

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION FINDING THAT, AS A RESULT OF THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED BY GOVERNOR NEWSOM, MEETING IN PERSON FOR MEETINGS OF THE SAN MATEO PLANNING COMMISSION WOULD PRESENT IMMINENT RISKS TO THE HEALTH OR SAFETY OF ATTENDEES

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Governor proclaimed pursuant to his authority under the California Emergency Services Act, California Government Code section 8625, that a state of emergency exists with regard to a novel coronavirus (a disease now known as COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2021, the Governor clarified that the “reopening” of California on June 15, 2021 did not include any change to the proclaimed state of emergency or the powers exercised thereunder, and as of the date of this Resolution, neither the Governor nor the Legislature have exercised their respective powers pursuant to California Government Code section 8629 to lift the state of emergency either by proclamation or by concurrent resolution in the state Legislature; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20 that suspended the teleconferencing rules set forth in the California Open Meeting law, Government Code section 54950 et seq. (the “Brown Act”), provided certain requirements were met and followed; and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed AB 361 that provides that a legislative body subject to the Brown Act may continue to meet without fully complying with the teleconferencing rules in the Brown Act provided the legislative

body determines that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees, and further requires that certain findings be made by the legislative body every thirty (30) days; and,

WHEREAS, this Commission concludes that there is a continuing threat of COVID-19 to the community, and that Commission meetings have characteristics that give rise to risks to health and safety of meeting participants (such as the increased mixing associated with bringing together people from across the community, the need to enable those who are immunocompromised or unvaccinated to be able to safely continue to participate fully in public governmental meetings, and the challenges with fully ascertaining and ensuring compliance with vaccination and other safety recommendations at such meetings); and

WHEREAS, California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”) and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) caution that the Delta variant of COVID-19, currently the dominant strain of COVID-19 in the country, is more transmissible than prior variants of the virus, may cause more severe illness, and that even fully vaccinated individuals can spread the virus to others resulting in rapid and alarming rates of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>); and,

WHEREAS, the San Mateo Planning Commission has an important governmental interest in protecting the health, safety and welfare of those who participate in its meetings; and,

WHEREAS, this Commission typically meets in-person in public building where other essential governmental functions take place, such that increasing the number of people present in those buildings may impair the safety of the occupants; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has informed County agencies about the unique advantages of online public meetings, which are substantial, as well as the unique challenges, which are frequently surmountable; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public health and safety, as affected by the emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, the San Mateo Planning Commission deems it necessary to find that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees, and thus intends to invoke the provisions of AB 361 related to teleconferencing;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED AND ORDERED that

1. The recitals set forth above are true and correct.
2. The San Mateo Planning Commission finds that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees.
3. Staff is directed to return no later than thirty (30) days after the adoption of this resolution with an item for the San Mateo Planning Commission to consider making the findings required by AB 361 in order to continue meeting under its provisions.
4. Staff is directed to take such other necessary or appropriate actions to implement the intent and purposes of this resolution.

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