ATTN: Laura Snideman, Mayor Tom Butt, Richmond City Councilmembers, and Supervisor John Gioia.

Who we are:
Richmond Our Power Coalition (ROPC) is a group of community-based organizations fighting for Richmond residents. We are creating models for a Just Transition for and by local frontline community members that will build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy.¹

Problem:
Governmental actions in these moments test our collective values and leadership. We need solutions for the moment and long-term systemic change that serve those in our community who are most in need. The COVID-19 pandemic is a threat multiplier – exacerbating existing inequality. Across the board, elders, people with disabilities, and pre-existing conditions such as respiratory diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure and other heart diseases experience great risk to their health and wellbeing. Statistically, Black people are dying of COVID-19 at a disproportionately high rate.² Working people who live paycheck to paycheck are losing hours or getting laid off, while others who work in healthcare, delivery or food service go to work every day and risk exposure. While we are called upon to both shelter in place and socially distance, incarcerated and unhoused people cannot do either. Survivors of domestic violence including children and youth face safety issues in their own homes. Many immigrants fear accessing resources and becoming a public charge while the racism of the current administration has promoted anti-Asian sentiments.

Our ask:
Despite seeing tremendous efforts in response to the unprecedented pandemic, we know that the city will be responsible for managing ongoing change in public life and policy. We ask that city officials and staff champion the following short and long-term needs of our residents, small business owners, and vulnerable populations and implement the decisions with the assistance of those impacted.

Action related to Government Accountability & Transparency
- Provide free basic internet access to all Richmond households to bridge the digital divide and enable families and youth to have greater access to schooling, work, critical resources, and connection.
- Produce all communication on resources, funding decisions and relief being sought from the state and federal government in multiple languages so that members of our diverse city can be informed and educated.
- Hold regular update sessions and town-hall-style meetings with translation and interpretation services for public communication.
- Post updated minutes of the City Council Meetings online.

¹ Just Transition Principles
² African Americans are at higher risk of death from coronavirus
- Produce expense reports under the emergency order with budget codes detailing all expenditures.
- Generate reports from each department on how they are shifting practices, policies, services, or resources to prioritize immediate needs.
- Focus on critical decisions needed to run the city. Decisions that can be safely postponed, should wait until full public participation is possible, including decisions related to the development of Point Molate and the Veolia sewer rate increase.
- Work with Contra Costa County and the State to initiate automatic voter registration and take the necessary steps to ensure that all Richmond voters will be able to vote in the November 2020 election.

**Action related to Work & Regenerative Economy**
- Provide all operating nonprofits, businesses and services with training for employees on CDC health recommendations to keep safe in and out of the workplace. Ensure that training is accessible to smaller, essential businesses without it becoming an additional burden during this time.
- Support local, state and federal bills that expand access to paid leave, worker protections and financial support for workers and small businesses, and ensure these policies are locally implemented when they pass.
- Implement small business aid or relief, such as delaying business tax collection and waiving business fees.
- Administer an anonymous helpline for residents to report price gouging and other exploitative practices.
- Address the gap in stimulus relief by partnering with foundations and nonprofits to administer a fund that provides matching economic relief to undocumented residents³ that are ineligible for the $1,200 federal relief⁴ and other extremely poor members of our community that cannot access relief.⁵
- Suspend city fees and debt collection,⁶ advocate for no new debt during the pandemic,⁷ and sign onto the effort to cancel debt.⁸

**Action related to Housing & Shelter**
- Offer incentives for landlords who forgive renters’ debt during the shelter in place.
- Call for the cancellation of mortgages and rents for the duration of this crisis for both residential and small business entities.
- Utilize all city-owned land and property to shelter the unhoused population and further the implementation of the Safe RV Park.
- Negotiate contracts with local hotels and motels with vacancies to allocate a portion of rooms to unhoused people and people who were formerly incarcerated.
- Shift police department resources to increase domestic violence intervention. Offer hotel vouchers and other interim housing resources for families who need a safe location to carry out the shelter in place order and create plans for sustainable housing and services once the order is lifted.
- Pass & actively enforce the source of income and fair tenant screening ordinances, and implement education & outreach efforts to ensure tenants know their rights.⁹ ¹⁰
- Direct the rent board to monitor all additional protections instituted during the shelter in place, and produce weekly reports of their impact.

³ Governor Newsom Announces New Initiatives to Support California Workers Impacted by COVID-19
⁴ San Francisco BOS proposes new law
⁵ Millions of low-income Americans at risk of missing out on stimulus payments
⁶ Mayor Lightfoot Announces Temporary Suspension of Debt Collection, Ticketing and Towing Practices to Provide Relief in Response to The COVID-19 Outbreak
⁷ COVID-19 Crisis: Consumer Financial Protection Policy Recommendations
⁸ Beyond Recovery
⁹ Source of Income Discrimination and Fair Tenant Screening Fact Sheet
¹⁰ 120319 Council Packet.PDF Reference H-20 language
Action related to Public Health

- Ensure all frontline healthcare workers, nursing homes, and shelters are protected from COVID-19, by receiving the proper staffing, personal protective equipment (PPE), education, and communication from their employers, or isolation rooms they need to safely care for COVID-19 patients. Ensure protections for workers who advocate for proper PPE and speaking out about unsafe working conditions.
- Establish a testing center in Richmond with free and reliable testing for all, including the uninsured.
- Install and maintain handwashing stations and hand sanitizing stations in highly populated areas of the city.
- Include frontline healthcare workers in any plans created for public health. These workers must be included in oversite work and monitoring efforts.
- Prioritize serious health care now and for the future. There has been no public hospital serving the Richmond community since Doctors Medical Center closed in 2015, further limiting our access to needed hospital beds. While the Craneway Pavilion has become a federal medical station for COVID patients, we need the implementation of a long-range plan to build a hospital in our city. Leverage available federal, state or county funds to reopen Doctors Medical Center.

Action related to Environmental Justice

- Urge the Contra Costa County Department of Public Health to issue a public health emergency to decrease/limit stationary source emissions from Chevron and other polluters like Sims Metal Management.
- Urge the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to reduce stationary source emissions in Richmond.
- Enforce the shelter in place order on large businesses deemed or those operating as “essential services” such as Chevron, rather than individual community members, by inspecting and ensuring compliance with the order.
- Coordinate immediately with local agencies like Contra Costa County Fire and Richmond Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services, as well as local utilities, to update existing plans and prepare for the upcoming fire season and public safety power shut-offs in context of the public health crisis, shelter in place, and social distancing requirements.
- Ask that the California Public Utilities Commission exercise their oversight to ensure that utility companies are implementing moratoriums on utility shut-offs due to non-payment.
- Send a letter to the Environmental Protection Agency expressing concern over their suspension of environmental reviews and uphold the highest level of environmental standards for all development projects under review.

Action related to Dignity, Safety, and Sanctuary

- Minimize new arrests as much as possible by issuing warnings or tickets.
- Shift resources to protecting vulnerable populations and direct city staff to conduct house visits and/or wellness calls with seniors and people with disabilities.
- Provide on-duty officers, staff and all houseless persons with appropriate gear, in accordance with public health recommendations.
- Call on District Attorney Diana Becton and Sheriff Livingston to decrease the number of people detained in Contra Costa jails; starting with the immediate release of the elderly,

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11 Hospital beds per 1,000 people and at-risk populations by county | Othering & Belonging Institute
12 City of Richmond charter language
13 New Research Links Air Pollution to Higher Coronavirus Death Rates
14 EPA suspends enforcement of environmental laws amid coronavirus
15 Police Responses to Covid-19
juveniles, and individuals with bail set at $50,000 or less as well as those with 6 months at the end of their sentence.

- When inmates must be incarcerated, minimize the sharing of cells and ensure that there are sufficient medical quarantine beds, and staff to promote the health and safety of the staff, those incarcerated, and visitors.
- Create a transition plan to provide services and housing to all who have been recently released from jail.
- Use your authority to advocate for free phone and email service so that those who are incarcerated can communicate with their families.
- Oversee the immediate distribution of health and sanitation resources to those at the West Contra Costa Detention Center.
- Advocate closing the West Contra Costa Detention Center.
- Continue to uplift our Sanctuary status and protect Richmond residents from ICE raids.
- Demand that USCIS does not share the personal information of DACA recipients with ICE.

This letter was co-created to request further municipal action during the pandemic and for ongoing consideration after the shelter in place ban is lifted. We ask for a thorough review of the actions and a written response in one week. We also request a meeting with the city manager to discuss the content of the letter in-depth and determine future action.

Sincerely,

Richmond Our Power Coalition (ROPC):
Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment
Communities for a Better Environment
Cooperation Richmond
Rich City Rides
Richmond LAND
Richmond Progressive Alliance
Safe Return Project
Urban Tilth

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16 Bay Area courts, authorities ramp up the release of inmates to stem COVID-19 risks in jails
17 JOINT STATEMENT FROM ELECTED PROSECUTORS ON COVID-19 AND ADDRESSING THE RIGHTS AND NEEDS OF THOSE IN CUSTODY
18 Commitment to surgical masks for American prisoners
19 ICE Has Access to DACA Recipients’ Personal Information Despite Promises Suggesting Otherwise, Internal Emails Show