



## **Monterey County Tourism Remains Focused on Recovery**

*MCHA, MPCC & MCCVB focus on Business and Marketing Recovery*

Monterey, Calif., April 17, 2020 – It’s been over a month since Monterey County’s leading hospitality and tourism organizations united to work through the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Faced with an unprecedented economic and health crisis, Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB), Monterey County Hospitality Association (MCHA), Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (MPCC) and additional chambers throughout the County continue to collaborate daily to prepare for an aggressive recovery once shelter-in-place orders are lifted.

Details on when and how the shelter-in-place orders will be lifted lack specifics, but the local hospitality/tourism industry has approached the comeback with a focus on two primary areas: Business and Marketing recovery.

“Our focus has always been on marketing our destination in partnership with our hospitality businesses,” said Rob O’Keefe, interim president and CEO at MCCVB. Adding, “But with this recovery it is even more important to be in lock step. How businesses ramp back up and ensuring high confidence with travelers is central to the marketing approach.”

MCCVB has formed a marketing recovery task force comprised of businesses and attractions throughout the County. On business recovery, MCHA has formed a task force focused on how businesses will ramp up and deal with potential government requirements. MPCC has led a weekly business roundtable and collaborated with local governments on issues ranging from a protective mask drive to SBA loans. They also created a “Monterey Peninsula Small Business Relief Fund” at Community Foundation for Monterey County designed to provide relief to small businesses and their employees.

“Our community’s recovery requires maintaining businesses during the shelter-in-place so that there is something to come back to,” said Frank Geisler, CEO at MPCC. “These small businesses are suffering tremendously. We hear their concerns and are doing everything in our power to help them survive.”

On March 24, Monterey County CVB reported an estimated short-term loss of \$400 to \$500 million in tourism spend during the first 90 days of the pandemic. That same model projects over a billion dollars of loss should the pandemic and resulting economic crisis continue for the next six to nine months.

“We have dozens of hotels that have closed, thousands of unoccupied hotel rooms and over 13,000 laid off hospitality workers,” said Jeroen Gerrese, Chair of the MCHA. The organization represents all hospitality workers in the County. MCHA has been collaborating with elected officials, developing a game plan to get hotels operating at full capacity and get people back to work. “The path to recovery won’t be short, but I’m optimistic that we will soon turn a corner and people will travel again. As that happens, MCHA will be here to help guide the ramp up,” he added.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Questions and requests for information should be directed to the following:

- **Monterey County CVB** – *questions on the overall tourism economy; general impact to the destination including groups/conferences and events; and changes in destination marketing*  
**CONTACT:** Rob O’Keefe, Interim President and CEO, [Rob@SeeMonterey.com](mailto:Rob@SeeMonterey.com)
- **Monterey County Hospitality Association** – *questions about employee impact*  
**CONTACT:** Jeroen Gerrese, Board Chair, [JGerrese@TheSanctuaryBeachResort.com](mailto:JGerrese@TheSanctuaryBeachResort.com)  
*For a list of hotels temporarily closed, please see [here](#).*
- **Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce** – *questions about individual business impact*  
**CONTACT:** Frank Geisler, CEO, Monterey Peninsula Chamber, [frank@montereychamber.com](mailto:frank@montereychamber.com)
- **Questions about businesses and employees in specific areas throughout the County:**  
**Big Sur Chamber of Commerce**, Kirk Gafill, President, [info@bigsurcalifornia.org](mailto:info@bigsurcalifornia.org)  
**Carmel Chamber of Commerce**, Jenny MacMurdo, CEO, [ceo@carmelchamber.org](mailto:ceo@carmelchamber.org)  
**Carmel Valley Chamber of Commerce**, Elizabeth Suro, Managing Director,  
[evsuro@sbcglobal.net](mailto:evsuro@sbcglobal.net)  
**Marina Chamber of Commerce**, Elizabeth Plante, President, [info@montereybaymoves.com](mailto:info@montereybaymoves.com)  
**Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce**, Moe Ammar, President,  
[moeammar@pacificgrove.org](mailto:moeammar@pacificgrove.org)  
**Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce**, Paul Farmer, CEO, [President@SalinasChamber.com](mailto:President@SalinasChamber.com)  
**Visit Carmel**, Amy Herzog, Executive Director, [Amy.Herzog@CarmelCalifornia.com](mailto:Amy.Herzog@CarmelCalifornia.com)