

# MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

**DATE:** March 17, 2020

**TO:** Top Management 

**FROM:** Mark A. Washington, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** **City Manager Administrative Order 2020 – 01: Continuity of Essential City Services**

We have been closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic in collaboration with our partner agencies including the State of Michigan, Kent County Health Department, Kent County and our neighboring cities.

We have a critical responsibility to do our part in the global fight against the spread of COVID-19 at the local level. We have a responsibility to our residents and to our staff members. It is important to take steps to both protect our community and ensure continuity of essential city services.

This order is effective beginning 12:00AM, Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

## **Temporary Service Changes**

It is for the reasons stated above that I am ordering temporary service changes that will be in place until 11:59PM Sunday April 5. Service changes include:

1. Effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020, Grand Rapids City Hall, the Grand Rapids Development Center at 1120 Monroe NW, the City Parks and Public Works Departments at 201 Market Avenue SW, the Water Resource Recovery Facility at 1300 Market Avenue SW, Water Administration Building at 1900 Oak Industrial Drive NE and Mobile GR at 50 Ottawa NW will be closed to walk -in traffic. City Staff members will be available to provide service using these methods:
  - a. Residents are encouraged to conduct business with City departments via e-mail or telephone by calling 311 or using known contact information.
  - b. The City offers a wide platform of on-line services for everything from service requests to paying a bill to filing buildings plans for permitting.

- c. Essential business can be conducted by appointment and can be arranged by emailing, by calling 311, by calling or emailing the specific department that is involved or making a call directly to a City contact person that is involved.
2. Seating in the City Commission Chamber and other public meeting spaces shall be reduced in accordance with Kent County Health Department rules and the Governor's Executive Order.
3. Non-essential meetings of Boards and Commissions shall be postponed until after the April 5 date. Depending on the business necessity, meetings will be rescheduled as possible in April and May.
4. City Commission has cancelled the March 31<sup>st</sup> City Commission meeting. Items scheduled for that meeting will be moved to the April 14 regular City Commission meeting.
5. The March 19 meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals shall be cancelled, and regular business will be pushed to the April meeting.
6. The March 26 Planning Commission meeting shall be cancelled, and regular business will be pushed to the next available meeting in April or May.
7. Public engagement meetings shall be postponed and rescheduled after the April 5 date. This includes meetings for Vital Streets projects, the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability, Parks Facilities and the City/County Consolidated Plan for Community Development Block Grant purposes.
8. Water System service shut offs will be suspended through April 30<sup>th</sup>. Services currently in shut off status will be restored.
9. Special Events of over 50 persons permitted through the Office of Special Events will be suspended through April 5<sup>th</sup>.
10. Parks and Recreation facility rentals have been suspended. A full refund will be provided.
11. In compliance with the Governor's March 16, 2020 Executive Order, the lounge in the bar area of Indian Trails Golf Course will be closed. Bar and food service will be available for those using the golf course.
12. Interior inspections of occupied residential units for code enforcement, water services, and lead remediation projects will be suspended except in the case of an emergency health, safety or welfare concern. All other inspection services shall be continued.

13. Accepting new applications for Community Development Block Grant contracts for housing rehabilitation and lead remediation will be suspended.
14. Cemetery services will be limited to attendance of 50 persons per the Governor's Executive Order.
15. City Staff members will be encouraged to telecommute or take accrued earned time off to the extent possible.

### **Essential City Services**

The City's 311 Center will remain open for business and is the recommended first place to contact for service.

Essential City services will continue including Police, Fire, Water, Sewer, Public Works, Streets, Building Inspections, Construction inspections, refuse, streetlighting, parking and mobility, parks maintenance operations, forestry, cemeteries, code enforcement and 61<sup>st</sup> District Court will continue their mission of service during this critical time.

61<sup>st</sup> District Court has announced a continuity of services plan suited to their mission.

The City's Yard Waste Drop-off Site at 2001 Butterworth Avenue SW will open on Monday, April 6.

### **Continuity of Operations and Workforce Flexibility**

A key part of our continuity of operations response requires workforce flexibility.

Department Directors are empowered to develop plans to maintain service according to their Continuity of Operations Plan. Workforce flexibility does not affect those staff members engaged in directly providing the essential public services noted above. Elements of these plans could include:

1. Establishing schedules or plans that enable staff members to telecommute and/or use accrued leave as work requirements allow\*
2. Establishing rotational schedules should a minimum number of staff be required at your facility/office
3. Establishing virtual/Skype meetings with staff on a regularly scheduled basis

*\* For employees who are telecommuting, please have them use the payroll code HOMWK for appropriate tracking.*

**In addition, we will allow use of earned sick time to care for school-aged children affected by local school closures.** There are no other planned changes

to leave or leave policies at this time, but we will continue to monitor developments at the state or federal level that might affect us locally.

Please refer to the FAQ on this topic prepared by the Human Resources Department. For additional guidance and/or information, please contact Human Resources directly.

### **Previously Announced Changes**

These changes were announced Friday, March 13 and continue as indicated:

- Postponing the police and fire departments' public outreach meetings on the proposed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles program. The meetings were set to take place next week. The new schedule will be announced at a later date. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).
- Canceling the remaining Parks and Recreation winter session classes and delaying all spring session programs and classes and senior (50+) programming until the week of April 6. Spring programs includes adult fitness classes, youth soccer, swim lessons, 5K training and lifeguard training. Impacted winter session participants will be issued a credit or refund.
- Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL) closed Saturday March 14 for the foreseeable future. Due dates on library materials will be extended and fines on overdue items during the closure will be waived. GRPL's digital services still will be available for free, including eBooks and eAudiobooks, streaming TV, movie and music services, research databases and digital subscriptions to magazines. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).
- [May Mobility](#), which operates autonomous vehicles in Grand Rapids, suspended service until at least Friday, March 27. The service does not operate on the weekend. The company cited its ridership of more than 500 people a day and passengers who are at risk of severe illness as reasons for the decision. Updates will be posted [HERE](#). Questions about the autonomous vehicle service in Grand Rapids may be emailed to [support@maymobility.com](mailto:support@maymobility.com).

You are directed to implement these changes by the March 18, 2020, effective date. Please work with your Deputy City Manager, Assistant City Manager or Managing Director to resolve any questions or concerns.

cc: Eric DeLong  
Doug Matthews  
Alison Farole