



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Governor Northam's Phase One Begins in the City of Fredericksburg

(Fredericksburg, VA) May 15, 2020 - Some Virginia businesses will be allowed to resume operations in a restricted and very limited manner today, including those in the City of Fredericksburg. This marks the start of Governor Northam's "Phase One" loosening of some restrictions on business operations and civic activity. Detailed guidance for all businesses and specific sectors is available at: www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/forwardvirginia

The City of Fredericksburg continues to strongly urge strict adherences to universally recognized COVID-19 best practices to include: social distancing (stay 6 feet apart), stay home if sick or a high risk citizen, following aggressive hygiene measures (wash your hands often), wear a mask when in the company of others. (The CDC website states: Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others. The Governor's website states: Some people with COVID-19 have no signs or symptoms and do not feel sick, but can still pass the virus on to others. A cloth face covering can help prevent this.)

Businesses are urged to carefully follow the Governor's guidelines in order to keep everyone safe and to prevent a setback that could lead to the re-imposition of restrictions. The City of Fredericksburg is studying ways that certain businesses, including restaurants, can slowly expand their operations in the weeks ahead in a manner that is consistent with the Governor's directive. One possibility being discussed is expanding the existing Sidewalk Café permit to temporarily allow for sidewalk seating areas in the public right of way that incorporate physical distancing requirements. Additionally, the City will be waiving Temporary Use Permit fees for restaurants who are able to use adjacent private property for outdoor seating. Look for more information on these measures soon.

Businesses needing assistance in interpreting occupancy restriction are encouraged to call the Building Services Division of the Community Planning and Building Department at (540) 372-1080 or the Fire Department's Fire Marshall's Office at (540) 372-1059. City staff is here to help you get the information you need to meet the Governor's guidelines and have a safe business operation for employers, employees and customers.

The Fredericksburg Police Department will have increased patrols in an effort to educate and seek voluntary compliance with the outlined Phase One restrictions issued by Governor Northam. If the community has specific questions related to Executive Order #61 or wishes to report observed violations of the order, please call the Police Department's non-emergency number at (540) 373-3122 and ask to speak to the on-duty watch commander.

Additionally, after delaying the opening one week, the City Manager has authorized the reopening of the outdoor Farmers Market at Hurkamp Park on Saturday, May 16, 2020. Extra staff will be on site,



implementing significant new measures to ensure better social distancing. Additionally, robust hygiene measures, masks and gloves will be strongly encouraged at the site.

The Market will be open from 7:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Shoppers are encouraged to use good judgement, and if the park looks too busy please consider coming back in 30-45 minutes. Historically, the heaviest shopping times have been 8:30am – 10:30am, so all are urged to arrive a little later in the day. If the park reaches maximum capacity of shoppers, a temporary 30-minute closure will take place. New barricades will be in place to ensure access is controlled from only three points of entry (shoppers should follow signage). Please review the website before arrival, and obtain online shopping options for many of our vendors at www.thefarmersmarket.co.

“I remain very concerned about this slow opening, and generally am not at all sure that we are ready. The health risks are real. In order for this to work our community and businesses must self-police,” stated Councilwoman Kerry Devine.

Mayor Mary Katherine Greenlaw shared similar reservations, as did many Council members at Tuesday’s Council meeting. “We all must be individually responsible in ensuring we approach the Governor’s Order with extreme caution,” she stated.

Lastly, the community should know that the City Manager has developed a plan with staff to evaluate City workforce spaces. The plan includes the creation of an Evaluation Team who will conduct risk assessments and make recommendations on safety protocols for workstations, which once approved will move to an execution phase. This work is now underway and will play out over the next several weeks. This work will also provide guidance on when it may be safe and appropriate to consider reopening of public buildings to public access. For now, all citizens and businesses should know that the City government is fully operational and committed to continued outstanding customer service.

Please feel free to contact the City Manager’s office with any questions or for additional information. They may be reached by calling 540-372-1010 or emailing citymanager@fredericksburgva.gov.

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