



From the Mayor's Desk

June 2020

Returning to a 'New Normal'

We've been through a lot these past few months. The pervasive march of the coronavirus has changed all our lives. We've watched our businesses, restaurants, shops and schools close. Individually, we've all had to endure a lengthy statewide shelter-in-place order.

Life has been difficult, to paraphrase the famous opening line in Scott Peck's "A Road Less Traveled." Fortunately, due to our collective diligence, we've begun to see the reduction of COVID-19 related hospitalizations, deaths and a drop in positive test results.

The bottom line is we are slowly returning to a new normal way of living, shopping, dining and doing business. Gov. Kemp's latest order gives us additional freedoms to meet in public and our restaurants, shops and businesses to reopen, albeit with a rather long list of safety requirements. Those safety requirements, although onerous, are the key to our success in this next crucial phase, until an adequate treatment or vaccine is developed.

Our City Hall has incorporated measures to ensure all who visit and work in the building are adequately and safely protected to eliminate the spread of COVID-19. Some of those safety measures for the public include:

- Hand sanitizer stations located throughout the building at all high traffic/use areas
- Installation of physical barriers in areas accessible to the public
- Signage and visual markers to assist the public with maintaining social distance
- Facemasks available to the public
- Cleaning service performed midday wipe down/cleaning of high contact surface areas

In addition, all staff members are required to conduct a daily self-screen prior to arrival at City Hall. The daily self-screen test requires they notify their supervisor immediately if they are experiencing a fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, new muscle aches, and unexplained loss of taste or sense of smell. Staff are also required to wear facemasks when meeting the public unless they are able to maintain a 6-foot social distance or if there are other barriers in place such as the glass windows in the business license and building permitting lobby.

Our staff is also required to practice safe work practices during the workday. Those measures include wearing facemasks, washing their hands frequently, using hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available, practice social distancing with co-workers, avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth, covering mouth with tissue when coughing or sneezing, and avoid using areas or items used by other personnel such as desks, computers, telephones, or other work tools.

We want to ensure you that we are taking every necessary step possible to be sure you feel safe while visiting City Hall. We also know that some of you may not be comfortable visiting public places, and we certainly understand. All our staff are available by telephone and email to assist you. Virtually all business transactions can be managed online should you prefer not to visit City Hall.

Back to Business – But not “Business as Usual”

On a personal note, after two months of sheltering in place, I am beginning to see the first indications of a return to some semblance of a normal routine. Since the governor lifted the restrictions for dine-in service, my wife, Debbie and I have finally been able to enjoy sitting down in a restaurant for a good meal. I've also heard from others who have ventured out since the dine-in restrictions were removed. While it's not quite the same with the social distancing requirements, it is a good start.

It's all up to us to remain committed to following the safety protocols while transitioning back to our new normal way of life. Our businesses are slowly re-opening their doors with new safety precautions in place. The progress is encouraging but we must remain diligent.

As always, our city staff members are on hand to answer questions or assist with any city-related business. And I, along with the city council, are available as well. You may find our contact information listed on the city's website, www.peachtrecornersga.gov under the “Contact Us” tab at the top of the homepage.

Stay safe, stay healthy. Better days are ahead.

Mike Mason, Mayor