Transcript of Teleconference Town Hall
with Governor Kate Brown
04/23/2020

Mike Cully: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Mike Cully from the League of Oregon Cities and the executive director here, and I'd like to welcome you to today's video conference and phone call. I know we have a lot of folks on the line, about 300 right now with more joining all the time. So, today's conference will be broken into two parts. The three o'clock hour to 3:30 will be a presentation. You'll hear from Courtney on that. She'll be presenting the framework for reopening the state, which is what we all want to talk about. How do we get to the next step? So, we'll be talking about that. It's been a busy day for the governor. I can tell you that she's had a press conference this morning where we talked about reopening the medical and dental for really non-emergency or things that aren't minor surgeries as long as they follow protocols. We could start to reopen that sector. There has got a lot of work done by the Corona Virus Economic Recovery Task Force. We've been talking a lot about opening six different sectors in those subcommittees have been meeting today was the retail sector that met to talk about what that looks like going forward. Earlier today, also just about a couple of hours ago, she released a press release on the outreach and education campaign that she's watching. And this is a this is a new campaign that's going out there to reach the folks that haven't been reached before the the homeless and the underrepresented out there. So, it's a real really focused on the equity and diversity piece out there. So, with that, I want to turn this call over to Courtney Crowell. She is with the Regional Solutions Team. You may know her from eastern Oregon, but she's going to walk us through the framework of this three-phase approach to reopening the Oregon economy. So, Courtney, it's all yours.

Courtney Crowell: Thanks, Mike, and good afternoon, everyone. This is Courtney. I'm the regional solutions coordinator for Eastern Oregon and the governor's office. So, I live out here in eastern Oregon and cover eight counties. So, I may be walking you guys through the presentation and the governor will hop on to take their questions.
Courtney Crowell: Let's get started.

Courtney Crowell: Lisa, there's kind of a moderate feedback for any way to mute. I'm hoping that will work. Can you see the screen folks here? OK.

Courtney Crowell: Here we go. So, this is a presentation that has been going around throughout the state this week. And we call it reopening Oregon. And it's a public health framework for restarting life and business here in the states. And if you can go to the next slide, Lisa. And I can't see anything, so I'm.

Courtney Crowell: Nervous that other people can't.

Courtney Crowell: Please hold. For technical difficulties. There we go.

Courtney Crowell: Area. OK. We'll go through. So, this slide really is just a quote. That from Dr. Fauci that says, you don't make the timeline, the virus makes the timeline. And I think this is really key and really sets the stage for the whole reopening is that we don't really know what the timeline looks like. The virus makes the timeline. And we're going to lean in and listen to our public health advisors and experts to make sure that as we progress on any opening, we're making sure that we're following our experts. And the reality is, is that we're going to be living with this virus until there is immunity, which is many months off. So, things are going to work. This is not as simple as sort of turning a light switch and business and life goes back to normal. It's going to be very different. And so, I think we all just need to keep in mind that that's this is what the reality is going to be.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: So, this next slide is really kind of shows that the goal is to keep the curve flattened. So as you can see, the blue line is really for the continued aggressive intervention and the experience in other countries and the modeling that we have said that we really do kind of take our foot off the brake too quickly and and go back to nonsocial distancing will create a spike in cases. So, we want to make sure that we're not reducing sort of the social distancing rules too soon.
Courtney Crowell: So next, whatever goes through what, these are the guidelines that were released by the president last week and they're called Open Up America Again guidelines. Now, this is really sort of the Oregon's framework is based off of the federal guidelines. So, we're going to go through the federal guidelines and then you'll see where Oregon sort of differs a little here and there. And it is worth noting that the governor’s medical advisory panel and the Oregon Health Authority have not thoroughly reviewed these guidelines or sort of the thinking that we're thinking here in Oregon. So that still has to be done. But this is generally the framework in which we're looking at. So, the framework overview really has three different areas. There's a gating criteria, a poor state preparedness criteria and then phase lifting of restrictions. So, there's three components in each section in the gating area, gating criteria. There are declining numbers of symptom decline. Members of cases and then hospital capacity is able to go back to regular procedure. We'll talk more about that in a minute. But just in general. Those are the three gating criteria, components. For core state preparedness. Again, three areas. It's robust testing and contact tracing. It's making sure of our health care system has capacity, including PPE, personal protective equipment and surge capacity. And then we have robust plans for health and safety. And then there's three phases of the lifting of restrictions.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: Never got to go into a little bit more detail into the three gating criteria. And it's worth noting these gating criteria in terms of how the federal government has put it out there, is that it can be on either a state or regional basis. And it's likely that Oregon will use potentially modified metrics, especially for our rural counties who have very small numbers of cases. But in general, what we're looking for is that there's a downward trajectory of influenza like illnesses within a 14-day period and a downward trajectory of COVID-Like cases reported within a 14-day period. So essentially, we want symptoms of both influenza and COVID-like cases to go downwards within 14 days. On the cases side, we want to have a downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period or a downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14 day period. So, we essentially want flat or increasing volume of tests. So instead of, you know, we'd rather have 20 positives out of a thousand and 10 out of 100. And then for hospitals, we want to make sure that we're our hospitals are able to treat all patients without crisis care. Some of you may have
heard Nick Blosser this week kind of talk about sort of crisis care, where nurses are being asked to just wear one mask per shifts. So, we want to make sure that we have enough equipment and our hospital were able to kind of go back to regular procedures. And then additionally, we have a robust testing program in place for our at risk health care workers.

Courtney Crowell: So then moving to the core state preparedness of the 2, so 1 and 2 is that and this is the testing and contact tracing is and I think one of the areas where we have the biggest lift and that's that we are able to test and screen all symptomatic individual individuals, which we're currently doing influenza like illness indicated people. And then the third one is really starting to test and asymptomatic cases or people that are in health care situations or congregate care area for a high-risk area. So, I think that OHA have announced that they're moving in that direction, but I think on the testing side, that's where we need to get around testing. And then we also need to make sure that we have a robust contact tracing system for all COVID plus cases. So OHA is working I think this week and next week to come up with sort of what the plan looks like to get us to this testing and contact tracing kind of state preparedness level. We have more information coming there. And then on the health care system capacity, we want to make sure that we have sufficient PPE and the ability to surge at the ICU capacity level. So that's really, we're hoping that the supply chain around PPE will start to level out and we'll be able to get to that level.

Courtney Crowell: And then next slide, please.

Courtney Crowell: And then the third court date for state preparedness is really we want it, we need to make sure we have robust plans, need to make sure we're protecting the health and safety of our workers in critical industries as we reopen, we need to make sure we're looking at those who are both living and working in high risk facilities and have plans around their health and safety, plans around mass transit. And then, you know, kind of additionally, or finally, we really have to have some robust plans to monitor conditions and then if we see an outbreak sort of starting or, you know, cases starting to rise, we need to have a plan in place to immediately take steps to limit and mitigate any any outbreaks.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.
Courtney Crowell: So, then we get into the phase approach. So, phase one really begins at the governor's direction. And this is after all three of those gating criteria have been met and all those core preparedness items are met. So, you kind of have to, you know, meet those first two sections and then we can move into the phases.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: And in this phased approach and this is, again, guidelines from the federal government. And these are these are guidelines that will continue in all phases for individuals who want to make sure people are practicing good hygiene. There are we're strongly considering the use of face covering the public and, you know, asking them to stay home if sick. So that's in all phases. And then for employers, we want to make sure that they are developing policies for social distancing, protective equipment, sanitation, temperature checks, those kinds of things, as well as be able to monitor workforce for symptoms and contact tracing policies for positive. And again, those are for all phases.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: And then within phase one for individuals and employers. The guidelines would be for all vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place. And then when folks do go out in public, they should maximize social distance or physical distance and then avoid socializing in groups of more than 10 people. As you can see on the presentation, the 10 sort of is red an asterisk and those definitely need to be reviewed by the health authority and the medical advisory panel. But in general, the federal guidelines do say in phase one to avoid large groups of folks. And then might be nonessential travel and then to continue telework whenever possible. So that's for individuals and employers. Let's go to the next slide.

Courtney Crowell: And then this is really kind of breaks down kind of specific types of employers. So, as you can see in the middle column, that's phase one of the federal proposal. And then on the right column, it's the Oregon modifications under consideration. Again, all of these still need to be reviewed by our health care folks. But in general, this is sort of where we're going. So, in the federal proposal for schools and organized youth activities would remain closed. In Oregon, we are considering
additional childcare reopening in Phase 1. So, we have a group that's working on what
that looks like in terms of visits to hospitals and senior living facilities that would be
prohibited under both the federal and Oregon. For large venues: sports, theaters and
churches the federal government has identified that if six physical distancing and
sanitation protocols can be in place, they might be able to stay open. I think here in
Oregon, those would likely remain closed during phase one. But for sit down dining,
there is a work group that is working to propose what a Phase 1 plan looks like. And
then additionally, for a gym, gyms are called out in the federal proposal for strict
physical distancing and sanitation protocols. I think the governor said yesterday that
both gyms and spas would likely remain closed during phase one. For bars, the federal
proposal has them remaining closed, they are part of the restaurant work group. So,
there are plans in place around bars and sit down dining here in Oregon. And then for
non-emergency procedures, as you as you heard today, the governor did make an
announcement around easing up some of those restrictions, so that's already underway.
And then for personal services, so this is hair salons, nail salons, tattoo parlors that's
not called out specifically by the federal proposal, but we do have a work group here in
Oregon that is looking at a Phase 1 plan. Both because I think that is those are
industries that hopefully can get back up and running quickly. And additionally, those
are some industries that are more hard-hit by women and minority owned businesses.
So we do have a work group that is looking at that.

Courtney Crowell: So next page, your next slide.

Courtney Crowell: So, I think we talked earlier that this could be on either a state or
regional basis and there is sort of geographical considerations. And the fact it's a county
or a region can show declining growth in cases and symptoms and they can show they
have regional testing capacity, hospital and contact tracing capacity, and they're able to
sort of work with OHA, there is an option for counties and/or regions to reopen sooner
than others.

Courtney Crowell: So next slide. So this is something that's under discussion, under
consideration, and this is we're talking with we talked with the counties and we're talking
with a lot of stakeholders where, you know, an additional prerequisite is if you can make
sure that you've met those gating criteria and the core state preparedness, an additional
prerequisite would be a formal request to the governor with a letter from the CEO or
chief medical officer of the hospital within the county committing to daily PPE, reporting to OHA, talking about PPE supply chain reliability and hospital beds, surge capacity. And then additionally, a recommendation letter from the county public health officer and then a vote of the county governing body certifying that their PPE is sufficient for first responders.

Courtney Crowell: So, moving forward to the Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: So that's phase one. And then ideally what this framework sort of outlines is that you would, you know, head into phase one, you would wait 14 days and see what the data looks like, pass the gating criteria again and then essentially move into the next phase. Now phases two and three that we have up here on this slide. Those have definitely not been reviewed much by our health care folks. So, I think these but these are what the federal guidelines have identified. In phase two gatherings would increase to 50. Nonessential travel can resume, schools and gyms can open under physical distancing. And then in phase three mass gathering size increases, work sites have unrestricted staffing. Visitors can be allowed into nursing homes and restaurants and bars can have more seating. Again, those are things that we haven't looked as we haven't dug into details as much there. They're over more focused on phase one. But this is sort of what the federal framework kind of outlines.

Courtney Crowell: So next slide.

Courtney Crowell: So right now, we're beginning and we started last week and we're doing these high level framework presentations. You can see all of the different groups that have received this presentation. I mean, we're trying to just make sure that we're putting the word in and getting feedback and making sure that folks understand what the framework looks like.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Mike talked about it at the beginning, we do have some sector-specific specific discussions that have started this week. So, we do have owners, practitioners, workers and health professionals within all six of these categories. Restaurants and food service retail, I think Mike was mentioning that they met today. They have a personal services
sector group, a childcare, a transit and then outdoor recreation. So those are the six groups that have started this week, and we hope to have more information as soon as even next week about what the guidelines for those sectors look like.

Courtney Crowell: So next slide. So, this is sort of our next step slide. Essentially, you can see we're doing these high-level framework presentations. We're doing our sectors specific work and then I think ideally the week of May 4th, we'd be completing details of the framework and coming up with, you know, final steps around what this looks like. And then that fifth one about around ongoing coordination with West Coast states. I think you guys probably saw the news, a press release was last week before, weeks are kind of going together these days. But the governor did announce that California, Washington and Oregon is sort of in coordination. This doesn't mean that we will have the same plans as them, but it just means that we will continue to have ongoing coordination with our West Coast partners.

Courtney Crowell: Next slide.

Courtney Crowell: And this is really some last resources for folks to kind of break down even more, what the White House plans are and sort of other national resources. So that's essentially our presentation. Look I'm like ten minutes early, so I'm going to give Mike ten minutes of time to fill before the governor hops on. Well, Mike, turning back over to you.

Mike Cully: Thank you Courtney so much, it was just to repeat myself here as I was talking to myself. I'm seeing all your comments over here, and they're great, actually. Thank you for sending those. Keep them coming because we're recording those and we will get answers to your questions. I will tell you that we have a whole packet of questions that have been sent in previously for the governor. She's going to join us at 3:30, if not just a little before. And then we have a hard stop with her at 4:30. So we'll run through these questions as they've been submitted in priority and go from there. So, as I was mentioning earlier, 16 states as of this afternoon have declared and put forth their own plan for reopening their economy. So most recently, it was Idaho, our neighbor over there, who actually put dates, which I think is not a good thing to do but put dates to what they want to do. And really, as Courtney said, this is a process. It's more of us, you're dipping your toe in and you're dipping your foot in and you see how
this goes in finding out. So, it's been a catch 22. I am as frustrated as many of you are because we want to get things up and running. We really do, but you have to balance public health against the economy, and we are putting public health first. Today, if you hadn't seen the latest news from the OHA, there were five more deaths because of COVID-19, and so it's still going on. It's still happening. And the risk that we run as leaders at reopening too soon is we take that curve that we've been so good at flattening and we see it we see it increase again. So, this is something that we're really trying to avoid. We're trying to be thoughtful and strategic about all the moves we make. Yesterday, the transit subcommittee met. I was listening to them. And yes, it's devastating. It's devastating. I don't think there's one part of our economy that hasn't been hurt or touched by this. So, we are acutely aware of that. But again, it's as someone said yesterday, I think this is well-put. It's easier to dig yourself out of a flailing economy than it is to dig holes in the ground to put people in. So, I think that that more or less a summed it up.

Mike Cully: So, by my watch, I have 3:22. So about eight minutes until the governor joins us. And I don't know that I can fill that much time. I will tell you that this call does not supplant our regular weekly call. Tomorrow we'll be back online at 10:05 and we'll have both the public health sector and the economics sector accounted for. So OHA will be on the call tomorrow, we'll have the National League of Cities joining us and we'll have Jim McCauley, who's our legislative director from the Oregon League of Cities with us as well. So that's at 10:05, if you haven't received the information on that, we will get it to you. I did get a question here. Can we share this PowerPoint? The answer is yes. I responded on a chat line. If you just e-mail me MCulley@orcities.org, we'll get you a copy of that. No problem. So, I do want to talk about some of the struggles that we've been having at the federal level while I've got the time.

Mike Cully: I did want to talk about what's going on at the federal level and kind of the struggles that we've been going through. So there's been many stimulus packages up to three and now 3.5 that have come forward, and in each one of these, we've really come out collectively as state leagues across the country and from the National League of Cities, come forth to really fight for funding for cities that were not accounted for in the previous stimulus packages. So, in the previous packages, the protocol for that for distributing federal funds from the CARES Act was five hundred thousand or greater population. Well, that's all of 19 cities across the United States and a couple of counties
here in Oregon. So basically, three places in Oregon under the CARES act in that stimulus package, 3.0 will receive some sort of federal funding. The rest, which is the majority of our 241 cities, has not been figured out yet and that is being talked about. We're leaving it all on the field for this one. So, we're going to fight this one until the end. But that is coming in Stimulus 4.0. We're hearing talk about that coming forth. There was a comment made, I think it was McConnell that said it's better for cities to go bankrupt at this point than to wait for that funding, something we completely disagree with. So, let me see...

**Mike Cully:** Summer camp, there are a lot of good questions coming in and I definitely appreciate those. And again, if we don't get to these that you're sending in now, we will we will answer them personally as we go forward.

**Mike Cully:** Talking about budget law, we made some good inroads there, I want to take a tip my hat to our legislative team, we heard you loud and clear. You were talking about public meetings and budget law and I think we really moved the needle there and really got some things done that are positive for you. So, when I talk about this being a really a minute to minute situation, it is, it is evolving as we speak. We can get different data that could change things in the next hour. So, I still have 3:26, So just a few more minutes until the governor comes on.

**Courtney Crowell:** Mike, can you still hear me? This is Courtney. So, I'm just wondering, there are a couple questions that I might be able to answer in terms I think some of the questions were are around schools opening. And again, we haven't set any final guidelines, but that is under the federal guidelines. I think you guys do have this PowerPoint that has been shared.

**Mike Cully:** Right. It came with it came with the invitation. There are some that probably don't have it, but there were some questions coming down on the feed about summer school and things of that nature as well. And where do we stand with that?

**Courtney Crowell:** Yeah, that's a question that's definitely out there. But I also know that we have that childcare sector that we reopen, I think I identified with schools closed child care is a huge issue. So how can our childcare sort of sector look at that.
Mike Cully: Yeah, that's one of the governor's priorities as well. So, as I said, we have a packet of questions that have come in and I really appreciate it. We haven't prioritized them in any particular way, but we do have an hour to ask these in time permitting, we'll go live to the governor. So, none of this has been prepared, so these are in raw form and we'll put them to her in that way. Leah are you going to be. Will you be asking the questions or how do you want to run with that?

Leah Horner: Mike, I think you do such a great job on it. If you want to ask the questions, that would be great.

Mike Cully: Ok. You got it. You got it.

Mike Cully: I still have 3:28, so should be any minute now. Let me see if there are any that I can tackle on here right now. Testing. Yes. The question of testing is continuing to come up. And really that's going to be that's going to define how we're gonna get through this crisis. If we make testing available on a wide scale, that's going to be the answer that we need. I was reading a report today of it was a nursing home, excuse me, a homeless encampment that they tested, and they tested 243 people in there. And clearly half of those people were testing positive but showing asymptomatic. So, the protocols, everything that's in place now with social distancing, stay at home orders, all this matters. It really, really does. And though it's affecting lives and it is, it's affecting all of our lives. We are going to get through this. We are going to get out of this. But we need to preserve life and that's what this that's what this all boils down to.

Mike Cully: So, Leah, did you have anything you wanted to add while we have the time here?

Leah Horner: Let's see, I don't I don't think so, you know, I think that oh, the one thing I guess I will just mention is that we and this might have been mentioned before we started the sixth sector strategy conversations this week. And I know that Courtney went through what those six were through the presentation. We're looking to have draft guidelines out next Monday. And then we're hoping to run those by both participants on those calls, as well as interested parties to the regional advisory teams. It'll answer some of these questions about kind of PPE and protocols to reopen. And so we're hoping to have that out next week and then finalize in the next couple of weeks. The
caveat on that being that we're not in Phase 1, we're not close to Phase 1 yet, but we're just making sure that when we do get there, that we're ready to go.

**Mike Cully:** Without further ado, Courtney went through the three-phase plan that we've been talking about in terms of reopening the state. Great presentation. Lots of questions. And without further ado, I want to turn it over to you for any updates or opening statements you may have Madam Governor.

**Governor Brown:** I don't know that I have any other updates. We late yesterday received the guidance from the federal government regarding the Corona Virus Relief Act funds. We know what we can't use it for. We don't know what we can use it for. I know local jurisdictions; cities are very anxious about that. We will work through that guidance as quickly as possible and get that information out to all of you as quickly as we can.

**Mike Cully:** Yeah. So, I've got we've compiled a bunch of questions, I don't know if you can see that. But I will be going through these in no particular order, some of them you probably heard before, but we have about 400 people on the line right now who are interested in hearing about this.

**Mike Cully:** So, the first question is local governments are in the middle of their budgeting process and it's clear they will be facing significant budget gaps due to lost revenue from a range of sources. The LOC, Association of Oregon Counties and the OMA jointly signed a letter to you just this week asking for consideration of sharing a portion of the CARES Act funding. This kind of touches on what we were talking about, I think just a moment ago. But what plans are there for using some portion of the CARES Act distribution for those cities and counties that are not receiving a direct allocation? And that's basically anything under five hundred thousand. So, Portland, Multnomah, Washington County, can smaller communities like Hermiston expect to see any funds?

**Governor Brown:** Apparently, like I said, the guidelines just came out. We're still analyzing them, but we have very little flexibility in terms of how we can use the Corona virus relief fund. And my understanding is they cannot be used either by state or local jurisdictions to replace the lost revenue. So, they are extremely focused and not at all flexible. I will tell you that there are going to be 50 governors having heart attacks after...
they receive these guidelines and that we're all committed to working with our congressional delegations and this administration to make sure that we have much more flexibility in any future resources.

**Mike Cully:** Ok. There was a follow up to that, saying the new Treasury guidelines just last night made it clear that local governments can submit reimbursement for costs associated with a response to COVID 19. Is there any, can the state commit to any plan or additional conversation around that with local government leaders?

**Governor Brown:** We obviously have to analyze our state costs. Certainly, we would welcome that conversation in the coming weeks.

**Mike Cully:** Ok. The second question, the next question says this week you announced your framework for opening Oregon back up and it's changed a couple of times as situations have changed. There is no question our citizens are getting house fever or cabin fever by staying home. But I think the majority understand how important it is to keep this curve going down. East of the mountains, we aren't living on top of each other like they are in the valley. In addition, our hospitals have zero cases of COVID 19. Bottom line, we need businesses to open and get people back to work. Can you offer some thoughts on what local leaders need to share with their communities to be helpful? And are there any steps we can take to communicate with public health or business leaders to prepare for opening the state?

**Governor Brown:** Yes, I would encourage you and I'm working with some of our more rural counties. I would encourage you to be partnering with your county, local public health. We are going to need robust public health systems to, number one, do testing, obviously, a systematic folks of vulnerable populations are folks in congregate care facilities, are Latina, are Native Americans, are African American. We're going to need the testing capacity to do surveillance testing like we do for flu. Secondly, we need to be able to do contact tracing, i.e. Mike, I'm assuming you haven't been in touch with very many people in the last few days. But if you came down with symptoms, we'd want to connect and reach out with everyone you've been in contact with and make sure that they self-isolate for a period of time. And then third, we need to be able to isolate folks. Obviously, for a lot of families, this is really challenging. If you've got five or six people living in a house, that's going to be really challenging. Can we develop some local or
regional housing concepts that allow us to put folks that test positive with COVID 19, give them a safe place to be, making sure they get access to the health care they need? And at the same time, making sure that their families stay safe. So, working closely with you with your county public health folks. Secondly, we are hearing from a lot of different sectors around how we can safely open certain businesses in Phases 1, 2 and 3. And as you know, this morning I announced that medical facilities, hospitals, dental offices can begin the opening phase. But we're also hearing from other businesses this week from childcare to outdoor rec to restaurants about how they can stay safe. And so, I want to encourage folks that have creative suggestions from Plexiglas in restaurants, to, I've heard some other things to throw away menus, to funnel those ideas to you, Mike, to your team and obviously funnel those up to Leah. I think it is more likely that we will open our remote rural Oregon first. But we have to have in place that public health system. It has to be very strong. It has to be very solid. And I'm committed to working with OHA, the Oregon Health Authority, to make that happen.

Mike Cully: Thank you. Yeah, I was on the retail subcommittee video conference today. If one thing became painfully clear is that there isn't any one size fits all solution to address these problems. And I said it earlier, if you first you dip your toe in, didn't you get your foot in and then you see how far you can go. So, it's a process and I can't hammer that home enough.

Governor Brown: I actually I grew up in Minnesota and I'm an ice skater and we used to skate on the pond, right? At the beginning of the winter, you'd get out of the pond or the lake, you'd test it if it didn't crack or you didn't fall in. You took another step. Same here. What we want to do is limit the amount of times that we're walking backwards. And that's why it's so important that we take each step very carefully.

Mike Cully: Exactly. It's a matter of public health over an economy that we can rebuild. You can’t rebuild lives. So that question, that last question came from Redmond. The next question is from Eugene. And it says, Testing seems to be a key component for moving forward under many plans. What does the testing infrastructure look like for Oregon and how do we get more tests at the local level?

Governor Brown: This is a really good question. I could have my testing czar come give you an hour seminar, but you would all be asleep. So, let me say this, our testing
capacity right now is roughly about a 8000 tests a week. We think we need to at least double that. So somewhere in the neighborhood of fifteen to twenty thousand tests a week. But it has to be the right kinds of tests at the right moment. Right. If you have an outbreak in a congregate care facility, you want to be able to test everyone immediately. Right. And make sure you can protect your residents. Or I'm trying to think of some other examples. If you're having someone go into surgery, you're going to want to make sure that they're COVID 19 negative. So being able to get those rapid tests, sometimes it's not so critical, surveillance of which we do for the flu, we're going to need to surveille communities to find out whether this presence of the disease in the communities. In terms of how we build our testing capacity, we are gradually increasing it. It's a public private partnership. I've got a team literally that's working on this as we speak. And we know it's key to helping Oregon move safely out of COVID 19 pandemic.

Mike Cully: Thank you. I want to note that I am seeing all the comments come across through the chat feature in this program, and as I said before, while we may not be able to get to those today, we will absolutely get your questions addressed. A lot of more good ones. But I'm going to continue to move through the list of those that were submitted previously. So, Governor, the next question comes from Hood River and it reads: Oregon's unemployment levels have shot through the roof. Lots of people are frustrated at the current system. Are the state agencies getting better at responding to the unemployment claims and do you have a suggestion of what local governments can do to help communicate or point folks in the right direction? That's from Hood River.

Governor Brown: Thank you. I know this has been really, really frustrating, just to give you a sense of the challenges our employment department has faced. First of all, their computer systems are older than I am. Number two, they had one hundred employees at the outset of this virus. They are moving up to eight hundred, we expect by next week they'll be up to eight hundred employees. They are now processing 8000 claims a day and they have really been focused on the easier claims, people working for one employer that were laid off. Let's see a couple other things just to give you a sense of the magnitude of the issue. Three hundred thousand claims in the last three weeks. That's more than double of what we saw during the entire 13 months of the great recession, more than double. This is not a challenge that Oregon is facing alone. Just about every single state has the same issue. And so everyone's frustrated. You can tell your constituents that we are going to get every single penny that is owed to
Oregonians into their pockets as quickly as possible. We are waiving the waiting week, the one week waiting period of the six hundred-dollar additional federal payouts. Thanks to Senator Wyden, it started last week. And obviously folks that weren't eligible in prior tough economic times like Gig and independent contractors are now available, are now eligible for unemployment. Our unemployment insurance fund is the second best funded in the entire country at five billion dollars. So at least for the short term, we have the resources. And so I would encourage you to tell people to be patient, to use email. I know one woman spent her entire day calling three thousand and one time and the three thousand and first call she finally got a hold of someone. E-mail is I think much easier for the system. The employees are working from 5:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. They need that break in the evening to upgrade the computer systems. So, we're doing everything we can as quickly as we can.

**Mike Cully:** Well, it's unprecedented times that I can tell you the nationwide, the numbers are staggering. I think they came out with some more today. I think it was I don't want to misquote but 44 million. That's a that's huge.

**Governor Brown:** It's a shock. This is a shock for the economy. We've never seen anything like it. We've never had to shutter the economy like we're doing. And we've honestly never had to unshutter the economy. So, we're doing the best we can.

**Mike Cully:** Thank you, thank you for tackling that question. Next, what I have come from Central Point, the state's budget will have a significant budget hit from this pandemic. Can you speak to how much surplus funds and rainy day or emergency funds are available?

**Governor Brown:** That's a really good question. So, we have two rainy day or stability funds. They roughly total one point five billion and we can only access those under limited circumstances, a period of economic downturn. And it required, I believe, three fifths vote of both houses. I think we should use those extremely prudently, but we do have roughly a little over a billion dollars in resources available to us right now. I anticipate that will mostly be eaten up by a May revenue forecast that is probably going to crater. We are in what I call a quadruple bind. Number one, we have to balance our budget. Unlike the federal government. Number two, our revenues are going to go [unintelligible]. We need to build a very robust public health system to tackle this virus.
and the needs of our families across the state for assistance, for housing needs, for food needs, for health care needs is going to go way up. So, this is going to be probably the most significant challenging budget scenario I have ever faced in my 30 years in public service. And it's going to take honestly all of us working together to create a path out of this.

Mike Cully: It's painful to think about that and I know that I've heard from city managers and city leaders across the state that they're bracing for a decline in revenue of up to 25 percent. And they're adjusting their maybe not their immediate budget, but the upcoming fiscal year budget to address that. And it's a tough place to be when you have to make decisions and tough decisions about public services and public safety. And I'm concerned and worry for them to hear them. But as you said, we'll work through this.

Governor Brown: That's why it's also really important that I've got, I think, mayors and city councilors on the phone here today. I want to encourage you to reach out to your federal delegation and encourage them to support the National Governors Association package of five hundred billion dollars to the state. My concern is that we will be so devastated from the revenue loss, both at the state and the local level, that it will take us longer to come out of this. And if we can get that level of investment in our state governments, obviously some of it I would expect to go down to the local level. That would be huge. It needs to be flexible funding. So, I just want to, it would be great if everybody could get on the same page, flexible on significant funding of 500 billion.

Mike Cully: Yes. I appreciate that. The next question comes from Region 3, which is Salem. Reopening our local economy is based on meeting several criteria, including testing, tracking and providing business specific social spacing. We are all working on these, but what's missing are the clear targets like we had initially to flatten the curve? So specific metrics which have been met apparently. When will those specific targets for us to be available, who evaluates our meeting those targets and who lets us proceed to reopening, presumably business by business? Can we unilaterally reopen city services when we are satisfied that we have the right programs in place?

Governor Brown: No, the answer is, can you reopen state services when you feel like you have the answers? No, because we are all in this together and I am concerned that opening before it is safe will cause us to lose more Oregonian's lives and that's
unacceptable. So, we will likely go either regional approach or county approach. The metrics are being fleshed out as we speak. I laid out the framework. You heard it from who did the overview Leah or somebody today. It was Courtney. Ok, Courtney, within that framework, you all are helping us put meat on the bones with these meetings. I think this is a very collective, collaborative effort. My medical advisory panel is assisting with some of these metrics. And frankly, some of it, the Oregon Health Authority is putting in place, how do we have a robust public health system and how do we make sure, for example, that we're using the right numbers in terms of declining case growth, et cetera? So, I will just say, I know one of the prerequisites was a decline in the number of cases for communities like Harney, and Malheur and Baker, you know, there's probably two handfuls of counties that have had either very few cases or a minimal number of cases. I anticipate we will be looking directly to their ability to have a robust system for public health. Some of it obviously provided by the state, at least assist with the state. For example, can we have a strike team that functions in eastern Oregon when there's an outbreak? So, we're all in this together actions as we're seeing from other states impact us and what we do, impact other states, and so I'll be making the decision, but please know that I am relying heavily on my team of experts. My medical advisory panel, epidemiologist and physicians.

**Mike Cully:** Having been at the table with you since the start of this pandemic, I can appreciate what you're going through in making these decisions. You don't make them lightly. I've seen the process you work through and it's taking a lot of input and a lot of feedback not only from your own staff, but from everybody, all stakeholders involved here and I very much appreciate the thoughtful and strategic way you go about making these decisions.

**Governor Brown:** I just have to say, you know, I certainly put in place these social distancing measures early and they were very aggressive, but they would not have been successful without the sacrifices of Oregonians across the state. And Oregonians in rural Oregon, on the coast have done and some in the valley, have done a remarkable job complying and making really tough decisions and hard sacrifices to help Oregon stay safe. And honestly, as a result of that, we have the ability to donate ventilators to New York. We were the first state in the country to do that. It started the entire West Coast doing donations. And that was, I think, an eye-opening moment for the country.
**Mike Cully:** Absolutely. Absolutely. And others followed suit after that. The next question comes from Region 9. This is from Sisters, because the shutdown water was from the executive branch, is the state going to take responsibility for all the small business losses?

**Governor Brown:** Unfortunately, I cannot. I have to tell you, I know that our small businesses are truly the heart and soul of Oregon, the economy. And I know it's really hard for all of you and it's certainly hard for me not to be able to go to my favorite little restaurant, your favorite taco bar to be able to go into that boutique, you really like what they offer. Hopefully that will change over the next several weeks. We do have some specific tools and resources for small businesses. We've created the small business navigator here at Business Oregon, we have 30 people designed to assist small businesses with their questions, help get them the services and the resources they might need. And I will be creating a small business fund out of my reserve dollars to assist our small businesses. Obviously, we know that there will be additional funding in this 3.5 package for small businesses. I think they've added 300 billion to the Paycheck Protection Act. My concern honestly is that needs to be going to our smallest businesses located in rural Oregon, in our under-served communities or communities of color and our communities that have traditionally been under-served.

**Mike Cully:** I know some of our cities here in the state, at least 16 to 20 of them stepped up with small business assistance programs of their own, so they're doing what they can as well. I'm watching the comments come up as we're going through this and there's been a lot of them. And again, just to make sure that I'm not ignoring what's coming across the screen that I'm seeing. We'll get those questions answered. And I do appreciate the comments that says they appreciate the fact that science is guiding the way we do things and not politics. I can't stress enough that we left that on the table. This is not a political thing. This is about lives and this is about protecting Oregon. Politics don't factor into this at all. And it's great to see everybody working together on this.

**Governor Brown:** Absolutely agree. And I was pleased to see Davis, Hibbetts and Mendenhall did a poll yesterday and apparently over 70 percent, 75 percent of Oregonians support the stay at home measures and are willing to stay home for a few
more weeks if it will mean that we have more Oregonians survive the Corona virus. And that's a good thing.

**Mike Cully:** I think the numbers for that study was way up in the 80s, high 80 percentages. So that's great. The next question comes in again from Region 9, from Redmond day-use areas, especially boat launches, should be opened, both launching by its very nature and safety consideration, requires at least 50 feet between boats at launching. Once boats are in the water, either fishing or boating, they usually require at least a six-foot distance between craft and this tends to be self-governing. If there is a worry, can we ask the county sheriff's officers to patrol the more popular destinations in their respective counties? That's from Redmond.

**Governor Brown:** So, I think the issue is really around staffing and how do we make sure that these places aren't overwhelmed and with limited staffing, at least at the state level. Right now, we want to protect our staff as well. How do we how do we have these recreational points be functional? And I know that Lisa Sumption with Oregon Parks is working with her colleagues in the federal government and in the city local government as well to come up with a plan. Here's the problem, right? I can't open the beaches in Lincoln County without all of Oregon going over there. Right. I mean, how do we do this in a way that ensures people can remain safe? The facilities don't get overwhelmed. And so, I think over the next month or so, you will see a soft reopening of these facilities. And we'll certainly look at boat launches. I'm a kayaker. I miss being on the water. I know this is really, really hard for Oregonians not to be out enjoying the beauty and bounty of Oregon.

**Mike Cully:** Appreciate that answer. We have about a half an hour left. I have a lot of questions, so I'm going to move quickly. This question is basically statewide. Those who like to exercise have been locked out of the gyms for a month or longer. Many are feeling the adverse effects of losing their fitness. Is there some accommodation that can be reached with gym owners, managers where the distance discipline can be invoked and enforced? Many gyms are now 24 hours, so congestion is not the problem it once was.

**Governor Brown:** Ok, I'm going to the gym, I have to tell you. But I am also a walker. And so I at least when the weather was nice the last couple of weeks, it was great to get
out and walk. So, I want to encourage that. My spouse is as a runner, so he’s running every other day. We’re checking to see; I think gyms are actually in phase two of the reopening plan. But I’ll check that and see. Let’s keep going, Mike, and will do a slip around?

Mike Cully: This is the 10th question. So, this is going to be coming from Redmond. So, as I understand it, restaurants can open the bars because restaurants are typically sit down where many bars offer standing at the bar. Can we use of sitting versus standing functional requirement rather than the designation of restaurant versus bar? We’re sitting with distancing rules in place, can that be invoked?

Governor Brown: I think let’s see, Leah is on, she listened to the restaurant bar conversation. Leah, can you give any guidance here? Yes, I was right. Gyms are in phase two. So, remember, phase one, two weeks and we have to do modeling and make sure not to go backwards. And then gyms in phase two. Leah...

Leah Horner: Mike, can you repeat the restaurant, please?

Mike Cully: Yeah. I'll repeat the question. This is verbatim as it was submitted. So, as I understand it, restaurants can open sooner than bars because restaurants are typically sit down where many bars offer standing at the bar. Can we use a sitting versus standing functional requirement rather than the designation of restaurant versus bar? We’re sitting with distancing rules in place can be invoked early and standing at a later phase. Note, many bars are spatially expansive, whereas many restaurants are confined. As a consequence, spacing is the issue, not the designation of a restaurant or bar.

Governor Brown: Mike, I want to say that one of the reasons why I thought it made sense probably the open restaurants first as one of my early calls with city councilors, mayors and county commissioners is that they inform me that restaurants were key to providing food for a lot of their more elderly, more vulnerable constituents. And so I would certainly make the distinction that restaurants are providing essential products. I know some folks would argue with me that beer and wine and cocktails are also essential, but Leah, do you want to get in on the details?
Leah Horner: Yes. Thank you, Governor. And thank you, Mike, for the question. This is something that came up in the restaurant sector conversation earlier this week. And while we're still working through the draft on that, the language that we're kind of toying with right now is table service can make that distinguishing delineation, which I think gets to the concerns in the question.

Mike Cully: I think that's perfect. Thank you, Leah. Moving on, Rapid Fire. Would you? This actually was probably addressed this morning in the press conference, but would you consider lifting the restriction of non-essential procedures?

Governor Brown: Yes, done, bang, move on.

Mike Cully: Number two. And that was from Silverton by the way, so I didn't ignore them. So, this is from Silverton as well. Similarly, can we ease restrictions on the veterinary industry?

Governor Brown: Yeah, that'll be next, they were just a bit different executive order. And I know all of you with dogs, parakeets, cats and other critters really want veterinarian offices open. I'm really grateful for our veterinarians for donating their protective equipment. And we will certainly open them relatively shortly.

Mike Cully: Ok. Perfect. Question 13, when will we know how long antibodies provide appropriate immunity? When will we have sufficient personnel to perform contact tracing? And where will these people come from? When will we have sufficient PPE supply chains to support this heightened consumption? It's a three-layer question.

Governor Brown: Ok. We our supply chain is in pretty good shape right now because the creativity and ingenuity of Oregonians, we have been able to produce a lot of PPE; gloves and masks here in Oregon. Department Corrections, Cascade Blocks, Renewal Project, ADEC in Newberg, all producing products for us to protect lives. We are also procuring it. We have at least a million and probably several million numbers of masks coming into the state. I just kind of going backwards on your questions. What was the third one Mike?
Mike Cully: When do we have sufficient personnel to perform contact tracing where all the people come from and the PPE, which we talked about?

Governor Brown: All right. Well, right now, we have a number of health care workers who are pretty limited at work because we’ve closed down hospitals and medical clinics. We’re hoping we can use some of these personnel. Other hospitals like OHSU, also, just reduced schedules. So, we’d like to pick up the already trained medical personnel that are out there. We also have a really great community health workers that have been in their communities for months, years connecting with their communities. And we think they will be able to go seamlessly into this work. We think roughly we’re targeting about 600 people. As I said, you know, for rural Oregon, we’re going to do some kind of SWAT teams so that, you know, Harney County doesn’t need five people and Malheur County need five people. We have a team with some experts on it that could do some roving, that would be great. What was the first question? I think that’s everything.

Mike Cully: I think you hit a ball so sufficient personnel to perform contact tracing. Where will these people come from? Which is the second part of that? And when will we have the sufficient PPE? So, we hit them all.

Governor Brown: OK, great.

Mike Cully: I’m jumping now to the coast and this next one is from Lincoln City. And it says verbatim: Governor Brown, please understand the unique situation we are facing on the coast. Can you please extend your order 20-03 endate out to May 31st or until modified? We need your help so we can manage our situation here. In Lincoln City, we have a beautiful new hospital with only 14 beds. Exclamation point. It is my opinion that we will not be in a good place to open the stirs on May 7. We have experienced a great number of visitors, day trippers, second homeowners and vacation rental owners during this current order. This is not just been one trip during this time, but the behavior is back and forth, multiple trips to the valley and back. They may be carriers of code 19, asymptomatic and not even know it.

Governor Brown: So, I ironically, I’ll be very up front with you I’m struggling about the coast. Spending time at the Oregon coast as part of our DNA as Oregonians. It is for me, certainly. I love being there. It makes me cry not to be able to just take a walk on
the beach. At the same token, I've asked Oregonians to stay home and avoid all nonessential travel. So, the coast is really tricky. I know that a number of communities, cities and counties have taken really strict action. And I guess I would like to work in partnership with the Legislative Coastal Caucus about what we do and how we open the coast. I know this region is particularly medically vulnerable and economically challenged. And I guess I would really like your input about how we do this, because I think it's going to be really, really challenging.

**Mike Cully:** Thank you for answering that one. Jumping now to Hermiston and this is from Mayor Dave Drotzmann. The question is, What I think community businesses need guidance on is, personally being a business owner and a community leader that others are looking to for answers. What happens when a business opens, and a member of their staff gets COVID-19? Do they close their business for 14 days again and again with each such occurrence? What about a staff member who has a close family member with COVID or what if a patron calls and says, I just got diagnosed and I was in your office yesterday? A business can't go through this "open, close, open, close cycle" routinely throughout the course of the next year. What is the state's expectations for how businesses are to respond to these situations?

**Governor Brown:** Those are really good questions that I would love to call the mayor personally and talk with him about that. I think that's why I use the getting on the ice analogy. Right. And that's why I think it's really important that we kind of move together. I don't want businesses in one community opening and the businesses 30 miles down the road not opening because you know that COVID-19 knows no jurisdictional borders, no boundaries, not city boundaries, not county boundaries, not state boundaries. I think And, you know, this is going to be really hard. There's no playbook here. The director of the CDC said two days ago that they're expecting a huge surge in the fall. I think we're trying to do this in a way that will allow us to stay open, but we just don't know. In terms of individual businesses, we took a different approach than many other states. Instead of saying essential, not essential, we told businesses except for a few that can't socially distance like, you know, hair salons, you know, if you can socially distance and keep your employees safe, fine. So, I think that's really hard. I think notifying fellow employees is really, really important. People need to know if one of their office mates has been tested positive for COVID-19, I think. And this is going to be really hard if that's the case. I think everyone in that employee cohort needs to self-isolate for two
weeks. I know this doesn't work for every business, obviously telecommuting is really important. If I've learned nothing else, I'm going to be screaming at my team and I'm gonna be screaming at all of you to figure out a way to invest in universal broadband for the state, because our businesses, our households and our communities need to be connected to the Internet. Happy to call the mayor.  

Mike Cully: I'll give you his number. He actually texted me and told me to give you his number, so I will do that but not right now...Let's jump over to Beaverton. What is the expected impact on the state of lower gas tax with lower income tax revenues?  

Governor Brown: Well, I think what is really challenging and in terms of lower gas tax is, you know, we've used, we've bonded the gas tax to invest in infrastructure. And that's how we have put people to work in tough economic times. And that's how we have created jobs in rural parts of the state. I am not willing to let this crisis be wasted, however. And if we've learned nothing else, we must be prepared for the next crisis. And I don't know if it's climate change or an earthquake, but we have got to make sure that our infrastructure is both earthquake resilience and climate change adaptable. So, I think you're going to see us making significant continue to make significant investments in infrastructure, despite the fact that we have no money. So, I'm hoping the feds are going to invest in an infrastructure package. There are in addition to broadband and seismic resilience and our roads, the bridges. The other piece for me is water, water, water. We're in a drought year. We have got to be making those investments in the natural and built water arena, whether it's dams, Hi Newberg, not Newberg Newport, I do see you...whether it's, you know, making sure the Umatilla Base has access to the Columbia River water, whatever it is. We've got to be investing in water infrastructure for Oregon's future.  

Mike Cully: You're singing our tune Infrastructure and Water that's what we fight for every day. Over to Haines now a question from Haines, can we determine the opening of a business on a county by county basis instead of a statewide approach? The situation in Wheeler County and other rural counties is quite different from the situation in the valley.  

Governor Brown: Absolutely. Let's see, isn't Haines right near Baker City?  

Mike Cully: Oh, yeah, they've got the great steakhouse.
Governor Brown: Yes, I have been there. It's fabulous and it's right on the way to Anthony Lake ski area. So, I think the short answer is yes. We will look at counties or maybe regions of counties in terms of opening. We know the valley is way behind remote and rural Oregon. So, I expect that you'll see some type of one size doesn't fit all of this circumstance.

Mike Cully: Perfect. Cornelius, we're going to come back Metro area, sort of. What is the plan to address...And I like this one because today we just started talking about addressing the underserved populations in Oregon. So, this is going to fit right with that. But what is the plan to address crowding farm workers into buses and vans for work, lunch etc.

Governor Brown: So that's actually a really good and timely question, we know we need about sixty-five hundred workers for cherry to pick cherries in the Hood River area. So our emergency command center is working on that. It may look like hoteling for these families to make sure that we can keep them safe. And obviously, cherries are just the beginning of a several month-long harvest that we need ah, ah, migrant families do. And so, it looks like housing. It looks like transportation. It looks like adequate personal protective equipment. And it looks like access to health care. These folks are the backbone of our agricultural communities and we need to make sure they are safe. And we're going to work hard on making that happen. And this is a great example of where we can use FEMA dollars. So, we're turning it over to the emergency command center. They can bring down FEMA dollars, roughly for every dollar FEMA will pay for seventy five cents. So, it's a pretty good way for us to rely on the federal government.

Mike Cully: Thank you so much. Number 22 comes from Bend: Can Governor Brown provide clarification as to your intentions for a city elected officials involvement in approving the reopening plan. I have heard about several different concepts for what is being proposed.

Governor Brown: So, I would love to continue working collaboratively with our city officials. We had a really good working relationship with our county commissioners. They obviously oversee public health, but these will only be successful if we all work together because we are truly all in this together. And I think this is my second or third
sort of Zoom phone call with all of you. And obviously, we're going to keep it up. But I need your help and I need your leadership. And it's really important if we want to continue to save lives that we all comply with our social distancing measures.

**Mike Cully:** Excellent, over to North Plains. Small businesses are having a heck of a time getting applications submitted and approved and sole proprietors are getting nowhere. What is being done to expedite the need for our small businesses which are anchors for small towns?

**Governor Brown:** Absolutely agreed. Small businesses are the heart and soul of Oregon and our economy. We've developed our small business navigator. As I said, I'm going to use a portion of the governor's strategic reserve funds to create some assistance, particularly for small businesses in our underserved communities and Leah, if you could sort of respond as well, that would be helpful.

**Leah Horner:** Yes. So I think the other thing that that's happening right now is that the federal government is in the process of approving the PPP 3.5, as I think the governor mentioned earlier, and that should have additional resources out there for small businesses in addition to the bank lending that was in the first round. They're also giving funds to the CDFIs, the community development financial institutions in order to help some small businesses process those applications a little bit faster. They've also expanded the economic injury disaster loans, which are actually grants through that program. And they've also expanded eligibility. So, there should be some additional resources coming from them as well.

**Mike Cully:** Perfect. Thank you. Just reading the chat comments here on the side of the panel again. Someone was asking what about fraternal organizations such as VFW or American Legion, jjw are they going to be handled?

**Governor Brown:** They will be handled at our reopening phase. My recollection is that we are staging gradually an increase in the size of gatherings. I think, I don't know what the framework says, maybe Leah or Courtney can help me out here. But yes, we obviously would like to go back to social gatherings. I am a social being and I miss those events. And I know it's really important for people to feel that sense of community and connection to other folks. I would just say that these large gatherings are
particularly challenging and a pretty horrific way to spread COVID 19. So, it will be a matter of weeks, probably months.

**Mike Cully:** Thank you. That kind of dovetails into what Albany was asking and that is, do you anticipate different industries to get the restrictions lifted gradually?

**Governor Brown:** Yes, I think it just depends. Obviously, we are giving the green light for Oregonians to access medical care starting May 1st. We have not shut down construction or manufacturing. I anticipate, you know, we'll gradually allow other types of businesses coming in. Honestly, a lot of it has to do with the availability of PPE. So for those of you dying to get your hair done or your face shaved and I see a lot of COVID 19 beards out there, we would like to get hair salons open quickly. If we can get and we can, I get the PPE, personal protective equipment, and folks can socially distance in those salons, you know, that should be good.

**Mike Cully:** I shaved for you today just so, you know, I had six weeks going. So, I see a lot of questions from the coast popping up on the side about the Oregon Aquarium, about summer camps and things of that nature. So, we'll get those answered as well.

**Governor Brown:** I mean, the aquarium. Summer camp. It's too soon to say. I know that other communities around the country are closing down their summer activities. I want to see how things go for the next few weeks. But this is I just I know this is really hard and it's really frustrating. I absolutely love the aquarium and I love being at the beach. If I were 12, I'd be very excited about going to camp. I mean, this is really, really hard.

**Mike Cully:** It really is. And again, living it firsthand with you. I see what's going on here. So, another question that's coming in is what is being done to ensure the food chain is not interrupted, specifically giving the harvest out of the fields, etc.?

**Governor Brown:** And I think I kind of answered that with the work we're doing to make sure that our agricultural workers can be safe. Some of our agricultural activities are already have social distancing in them. I'm thinking of wheat farmers and others are pretty limited in their daily personal interactions. Obviously, cattle ranchers as well. But I think for me this is a lesson in making sure that Oregon is more resilient in the future.
We learned early on that we were going to get handed personal protective equipment from the federal government. So, we collected it. We conserved it. We're creating it and we're procuring the hell out of it. And I think that's really true about our food chain. And what's great about Oregon is that we have over two hundred and twenty commodities and we really created the farm to table or farms fork movement in this state. And I think we need to build on that. We just strengthen our agricultural sectors both in terms of self-resilience, but also in terms of how we can be literally a great food producer for the rest of the country in the world.

**Mike Cully:** Thank you. We're having some great questions come up here on the chat line and again, we're compiling those, and we'll get them. So, this next question asks Hey, we're having a tough time figuring out how to deal with our homeless people. We are in a county area and is driving more homeless to our area. What do we do to communicate with them and let them know what's going on?

**Governor Brown:** So, we're working closely with the community action teams in counties across the state. I believe most of our counties have a community action organization. We're working with them through the emergency command process. Using the command center to get them either resources up front so they can house in our local hotels and motels, our folks that are houseless. But I think right now it's really important that we get our folks who are living on the street, off the street and to some place that safe and clean and sanitary. And we're working to get our community action agencies the resources they need to make that happen all across the state.

**Mike Cully:** Thank you. We have about seven minutes left, so we're nearing the end of this. I do want to get this question in from Union because we do have a hard stop at 4:30. Can you provide a clear timeline, including target dates for opening up eastern Oregon’s economy? Eastern Oregon has been following guidance for the past six to seven weeks and while our city has already lost businesses that do not appear, as they will reopen, more will follow with this timeline continues for months. Can Eastern Oregon businesses, hair salons, barbers, boutiques, etc. begin opening May 4th, 2020.

**Governor Brown:** At this point in time, I cannot give a date and I'm sorry. I know these are really uncertain and chaotic and confusing time and we all want certainty. I certainly want certainty. But we are working hard with the Oregon Health Authority to build a
robust public health system that would enable folks in eastern Oregon to have the systems in place they need to protect the health and safety of their citizens. I am well aware that eastern Oregon, that our rural communities are disproportionately impacted by the COVID 19 outbreak and we're working quickly to see what we can do.

**Mike Cully:** The next question from the chat line over here is about food banks and their emergency funds available to them?

**Governor Brown:** Yes, through the emergency command center, FEMA has granted my request for a million dollars a week in additional funding for the Oregon Food Bank that will be distributed out to all of the local food banks around the state. Essentially, that's doubling their normal budget.

**Mike Cully:** And I have another one. Does the governor plan to require masks when in public? That comes from Newberg.

**Governor Brown:** Here's what I will say. The CDC has recommended masks in order to protect people that you come into contact with. And our lives are not going to be normal as we were to come out of this pandemic. And I would encourage folks to start either making or purchasing masks that they can wear as they go into grocery stores, as they go into pharmacies and frankly, go get your hair done.

**Mike Cully:** Another one asks, are there any financial provisions being made for people whose unemployment benefits have run out?

**Governor Brown:** Boy, they've run out already? My understanding is that the federal dollars run for four months, so they shouldn't be run out yet.

**Mike Cully:** Ok.

**Governor Brown:** We better be prepared. We're hoping that this is a V recession, right? Way down, way out. We'll get prepared for that.

**Mike Cully:** That's the goal. And I know we're the second best funded in the nation, so that's a good thing. What about the small communities with zero positives within a county with low positives? That is very near to entering the Phase 1 process.
**Governor Brown:** Well, we've been working with a number of those counties to make sure that they still have to have the mitigation efforts and the containment and mitigation efforts in place. That means a strike team or the public health system that will allow them to do the testing, the contact tracing and the isolation and surveillance. And so, the challenge with our rural communities. Right. Is that your population tends to be a bit older and you don't tend to have the hospital system capacity? And we want to make sure that there's adequate hospital capacity, adequate PPE and that there are strike teams to assist should there be an outbreak. So, we're working hard to get you open. I know this is really hard.

**Mike Cully:** Yeah, it all makes good sense. I like the next series that have come in because we've been asking you, what can you do for us? How can you help us? The next series of questions asked, how can we as city leaders, community leaders support your efforts both here in the state and on the federal level? Great questions.

**Governor Brown:** Yeah, absolutely. In terms of at the federal level supporting our request for five hundred billion dollars for the state with broad flexibility would be huge. Making sure that the federal delegation understands that this first tranche of money to the state is really limited in terms of power able to fund it. Talking with your constituents. You are on the front lines. You guys are doing the toughest. You guys and gals are doing the toughest work because you can't go to the grocery store without talking to people. I know that. And so encouraging people to continue social distancing, to stay safe, to care for their vulnerable neighbors and family members. I Encourage you to wear masks as you're out in public. Obviously. Does that work? I did a press avail this morning, I'm not going to wear a mask during that. But all of that certainly helps my efforts, our state's efforts. And I'm hoping the more likely we have solid systems in place, the less likely we'll have to step backwards in the event of a outbreak of the virus in the months and the year to come.

**Governor Brown:** Remember, we've got to do this together.

**Mike Cully:** That's right. We're all in it together. It's not just my problem or your problem. It's all of us. So, Governor, we're at the bottom of the hour, and I promise to hard stop. I just want to thank you. It's been a pleasure working with you. We very much appreciate your accessibility. I appreciate the thoughtful approach that you're taking to
this. The amount of information that you have to assimilate to be able to make these
decisions is mind blowing. And I know you and your staff have been working really
round the clock. I've had exchanges with Leah at 11:00 at night. And I really appreciate
what you guys are all doing, and we are all in it together and we're going to get through
it. And I sincerely appreciate that.

**Governor Brown:** Thank you. Be safe out there, everybody. Take care.

Thanks so much, everybody. We'll see you on the call tomorrow, 10:05