



## **CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

**MEETING DATE:** 9/17/2024

**DEPARTMENT:** City Manager

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### **SUBJECT:**

LAGUNA HILLS DMV OFFICE CLOSURE

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Exercise City Council discretion.

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

At the September 3, 2024, City Council Meeting, Council Member Yu received consensus to agendize an item regarding the Department of Motor Vehicles ("DMV") Laguna Hills Office location (Attachment 1). In an August 12, 2024, press release, the DMV announced the permanent closure of the Laguna Hills DMV Office location on October 11, 2024 (Attachment 2). The release states that Laguna Hills office, which opened in 1987, does not meet the current needs of the DMV. In KCAL News article from August 28, 2024, a DMV spokesperson said that renewing the lease for the Laguna Hills office would be cost prohibitive as the office is outdated, requiring major renovations to comply with DMV operational standards and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (Attachment 3).

The Laguna Hills location was one of two DMV locations in South Orange County. The DMV initially intended to open a new location in Mission Viejo but was denied the conditional use permit by the City Council in June due to traffic and safety concerns. That location would have been all-inclusive, offering driving tests and license and registration renewals. Since this denial, the DMV is no longer pursuing an additional site to replace the Laguna Hills office.

The DMV cited the digitization of services and the availability of services that can be conducted online, by mail, or at a DMV kiosk as a means of mitigating the closure's impact. For transactions that require an in-office visit, such as finalizing a REAL ID application, customers can visit one of the following locations (mileage is calculated from the Laguna Hills office):

- Santa Ana: 1330 East 1st St. (13 miles).
- Costa Mesa: 650 West 19th St. (15 miles).
- San Clemente: 2727 Via Cascadita (18 miles).

In response to the Laguna Hills DMV office closure, Assemblymember Diane Dixon and nearly a dozen other legislators sent a formal letter and have requested a meeting with department representatives to discuss either renewing the Laguna Hills DMV lease or identifying a new location in South Orange County (Attachment 4).

Inasmuch as the City Council requested that this item be placed on the agenda, any further direction is at its sole discretion.

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#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impact of the recommended action is dependent upon City Council action.

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#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft City Council Minute Excerpt, September 3, 2024 – DMV Closure
2. DMV Laguna Hills Office Closure Announcement
3. *KCAL News*, “Laguna Hills DMV slated to close, leaving Orange County residents with three offices”
4. Letter from Legislators to Department of Motor Vehicles

Initiated By: Nidia Ruelas, Assistant to the City Manager

Submitted By: Debra Rose, City Manager

Approved By: Debra Rose, City Manager