

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City Maintains Services While Protecting Community Health, Well-Being

Bloomington, Ind. - Along with federal, state, and local agencies, the City of Bloomington is implementing protocols to maintain continuity of City government services to support the community's well-being and protect residents' and employees' health during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Mayor John Hamilton's Continuity of City Government (COCG) team, led by Deputy Mayor Mick Renneisen and Human Resources Director Caroline Shaw, assembles several key city officials to implement contingency staffing plans and protocols to maintain City services during this critical time.

Mayor Hamilton and other City leaders also continue in close communication with counterparts at the Monroe County government and health department, IU Health, Indiana University, local school corporations, and other civic and business leaders to coordinate the local response to this public health crisis.

As announced [March 11](#), all upcoming large City-led public meetings and events have been cancelled or [rescheduled](#). The vital work of boards and commissions may continue without putting members at undue risk, however, per Governor Eric Holcomb's [executive order](#) of Monday, March 16. The order lifts, for the duration of the crisis, the requirement that all members of a body be physically present for public meetings, but may participate electronically as long as one member is physically present. Additional precautions include the closure of several City facilities, including Twin Lakes Recreation Center, the Allison-Jukebox Community Center, and the Banneker Center. These actions support the social distancing essential to "flattening the curve" -- reducing the rate and extent of local viral infections, to protect our health care system and reduce health risks.

City government departments deliver essential services, including fire, police, dispatch, water utilities, sanitation, transit, fleet maintenance, and animal shelter, among others, and all continue to operate. Special protocols are in place in all City operations to protect our workforce and the public. City Hall (401 North Morton St.) remains open, with more teleworking and reduced on-site staffing, in order to assure continued operations.

The COCG team is monitoring the continually evolving public health situation and reviewing operations and protocols accordingly, in order to meet public needs while minimizing the opportunity for viral transmission. Among dozens of changes being implemented in City operations, the following are a sample:

- Department heads have created contingency staffing lists, designated essential and non-essential staff, and indicated staff capable of performing tasks remotely. Telecommuting from home has been recommended where appropriate, with new tools and protocols for remote workers.
- Municipal facilities, both public areas and private workspaces, have significantly enhanced sanitary cleaning protocols and additional provisions such as hand sanitizers.
- The [Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development](#) (HAND) has suspended routine rental inspections of all existing properties through May 8. Off-cycle inspections prompted by tenants' complaints will continue but may be delayed as a public health precaution.
- The Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA) has closed its main lobby and community building (on North Summit Street), and in-person appointments will be replaced with meetings over the phone or internet. Routine property inspections, rent collection, public meetings, and other processes are being adapted to protect vulnerable residents, including new income/family status reporting options at the BHA [website](#).
- The [Bloomington Police Department](#) has implemented protocols to minimize interaction during shift changes and between patrol officers and administrative

offices; and to limit exposure for first responders. Equipment and vehicles are being sanitized more thoroughly and frequently.

- [Bloomington Transit](#) (BT) has implemented nightly electrostatic cleaning of fixed route and BT Access buses.
- City of Bloomington Utilities (CBU) has taken steps to ensure that all treatment plants and other operations will operate safely during the crisis, and that any emergencies will be handled in a timely manner. To report an issue related to water, sewer, or stormwater, or to contact CBU after hours, please call 812-339-1444.
- CBU has discontinued service disconnections, and is expanding support programs for customers who are unable to pay their bills. More information is available [here](#). Customer service during business hours is available by phone at 812-349-3930 and by email at utilities.cs@bloomington.in.gov. Customers are encouraged not to enter the CBU main office (600 East Miller Drive) but to make cash or check payments at the exterior payment drop box.
- The City will offer one two-hour free parking session per day at downtown meters and in surface lots in order to facilitate ongoing commerce. Parkers who intend to leave their vehicle at a metered space longer than two hours will be required to pay normal hourly rates.

The City is monitoring the rapidly evolving public health situation and coordinating with our partners at the local, state, and federal levels to protect residents' and employees' health while continuing to provide critical municipal services, and will tailor protocols accordingly.

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