



City of Grand Rapids, Michigan

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

ROSALYNN C. BLISS
MAYOR

Greetings friends and neighbors. We're all experiencing a challenging, unpredictable and anxious moment in our history – both locally and nationally. The news and updates are coming faster than we can keep up with them, and every one of us is affected in some way. As we navigate this challenge, Grand Rapids can lean on our strength: working together. It's time to do our part to support one another, to stay safe and to save lives.

While I know it's hard, it's important that we follow recommendations on social distancing, staying home if possible (especially when we're sick), avoiding social gatherings and postponing nonessential travel and trips. These are difficult actions, but they're necessary.

As you've heard, our mission right now is simple: help reduce and prevent community spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. This helps to ensure that our most vulnerable stay safe and that our health systems maintain the capacity to care for those who are sick. Otherwise, even an exemplary health care system like ours can become overwhelmed.

Our incredible staff here at the City continues to coordinate with county, state and federal officials in our response. This situation has proven to change from hour to hour, and we continue to adapt to the guidance we're provided with. What I can tell you is that this City is committed to provide critical services, reliable information and steady leadership regardless of how long this response may take.

That includes planning now for the future. We know the incredible economic burden this event has had on our residents and our businesses in just one short week. There have been positive initial steps from the federal and state government to provide relief, and we're working to determine what role our City will have in ensuring that our community benefits.

We're also looking at our own programs and initiatives to see how they might be used to help our residents not just through the crisis but afterwards. We want to maintain the economic momentum we've built over the last decade, and to keep people safe and stable in their homes and jobs.

With so much coverage on television and social media it can be hard to keep up, or even know what's relevant to us here at home. In a health emergency like this, the Kent County Health Department takes the lead on coordination, so I would encourage you to sign up for their updates [here](#). If you have questions about City services, you can always call 3-1-1 for answers.

This is hard – there's no doubt about that. But I know that we're up to the challenge. Take care of yourself. Take care of your family and your neighbors. Be sure to express gratitude to the health, service and other workers who are on the frontline during this time. I don't think there's any city better prepared to respond to these challenges than we are.

Sincerely,

Rosalynn Bliss