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City of Hayward, Avellino Lab mark two-year anniversary of leadership in COVID-19 testing

HAYWARD, Calif., March 24, 2022— The City of Hayward marked the two-year anniversary yesterday of the launch by the Hayward Fire Department of the nation’s first no-fee, city-initiated COVID-19 testing center.

The testing center opened on March 23, 2020, at the Hayward Firehouse Clinic in South Hayward and was made possible through an innovative partnership with Avellino Lab USA, Inc., (Avellino) of Menlo Park and other local and Bay Area nonprofit organizations.

During the crucial first few months of operation—at Hayward Firehouse Clinic and later at Cal State University East Bay—the center provided more than 26,000 tests with follow-up support to anyone meeting age, exposure, or symptom criteria and regardless of immigration status or place of residence.

Hayward firefighter-paramedics also were deployed to test vulnerable residents and employees of Alameda County nursing homes before pathways and likelihoods of coronavirus transmission were well understood by public health authorities.

Launched just 19 days after Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a coronavirus state of emergency in California and just 12 days after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, the testing center was the leading edge of a multi-pronged City response to support, protect and sustain Hayward residents.

Other measures undertaken by the City—staffed in part by Hayward municipal employees volunteering as disaster service workers—included formation of a live call center providing reliable, real-time information; a weekly food distribution program; local protections against

residential and commercial evictions; procurement and distribution of masks for employees of essential businesses; and some of the first economic grants in the country to local small businesses.

Meanwhile, Hayward police officers, firefighters, water and sewer utility employees, and other essential City workers remained on the job despite the unknowns and disruptions to home life and households being experienced across the region, state, nation, and world.

The two-year anniversary of the testing center launch was marked and commemorated on Wednesday with Avellino hosting a special event and luncheon for the Hayward Fire Department. The event featured remarks from Hayward City Manager Kelly McAdoo, Fire Chief Garrett Contreras and Avellino Global Head of Facilities and Real Estate Scott Korney, who helped lead the testing site efforts for Avellino. Korney also presented a donation to the Hayward Firefighters Charitable Fund in honor of Robert Negri, the late EMS Coordinator for the Hayward Fire Department who was integral in executing the logistics for the COVID-19 testing site. The donation will be made annually for the next three years.

On Tuesday, the Hayward City Council formally passed a Certificate of Commendation acknowledging and thanking Avellino for providing reliable Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing for COVID-19 infection to the Hayward community and first-responders across the Bay Area during the COVID pandemic.

The Commendation notes that Avellino—through its reliable procurement of its COVID-19 test and exemplary service and responsiveness to the City of Hayward’s Fire Department in order to open the first free, city-initiated COVID-19 testing site—positively impacted an immeasurable number of lives in Hayward and kept Hayward first-responders on the job following COVID-19 exposures which otherwise could have sidelined them for a week or more at a time.

Avellino is a global leader in genetic molecular diagnostics. They have a long-term mission to develop personalized approaches to improve health and disease management through genomics and advanced technology to better manage inherited diseases. The company also developed the Avellino SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR diagnostic test (AvellinoCoV2) to aid in COVID-19 pandemic testing efforts in the US, and was the first private, independent company in the US to receive an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for its COVID-19 test. To learn more, visit the company’s website at <https://www.avellino.com/>.