Davis
Brooke ramirez
Cally Dym
Cam Witte
Cara Lamb
Carol Johns(Van Zandt's Redwood View Resort)
Carolyn Dunn
Cassandra Garza
Cassidy Bell
chelsea lopez
Chelsea Strupp
Cheri Osborne
Chong Mejias
Christina Neiman
Christopher Boettcher
Cindi Wagner
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Joey Oda

Johana Velazquez
JOHN CROCKER
John Dixon
Jon Glidewell
Jude Lutge
Judith Ventura
Julie Keaton
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kaitlyn clark
Karin Dorsey
kat hawley
Katherine Waid
Kayla Brianna
Kayla Mendoza
Kelly Bird
Kevin Orr
Kim Queen
Larry Willard
Laura Hockett
Lauren Ghiselli
Le John Escoro
Leslie Lutge
Lezlie Kookenboo
Lorin Ohayon
Luke Fraser
Lynne Hopper
Madelyn Tran
mariah braganza
Marilyn Rose
Marjorie Kamb
Mark Hancock
Mary Titus
Mary Williams
Meagan Demitz
Megan Cooper
Michael Gordon
Michelle Shortridge
Mila Cordero
Miren Alvarez
Nancy Cardenas-Fowler
Natalie Moore
Natilee Gonzalez
Neb Zewdie
Nick Patel
Nicole Fakrawalla
Niels Bjerre
Olivia Christian

Olivia Leach
Oscar Lerma
Pamela Perez
Pamela Pollard
peter hernandez
Peter Wells
Peyton Hetland
Qvy Ho
RAKESH TANEJA
Raquel Velazquez
Remigijus Milcius
Renata Dorn
Richard Keaton
Roselyn Zelaya
Rosemary Campiformio
Roshankumar Patel
SALLY GRIGG
Samir Tuma
sandra McElroy
Sara Hodge
Sarah Kammer
Scott Connolly
Scott Schneider
Shane Perrigo
Shanice Williams
Sharon Davis
Sharon Hansen
Shelley and Richard Priest
Sid Garza-Hillman
Sidra Stone
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Sofia De Leon
Sophia Lindner
Stacy Lopez
Stephanie Silva
Stephanie Voltero
Stuart Marcus
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Susan Winding
Susie Plocher
Tatiana Johnson
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Trevon Mehtlan
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