



# **Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality Activity during the COVID-19 Crisis**

**COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Update**

**June-October 2020**

Prepared by the Urban Center for Applied  
Information and Knowledge

## Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	4
<b>From the Mayor</b> .....	7
<b>Resident-Oriented Initiatives</b> .....	8
Social Services .....	8
Education .....	14
Enforcement and maintenance of public order .....	16
Community .....	16
Culture .....	20
Tourism .....	22
Traffic and Parking .....	22
Infrastructure, Construction and Development .....	23
Residence .....	23
DigiTel Residents' Association .....	23
<b>Business Oriented Initiatives</b> .....	24
Division preparation for property tax collection .....	24
Local Businesses .....	25
Information, directions, and enforcement of business compliance with "Purple Tag" regulations .....	26
Online requests for a signage fee refund for business owners .....	26
Payment to suppliers .....	26
Flexible enforcement .....	26
Aid to businesses at risk .....	26
Additional relief for businesses .....	27
Establishment of dedicated page to centralize all information necessary for businesses during COVID-19 .....	27
Promoting digital initiatives for businesses .....	27
<b>Internal organizational initiatives</b> .....	28
Transparency and remote connection to employees .....	28
Employee health protection and compliance with purple tag conditions .....	28
Management flexibility and working from home .....	29
Salary and payslips .....	29
Construction work in municipal buildings .....	29
Budget preparation .....	30

Information Management .....	30
<b>Public Relations and Communication.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Information for residents.....	30
International Relations .....	31
Foreign relations .....	32
<b>Summary: Scenarios of urban coping and growth during COVID-19.....</b>	<b>33</b>

## Preface

The current document coordinates the range of activities of the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality in handling the COVID-19 crisis in June-October 2020. The document is an update to two previous documents prepared on the subject - in April and May 2020 - by the Mayor's Office, in collaboration with Tel Aviv Global & Tourism, and by the Urban Center for Applied Information and Knowledge.

[To April report](#)

[To May report](#)

This period is divided into three sub-periods in which the municipality operated under different constraints:

1. June 1-August - A setting of partial opening in the city, in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, under certain restrictions.
2. September-mid-October - the period of the second lockdown, which lasted about five weeks.
3. From October, a gradual opening of businesses and institutions, which is continuing through the present.

The information in this document details a variety of activities, encompassing the areas of action of the municipality in four separate aspects:

- Residents - providing services and response in the areas of community, welfare, health, education, security, infrastructure and traffic, culture, tourism and more.
- Businesses - providing a solution and assistance to businesses in the city.
- Employees - work schedules, activities of employees and managers, and intra-organizational initiatives.
- Public relations - information and spokespersons, relations with other authorities and with local government.

Among the range of actions taken by the municipality, the most prominent were: the establishment of a command center for daily monitoring and control of the spread of the disease in the city and its reduction; providing assistance and treatment to all types of populations in need - senior citizens, youth, new immigrants, asylum seekers, and others; changes in the nature of leisure and cultural activities offered to residents, and beyond holding various events for all ages in bubbles, in the open and through Zoom; operating the education system in accordance with government guidelines and establishing assistance and support for educational staff and parents; strengthening communication with businesses and aiding applications for waivers of property taxes, through online interfaces, spacing of seating in public areas; maintaining continuous contact with residents through dedicated information sheets about COVID-19 on the municipality website, digital mailings, announcements; maintaining continuous and transparent employee communication with residents through text messages, campaigns and outreach activities; and flexible working arrangements that enable the municipality to continue providing service even in days of lockdown and restrictions.

## **Main trends - the Center for Economic and Social Research**

Between June and October 2020, the Center for Economic and Social Research conducted several surveys:

- Resident survey - which included 3,000 respondents and examined residents' satisfaction with the functioning of the municipality during emergencies and the information provided by the municipality, as well as examined additional needs that residents have during this period.
- A survey among business office owners – to which 400 office owners responded - designed to understand the situation of the businesses during this period and to identify businesses at risk - those that are likely to close, leave the city or reduce their business space. These parameters may affect city and municipal revenues.
- A survey on housing - which included 2,000 residents and examined parameters related to the COVID-19 period, and the economic and employment situation of respondents, as well as examined considerations of changing place of residence due to the crisis.
- Monthly follow-up conducted by the Research Center, in collaboration with the Strategic Planning Unit, after indicators showing the status of the city and the residents, for example on the subject of tourism (hotel occupancy), rate of job seekers among the residents, rate of exchange of holdings in hospitality, property tax rates.

The findings indicate the changes that took place in municipality actions for the city between the beginning of 2020, before the outbreak of COVID-19, to the present, with two lockdowns in the middle.

These are the main trends:

- Consumption and transportation - changes in the consumption and transportation habits of the residents.
- Sanitation - the amount of garbage per resident is lower compared to the corresponding period.
- Tourism and hospitality - indicators point to a gradual recovery through August, but a decline from September.
- Libraries - Physical lending in libraries has been replaced by digital lending.

The two major issues the city is still suffering from:

- Employment - According to data from the Employment Service, in September 2020 there were about 22% job seekers in the city, with young people being the main victims of the situation. According to a survey by the Research Center, conducted in offices using an area of more than 100 meters, and designed to assess businesses at risk, about half of the offices expect a reduction in activity areas, and about 40% estimate that they will close the business in the coming year if the situation continues.
- Vulnerable populations - There has been an increase in the number of referrals to welfare agencies, especially in matters of food, housing and domestic violence.



## From the Mayor

It is difficult to sum up everything that has been done here in recent months. Circumstances are changing rapidly, and each week feels like a month. We have been and still are required to frequently adapt to new changes and guidelines, formulate creative solutions and prepare in real time for a new and dynamic reality.

The crisis has forced a change in priorities. Beyond ensuring the continual supply of basic services, such as: sanitation, infrastructure, sewage, lighting, maintaining public order, during this period we have devoted all our attention and resources to the direct and indirect consequences of the pandemic: providing support to populations in distress in the circumstances; adapting routine urban activity in various fields: education, community, culture, leisure, sports, etc. to necessary changes; and taking the initiative in taking an active part in the national task of breaking the chain of infection.

In order to preserve knowledge and promote peer learning, we have summarized in the report before you the primary actions that the municipality has taken in the various areas.

As you will see, there is much to be done. I thank all those involved for their dedication and professionalism.

Wishing us all better days ahead,

Ron Huldai

## Resident-Oriented Initiatives

### Social Services

- **Establishment of a COVID-19 Command Center** - In June, a command center was established at the headquarters of the Social Services Administration, together with the Home Front Command, the Israel Police and the Ministry of Health. The purpose of the move was to reduce the level of disease in the city by cutting the chain of infection. The principles that guided all those involved in this work: An outcome-oriented operative partnership between all parties involved; completion of action at the community level - local research, focused information, enforcement, building trust with residents; recruiting additional partners in the local neighborhood communities - community factors, resident representation, local leadership; focusing on individual (micro) care, while performing complementary actions at the community authority level (macro) ; constant analysis of data and identification of disparities. The command center is made up of professionals from several relevant fields, working in full cooperation - and simultaneously. All centers operate six days a week, and when necessary seven days. The command center conducts a daily situation assessment, in collaboration with relevant key parties, including the community administration, the spokesperson and payroll. These are the teams working in the command center:
  - A. **Command Center Staff** - Coordinates between the various factors, responsible for coordinating evacuation to hotels of confirmed patients who cannot maintain quarantine in their homes. In this team are representatives of Home Front Command, the Police Department, the Ministry of Health and the municipality.
  - B. **Social Services Staff** - Responsible for holding dialogues with all confirmed patients in the city to make sure that they have appropriate conditions, that they adhere to the quarantine guidelines, and if necessary, provide their basic needs (food, baby products, toys, volunteers) so that patients will not need to leave their homes. The inquiries are conducted mainly by social workers and employees of the Social Services Administration, transportation is carried out with the assistance of many municipal units.
  - C. **Epidemiological Investigation Team** - Responsible for conducting an investigation of all patients and those who have been in contact with them, in order to instruct them and determine preventive measures and thus stop the spread of the virus in the city. This team employs municipal employees who have been trained to perform the job by the Ministry of Health and Home Front Command.
- **Care for the community of asylum seekers and undocumented workers** - The COVID-19 crisis has had a dramatic and severe impact on the community of asylum seekers and undocumented workers, leading to a humanitarian crisis and acute hunger. With the outbreak of the crisis, many members of this community were fired from their jobs, mainly in the restaurant and hotel industries, and since then they have had difficulty finding permanent jobs. We estimate that today in about 80% of households at least one person is not working. Due to the severe financial hardship, community members have difficulty purchasing food, diapers, baby food, paying rent, paying for childcare, paying for child health insurance and more. Members of the community of asylum seekers and the statusless are not entitled to receive any allowance from the state and have no family-community security. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, Mesila has been working in an emergency format to address the needs of the community, especially financial



and psychological assistance. Social workers maintain ongoing communication with all Mesila clients (about 1,000 families), in an attempt to help them cope with this challenging period. They hold face to face meetings with them, in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.

In June-October, 5,669 inquiries were received at the Mesila Center for the Exercise of Rights: 95% of these included a request for financial assistance. Mesila also serves as a key information channel for the community: Mesila staff prepares, translates, uploads to the Mesila Facebook page and disseminates to organizations and clients all the essential information published by the Ministry of Health and the Government, notifications about test centers, videos and instructions for parents, with pedagogical content and more. Mesila's Facebook page has in fact become the main source of knowledge and a kind of news channel for the community regarding the COVID-19 virus. The information is also distributed in WhatsApp and Telegram groups shared by Mesila and key figures in the community. In addition, Mesila staff work daily at the COVID-19 Command Center established by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality, the Homeland Front Command and the Ministry of Health, and serve as a key body of knowledge about the spread of disease in the community.

From June to the end of October, Mesila distributed 5,387 food coupons. These food coupons are given to applicants to the Mesila Center for the Exercise of Rights and to families who are regularly cared for by the various Mesila divisions. The aid distributed was purchased with donations raised by Mesila, and received matching funding from the emergency fund established by the Mayor of Tel Aviv-Yafo.

- **Support and Aid to Senior Citizens** - One of the greatest challenges we face with COVID-19 is the attempt to reduce isolation and loneliness, which has intensified due to the limitations of social distancing. Much thought has been invested and is still being invested in improving the quality of life of the city's senior citizens in order to reduce their loneliness. These are the main initiatives taken:
  - \* **Initiating calls to senior citizens in the city** during the holiday season lockdown. The calls were made by employees from a number of municipal divisions as well as by social workers: they included conversations with senior citizens known by the social services departments; conversations with senior citizens who are members of community frameworks ("Pina Hama", "Cafe Europa", clubs, day centers, Mofet, community support), and conversations with senior citizens who are not known in these departments or frameworks. A total of more than 44,600 calls have been made to city seniors.
  - \* **Digital equipment and means** - a pilot for the distribution of about 50 tablets accessible to senior residents from low socio-economic status and with low digital literacy, handled by the departments of social services. The tablets were distributed by volunteers. (This was an initiative led by the acting mayor, Ofira Yohanan Volk, in partnership with "Eshel" - "JDC" and "Keren Shlomo Tiran".)
  - \* **Distribution of recreation kits for Holocaust survivors** - More than 1,200 kits were distributed to members of "Pinot Hamot", to Holocaust survivors who are members of "Cafe Europa" and to Holocaust survivors treated in wards. The kits were purchased from the Nini Chop Association with funds from the Tel Aviv Foundation for Development. The distribution

- was carried out by program operators as well as by youth scouts in the city. In addition, 600 sets of board games were distributed to Holocaust survivors who are members of the supporting communities: in some of the public housing in the southern section, in the "Beit Bracha" community housing, the "CELEB" program, the "Connections" program, "Cafe Europa" Center and ward patients (heart of the city for seniors and outside of Jaffa). 143 card kits for Holocaust survivors were recently purchased by the Galilee Seniors Association, as well as 500 kits containing crossword puzzles, wordsearch, and sudoku booklets. The kits are to be distributed around Hanukkah.
- \* **Family member caregivers** - Establishment of an online support group for family members caring for senior citizens, which was held daily between Rosh Hashana and Sukkot. The daily group was held at regular hours, led by social workers. The aim of the project was to provide an available and permanent space for family member caregivers who are dealing with stress during lockdown. Notice began only four days before the first meeting, and some 50 people signed up. In practice, a permanent core of participants was formed, who take part in the group on a daily basis. At the end of the project, we requested feedback from the participants, in which they reported that the group provided them with relief and served as a safe place to share. In addition, they reported that they felt that the sessions helped them and strengthened them emotionally.
  - \* **Activities in clubs and day centers** - Clubs, the "Pinot Hamot" and the four "Cafe Europa" centers operated during the months of June-November according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and the municipality and in compliance with the instructions for the purple tag. The allowed number of participants decreased in accordance with the guidelines, and when possible, classes and enrichment activities took place in open public spaces adjacent to these frameworks. The Mofet clubs and day centers returned to operation in June, and since then they have been operating in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and the purple tag. In most of these frameworks, too, a decrease in the number of visitors was seen compared to the period preceding the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, the program to reduce loneliness on the weekends is beginning to return to activity gradually, in places where it is possible to act according to the purple tag regulations: Activities for Shabbat eve in "Plugot" housing, and a cultural Shabbat at "Avivim" are active and participants are enthusiastic. The existence of the activities in the various frameworks is very significant for senior citizens who take part in them and helps reduce loneliness.
- **Senior Citizens**
    - \* App 60 + - activities for younger senior citizens within the framework of the Center for Guidance and Growth for Senior Citizens. To aid residents who are at a significant crossroads in their lives, that of moving from employment to retirement, most of the activities and workshops have been transferred to an online format. In addition, telephone support was also provided to the target audience, to enable them to connect with the technological means, and through them to access activities that help them maintain function and resilience. At the same time, in order to make technological and digital means accessible, lectures and workshops for digital literacy were intensified on topics such as: using Zoom, using WhatsApp-Web, instruction in online shopping, using health apps. There

was a large number of participants in the online activities, and we reached 200-600 people per week, with a total of more than 3,000 participants overall who took part in the activities. During this period, content was also offered for maintaining a healthy lifestyle in the broadest sense of the word, both in terms of fitness, nutrition and sports, and in cognitive aspects. A recent lecture on stamina was attended by about 200 people.

- \* Additional activities for the elderly - a variety of lectures and tours tailored to the audience. For example, legal Wednesdays (Zoom lectures by lawyers, in collaboration with the Marva Association, and App 60+ on legal issues such as ongoing power of attorney, gifts within the family, wills, and guardianship), guided tours of Tel Aviv, Shabbat eve in public housing, stand-up shows, lectures about relationships, meetings and classes in open spaces.
- **Families in Poverty and At Risk** - The social services departments remained open to the public throughout the period, in accordance with the directives of the Ministry of Health and the directives of the Ministry of Labor and Welfare, including the second lockdown period. Unlike the other sectors of the economy, the work was largely continuous and face-to-face, out of the employees' sense of staffing the frontline in the battle with COVID-19. During the social workers' strike, all employees of the administration, including those in support units, engaged in ongoing, strenuous work in their departments, in order to continue the work as much as possible. Department staff take care to maintain continuous contact with the workers who work with individuals and families in poverty and at risk. Families who require food assistance receive help or prepared meals, as well as food coupons purchased by the Tel Aviv Development Fund.
- **Programs for Children, Teens, and Families** -
  - \* Day care centers and nursery schools - Throughout the period, day care centers and nursery schools operated, except during the Tishrei holidays lockdown, when all educational facilities in Israel were closed. The operation of these frameworks was approved, in part in response to parents employed in essential work, and their children were integrated into the system.
  - \* After-school clubs and treatment centers for parents and children - All child and youth care frameworks operated in accordance with the Ministry of Welfare's policy for operation in accordance with the regulations for the purple tag. In this framework, all programs for children in the city were active, including for children of disadvantaged populations as well as parent - child centers, programs for mental health therapy, and empowerment of parents and children of early childhood, elementary and high school ages.
  - \* Counseling stations for children and families in crisis or trauma - As part of the understanding that the COVID-19 period intensifies existing crises in families due to divorce and other life events, treatment frameworks have continued to operate throughout recent months. Treatments were conducted both in face-to-face sessions, in accordance with the rules of the Ministry of Health, and through Zoom, and provided a response to many families in distress. In the field of treatment of trauma victims, treatment continued throughout the entire period.
  - \* Activities for teenagers - All youth services operated by social services continued to operate during this period, in services for individuals and small groups of teens. As an exception to

- the closure of educational institutions during the Tishrei holiday lockdown, the Ministry of Welfare approved activities at "Miftan Alon" and "Meitar in Miftan Alon" as youth frameworks. Part of the youth activity was through volunteer and employment projects aimed at providing assistance as part of COVID-19 Volunteering.
- \* Warm homes for young women - run in cooperation with the "WIZO" association in the city, continued to operate throughout the period for the young women in the neighborhoods. Among other things, they are offered lectures, workshops, and leisure activities.
- **City Youth** -
    - \* The "Yated" program continued to operate and provided a service to about 300 young men and women throughout the city. In the last six months, 200 young people from the program's participants received financial assistance from a flexible "Yated" basket (that included assistance with food, clothing, temporary accommodation, furniture and more), 53 received eligibility for rent assistance, 15 received academic scholarship assistance, and 50 young men and women received salary supplementation in the "Employment Promotion" program, in collaboration with the Opportunity Center.
    - \* In the "Nitzotz" program, which accompanies soldiers and police officers throughout the city, financial assistance was provided to 120 residents of the city in the past year, using a "flexible resource basket".
  - **People with Special Needs**
    - \* All frameworks of the Ministry of Welfare that serve people with special needs (Tutim, the Family Center and the Center for Independent Living) operated normally during these months and offered a variety of leisure and enrichment activities (art and cooking workshops, tours, social groups on Zoom and lectures on employment and rights). In September, the second season of the "Hapoel Shavim Tel Aviv" football team, a team in which 10 players with disabilities take part, opened. During lockdown days, the team practiced on Zoom.
    - \* **Ongoing communication with residents** - The "Special People's Group" on Facebook, in collaboration with the Community Administration and the Education Administration, continued its scheduled activities. In addition, in collaboration with the Knowledge Administration, a dedicated area has been established on the [municipality's website](#) for families and people with special needs, where the main relevant municipal services are concentrated.
    - \* At the beginning of the second lockdown, the 106 Call Center was staffed with social workers in the field of disabilities, in order to provide a dedicated solution for this population.
- (More on the subject: in the chapter dealing with the education system and in the chapter dealing with community activities)**

- **Opportunity Center** - The activities at the Opportunity Center and the "Midway" program continued to operate, to help residents from all walks of life who were redundesnt from their jobs or were put on furlough due to the crisis. In addition to the existing activity, intended for welfare clients and those over 45, attention was paid to new populations affected by the COVID-19 crisis. For these populations, new and dedicated solutions were created: young people (in collaboration with the youth centers); self-employed (who, for the first time in their lives, are looking for work) and employees who have been redundesnt (who want to become self-employed or relocate from the hotel, restaurant and cultural industries).

Tools for assistance are diverse and include: individual and group guidance by a coach, occupational psychologist or occupational social worker, who specialize in intervention during an occupational crisis; integration in online and face-to-face courses in skill acquisition; and connections to jobs and employers - depending on what is found in the various sectors.

In addition, the center operates hotlines and dedicated WhatsApp groups, which offer current job offers and information to residents of the southern area of the city, residents of Jaffa (in Hebrew and Arabic), and residents in their 40s; and also maintains a Facebook page that is accessible to residents and includes practical content for job seekers.

- **Centers for the Exercise of Rights** - All centers for exercising rights throughout the city operate and assist city residents in exercising their rights concerning the relevant bodies. Two marketing campaigns were launched to inform new target audiences of the centers' activities. They work in cooperation with the youth centers, with the aim of helping young people affected by the economic COVID-19 crisis.
- **Homeless** - The municipal unit for the care of the homeless works full time, 24/7. The unit continues to meet the public, initiates street patrols in accordance with calls to the municipal hotline, and offers assistance to homeless people in the city in a variety of ways, including suggestions for accommodation within the three shelters in the city. As part of the street patrols, there was an outreach activity about COVID-19 and how to protect yourself against it, food baskets, meals and food coupons were distributed, and treatment was offered to refugees who arrived from abroad with nothing. During the months of June-October, COVID-19 tests were carried out on about 70 homeless people in two stages (June and October) and in both of them all of the homeless individuals tested were found to be negative.
- **Volunteers** - Due to the COVID-19 crisis, which has hampered the ability to provide face-to-face volunteer services, unique services have been developed that combine the pursuit of social solidarity with compliance with the purple tag.
  - \* Distribution of meals to residents by volunteers, assistance with equipping and purchasing medicines.
  - \* Mobilizing volunteers, senior citizens, from home - which provides volunteers with something to do and gives them a sense of involvement and belonging to the community.
  - \* Communication Lines - Keeping in touch with senior citizens, through regular phone calls from volunteers, in collaboration with the Community Administration.

- \* Survivor grandchildren - Scouts volunteer to chat through the "Communication Lines" project with 130 senior citizens in the city, mostly Holocaust survivors.
- \* Organizing volunteer activities in small groups - The Altshuler Shaham company adopted the members of the senior club in Neve Sharet, and initiated a range of activities such as cooking together; correspondence in the city - a connection between club members who come to activities and those who stay at home; volunteers to the door - handing out flowering plants on birthdays to senior citizens; distribution of cakes and meals during the Tishrei holidays and more. Recently, in collaboration with the Spokesperson's Office, a municipal COVID-19 patrol composed of volunteers from the city was established, to increase positive discourse on the use of protective measures and reducing the chain of infection.

## Education

- **Special Education** - The special education schools and the small classes in the regular schools worked throughout the lockdown period, until 2:30pm (except Fridays and bubbles that required quarantine). Special education children who are integrated into regular education, which was closed, continued to be accompanied by an aide at home. Day centers were opened for children of the educational staff in five schools. About 60 children took advantage of this framework.  
The Department of Special Education worked full time and provided full services to the education frameworks, held eligibility committee meetings and diagnostic services, dealt with the placement of children in the frameworks, and the recruitment of aides. Special education aides worked fully in frameworks as needed.
- **Kindergartens** - Throughout lockdown, educational staff (kindergarten teachers and aides) were recruited for distance learning in all kindergartens, divided into small groups. A variety of learning and social release activities were used. Creative ideas for the activities were formulated by both staff and parents. In addition, in the second lockdown, about 30 daycare centers were opened for children of medical staff. Throughout the lockdown period, personal contact was maintained with kindergarten aides, accompanied by remote professional development. Large meetings, enrichment lectures and personal conversations were held. With the announcement of the return to school schedules, feverish preparations began to open kindergartens. Stability, ongoing routine activities and reduction in COVID-19 cases outlined a return to five days of activity, which has been operating successfully so far.
- **Elementary Education** - Following the request of school principals in the city, to expand learning beyond what was stipulated by the government cabinet, a joint municipal effort was made so that on Sunday November 1st studies would be resumed in a five-day format for first through fourth grades. As part of the Education Administration's efforts to provide field support as much as possible, we expanded the after-school activities, so that in schools where the first-to-second grade schedule is only for 4 hours, the after-school activities would begin at noon. We opened community centers and city recreation clubs for use by the schools, and necessary staff was provided so that the schools and yards were prepared for the best return of the schoolchildren.
- **Equipment, Computers, and Infrastructure** – The purchase, packaging and transportation of COVID-19 related equipment to educational institutions. We carried out the purchase and lending of tents to be used for capsule learning in schools. We oversaw the cleaning and

disinfection of all surfaces, yards, classrooms and other communal spaces in educational institutions prior to their opening. We opened kindergarten clusters for children of medical staff. We handled computer procurement orders for schools, as part of the Ministry of Education's "Kol Kore" program.

- **Changes in Payment of School Fees** - Government decisions regarding the operation of educational institutions, summer schools and daycare frameworks have changed during the COVID-19 crisis and are still subject to change. Every new decision means a change in the manner in which fees are collected and in the provision of refunds to the parents of students in municipal education frameworks. It was therefore decided to provide a pro-rated refund of education and welfare payments for services not provided during the lockdown period (such as transportation and long school days), charging for daycare at a daily rate instead of monthly, and recalculation of payment schedules.
- **Educational Psychological Services** - The educational and therapeutic staff monitors and partners in issues of distance learning, with an emphasis on social and emotional needs and building tailored solutions for both staff and population: Establishing dedicated groups to guide and support kindergarten teachers, aides and parents (according to children's ages and needs - such as special needs or asylum seekers), lectures for parents and staff related to coping with COVID-19, identifying personal needs of teachers, training and mentoring work with classrooms and children, ongoing and continuous work with both comprehensive and integrated special education, preparing professional and informational materials for parents and educational staff according to adjusting needs and changes in educational settings, accompaniment and support for parents, staff and children of all ages and educational frameworks as needed, guidance in issues of loneliness, social difficulties, parental presence, anxieties, depression and learning difficulties. The "Open Door" project - individual work with parents of adolescents and with staff of middle and high schools. Systemic and therapeutic intervention in extreme cases, such as: violence, suicide risk or self-harm.
- **Educational Services Center** - A parenting center in education operated a number of programs during lockdown, such as: "Parents Plus" (lectures for parents where tools are provided to improve family environment and develop parental resilience), a response to principals of city education frameworks as needed (lectures, workshops and individual parenting guidance), "Parents outside the house" (lectures and instruction held in 30 educational frameworks in the city, an addition of 50 lectures to parent communities throughout the city), group instruction for parents in different target audiences (single mothers, parents of gifted children, parents of children with ADHD, and parents of twins), a program covering diaper weaning which included lectures and accompanying families in an individualized process of toilet training.
- **Facebook Activity** – The "Afternoon Plus" program (which includes a series of plays, activities and workshops for parents and children of different ages, and provides a solution for early afternoon - two or three daily activities for two weeks), a panel on the "Breakthrough" program (in collaboration with the Branco Weiss Institute, the Education Administration, principals and students), which encourages rethinking education in the city, "Digital Campus" (which includes a series of lectures given by city parents with the aim of integrating them into the school system, covering issues such as democracy, art, peace agreements, photography, nutrition). In addition, providing current updates and responding to parent inquiries within the framework of the Facebook page of Education in Tel Aviv-Yafo and the Facebook groups: Municipal Kindergartens

in Tel Aviv-Yafo, Elementary Schools in Tel Aviv-Yafo, the Special People of Tel Aviv-Yafo, and High Schools in Tel Aviv-Yafo.

### Enforcement and maintenance of public order

- **Returning public space back to routine quickly** - disinfecting play and fitness facilities in the parks, disinfecting bus stops, reinforcing washing in public space, fencing in play and fitness sites and placing signs prohibiting their use, etc. For this, cleaning teams were active at night and maintenance contractors operated not in accordance with the municipal tender terms but rather in accordance with required reductions.
- **Establishment of testing stations for MDA** - and allocation of vehicles for distribution of food to the needy.
- **Establishment of a "COVID-19 Patrol"** - The Social Services Administration, in collaboration with the Spokesperson's Office, has been working to recruit volunteers for the establishment of a COVID-19 Patrol. The patrol is made up of volunteers from the city, who will help break the chain of infection and increase positive discussion in the city regarding raising awareness of ways to protect against COVID-19 infection.
- **Information activities (Supervision and Security Patrol Division)** – Increased public announcements and enforcement in red neighborhoods to maintain public health, conveying messages to the foreign populations in Arabic, English and Tigrinya, using public address systems and distributing flyers in different languages.
- **Enforcement** - The Supervision and Security Patrol Division, in cooperation with the Israel Police, deals with the enforcement of COVID-19 regulations, such as: prohibited beach visits during quarantine or not wearing masks in public areas. Thousands of inquiries and requests were received from the public regarding enforcement of COVID-19 regulations. More than 5,000 reports and warnings have been recorded in COVID-19-related offenses. The Security Patrol Division handled 14,383 incidents during lockdown (September-October), compared with 9,720 incidents last year.

### Community

- **Community activities** - With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the administration began working on a neighborhood management outline: neighborhood managers were selected to lead local activity, and neighborhood resilience teams were set up built by professionals and residents. The emphasis was on creating an ongoing dialogue with the residents in order to identify problems and help struggling populations, in addition to providing a platform for community initiatives that would help address the challenges that this time has brought with it.

At the beginning of June there was a partial return to activity, and the period between June and October was characterized by a transition between realities. Community institutions opened to the public, and some of the activities were renewed. Gyms and pools and even studio classes were opened, but after a while they closed again, until the last lockdown. The emphasis was on trying to produce as many activities as possible for diverse populations, to allow space for residents' initiatives and to continue the work on the issue of neighborhood resilience.



### Principle Activities Carried Out:

- \* **Family August** - Workshops for preschoolers in a variety of fields throughout August.
  - \* **Community Networking** - Recruiting building movers to produce local and community responsibility.
  - \* **Building Bubbles** - A call was issued to residents, who were asked to organize in bubbles of up to 20 people in their building. Afterwards, the residents could choose from a variety of possible activities such as: sports workshops, story time, crafts, a show, music, and more.
  - \* Additional activities outside the house: activities for preschoolers ("Salta"), a neighborhood artists festival in the yard, workshops in the gardens of buildings.
  - \* **Neighborhood tours** - urban nature tours, walks in Tel Aviv - weekend celebrations of tours near home on a variety of topics: art, nature, history, etc.
  - \* **"From story to tour" course** on Zoom - a unique digital course that provides tools for building and leading tours in the neighborhood.
  - \* **Summer in the neighborhood** - a digital game for the whole family in the style of searching for treasure on mobile phones, an escape room in neighborhoods - challenging tasks online to get to know the neighborhood in a manner adapted to the times.
  - \* **Summer camps COVID-19-style** - In all the centers in the south of the city, camps were held at the end of August to help working families.
  - \* **Master artist classes and shows** - "Intimate in Neve Sha'anana"
  - \* **A moment to breathe** - Online lectures for residents on various topics
  - \* **Involvement of local leadership in the war on disease** - We initiated outdoor billboard and video campaigns in many neighborhoods, by the local leadership.
  - \* **Operation of public pools** - which addressed the needs of thousands of residents.
  - \* Community navigation in the city - discover your neighborhood. Challenging puzzles and tasks to get to know the most intriguing points of interest in your area.
  - \* The Switchboard - setting up a central Facebook page to coordinate all the work in the city.
  - \* The social "net" - table tennis games in the courtyards of buildings - in bubbles of up to 20 participants, under the guidance of a professional coach who brings all the necessary equipment.
  - \* Praise your neighbor - COVID-19 version 2 - Establishing WhatsApp groups for building residents.
  - \* **Residents lecture to residents** - A community project that invites residents to lecture on various topics (digital advertising during COVID-19, talking about art with children, and more).
- **Senior Citizens** - One of the challenges posed by COVID-19 is that of reducing loneliness among the elderly population, which has intensified due to the restrictions of social distancing. Below is the range of actions taken:
    - \* **Activities in public** - (dancing, gymnastics, lectures, public singing, workshops, tours, reading club, Shabbat festivities, and more), a variety of Zoom activities (exercise for the elderly, lectures on culture, art, cooking, positive psychology and more), teens giving aid to senior citizens (doing shopping, holding conversations with childless senior citizens in nursing homes and day centers, distributing cakes and leisure activity kits), Golden Gardens

- (dedicated, separate areas for seniors in urban gardens, combined with sports activities and meetings with volunteers, and more)
- \* Golden Neighbors - A project in which volunteers ensure continuous contact with senior citizens in their building, through small gestures such as challah distribution, plant distribution, etc.
  - \* Groceries to your door
  - \* Book lending services in libraries and books for takeaway - (in collaboration with youth movements. See details in the section on library activities.)
  - \* Floral distribution to retirees, smartphone instruction for retirees.
- **Special Families** – COVID-19 has psychological effects on all children and parents, and to a greater extent among children with special needs, who depend on the help and support of their environment. To support this population, we offer a range of services for them:
    - \* **Summer frameworks for children with special needs** - sailing camp at the rowing center, a ropes and surfing camp in cooperation with the Etgarim Association, Scout troop camps under the leadership of the Tel Aviv-Yafo Scouts.
    - \* **Personal tutoring program for children and adults with special needs** - one-on-one quality time in collaboration with the Tel Aviv-Yafo Scouts.
    - \* Establishment of a special commune that works in special education and in youth centers and in the community at the same time, to promote the integration of youth.
    - \* Dozens of accessible workshops adapted for children with special needs as part of "Today is my turn" during the month of August.
  - **Youth** – During the COVID-19 period, there has been a significant increase in risky behavior among young people in the city, and in general. This is the result of confinement at home, reduction of time allowed in public areas, reduction of social frameworks and cancellation of regular activities that provide interest, meaning, experience and social interaction. In order to deal with the situation, many activities took place to engage as many young people as possible and to create stable weekly activity:
    - \* Group activities in all informal education frameworks.
    - \* Guided building activities - engaging youth in their buildings by instructors from the youth movements.
    - \* Night talks - (Continuation of the summer program) activities of 20 youth teams, coordinators and volunteers.
    - \* Social Acton for Youth.
    - \* Avenue Breeze - music groups for youth in small ensembles.
    - \* SarenaHub from home - remote courses in entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, etc.
    - \* Zoom activities - leadership in the living room (enrichment lectures / athletic leadership, artists, etc.), lectures and meetings for youth and live YouTube, photography course, various events (stand-up, artists, cultural figures, cooking workshops, workshops in collaboration with the Culture Department and Beit Ariela, and more).
    - \* Quarantine News - access to information for youth in the city via social network.
    - \* Sports - surfing lessons, fitness training and dance lessons for youth on Zoom, in sports complexes on the beach and around the city.

- \* Packing, collecting and distributing food - youth movements, Scout troops and the women's centers distributed food to the elderly and needy during and after lockdown. On Fridays they distributed Shabbat challahs to residents and added a flower and a blessing.
  - \* Personal tutoring for children in special education - meetings of volunteers from youth movements and neighborhood youth centers, one on one, with children from special education.
  - \* Computer collection project - instructors from youth movements and neighborhood youth centers collected computers from residents and transferred them to a computer repair project to then be used by children who need them.
  - \* Volunteer Neighborhood Patrol - every day, youths from youth centers and Scout troops went out to hand out masks to residents and provide information about COVID-19.
  - \* Big Brother project - older youths in the youth centers and youth movements were divided into teams and took responsibility for children and younger teens, in order to help them and dispel boredom.
  - \* Tel Aviv Scouts Band - gave performances in the courtyards of senior centers and sheltered housing.
- **Young Adults -**
    - \* Mapping the issues that define the "youth crisis in the COVID-19 Age" - employment, the economic / bureaucratic situation, and emotional coping.
    - \* Creation of the "The Day After" program - which includes workshops, lectures, meetings and personal guidance for young men and women throughout the city in these fields.
    - \* Forming intra-city collaborations in order to make existing services accessible to the younger population, among them: Opportunity Center, Centers for the Exercise of Rights, the Culture Department (assistance to young artists in crisis), the Authority for Stability and Social Equality (dedicated workshops for young women) and more.
    - \* Creating small community groups - that meet physically in public spaces on a regular basis and around topics that produce closeness and community.
    - \* Assistance from the municipal COVID-19 command center in matters concerning young adults (transfer of young people to COVID-19 hotels, maintaining guidelines among young people, etc.).
  - **New Immigrants -**

Mapping the needs of English, Russian, French and Spanish speaking populations in the city, increasing communication with immigrants in order to answer individual questions that have arisen as a result of the situation, a long series of Zoom meetings and lectures tailored to the population, on various issues (rights, employment, the job market and hi-tech, learning Hebrew, first steps in the country, dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, assistance for parents, first aid workshops, story time for children, and more), holding tours and workshops in the fields of culture, art, and history, ongoing Facebook postings of situation updates, increasing cooperation with new immigrant associations.

- **Sports** - Along with extensive popular sports activities conducted by the city's residents and guests, the Sports Authority has conducted sports activities that meet the guidelines of the Ministry of Health, such as "Spinning in the Community".
- **Civic Participation** -
  - \* Conducting civic participation meetings on various topics - such as, the vision of urban transportation, bicycle paths, dog parks, the light rail, the metro and more.
  - \* Writing a guide - recommended means for civic participation during COVID-19.
  - \* Instruction in the use of Zoom for holding civic participation meetings and updating the public on Zoom.

## Culture

**A variety of cultural events on Zoom and bubbles in the open, at the initiative of various cultural institutions in the city.**

- **Municipal Libraries** -
  - \* Production and broadcast of online content on culture and humanities throughout the months of COVID-19 - hundreds of topics that captivated tens of thousands of viewers, the vast majority of whom are city residents.
  - \* Establishment of an online cultural season of the "Beit Ariela" cultural center - customers paid for a "Netflix" subscription of about 300 meetings and lectures, the subscription enables the viewing of all the offered content (about 10 topics per week) and provides a solution for hundreds of city retirees who currently "suffer" from excess free time.
  - \* City residents' participation in filmed content from events that have taken place in recent years, and the production of a new online show.
  - \* Integrating Beit Ariela content into the online school curriculum - to diversify content and create interest among the students.
  - \* Online writing sessions - "Writing in a pandemic".
  - \* Frontal writing sessions in accordance with purple tag regulations.
  - \* Online events for unique populations - such as children with special needs, a writing workshop for the parents of those children, online meetings for children in Amharic, Russian, and English.
  - \* A story-reading project for fifth- and sixth-graders at Balfour School - in which the students are filmed reading a story at Beit Ariela, for the enjoyment of their smaller siblings.
  - \* Books for Take Away - The residents of the city choose books using an online form, and a day later can come and collect the books in a branded bag from Beit Ariela.
  - \* Books to the doorstep - Residents who have difficulty leaving their home receive the service of someone bringing the books to their home, and at the same time taking back the books they wish to return.
  - \* Building Bubbles - an initiative that grew out of a library department, won the cooperation of the community administration, and became a nationwide urban project. The initiative also generated a livelihood for dozens of storytellers who participated as facilitators.

- \* Creation of an online service for paying fines - to allow customers to pay fines and continue to borrow books without having to visit the library.
  - \* An online form for reserving seats in the various library halls - for days when people can be admitted to the library on a limited scale.
  - \* Digital library and search services - which also work routinely.
- **Performances –**

**Production of shows and cinema screenings, in the open-air and on Zoom, including:**

    - \* Shlomo Sixt Hall Drive in - Film screenings
    - \* Street performances around the city - in collaboration with Mifal Hapayis
    - \* Cinema on the water - in Ganei Yehoshua - watching a movie from boats
    - \* Street theater event on the occasion of the school year opening.
    - \* The Shanti House event (fundraiser) at the Wahl Amphitheater
    - \* Survival final - in the parking lot of the Kvutzat Shlomo Hall
    - \* The 14th Jaffa Festival for online children's plays on the theater's website
    - \* Simchat Torah celebrations throughout the city
    - \* Spiritual Festival (Online)
    - \* Plays at the Jaffa Theater plaza
  - **Establishment of an artist assistance team to initiate a variety of activities:**
    - \* Neighborhood in the yard - an art festival in private yards
    - \* Zoom lectures by artists
    - \* Dubbing course
    - \* Street music performances
    - \* Lifting the Switch in Gan Hahashmal - artists hosted by businesses
    - \* Family August - Activities for the whole family in the summer, near home and in accordance with guidelines
    - \* Building Bubbles - (See details in the Community section)
    - \* Jaffa Summer - Dozens of music events in Jaffa during the summer, admission is free
    - \* La Culture - an exhibition of artists, designers, illustrators and photographers
    - \* Shenkin Musicians
    - \* Zoom dance workshops for community centers
    - \* Monologues from the garden - a festival of joint performances in public gardens and in open spaces: The Alley Theater, the Music Center and the Bialik House - shows and performances on the roof of the theater, and in the open air: music events, jazz evenings, stand-up performances, fringe performances, rehearsals, and more.
  - **Tours of cultural institutions** - in the absence of performances, and out of a desire to provide at least some cultural activity and to generate some income for theaters and actors: a behind-the-scenes tour of the Cameri, a behind-the-scenes tour with an actor at Beit Lessin.

- **New tours with an emphasis on assistance to cultural businesses and institutions, under purple tag regulations** - tours for retirees, tours between businesses on the light rail route, benefits on Eretz Israel Museum visits for tour bookers, in cooperation with the Social Space Museum by combining them with Tel Aviv Global ticket purchases, in cooperation with the Liebling House for ticket orders, for booking tours on the Tel Aviv Global website.
- **COVID-19 Emergency / Routine** –
  - \* Opening test complexes in the various neighborhoods - advertising in the community, assistance and allocation of sites.
  - \* Writing neighborhood procedures for lockdown in collaboration with social services and the security division.
  - \* Conducting information meetings with key figures in neighborhoods in order to help spread messages and establishing dedicated WhatsApp groups in the various communities.
- **Jaffa** -
  - \* Dozens of activities for children, teens and adults as part of bubbles.
  - \* A broadcasting station at the Arab-Jewish Community Center of Jaffa - of residents from the community for the community. During lockdown, 51 videos were broadcast (parent training, cooking workshops, story hours, fitness, scientific experiments and more) with an average of about 5,000 views per video.
  - \* Distribution of building and quarantine kits - a games kit, a family quarantine kit, and a planting kit for a building.

## Tourism

- **Distribution of a letter to city hotel owners** - regarding benefits and rights following COVID-19.
- Initiating and conducting a domestic tourism campaign to channel demand for hotels, cultural institutions, restaurants and attractions in the city, from the end of the first lockdown until the beginning of the second lockdown.
- **Coastal Road Campaign** - in cooperation with the Haifa Municipality in order to encourage mutual domestic tourism. Each city offered the residents of the other city benefits (1 + 1 at museums and on tours).

## Traffic and Parking

- **Acceleration of projects in the field of transportation and infrastructure** - improving the status of pedestrians and continuing to promote the "Bicycle City 2025" program to improve and expand the layout of bicycle paths in the city.
- **Postponement of payment dates for parking tickets for the benefit of residents** - In view of the COVID-19 crisis and as part of emergency regulations, residents are given the option to postpone the payment date of parking tickets received before the COVID-19 crisis and the last date to pay falls during the crisis. To this end, the Computing Division developed adaptations in the Mahog system, which allow for the postponement of payment dates as well as the

cancellation of interest accrued on a parking ticket that was supposed to be paid during the COVID-19 crisis, and postponement of filing an application for cancellation of a parking ticket that was supposed to be paid during the COVID-19 crisis.

Applications are submitted using an online form.

- **Reimbursement of additional late fees due to parking fines.**
- **Eased parking restrictions for residents** - discounted charges in private overnight parking lots, night parking in school parking lots and more.

## Infrastructure, Construction and Development

- **Transferring information and clarification sessions on infrastructure works to Zoom** - at the initiative of the Municipal Center for Engineering Coordination. Information meetings are the first meeting point and acquaintance with stakeholders in the areas of infrastructure works and paving bicycle paths in the city. On normal days, there is poor response to face-to-face meetings, in which a project is presented along with how it is to be carried out, expectations are coordinated, and questions are answered. Moving the sessions to Zoom made it possible to expand the audience of participants and coordinate a greater number of sessions more quickly, since no physical space is required to hold the session. This prevents stakeholders from taking over the discussion at the meeting, and encourages a respectful exchange of ideas that makes room for every opinion.
- **Licensing and construction supervision** - From the beginning of the pandemic the branch has been required to find creative solutions to continue to support the construction industry in the challenging situation, without receiving the public and under the limitations of the purple tag. The main emphasis has been on opening online communication channels and technological solutions for working from home. We moved to issuing building permits online, without the need for customers to come to the municipality. New interfaces have been developed for submitting documents during the construction phase online, and new consulting and communication channels have been opened with the branch's customers. In view of the demand, a guide was published for approving balconies in condominiums.

## Residence

- **Establishment of a joint mediation center on residential and business leases in the city** - The Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality and the Bar Association have established a joint mediation center on residential and business leases in the city, where free advice is given to tenants and landlords affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

## DigiTel Residents' Association

- **DigiTel video registration online** - In view of the COVID-19 crisis, the option of subscribing to DigiTel has been developed through Zoom or WhatsApp at the DigiTel support center in the Computing Division. Registration for the DigiTel Association is initiated by the applicant through the service center, and upon presentation of an up-to-date ID card.

## Business Oriented Initiatives

### Division preparation for property tax collection

- **Implementation of an exemption from property taxes for businesses and receipt of indemnification from the State** - the property tax department and the collection department participated in discussions at the 15th Treasury Forum, which outlined a policy for granting a coronavirus discount to businesses.
- **Development of an online form for business owners to apply for a tax exemption** - The Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality has implemented an exemption amounting to tens of millions of shekels that will help businesses get through the current difficult period. The municipality decided that the exemption will be granted immediately and will not be spread over the entire year. The exemption is up to date in the municipal system, and a large proportion of businesses do not have to contact the municipality and waste valuable time unnecessarily. Business owners who were harmed during the COVID-19 period and for whom there is a credit balance, can fill in their personal details and their bank account details in an online application form. Dedicated development in the Mahog system allows businesses that meet the criteria to receive a 100% discount for three months. At the same time, a project of refunding credit card payers and standing orders was carried out. Development of the repayments was carried out in Mahog and included reimbursement of payments by standing order, teleall, and system funds. Refunds were issued to approximately 10,500 business customers totaling approximately NIS 23 million.
- **Access to information for customers** - A computer program has been established that supports the process of quickly and efficiently granting a discount to those entitled to one, including the production of letters to update the customer on the discount details provided to the account, and a voucher for payment of the balance. The information has been updated on the municipal website and announcements have been distributed on many different media channels regarding the process of granting the discount and how to receive it, including referrals to the Small and Medium Business Agency in the Ministry of Economy and Industry, announcements at the property tax call center and notification on the municipality's Facebook page. In addition, an attachment was sent with the property tax slip for the months of November-December, regarding the granting of the discount, and emails and text messages were sent to all business owners.
- **Development of an online form for submitting a request for a refund** - in cases where the granting of the discount will create a credit balance for the customer, and adjusting work processes that support the discount process, along with the collection.



## Local Businesses

Following the government's guidelines for closing businesses, we mobilized for the benefit of businesses, to strengthen the connection between the community and businesses and to carry out marketing moves to encourage business. Below are the main actions:

- Establishment of a new system for dealing with businesses - five business relations administrators were recruited in the community (geographically spread) covering a range of beliefs about the connection with businesses in the city's neighborhoods.
- Field mappings and business tours - with an emphasis on businesses on the light rail routes.
- Focus groups were conducted with business owners - to get acquainted with the needs of businesses during this period.
- Various collaborations - with the Institute of Certified Public Accountants (free consulting for businesses and assistance in receiving COVID-19 grants from the State), with the WE19 project (Home for Social Solidarity, which provides small businesses with a growth grant for developing, upgrading and adapting the business to the new reality), with C40 and the Environmental Sustainability Authority (to connect businesses with what exists).
- Ongoing communication with businesses on a dedicated Facebook page and sending a weekly newsletter to businesses.
- Training in digital marketing for business owners.
- Collaboration with community space teams on various projects: Golden Neighbors, The Lit Up Building, and more.
- Cultural, Community and Business Initiatives - Picking up the counter at Gan Hahashmal and Basel (artists performed and displayed their works in businesses, in the streets, and in public spaces), a community memory game between restaurants and cafes in the area, a neighborhood artists' fair (on Yad Labanim Boulevard), a combination of artists' performances in cafes around the northwest area of the city (held only partially due to the lockdown), "Let's fall in love with Givon Square" (an activity in the public area in Givon Square for the benefit of the residents) and businesses, including a jazz performance and a film screening.
- Introductory and brainstorming meetings to encourage business in the neighborhood - business relations managers and community center managers together.
- Creating cooperation between community centers and shopping centers - ongoing purchases, holiday gifts, introductory gifts and more.
- Family August for Business - Inviting businesses to create activities as part of Family August.
- Promoting the establishment of pedestrian only areas on Florentine Street (following Vital Street) - as a solution for businesses that need more space to sit outside.
- Initiated inquiries and information to business owners at major intersections - about works, renovations, etc.
- Dedicated campaigns on holidays - Tu B'Av (promotion of business owners who are couples), Rosh Hashanah (encouraging customers to write Happy New Year greetings to businesses they love. Greetings were printed on postcards and placards and sent to the businesses).
- Photo IS:RAEL in HaMedinah Square - an art festival in the public space.
- Businesses in my neighborhood - advertising businesses on the municipal website during the second lockdown in the framework of restricted movement. About 700 businesses signed up for

the database, which was distributed to residents through municipal means to get to know the businesses that were open.

- A campaign on billboards, bus stops and advertising space to encourage local purchases.
- Auto-Tel benefits for businesses.

### Information, directions, and enforcement of business compliance with "Purple Tag" regulations

- Under the Supervision and Security Patrol Division

### Online requests for a signage fee refund for business owners

- In accordance with the decision of the City Council, a signage fee waiver is granted due to the COVID-19 crisis - three months discount for signs and two months discount for ads - for businesses holding a legal signage permit, as well as businesses that apply for a signage permit and meet signage guidelines. In addition, vouchers with credit balances were sent to business owners.

### Payment to suppliers

- Payment and provision of ongoing service to external suppliers and service providers.

### Flexible enforcement

- Payment notices have been sent to businesses with debts, explaining that if they have tax-authority approval for eligibility for a discount, they must contact us to submit the approval and pay the debt balance not included in the discount and maintenance levy - and if they do not have approval, they can contact us and receive debt settlement assistance.

### Aid to businesses at risk

- Identification of businesses that are at risk of closing or businesses closed as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, or business owners who intend to report to the municipality if they have stopped owning the property, in order to avoid property tax debts. Once inspectors observe that a business is closed or a property is for rent, they proactively contact the business owner(s) and ask them if they are interested in changing their holdings so that the property tax will not be in their name(s).

### Additional relief for businesses

- Cooperation between the Supervision Division and the Community Administration, to provide relief to businesses.
- Placement of chairs and umbrellas in public spaces to encourage food consumption through takeaway - on the HaArba'a Street pedestrian mall, Rabin Square, Castel Square (Nordau-Pinkas), the Cinematheque Plaza, Tchernichovsky Street at Bograshov, Rothschild Boulevard, Levinsky Street pedestrian mall, Dizengoff Square, Basel Street Pedestrian mall, Givon Square and more.

### Establishment of dedicated page to centralize all information necessary for businesses during COVID-19

[To page](#)

### Promoting digital initiatives for businesses

- A new association is currently being set up, similar to the DigiTel Association for residents. This association is intended to provide, under a single roof, a dedicated solution for businesses operating in the city - with information tailored to the type of business, the area in which it operates and more.

## Internal organizational initiatives

### Transparency and remote connection to employees:

- Maximum transparency and cooperation with employees, while listening to their questions, concerns and feelings. Ensuring that a response is provided as quickly as possible, both by employees of the Human Resources Division and the Administration, both in documents detailing the expected manner of conduct, and within the Facebook group opened to employees of the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality.
- Activity in the Facebook group, managed by the Human Resources Division and the Communications and Marketing Administration. The group was established to enable direct intra-organizational communication with employees during the COVID-19 period. The Human Resources Division posted two Facebook Live broadcasts, in which the division director and his deputy answered questions from dozens of employees, and both had thousands of views.
- Publication of updated, clear and accessible documents and instructions to employees - based on the agreements and instructions of government ministries - on an ongoing basis by the Human Resources Department.
- Updating employees by the HR Division, on an ongoing basis, in text messages and emails, regarding the main points of the agreements signed and the creation of a "Question and Answer Bank".
- Opening a call center that operated for two days and where managers answered questions from about 500 employees, who were desperate for human response and answers to many questions that arose during this period.
- Concentration of all agreements signed during the COVID-19 period) and in the period preceding it in a special environment on the Human Resources Portal (A national database of wage agreements)

### Employee health protection and compliance with purple tag conditions

- Preparations of the City Halls Division, the Procurement and Logistics Division and the Human Resources Division, for the purpose of providing protective equipment and preserving the health of municipal employees, such as: placing no-contact electronic thermometers, briefing guards, purchasing and distributing marking tape to employees, custom signs with instructions for employees, installing partitions, purchasing disinfectants and masks.
- Appointment and briefing of COVID-19 trustees, who maintain compliance with purple tag regulations and provide equipment to employees, in order to comply with the rules and maintain their health.
- Extreme concern for cleanliness, with an emphasis on sensitive surfaces such as elevators, handles, buttons and so on.

## Management flexibility and working from home

- Permission for many workers to work from home - in order to prevent overcrowding and virus infection. Managers were instructed to consider granting permits to work from home as much as possible depending on the employee's role, and provided that appropriate technological means were in place.
- Rotating workers whose work is not required at this stage, such as lifeguards, into other positions so that they would not be considered idle workers (e.g. integration in the COVID-19 Command Center, talks with senior citizens in the city, assistance in distributing food to the needy).
- Determination of uniform criteria and threshold conditions for lending laptops (COVID-19 computers) to employees and managers, and for distributing Zoom cameras - by the Organization and Standards Division, in collaboration with the Computing Division and unit managers. The distribution of equipment was carried out with the aim of maximizing municipality activities with existing resources and assisting municipal units in providing optimal service and meeting the goals and objectives of management.

## Salary and payslips

- Introduction into using the "online payslip" system - which replaces the "smart payslip" system that began in June 2020. The system enables employees to receive their payslips and be digitally updated on additional innovations directly to their computers or mobile phones.
- Adjusting the payment of incentive pay to employees during the pandemic - Due to COVID-19 and the transition to work from home, there was a need to create dedicated reporting codes in the attendance system. A "COVID-19" code was established as well as a "work from home" code on the attendance record. However, due to the change in the codes, the employees did not receive a premium and it became necessary to pay the differences to about 2,500 employees. The Organization and Standards Division, in coordination with the Division of Wages, Human Resources and the Computing Division, installed a rapid update of the calculation mechanisms accordingly, while complying with the procedures and guidelines of the Civil Service Commission. This action prevented harm to workers' wages and allowed the municipality to continue to operate in accordance with the needs of the city, residents and management.

## Construction work in municipal buildings

- We brought forward the execution of future projects to the current time when municipal employees are absent from their offices, so that the duration of the project is shortened and work disruption is avoided. For example: infrastructure work in the south parking lot, strengthening the stairs of the balcony on Rabin Square, a renovation project on the "Shekel" building for the computer department, completion of the corporate office renovation at 68 Ibn Gvirol Street.

## Budget preparation

- Maintaining the volume of revenues and economic soundness of the municipality and defining an annual budget under conditions of uncertainty - building scenarios for the municipal budget for 2020 in accordance with the state of uncertainty from the COVID-19 crisis, taking budget updates into consideration, including cuts due to declining revenue sources, and large-scale closure.

## Information Management

- Continued establishment of a supportive information management environment for municipal units, such as: documentation of residents' needs, epidemiological investigations and ongoing updates from all municipal units on what is happening during the COVID-19 crisis, an environment was established to document residents' needs in the second lockdown, for input by Social Service Administration workers.

## Public Relations and Communication

### Information for residents

- **Publication of articles on the website about information of the Municipal Information Center and the Spokesperson's office** - During the said period, about 90 articles on various topics appeared on the municipal website related to COVID-19, for example: [Municipal COVID-19 Testing Centers](#), COVID-19 Updates in the Municipal Education System, [Business Tax Relief Due to the COVID-19 Crisis](#), Infection Data in the City, COVID-19 Period Youth Assistance Program, COVID-19 Public Prayer Guidelines, [Coronavirus Updates and Guidelines](#), Telephone Psychological Support Program, an initiative to double donations from COVID-19 grants.
- **Establishment of new information pages on the municipal website** - dedicated pages have been set up about COVID-19, and there is a regular daily update of the changing information.
  - \* The municipality's preparation for the COVID-19 crisis (directed at residents).
  - \* COVID-19 Business Information (Updated Guidelines for Workplace and Business Activities).
  - \* My Neighborhood Business Page (listing the businesses active during lockdown)
  - \* "Stay at home" events - coordinating activities suitable for lockdown, including those with special needs.
- **Digital mailings and text messages** - From June to the end of October, more than 80 digital mailings were sent out, as well as text messages, some targeted for specific neighborhoods and areas, and some sent widely to all residents of the city. The mailings promoted and incorporated information about COVID-19 spread.
- **Flyer distribution** - Through flyers, messages were conveyed by the municipality as well as the guidelines of the Ministry of Health on what actions to take. In June-October, 162,000 flyers were distributed in the mailboxes of all residential buildings in Jaffa and in the neighborhoods of

Neve Sha'anani, Shapira, Hatikva, Neve Ofer and Kiryat Shalom. These focal points were selected due to an increase in infections or due to a language gap that exists among some of the local population, and therefore the information was printed in six languages: Hebrew, English, Russian, Arabic, Tigrinya, and Amharic. In addition, flyers were produced and distributed by volunteers and soldiers of the Home Front Command, as well as for distribution in synagogues (mainly before the holidays).

- **Posters** - Through the posters we conveyed messages from the municipality, guidelines of the Ministry of Health as well as an update on the state of the city (traffic light plan). From June through October, 10,480 posters were hung on all public bulletin boards, in the entrances to educational institutions, houses of worship, playgrounds, markets, and more. The information was distributed in six languages: Hebrew, English, Russian, Arabic, Tigrinya, and Amharic.
- **WhatsApp notices** - a WhatsApp format was developed, through which an update was transmitted to residents, while ensuring a Hebrew and foreign date, changing the WhatsApp background between neighborhoods and days (to create differentiation and avoid confusion). Through WhatsApp we encouraged everyone to go out to be tested at the testing stations deployed in the city. (By October, 22 testing complexes were opened. By November there were more).
- **Informational videos** - The New Media team prepared dozens of videos, including a video with Prof. Lass, to encourage shopping from local businesses during COVID-19, a video aimed at families on following the Ministry of Health's guidelines so that the disease does not increase before children return to school, an appeal to city youth to wear masks and social distance so they don't infect parents and the elderly, a video of the mayor urging residents to go get tested at the testing complexes deployed in the city.
- **COVID-19 Patrol** - Recruitment of a team of Eurovision volunteers to go on rounds to provide information and distribute masks at key points in the city (Rabin Square, Habima Square, Dizengoff Square, Sarona, Carmel Market and more).
- **Facebook** - Posting on the municipality's page and the mayor's page on a regular basis - COVID-19 guidelines, encouragement to support local businesses, and more.
- **City newsflashes via the 106+ app** - The COVID-19 crisis has created a need to update and pass on many instructions to the public, one of the most effective ways to disseminate information is through the 106+ app, which is widely used among city residents. From now, in addition to the ability to report hazards in the city, city residents can be updated on municipal news and receive important information about new guidelines and updates.

## International Relations

- **Business promotion on International Instagram** - a joint campaign with influencers from Tel Aviv-Yafo and the surrounding area to recommend local businesses.
- **Promotion of events in the city and in cultural institutions in particular** - Eretz Israel Museum, Heichal Hatarbut, Tel Aviv Museum, Nature Museum - for tourists and residents.
- **Campaigns to keep Tel Aviv in the international consciousness:** The "Good things come to those who wait" campaign - the city of Tel Aviv will wait for tourists at the end of the COVID-19 crisis - the clip was distributed to partners around the globe by Tel Aviv Global, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism. A clip of the 111th Birthday celebrations for the city of Tel Aviv-Yafo from the balconies of the homes - was distributed to partners around the world by Tel Aviv Global, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism. In view of the

peace agreement signed between Israel and Gulf states, and despite COVID-19, a clip to encourage tourism between the United Arab Emirates and Tel Aviv-Yafo was produced and distributed.

- **Collaborations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on digital media** - Twitter and Facebook - creation of viral and relevant content on platforms, in order to keep Israel and the city of Tel Aviv-Yafo in particular in the international eye.

## Foreign relations

- Update distribution with information about COVID-19 to partner cities and embassies.
- Joining WhatsApp groups of all ambassadors and international liaison managers in the country for sharing and information exchange.
- Assistance at international conferences in the city - for example the Ichilov Conference on COVID-19 (Leading World Hospitals Virtual Conference)
- Webinars with partner cities about COVID-19 - in New York, Frankfurt, Moscow, Freiburg Friendship Association board of directors.
- Cooperation with embassies in the shadow of COVID-19 - with the Dutch Embassy on bicycles, with India on the subject of International Yoga Day on Zoom, Independence Day celebrations on the promenade of Russia, Italy, and China - Solidarity.
- Knowledge exchange with leading cities about COVID-19 and reopening policies - information on business, education, culture, housing and more.
- The first Zoom meeting of all the partner cities of Tel Aviv-Yafo - with the participation of 20 international liaison officers around the world. For the first time, a virtual conference was held with the participation of 20 international liaison officers from the world's leading cities, 40 colleagues from the partner cities, among them: Seoul, Montreal, Vienna, Essen, Frankfurt, Moscow and Buenos Aires. At the conference, they presented the international relations in their city, shared their experiences and shared their insights on the role of international relations in the new era.



## Summary: Scenarios of urban coping and growth during COVID-19

The Strategic Planning Unit and the Engineering Administration are examining the significance and impact of the COVID-19 crisis and its accompanying economic crisis on urban life, in various areas such as: employment, trade, commuting, and economic and social disparities. These gaps were created due to social distancing, isolation and digital poverty - which have sharpened the differences between the neighborhoods, communities and cultures in the city.

**The leading trends in the world see the crisis as an opportunity for more responsible rehabilitation.** "Building Back Better" and "The Great Reset" are perceptions that call for rehabilitation and growth, while rethinking the place of the environment and community in urban life, creating regional partnerships, building economic models, and the need to produce policies that leave no one behind.

**Our work examines possible scenarios for urban management, ranging from ensuring certainty, changing economic models and strengthening the community.** All scenarios offer a response to the urgent challenges, alongside strategic thinking in the medium and long term, while maintaining urban economic and governance certainty.

**A vital part of formulating scenarios and strategy is the definition of clear, quantitative and qualitative indices, which will allow the municipality to identify various extreme trends and prioritize actions and budgets for different fields and areas.** The indices focus on preparing for and meeting the COVID-19 challenges, but also serve as a significant tier in fact-based urban decision-making, in future planning, and in addressing situations that require flexibility, adaptability, and the capability to respond to conditions of uncertainty at the municipal level.