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City of Fremont Announces Relief Package for Renters and Small Businesses Impacted by COVID-19

Up to \$800,000 of Community Development Block Grant funding available

Fremont, Calif. – May 18, 2020 – The Fremont City Council unanimously approved a COVID-19 aid package targeting Fremont renters and small businesses whose incomes have been adversely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic response. The aid package, approved at the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on May 12, 2020, consists of two programs:

- 1) **Fremont Cares Rent Relief Program** will provide \$400,000 in rental assistance. Households that qualify may receive up to three months of rental assistance beginning March 17, 2020, the date of the first Shelter-in-Place Order issued by the Alameda County Health Officer.
- 2) **Fremont Small Business Relief Grant Program** will provide up to \$400,000 to small businesses in \$5,000 or \$10,000 grants.

The Fremont Cares Rent Relief program will provide rental assistance to eligible households who are unable to pay their rent due to a COVID 19-related job loss or loss of income. In order to be eligible for the program, applicants must demonstrate their loss of employment and income is directly related to COVID-19; be a resident of Fremont; hold a lease in their name; and show their income was at or below 80% of Area Median Income on January 1, 2020. Applications will be weighted and scored due to applicant need with priorities given to: those at the lower end of the income scale; those who spend more than 30% of their household income for rent; single heads of household with minor children; those who have no additional resources for rental assistance; and those who may have special circumstances such as additional medical expenses due to COVID-19. The rent assistance payment will be made directly to the landlord.

The Small Business Relief Grant Program targets Fremont businesses who have suffered financial impact from COVID-19 pandemic responses. Grants awarded to selected businesses will be valued at \$5,000 for businesses with 10 or fewer employees on payroll at the time of the initial Shelter-in-Place Order and \$10,000 for businesses with 11 to 50 employees, respectively. In order to qualify for funding, businesses must have a physical storefront or place of business in a commercial-designated facility in Fremont (home-based businesses do not qualify); have demonstrable financial impact stemming from COVID-19; and commit to rehiring or

retaining at least one employee from a low-to-moderate income household. Additionally, businesses must have had a maximum of 50 employees in Fremont at the time of the first Shelter-in-Place Order issued on March 17.

The application period is now open for both programs. The Fremont Cares Rent Relief Program application period will be conducted in two rounds. Applications, with required documentation, will close for Round 1 on May 29, 2020, at 11:59 p.m., while applications for Round 2 will open on June 1 and close on June 12, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. The application period for the Small Business Relief Grant Program will start on May 18 and end on May 31, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Applications for both programs will be scored and ranked based on documentable need rather than a first-come, first-served basis.

“While these programs will bring much-needed relief to many Fremont community members and small businesses impacted by this pandemic, we know more investment is needed,” said Fremont Mayor Lily Mei. “The City will continue to advocate for critical resources for our community and actively pursue ways to support residents and local businesses during this unprecedented time.”

To apply for assistance, please visit the City’s website at www.Fremont.gov/RentRelief for the Fremont Cares Rent Assistance Program and www.Fremont.gov/BusinessGrants for the Fremont Small Business Relief Program. For language assistance services for the Fremont Cares Rent Relief Program, please call the Fremont Family Resource Center at 510-574-2000. For questions on the Small Business Relief Grant Program application, including language assistance, please call 510-284-4020 or email businessgrants@fremont.gov.

Funding for this relief package comes from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, as part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

For more resources, information, and updates for residents and small businesses, visit the City’s Coronavirus webpage at www.Fremont.gov/Coronavirus. General updates will be made to the City’s social media accounts on Facebook, Nextdoor, Nixle, and Twitter; follow our channels at www.Fremont.gov/SocialMedia.

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