

## A special message from Okotoks Mayor and Council

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19! We're in this together!



The world is currently facing a situation that is unprecedented in modern history. We are all worried about the health of our families, friends, neighbours and coworkers, especially those most vulnerable to COVID-19. Okotoks is a young community and therefore we know that many of you are also dealing with child care issues with school closures.

We are all taking direction from Alberta Health Services – we urge you to follow their advice to help limit the spread of the virus.

The Town has already taken steps to ensure that essential services continue for all our residents and to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 virus in Okotoks. At Monday's meeting, Council approved the deferral of all utility payments for all Okotoks' customers due to the financial impact of COVID-19.

These new measures mean that if residents need to pause their utility bill payments, they can do so for three months for the next two billing cycles. More details are available at [Okotoks.ca](http://Okotoks.ca). Additionally, Council has directed administration to investigate possibilities for using the 1.5 Million Dollar surplus from 2019 to reduce the 2020 property taxes.

Administration has also been directed to re-evaluate the 2020 budget and come forward with recommendations on changes that will provide additional relief. Reports on both of these Council directions will be brought back to the April 27, 2020 regular Council meeting.

In our continuing efforts to protect the health and safety of citizens and staff, while still providing high quality service to the community, the Town has transitioned away from in-person contact at the majority of its facilities.

While the offices of the Municipal Centre, Operations Centre, and Okotoks Family Resource Centre (OFRC) have closed, services will continue to be available to the public by phone or email and online.

RCMP, delivery of potable water and wastewater services, waste collection, fire services, road maintenance and transit. The eco centre will remain open as processes are in place to protect staff from direct contact.

During these challenging economic times the health and strength of our business community is vital. Trust, collaboration, and resiliency are required for Okotoks to move from recovery to a thriving economy.

We have an experienced and talented Business Recovery team in our Economic Development office who will be implementing a strategic plan over the coming weeks. We need to hear from businesses about what you are

experiencing and needing so resources can be put into place in a timely and effective manner.

The Business Recovery team will be putting a tool in place for this dialogue to happen. In the meantime, go to the Business Support and Recovery webpage to learn what is currently available for Okotoks businesses.

Okotoks is a strong, connected, caring community and it will be this willingness to support each other that will help us overcome the current crisis, as we have in the past.

While our recreation and cultural facilities are closed as well as all Town playgrounds and the skateboard park, we can still remain socially connected while maintaining physical distancing. We can enjoy the early spring weather along our beautiful pathways, or connect with friends and family through technologies like Skype or FaceTime.

There are actions we all need to take to help mitigate the risk and support each other:

### Act responsibly:

- Do your best to stay healthy: wash your hands and practice social distancing (2 meters separation).
- If you have been out of the country or are sick, please stay home. Self-isolation is one of the greatest ways you can help demonstrate your concern and respect for your neighbours, friends and family.

### Think reasonably:

- Stock up, don't stock pile. Canada has a robust supply chain. It is more important to ensure that everyone in our community has what they need.
- Ensure that information you are receiving through social media channels is coming from a reputable source such as the Town, provincial or federal governments or media outlets.

### Practice thoughtfulness

- Check in on your friends and family or those in your neighbourhood who may be housebound; reach out to the elderly in our community. Take the time to connect through phone calls and technologies like FaceTime. Keep our small-town feel alive – while maintaining social distance.
- Offer to bring groceries or supplies to those who are self-isolating or who cannot do it themselves.
- If you know of someone who cannot find childcare to be able to fulfill work requirements, and have the skills and capacity, offer babysitting services.
- Continue to support our local restaurants and businesses by ordering delivery or purchasing gift certificates.

Okotoks Town Council and Town administration want to thank you for your cooperation and support through this current crisis. We appreciate the countless acts of generosity that we have seen happening throughout Okotoks. We are stronger together and together we will be successful in overcoming this challenging time.

Continue to follow the Town's social media platforms and check on the Town's website regularly for updates.

Sincerely,  
*Okotoks Mayor and Council*

## Next Council Meeting

3 p.m. Monday, April 27  
Municipal Centre, 5 Elizabeth Street

Live streaming: [okotoks.ca/CouncilMeeting](http://okotoks.ca/CouncilMeeting)

Starting with the March 23 Council meeting, we have made the decision for four Councillors to be in Council Chamber and three to attend electronically. The public will be able to watch through our live stream.

It will not be possible to have in-person delegations for public hearings. To submit a public hearing or agenda item, please visit [okotoks.ca/CouncilMeeting](http://okotoks.ca/CouncilMeeting) and click the *Submit Agenda Item* button. Indicate in the subject line if the agenda item is for a public hearing or public delegation.

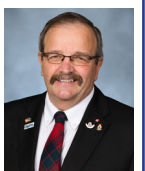
### Is council permitted to close meetings to the public to practice social distancing?

No. Sections 197 and 198 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states that Councils and Council committees must conduct their meetings in public, and that everyone has a right to be present at these meetings. However, Council is exploring options to ensure their duties are met in accordance with recommendations from Alberta's chief medical officer of health.

## Mayor Updates

Mayor Robertson will be providing regular updates through video on the Town's website at [okotoks.ca/COVID-19](http://okotoks.ca/COVID-19) and on Eagle Radio 100.9, which will be airing his message every day. Please follow the Town's social media platforms where the most current updates will be posted.

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#) @TownofOkotoks



## Temporarily Closed

Accurate as of Tuesday, March 24, 2020

### Town buildings

- Town of Okotoks Municipal Centre
- Town of Okotoks Operations Centre
- Okotoks Family Resource Centre (OFRC)

Services will continue to be available to the public by phone or email and online.



## Playgrounds & skateboard parks

All playgrounds, and the skateboard park are closed but the pathways and green spaces are still open.

Open spaces are great to get outside! Practice social distancing by keeping two metres from others. Bring your own balls, baseball gloves and toys to play with, then be sure to clean them after each visit to the park.

## Contact Information

**Municipal Centre General Inquiries:**  
(403) 938-4404 | [municentre@okotoks.ca](mailto:municentre@okotoks.ca) | [okotoks.ca](http://okotoks.ca)

**Family Community Resource Centre:**  
(403) 995-2626 | [familyresources@okotoks.ca](mailto:familyresources@okotoks.ca) | [okotoks.ca/OFRC](http://okotoks.ca/OFRC)

**Waste Services General Inquires:**  
(403) 938-8054 | [waste@okotoks.ca](mailto:waste@okotoks.ca) | [okotoks.ca/Waste](http://okotoks.ca/Waste)

**Water Services General Inquires:**  
(403) 938-1230 | [waterservices@okotoks.ca](mailto:waterservices@okotoks.ca)  
[okotoks.ca/WaterServices](http://okotoks.ca/WaterServices)