



A message from Mayor Smith regarding the COVID-19 pandemic

I pray that you, your families and friends are healthy and persevering during this unprecedented time of uncertainty. Our city, county, state, country and world are in uncharted waters right now. The precautions necessary to avoid and contain COVID-19 are having a profound effect on everyone. However, the firmly-rooted character of our community convinces me that we will ultimately be stronger after these trials and tribulations.

On behalf of my colleagues with the City of Greenwood, please allow me to extend prayers, well wishes and sympathies to those directly affected by this disease. Likewise, our first responders, nurses, doctors, medical professionals and all those responding to the call of duty during this time deserve an appropriate hero's reception whenever such honors can be safely undertaken. The courage of those facing these dangers cannot be understated and will never be forgotten by our community when history attempts to digest 2020. While a simple "thank you" can feel insufficient, it will undoubtedly be warmly received by those on the front lines.

Of course, any commentary on COVID-19 would be incomplete without yet another message imploring in the strongest tone possible the need to use the highest degree of care and common sense with regard to hand-washing, hygiene and social distancing so as to contain and limit the spread of this virus. Please remember the role that each one of us plays in protecting ourselves and those that are especially susceptible to serious complications should they be exposed.

As you know, Gov. McMaster's recent order shut down a number of "non-essential" businesses. However, there are many retail, restaurants and other services still open for business. You are encouraged to patronize local business while using the necessary precautions and at your own discretion. At a minimum, I would ask that you contact local businesses to ask how you can offer support.

I can only hope that I have expressed the empathy that I felt while listening to your unique and personal situations. It is during times like this that we gain a deeper appreciation for others' struggles. Is this not an opportunity to reflect and find the ways in which your life can positively impact and uplift others? If not now, then when? Indeed, my fellow city and county leaders express the same sentiment.

While the tales of humanity during this crisis are well-documented globally, we can take solace and inspiration in the local examples of people living out their faith in compassionate and creative ways. Whether it is creating personal protection equipment for others, showing support for local impacted businesses and musicians or simply bringing a smile to someone in need, all acts of kindness are appreciated. Please remember to be considerate of your fellow man. Hoarding food or supplies only increases the risk to others. Most of our retailers have put measures in place to restrict certain over-purchasing, but restraint on the part of consumers is also necessary to avoid shortages.

From a local government standpoint, we will continue to communicate with you at cityofgreenwoodsc.com and on social media regarding resources and federal, state and local mandates. This will continue to be a fluid situation, where guidelines, directives and news can change quickly. While far from perfect, the CARES Act passed by Congress and signed into law by the President will offer much-needed assistance to local employers. You are encouraged to research how this emergency legislation applies to you. At the same time, please be vigilant against the small percentage of the human race that will undoubtedly use this crisis as an occasion to exploit others in unscrupulous ways.

Certainly, clichés can lead to cynicism. But, please be reminded that we really are all in this together and that our collective determination to succeed will put us in as favorable a position as possible once the world gets back to normal. But lo, let us too not permit the pervasive venom of fear to paralyze our collective psyche worse than the perils of any viral affliction.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any ideas, questions, desire to help or if you just want to vent.

Brandon Smith

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brandon A. Smith".

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