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CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

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Jeffery M. Smith
Mayor

PRESS RELEASE

March 15, 2020

In keeping the safety of the community at the forefront, the City of Watertown has developed a plan of action to address the concerns and effects of the COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus, pandemic. Our number one priority as a City is to keep our citizens, as well as our employees, safe and try to reduce the further spread and outbreak of the virus. While we maintain our City operations, we will implement changes that will limit public interaction and support social distancing. City business will continue, however during this unique time, people may experience some delays and inconveniences, so we ask for your patience and understanding.

The City has implemented the following plan of action and will advance through the phases as the situation progresses:

Phase I: Planning and preparing city staff - distributing DOH COVID-19 information and posters, increasing cleaning efforts, educating staff, limiting contact with the public and reviewing operations for alternative ways of doing business.

Phase II: In coordination with school closings, the Watertown Fairgrounds Arena and Flower Memorial Library are now closed to the public until further notice and any scheduled event has been canceled or postponed. We strongly encourage citizens to pay bills through the online bill pay service or through the mail and to take advantage of the City's website at www.watertown-ny.gov for any available online services and phone numbers for the City departments.

Phase III: This phase will go into effect once there is the **1st confirmed case of COVID-19 in Jefferson County or surrounding counties**. At that time, City Hall will be closed to the public and a drop box will be put in place outside City Hall for any residents needing to drop items off, such as: bill payments, applications for permits, items for the City Clerk's Office. We highly encourage individuals to call the department in which they need to conduct business with and obtain specific details on how to proceed.

Monday, March 16, 2020, will be the last City Council meeting the public will be able to attend during this unprecedented pandemic. The City Council will continue to conduct business and work sessions. All meetings are streamed live for the public, items dealing with the need for public hearings will be postponed at this time. We will continue to re-evaluate daily.

Again, we appreciate your understanding and patience during this period. We remind the public, if you have a fever, cough, chills, body aches, any respiratory symptoms to limit your public exposure and avoid coming into City Hall.

As a community we will get through these unprecedented times together.