

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Belleville Mayor Mark Eckert's Message to Belleville Residents

April 17, 2020

Dear Belleville Residents:

As you know, we are all feeling the effects of the stay at home order. We've been managing this new normal for about a month now, and I urge you to remain resilient and persist with the social distancing measures in place. We know they are working which is allowing our healthcare workers to manage the new demands on them. Please know that you staying home is having an impact on flattening the curve.

I want to thank everyone who has shown support to Belleville Memorial Hospital. This week we have had a couple of groups provide meals and snacks to the medical personnel and staff. Some of downtown businesses like Bennie's Pizza, Abe's Gourmet Popcorn Shop, Crafty Sugar Company, and Kaskaskia Engineering came together to provide pizza, popcorn and treats. On Thursday, the Ainad Shriners provided food for the medical personnel and staff members at Belleville Memorial Hospital. They also had a parade of vehicles to show support for our heroes. Thank you to all the Belleville heroes for joining the parade, including the Belleville Police and Fire Departments.

Public access to city offices and programs remains shut down for the safety of our employees and residents. We are doing everything we can to keep our essential services properly protected. We will continue to have public spaces closed including the libraries, playgrounds, and the skate park for all group activities until further notice.

We know small businesses continue to struggle and worry about their futures. Please continue to help support them during this rough time. **Please shop Belleville as much as possible! We need this now more than ever.**

As Mayor, I have been on bi-weekly phone conference calls with Governor Pritzker and other mayors. We are also working with the St. Clair County Health Department and the St. Clair County Chairman and Emergency Services. I continue to hold weekly conference calls with the Police Chief and Fire Chief and our peers from these groups to ensure our city is safe.

The Illinois Municipal League has been sharing much information and has several conference calls with mayors throughout Illinois. I have also been included in weekly calls with the mayor

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of Chicago. I encourage us all to stay vigilant and aware of the realities of COVID-19 so that we can be happy and healthy in Belleville.

With that, the City of Belleville is actively evaluating what the future of our city may look like after the threat of COVID-19 eases. We are actively studying the amount of projected revenue loss to the city's budget, and know some action will need to be taken. Like most other towns and cities in southern Illinois, we are very concerned. We're looking at it very closely.

There are many unknown variables and factors that may impact life after the virus. We are taking a cautious approach because the health and safety of our residents is of the utmost importance to us. We do know that we are all very vulnerable right now and we will continue to take the appropriate actions in order to mitigate the threat of extreme and rapid spread of the virus.

Once we know more about how and when the City of Belleville can reopen, I will be sure to relay that information. In the meantime, continue to remain positive. Check on your neighbors, continue to be socially distant and remain vigilant on proper health practices like wearing masks and washing hands. Continue to support our essential workers and social service organizations. The positive community relationships that have formed and strengthened over the past several weeks attest to the kind of people we are in Belleville. Please continue to take care of yourself and reach out if you need help. We are all in this together.

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