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Date: March 25, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ONTARIO FILED PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST SEEKING LOCATION OF CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES**

The City of Ontario has filed a public records request with the County of San Bernardino for information on where confirmed coronavirus are occurring.

So far, only countywide data has been released, which puts Ontario and other cities at a disadvantage when it comes to keeping their own communities informed and safe. The request, filed Wednesday, seeks the identity of local jurisdictions in which cases have been reported. “Knowledge is protection,” said Mayor Paul Leon. “Our message of social distancing is more impactful if we all know that the threat is indeed present in our community.”

Patient privacy concerns voiced by the County are misplaced, according to City Manager Scott Ochoa. “We are not seeking specific identifiers that would divulge protected information under HIPPA,” he said in reference to the federal health information privacy law. “Until and unless folks can confirm that COVID-19 is impacting their community directly, people are apt to lessen their adherence to the State’s stay-at-home orders – especially when neighboring counties are releasing such information.”

On March 14, the City of Ontario declared a local state of emergency in preparation for a potential local spread of COVID-19. The next day, San Bernardino County reported its first case. Since then, 16 other cases have been confirmed in the county, but because the data is not separated out by local jurisdiction, Ontario city officials say they are operating at a disadvantage.

The public records request is designed not to infringe on individual privacy but help local officials inform and better respond to their communities.

Ontario has closely monitored the coronavirus outbreak since its onset, and developed a comprehensive COVID-19 emergency response plan to minimize the risk of exposure, anticipate potential vulnerabilities and act quickly and responsibly to any new developments.

For updates on the City’s COVID-19 response efforts, please visit: [www.ontarioca.gov/coronavirus](http://www.ontarioca.gov/coronavirus)

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**About the City of Ontario**

The City of Ontario *Elevates* the quality-of-life by creating urban lifestyle districts that create sustainable places to live, work and play. Located just 35 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, the City of Ontario is ideally situated as a gateway to Southern California. With major freeways, rail transportation and International Airport, Ontario offers the rest of the world to be a part of a culturally diverse community with rich history that is well positioned for quality development and economic sustainability for its 177,000 residents.  Complementing its business and residential core, Ontario offers premium entertainment venues such as the Ontario Convention Center, Toyota Arena, and the Ontario Mills Mall. To learn more about the City of Ontario, visit [www.ontarioca.gov](http://www.ontarioca.gov) or call (909) 395-2000.