



# The Week in Review

City Manager Grace K. Leung

February 19, 2021

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## Upcoming Events

**Monday, February 22**  
**Aviation Committee Meeting**  
(virtual)

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

5:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 23**  
**City Council Study Session**

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

4 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 23**  
**City Council Regular Meeting**

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

5:30 p.m.

[\(Insider's Guide\)](#)

**Wednesday, February 24**  
**Housing Element Update**  
**Workshop (virtual)**

[\(Register here\)](#)

6 p.m.

**Thursday, February 25**  
**Corona del Mar BID Meeting**

[\(Register here\)](#)

7:30 a.m.

**Thursday, February 25**  
**Zoning Administrator Meeting**  
(virtual)

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

10 a.m.

Community members,

Orange County moved a bit closer to the Red Tier of the state's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) as this week's COVID-19 metrics continued to move in an encouraging direction.

The County's positivity rate (the percentage of positive tests among those tested) dropped to 7.8%, which is within the Red Tier threshold. The health equity metric decreased to 10.7% – still in the Purple Tier, but closer to the 8% needed to move into Red. And the 7-day average case number is down to 21.0 – higher than the 7.0 needed for Red Tier status, but a vast improvement from recent weeks. Last week's case count was 29.7, and in mid-January, it reached a high of 67.8. If these trends continue, Orange County may be able to move into the less restrictive Red Tier in a matter of weeks. It is important to note that the County must maintain the metrics for two weeks in order to be placed in the Red Tier.

There was more good news this week regarding youth and adult sports. The California Department of Public Health released [updated guidelines](#) that will allow organized and recreational outdoor sports such as baseball, soccer and football to be played competitively (with protective measures) in Purple Tier counties when the case counts fall below 14. This will take effect Feb. 26.

Unfortunately, the vaccine rollout experienced delays this week because of distribution challenges related to the snowstorms and cold weather across much of the U.S. The delays are expected to be temporary, but the County was forced to halt vaccinations of Moderna doses at the Disneyland vaccination site until the beginning of next week.

Visit the City's website for a complete listing of meetings and events at [newportbeachca.gov/events](http://newportbeachca.gov/events).

Here is updated vaccine information and resources as of February 19:

- The County's Disneyland Super POD vaccine distribution site is closed at least through Monday, February 22, pending delivery of additional vaccine supply. Those who have appointments scheduled will receive a notification of their rescheduled appointment date through the Othena portal.
- Earlier this week the County announced the opening of a third super site at the Anaheim Convention Center, which would focus on delivering second doses of the Moderna vaccine. The scheduled opening of Wednesday, February 24, may be postponed because of the Moderna vaccine delays.
- The Soka University Super POD remains open to provide a second-dose Pfizer vaccine, dependent on vaccine supply.
- If you missed it, Mayor Brad Avery recently sat down for an interview with Dr. Martin Fee of Hoag Hospital, who gave an informative update on COVID-19. The discussion included the impacts of the pandemic on Hoag, the outlook for vaccinations, and more. You can watch the video on NBTV government access cable channels or on the City's YouTube channel [at this link](#).
- The County has developed a weekly e-newsletter dedicated to vaccine information. You can sign up to receive the 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 February 18, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Newport Beach was 3,544 and the total cases in Orange County was 243,665. The number of recovered COVID-19 patients countywide as of February 18 was 220,609. These figures are provided to Orange County by the California Department of Public Health.

### **Circulation Element Visioning Workshop Held February 10**

Last Wednesday, February 10, the City hosted a workshop related to the Circulation Element update. If you were unable to make it, don't worry! The recording and all activities are posted [here](#).

By way of a quick recap, the workshop was attended by approximately 30 people and it focused on presenting areas of little to no policy change and areas for planned policy change. At many points throughout the workshop, community members were encouraged to join the discussion and present what is important to capture in the update.

To get the conversation started, City staff discussed the importance of maintaining consistency with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Master Plan of Arterial Highways, as well as the process to amend it. The concept of "complete streets" and what that means for the community was also discussed, including a potential refresh of the 2014 Bicycle Master Plan.

Additional topics of discussion were encouraging alternative transportation, such as bicycles and the enhancement of public transit (i.e., shuttles) to connect the various villages and neighborhoods. The community also took an interest in enhanced parking management through emerging technologies and improved curbside management for rideshare and valet services to help protect residential neighborhoods from excess commercial parking intrusion. Ideas for change included encouraging dedicated spaces for rideshare services, such as Uber and Lyft, and introducing new technologies to better manage existing parking lots.

Check out [www.newporttogether.com](http://www.newporttogether.com) and sign up to stay informed!

### **Homelessness Update**

Addressing homelessness continues to be a priority in the City's ongoing COVID-19 response, working closely with contractor City Net and 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.

### Success Stories

- City Net and American Family Housing continued to assist a formerly homeless man as he transitions into permanent housing. The man has been living in a motel since May as part of the state's Project Roomkey program. Prior to that, he had been staying by the Newport Transportation Center for several months. City Net provided kitchen appliances and American Family Housing provided furniture for his new home. American Family Housing, founded in Santa Ana in 1985, provides housing assistance and an array of services for those in need.
- The Homeless Liaison Officer and City Net placed an elderly man into a motel. The man had been staying by the Newport Pier and he is on the waiting list to enter the new Yale Transitional Center in early March. The Yale Transitional Center, located in Santa Ana, will serve 425 people with on-site services for case management, housing navigation, and job resources.
- The Homeless Liaison Officer and City Net assisted a military veteran with applying for the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). The EBT service provides \$125 a month per person to purchase food. The man now has a case manager with the Veteran's Affairs office to assist him with securing housing.
- City Net helped a man complete a housing assessment to locate appropriate living arrangements. City Net built rapport with the man for two months to earn his trust.
- A woman who has periodically experienced homelessness by the Newport Pier for 10 years extended her stay in a sober living home. The Homeless Liaison Officer located the program, assisted the woman with the intake process, and provided her with new clothing. The woman extended her stay from 30 days to 90 days to help ensure success in the program.
- 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.

### Insider's Guide for the Newport Beach City Council Meeting on February 23, 2021

Our next City Council meeting is Tuesday, February 23. Items that may be of interest are highlighted below. The entire agenda, and all reports, can be viewed [here](#).

There will be a Study Session at **4 p.m.**:

- The Council will receive an update from City staff on efforts to reduce homelessness in Newport Beach. The City has developed a comprehensive approach to assist individuals experiencing homelessness and connect them to appropriate county, state and federal resources. Staff will provide an update on the City's efforts, which include a temporary shelter partnership with the City of Costa Mesa and a proposal to develop permanent, supportive housing in Newport Beach.

The Regular Meeting begins at **5:30 p.m.** The following are items of note:

On the Consent Calendar:

- The Council will vote on preliminary steps to create an underground utility assessment district for a 50-block area of central Balboa Island. The request was submitted by residents in the area and met the 60 percent or greater approval necessary for Council consideration. The Council action would authorize City staff to prepare an engineering report and cost estimates for the project and prepare for a formal vote of approval by the property owners within the district.
- Council will also consider advancing an underground utility assessment district request by residents of Cliff Drive and Santa Ana Avenue between Old Newport Boulevard and Cliff Drive. The Council action on this item would approve assessments and financing for the project, approve an engineering report, and set a public hearing.

Public Hearings include:

- A proposed ordinance to eliminate an amortization period for non-conforming business signs. The proposed action would allow 327 existing signs that do not meet current municipal code standards to remain in place, under certain conditions. Non-conforming signs are those that were legally installed, but because of municipal code changes, no longer meet current standards. In a 2005 Council action, businesses were given 15 years, until October, 2020, to modify or remove non-conforming signs.
- A proposed zoning code amendment that would allow wine tasting rooms within an industrial zone located in the southwest area of the City, near 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Placentia Avenue. The current zoning limits eating and drinking establishments to take-out service and caps indoor seating at six people. The amendment would allow businesses to sell and serve wine, and allow expanded seating capacity based on parking availability and building and fire codes.

Current Business includes:

- The Council will receive an update on potential measures to increase safety on the Oceanfront Boardwalk. In September 2020, the Council approved the Oceanfront Boardwalk Safety Program that increased fines for speeding, among other measures. The Council also directed staff to study additional traffic-calming measures. Staff will report on the results of those studies. Additionally, staff will discuss the Boardwalk Ambassador Pilot Program that has recently begun.

