



An Open Letter from City Council to the People of Chestermere

May 30, 2020

Dear Chestermere Community,

The last few months have been an extraordinary time, here at home and throughout the world. For those who have lost loved ones and friends to the COVID-19 virus, they have also been heartbreaking times.

We, your members of City Council, would like to take a moment to thank you.

Thank you for all of your individual and collective efforts to rally together as a community, to support one another, to take the virus and its impacts seriously, to follow protocols and to work together to combat COVID-19. Our collective efforts have shown that we care, and those efforts haven't just made a difference, they've made all the difference. We are also thankful for the hundreds of encouraging calls, emails, texts, and social media words of support. We are so proud of you, our community.

This pandemic has drastically impacted all our lives in financial, physical, social, and emotional ways. We recognize that it has been a challenging time of stress and change. It has tested our patience, resilience, compassion, empathy, faith, and tolerance. In many ways, it has also brought us together and provided us with an opportunity to reflect on how we can make our community stronger.

Thank you, Chestermere, for the many sacrifices you have made to flatten the curve and stop the spread here in Chestermere.

When we look at the alarming number of cases around us, and the impacts these have had on communities in places like Calgary, High River, Okotoks, and Brooks, as well as elsewhere in Canada, we are thankful that we have had relatively few cases. Outbreaks in long term care facilities, businesses, organizations, and community transmissions have been troubling. Again, for all your efforts to keep us from being an outbreak community, we thank you.

As a community, we need to thank our front-line workers who have been working since the pandemic started. To those who have kept our grocery stores open, stacked shelves, prepared and delivered our food, filled our prescriptions, dropped off our parcels, bagged our groceries, cleaned stores, and so much more, we acknowledge your efforts and thank you for your contributions.

We also would like to give a heartfelt thank you to those who are responding directly to the health and well-being of our community. This includes our community's doctors, nurses, first responders, EMS, fire, police, peace officers, and Chestermere's emergency management team. These teams and individuals have sacrificed so much to keep us safe and to care for us.

During emergency events like this, under legislation, City Council turns over planning, action, and decision making to the Chestermere Emergency Management Agency (CHEMA). This Agency is overseen by Council's appointed Director and Deputy Directors of Emergency Management. As City Councillors, we are proud to lean on this agency and its trained, experienced, and hardworking members to look after our community's needs during an emergency. They work closely with other municipalities, provincial officials from Alberta Health Services, Municipal Affairs, Emergency Management, and provincial and federal agencies involved in emergencies.





Together, CHEMA has been working tirelessly since the pandemic started to protect our community carefully and thoughtfully. As City Council, we stay informed of every decision with frequent updates from our Director, and we support the work of this team every step of the way.

For some aspects of our response, that has meant that our local orders added additional clarity or strengthened provincial directives. Or in some cases, local actions to keep us safe were taken in advance of provincial directives. Provincial emergency and health officials, our MLA, and our MP have expressed their thanks and admiration to our CHEMA team for their efforts. As City Council, we join them and say “thank you.”

Now, as we embark on the phases of relaunch, and reopen our services, we ask that you continue to be as amazing as you have been since the start of this pandemic.

This next phase is equally as important as the previous. The virus has not been eradicated, and we can unknowingly infect those most susceptible to severe outcomes if we are not careful. We must remain diligent and vigilant. The decisions and sacrifices you are making continue to save lives.

Thank you to all of our local businesses. When you visit these businesses, please continue to be kind, patient and generous as they adjust to new regulations designed to keep you safe. When you enjoy time in the parks, playgrounds, sports fields, and walking trails, we ask that you keep a close eye on your kids, stay 2 meters away from others, wear masks when warranted, and wash your hands well afterwards. When you are eager to socialize, we ask that you do not share items and limit your gatherings to the local maximum size regulations. If you are unwell, stay home.

Together, we ask that you join us in continuing to keep our families and community safe. We can all enjoy the warmer weather, and we can all do it safely.

If you have questions, we recommend that you visit www.chestermere.ca/covid19 for the latest information, local orders, FAQs and more. If you would like to know more about our support for the CHEMA team, please reach out to us at any time.

Thank you, everyone, for your patience, partnership, and courage as we continue to face COVID-19 together.

Sincerely,

Chestermere City Council

Mayor Marshall Chalmers

Deputy Mayor Michelle Young

Councillor Laurie Bold

Councillor Cathy Burness

Councillor Mel Foat

Councillor Yvette Kind

Councillor Ritesh Narayan

