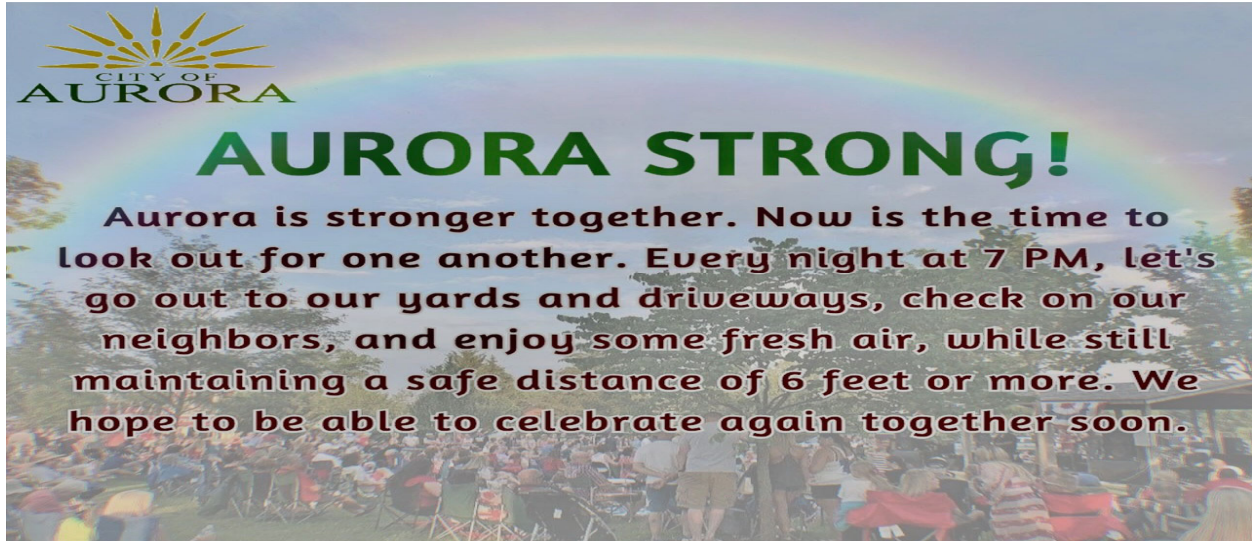


AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
April 2, 2020



“Thank you for your sacrifices. This is difficult and not particularly easy for anyone.”

Gov. Mike DeWine, April 2, 2020

At least it is on a sunny day that we learn we are in this for the long haul! Governor DeWine is extending the “Stay at Home” Order to **May 1, 2020**, consistent with the K-12 school closing which was already extended.

I am so sorry, Aurorans! I feel for you every single day, and I truly appreciate the efforts at social distancing and restraint you are exhibiting. By doing this we are saving lives and the health of first responders, and we are providing time to the hospital system to build out what will be needed when more of us start getting sick. Dr. Acton made a special point today of saying that young people are at risk as well as older folks, and this is a “pernicious” illness which is very slow to show itself in symptoms.

This new Order has several modifications/clarifications, including the following:

1. It requires retail businesses to establish the number of people who can safely be in their facility at one time, and enforce that limit.
2. Anyone coming into Ohio from out-of-state must be quarantined 14 days.
3. While weddings are not specifically regulated, receptions must be limited to no more than ten people.

We can do this! We are strong! **Aurora Strong!**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Womer Benjamin".

Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
April 1, 2020

Welcome to a pandemic!

So technically
showing up at the
bank in a mask and
gloves is ok now.



"How well we do is going to be determined by each individual in Ohio." Gov. Mike DeWine

Finally, a sunny day in Aurora, and it is April Fools' Day at that! We could all probably use a joke about now, but no pranks allowed during this pandemic! Wikipedia says that April Fools' Day has been celebrated for centuries across various cultures, and in Odessa, Ukraine, it is a city holiday. I put a few "jokes" above from a longtime correspondent, resident Dr. Joe Gadd, who has sent many uplifting and humorous messages my way during my public career. I hope they make you laugh!

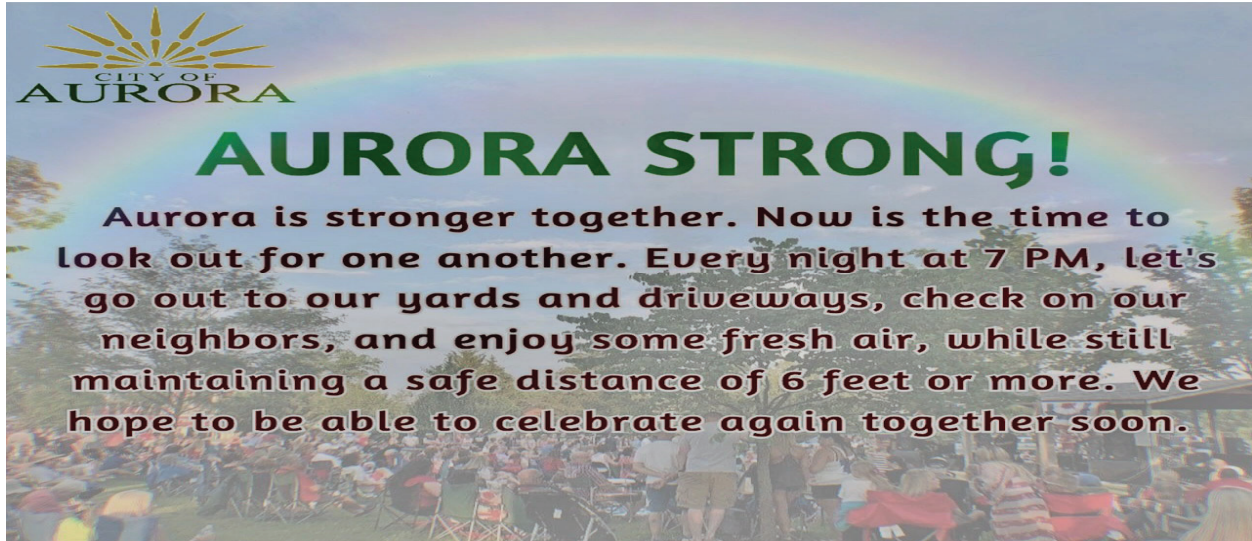
I have been texting with Governor Mike DeWine today, following his daily 2 p.m. news conference. He particularly wanted to know how Aurora residents were following the social distancing order. I told him I had actually observed better social distancing at the grocery today, and I hope you all continue to keep your distance. He also loved the 7 p.m. "Hello to your Neighbor" idea! As Ohio Health Director Dr. Amy Acton has stressed, EACH OF YOU can make a difference in how Ohio fares in the coming weeks. Please do your part and stay apart!

Aurora Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Womer Benjamin".

Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 31, 2020



“How well we do is going to be determined by each individual in Ohio.” Gov. Mike DeWine

I am repeating Governor DeWine’s statement from yesterday to reinforce the extreme importance of social distancing in this pandemic. Each one of you has a critical role in slowing the spread of the coronavirus by keeping your distance and staying home if at all possible. And it can be fun! Last evening at 7 p.m. I had a wonderful distance visit with my neighbors even in the cold, drizzly weather. Councilman Harold Hatridge told me he has organized a periodic backyard cocktail hour with his neighbors and has had a good time catching up at a distance.

Demonstrating your social distancing efforts is also important because I want to be able to keep our parks open, even if the “stay at home” continues. We need your cooperation to do that please! However, we have had to postpone, cancel and/or reorganize other community programs and recreation activities in this pandemic as noted below:

- All Walker Building activities are cancelled through May 1, 2020.
- Senior program trips are cancelled through May 8, 2020.
- All Sports and Community Ed classes in Aurora Schools buildings are cancelled.
- Modified schedules for late spring/summer programming to be announced soon.
- Access to the Walker Building remains limited to staff: call 330-562-4333 or email parks@auroraoh.com.

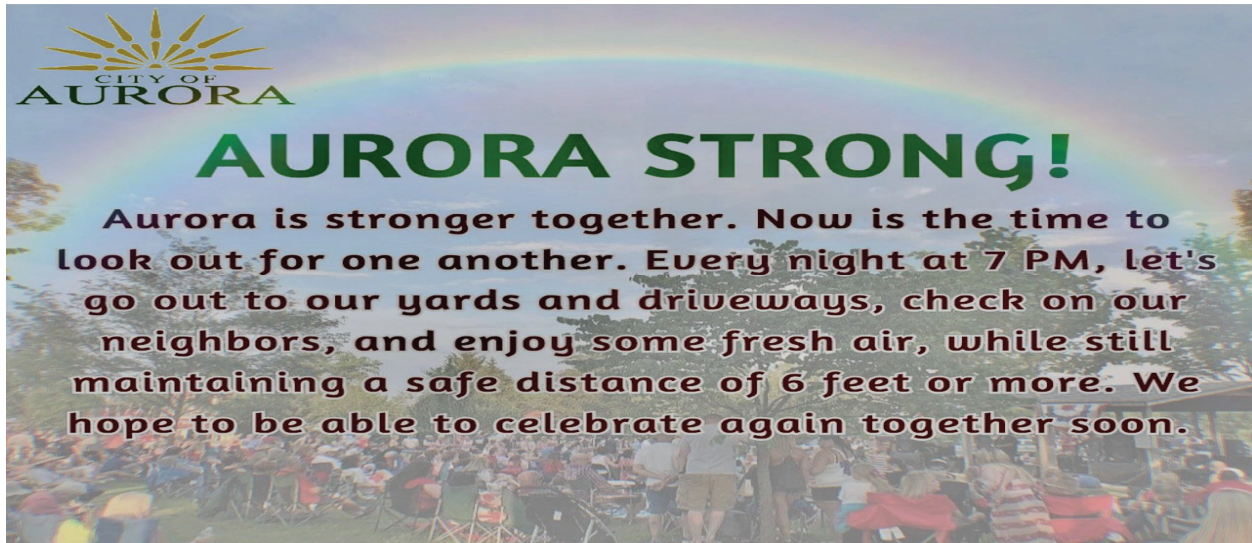
Nevertheless, our Aurora Strong “Hello Neighbor” at 7 is on! So maybe I will see you then.

Aurora Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Womer Benjamin".

Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 30, 2020



"How well we do is going to be determined by each individual in Ohio." Gov. Mike DeWine

This was Governor DeWine's message to Ohioans today, and it is an important message for all of Aurora to hear and heed. **Personal responsibility and compliance are critical** to how well we fare in this pandemic. Our police cannot patrol private groceries and pharmacies, nor do we have the personnel to patrol all of our parks all of the time. **IT IS UP TO YOU TO USE COMMON SENSE AND KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, PLEASE!** And if one park is crowded, go to another, since we have several big parks in our town: Sunny Lake, Paddock River Preserve, and Hartman.

I have had questions regarding grocery shopping, so today I had a long conversation with **Tom Heinen** and we discussed the importance of social distancing in the Aurora store. Heinen's has taken many precautions in the last two weeks, including erecting shields at checkout, taping the floors for distance reminders, cleaning high-touch surfaces all day, and offering seniors with morning shopping at 8 a.m. Mr. Heinen stressed that they restock their shelves *regularly* throughout the day and that typically the less crowded time to shop is in the afternoon. So consider shopping later in the day!

I hope you are able to join your fellow Aurorans at 7 p.m. for a wave and hello to your neighbors from your driveway or yard. We all need some caring and positive reinforcement!

Aurora Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Womer Benjamin".

Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 28, 2020

We are all in this together!

Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted, a longtime friend of mine from my days in Columbus, stressed this message today on Governor DeWine's daily 2 p.m. update on the coronavirus: we are all in this together! The Lieutenant Governor also spoke about the added staffing and telephone and online capabilities being implemented for employee assistance through Job and Family Services and Bureau of Unemployment Compensation. In addition, benefits will be paid retroactively to your date of eligibility despite any delay in your application due to the current circumstances.

Dr. Amy Acton, the Ohio Health Director, reinforced the message that everything YOU are doing to stay away from others and practice Covid-19 hygiene measures – like washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when you return from outside – are working! Those measures will continue to slow the spread of Covid-19 and help to flatten the infection curve, so important for giving our hospitals and healthcare providers the time to ramp up their equipment and operations to deal with those who get sick.

Therefore, **please continue to use social distancing** (at least six feet!) as your guideline when enjoying the outdoors. We also need parents to please keep their children from using the playgrounds, which are **closed** by both the Governor's and my direction. This is for everyone's safety.

I hope you are utilizing takeout and delivery options at our local restaurants, along with the food sales continuing at our local stores. Kudos to our pharmacies as well for helping us get through this pandemic. Personally, I am going to slowly revitalize my cooking skills which previously have been reserved for holiday gatherings!

Keep checking the Aurora website at www.auroraoh.com for updates and information on business, food and other resources. Aurorans are helping out the community every day!

I continue to pray for our community and all of you, and hope that you will find strength and hope in your family, your friends, your faith, and each new day that we share together.

We are all in this together.

AURORA STRONG!



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 27, 2020

Stay home, stay positive, and stay healthy!

The above was the message of today at Governor DeWine's daily press conference at 2:00 p.m. His daily presentations have proven to be not only informative, but also uplifting, so I suggest you tune in to public television or online to hear the latest. Ohio Health Director Dr. Amy Acton provides a clinical perspective with lots of data, but she is also obviously such a caring person whose mission right now is to keep Ohioans safe.

That is my mission with respect to Aurora, in addition to keeping our services and safety forces healthy and operational for all of you. Our staff cannot be at the parks all the time, so please use social distancing (at least six feet!) as your guideline when enjoying the outdoors. We also need parents to please keep their children from using the playgrounds, which are **closed** by both the Governor's and my direction. This is for everyone's safety.

As of today Portage County has 13 cases of confirmed Covid-19, so "community spread" is indeed coming our way. Even though we need to keep our distance, please check in with friends and family not only to make sure they are okay but also to help keep them from being lonely. Quarantine does not mean out of contact, and we are so lucky to have all of the long distance communication options we have today!

I will mention again that community organizations are really stepping up to address food needs in the city. The Aurora Food Pantry, Christ Community Chapel, and The Church in Aurora are providing meals and groceries for those in need: [FOOD RESOURCES FOR AURORA RESIDENTS](#). We are also working to develop a list of resources for businesses as they struggle with slowdowns and closures. You can find information at <https://www.auroraoh.com/774/Business-Resources---Covid-19>.

Let's take this one step at a time and we will get through it!

AURORA STRONG!



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 26, 2020

What a beautiful day we are having!

It is certainly hard on a day like this to remember that we are in the midst of an escalating Covid-19 pandemic. I hope you have been able to enjoy the weather, which I hope to do yet this evening.

I watched Governor DeWine and Ohio Health Director Dr. Amy Acton today as they updated Ohioans on the spread of the virus. Dr. Acton made it absolutely clear that the steps we are all taking to avoid contact with others and stay at home unless absolutely necessary are working! Please continue to be diligent and rigorous in following the Health Director's, and CDC's, recommendations.

As Governor DeWine said today, "Ohioans are resilient." I would add in particular that Aurorans are resilient! We have to be – our town has been around for 221 years! The first settlers who arrived found plentiful woods, several nearby tribes of Indians, rivers providing water, and a lot of work to do. Somehow they managed, and even flourished, putting Aurora on the map and helping to lay the foundation for the beautiful and idyllic place we have become in 2020. Resilience is in our nature.

Thank you to those in our community who are stepping up to help! For residents needing food resources, please check the information on the city website regarding food needs. The Aurora Food Pantry, Christ Community Chapel, and The Church in Aurora are providing meals and groceries for those in need: [FOOD RESOURCES FOR AURORA RESIDENTS](#) We are also working to develop a list of resources for businesses as they struggle with slowdowns and closures. You can find information at <https://www.auroraoh.com/774/Business-Resources---Covid-19>.

Thank you, all of you, for staying the course and showing your Aurora resilience. Please let me know if you need assistance because my office is working every day to coordinate resources and find help for those who need it. Let's all work together!

I am thinking of you,



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 25, 2020

Good afternoon, Aurorans!

I am thinking of you and keeping you in my prayers as we all weather this coronavirus pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic is serious, and I implore all of you to heed the Governor's Order to **stay at home**, except to buy groceries, to exercise, or if you are an essential worker. This is not only for your protection but for everyone's protection, and to do our best to make sure our safety forces and medical community stay healthy during the crisis so that they can take care of those who get sick.

I truly hope you are all taking our quarantine a day at a time, and calling and/or Face Timing with family and friends as much as possible. Virtual get-togethers through the various apps available will help us all stay connected despite being apart.

And by the way, our parks are open! Aurora has about 1600 acres of parkland to enjoy as the weather improves. You can enjoy our trails and green space but be sure to keep a 6-foot distance from others as you do so. I also urge you to patronize our restaurants via their take-out and delivery options, since they are certainly struggling to serve our community in this pandemic. We should all thank those folks working at the grocery stores, pharmacies and other essential businesses for toughing it out to help us out!

As for the City of Aurora, all of our departments are operating, including Service, Police and Fire, and please continue to call my office at 330.995.9126 if you have a question or need assistance. We will all get through this together.....at an appropriate distance of six feet! In the meantime, **God bless you**.

Stay healthy!



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor, City of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 24, 2020

STAY AT HOME, AURORA! The Covid-19 pandemic is serious, and I implore all Aurora residents and businesses to heed the Governor's Order to stay at home. I take the Governor's Order very seriously and the city will enforce its provisions during the next two weeks and as it may be changed from time to time. While our parks currently remain open, playgrounds and restroom facilities are closed. Any gathering of more than ten people is prohibited except for limited purposes. All non-essential businesses must be closed and businesses which are open must comply with "Social Distancing Requirements" as defined in the Order, including by maintaining six-foot social distancing for employees and members of the public. And by the way, that means at the grocery store or pharmacy, too! City Council and I are working hard to continue the city's business and operations, but we are looking to you for your cooperation and understanding. Some city responses may not be as prompt as usual, but if you have an urgent matter for which you need assistance, please contact my office or City Hall. We will get through this together.....at an appropriate distance of six feet. You can view the Order at [Director's Stay At Home Order](#).

Aurora Covid-19 Update March 23, 2020

Dear Residents and Businesses of Aurora,

As you saw by Governor DeWine's press conference yesterday, Sunday, Ohio is at a critical point in the fight against the coronavirus. The Governor has issued an Order for all Ohioans, except for essential businesses and services and those on essential errands, to stay at home effective today, **Monday, March 23 at 11:59 p.m. until 11:59 p.m. on Monday April 6, 2020**. This is for the protection of all of us in an extreme effort to slow the spread of Covid-19.

The City of Aurora will continue to operate, although at a slightly reduced schedule. You will be able to reach City Hall at 330.562.6131 and the Mayor's office at 330.995.9126. You will be able to reach other city departments at their respective numbers on the city's website, www.auroraoh.com, and emergency at 911. You also should check the city's website regularly because we will continue to post updates regarding the city's operations. **All city buildings will be closed to the public until further notice.**

I take the Governor's Order very seriously and the city will enforce its provisions during the next two weeks and as it may be changed from time to time. While our parks currently remain open, playgrounds and restroom facilities are closed. Any gathering of more than ten people is prohibited except for limited purposes. All non-essential businesses must be closed.

City Council and I are working hard to continue the city's business and operations, but we are looking to you for your cooperation and understanding. Some city responses may not be as prompt as usual, but if you have an urgent matter for which you need assistance, please contact my office or City Hall.

My wish for you is that you stay inside, remain vigilant, and find the silver lining in what is a scary situation. One of my silver linings is that my husband and I finally figured out how to use our DVD player last night! You are not alone, and you are all in my prayers daily. We can do this!

Thank you,



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor of Aurora, Ohio

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE
March 20, 2020

Dear Fellow Aurorans,

Spring is here, and warmer weather will cause us all to want to get outdoors from our Covid-19 confinement! As you enjoy the outdoors, please remember to keep a distance from others enjoying the same to protect yourselves from the virus. I was on a long conference call today with Northeast Ohio mayors and representatives of the Governor's office and they asked us to reinforce precautionary practices such as the following:

- Please **practice social distancing** and avoid close contact with others, **including at the grocery store and pharmacy, at our parks, and while standing in line anywhere**. Avoid congregating in groups of 10 people or more. The CDC recommends a minimum of 6 feet distance between individuals: www.cdc.gov.
- While our parks remain open at present, we are **closing our pavilions and restroom facilities** at our parks as of the end of the day today, March 20, 2020. The use of playgrounds is **strongly** discouraged. While our team is working diligently to help ensure public safety, it is not feasible to clean and sanitize playground equipment effectively.
- **Practice good hygiene**, including washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, including when coming and going from home. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- **Please stay home if you are sick** and contact your healthcare provider.

The City of Aurora has been implementing work strategies to protect the health of our employees and make sure they are able to continue to provide residents and businesses with the services, information and public processes you all expect and deserve. Thank you for your patience, understanding and good humor during this very challenging experience!

My best to you,



Ann Womer Benjamin
Mayor of Aurora

AURORA COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear Friends,

March 17, 2020

Happy St. Patrick's Day! Little did we imagine just a week ago that we would be facing a pandemic with ever-increasing cancellations, closures, and restrictions on our everyday lives. I am so sorry that you have to endure these inconveniences and disruptions. I truly believe, though, that our elected officials are looking to science and medical experts before taking action to keep us safe.

Your first line of defense is protecting yourselves and your family by following the fairly simple CDC recommendations, including the following:

- Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, including when coming and going from home.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoiding contact with people who are sick.
- **Staying home if you are sick** and contacting your healthcare provider.

The City of Aurora is working hard to serve you and make sure that our staff remains healthy to do so. Therefore, as of the close of business today, March 17, 2020, Aurora will be limiting access to the Walker Building and City Hall to city employees and Council members. The Service Department also has such limitations. We still are here to help you conduct your business and we are available by telephone and email to help you:

- With respect to **Planning, Zoning and Building**, those needing to file plans and/or obtain permits, please call ahead to the Planning Department at 330.562.9564 or email Denise Januska at JanuskaD@auroraoh.com. Committee meetings have been cancelled through March, and further meetings will be reviewed in April. Outdoor drop boxes are available for leaving plans and other required forms. Those boxes are cleaned regularly.
- With respect to the **Service Department**, do not hesitate to call them at 330.995.9116 for assistance or email Harry Stark at StarkH@auroraoh.com. In addition, utility payments can be made online through the city's website www.auroraoh.com or via the outdoor drop boxes at the entrance to the Service Center drive and at the front main doors to the Service Center (checks or money orders, no cash). Both boxes are cleaned regularly.
- With respect to **City Hall**, we have an intercom system so you can speak directly to the receptionist at the door. You can also call City Hall at 330.562.6131 or my office at 330.995.9126, or email me at Mayor@auroraoh.com to voice your concerns or ask questions. Those presenting bids should still bring them to City Hall at the appointed time.
- City Council meetings are still expected to be held and we are anticipating livestreaming any public meetings for public viewing.
- All **Parks and Recreation** programs and activities have been cancelled until the beginning of April and will be reevaluated at that time. If you have questions please call the department at 330.562.4333 or email Laura Holman at HolmanL@auroraoh.com.
- **Police and Fire** remain ready to assist you in an emergency at 911.

Please stay safe and healthy!

Ann Womer Benjamin, Mayor of Aurora