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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Governor Walz meets with Rochester leaders Tuesday to discuss impacts of COVID-19**

April 28, 2020 – Rochester, Minnesota – Minnesota Governor Tim Walz joined City of Rochester Mayor Kim Norton, city administrators, and representatives from the City Council and Olmsted County Board of Commissioners this afternoon at the Government Center to highlight COVID-19-related budget impacts.

City Administrator Steve Rymer shared an overview of the city’s projected COVID-19-related budget challenges, and Mayor Norton stressed the importance of a state bonding bill to help with economic recovery. (The budget presentation can be viewed in its entirety [here](#).) “Financial assistance through a partnership with our state and federal governments will be essential to reduce the impacts on the Rochester community,” said Rymer.

The governor shared the city’s appeal to have a portion of CARES Act funding directed to local municipalities like Rochester to help offset some of the unexpected expenses resulting from COVID-19.

Another budget challenge to the city is the anticipated decrease in Rochester’s Local Government Aid (LGA) for 2021, which is projected to drop by \$1.2 million based on tax base growth. The governor shared strong support for the importance of the LGA. While this financial change is not tied to COVID-19, it is another direct impact on the city’s budget and places additional pressure on the local tax levy or the need to generate a new revenue stream.

The governor commended Rochester’s successful creative partnerships that have developed to address community needs such as economic stability, food stability, and a day center and warming shelter for the homeless. “The city, the county, and Catholic Charities came together to turn the Mayo Civic Center into an emergency shelter and a day center to offer homeless services,” said Aaron Parrish, Deputy City Administrator. “We were able to leverage that community asset into something very powerful.” City and council leaders both emphasized the importance of creating permanent funding solutions to support vital community facilities like the day center long-term.

As confirmed cases become more prevalent in Minnesota’s congregate care facilities, local officials are seeking to lessen demands on the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and speed up testing by encouraging risk assessment and contact tracing to be handled locally. “We have tens of

**NOVEL CORONAVIRUS  
(COVID-19) PANDEMIC**



**EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS**

**Stay at Home  
Executive Order 20-20**  
*Effective March 27 — April 10*

**City of Rochester  
Declaration of Local Emergency**  
*Issued March 17, 2020*

**Olmsted County  
Public Health Emergency**  
*Issued March 17, 2020*

**Minnesota Peacetime State of  
Emergency EM-3453**  
*Issued March 13, 2020*

**National Emergency  
Concerning Novel Coronavirus  
Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak**  
*Issued March 13, 2020*

**LOCAL ACTIVATIONS**

**City of Rochester  
Emergency Operations Plan**

**Joint Information Center (JIC)**

**City of Rochester Emergency  
Operations Center (EOC)**

**EOC STRATEGY**

Ensure Community Lifelines

**EOC OBJECTIVES**

- Continuity of Operations
- Timely Community and Teammate Communication
- Economic Stability
- Community Stability
- Healthcare System Support

*Lifelines enable the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and are essential to human health and safety or economic security.*

thousands of healthcare providers right here in Rochester,” Mayor Norton told Governor Walz. “Let us do it. We have trusted providers on the ground in this community. We can move the needle on helping to get the state back open.”

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