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## **The Mayor's Message to the Community Concerning the Coronavirus Outbreak**

Dear Los Altos Community,

Over the past week, critical decisions have been implemented in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and spread. These changes are not easy, and some will cause inconveniences in our daily lives. It is how we respond to these changes that will shift the course of this crisis and slow the spread of COVID-19. As community members, we must stay informed and be proactive in protecting ourselves and our fellow community members. As our Mayor, it is my duty to enforce guidance, support City staff, and, most importantly, offer aid to you.

Yesterday, March 15, 2020, the State of California advised all people aged 65 and over and those under the age of 65 with underlying health conditions, to self-isolate. Earlier today, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department in conjunction with five Bay Area counties and the City of Berkeley [issued a region-wide order](#) for individuals to shelter at their place of residence. Essential City services such as Police, Water, Sewer, Solid Waste, and Fire will remain operational. We understand that this order comes with hardships regarding how to purchase food and other necessary goods. The City is working closely with our community-based Block Actions Teams (BATs) to help those affected and will be providing more information shortly.

The City is [taking all the necessary steps](#) to protect the Los Altos community; your safety is our number one priority. City staff is in close communication with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department and is distributing all updates through the City's social media channels, website, email lists, and physical signs. On March 12, 2020, City Manager Chris Jordan [proclaimed a local emergency](#), and starting today, Los Altos has partially activated our Emergency Operations Center. Every decision made was with the safety and health of our community and City staff in mind. I, along with my colleagues on the City Council and the staff, will continue to follow County, State, and Federal guidance, enforcing further preventive measures that will ensure the community's safety.

As this situation is evolving every day, I urge the community to practice good hygiene and stay home. It is important to remember, even if you are not a part of the vulnerable population severely affected by this respiratory virus, your role still matters in protecting those who are. We can slow the spread of COVID-19 when we work together. The [Santa Clara County Public Health Department](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) currently provide a plethora of resources and guidance that I advise the community to follow. The City has compiled resources from both organizations on the [City's website](#), which is updated regularly by City staff.

To our health care professionals, public health officials, and first responders who are working tirelessly during this time of crisis, I thank you. Your work is saving countless lives, and my gratitude is boundless.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed and scared by everything going on. But if we look at this crisis as an opportunity, what do we see? Over the last few days, I have witnessed beautiful acts of compassion from those volunteering to cook meals and grocery shop for the elderly, and others offering to watch children of parents who cannot work from home.

As many of us hunker down at home, let's take time to get to know our neighbors better as we take walks around the block. If we have a Block Action Team on our street, let's use that to check up on our neighbors. And if we haven't formed one yet, let's talk to each other and consider forming a Block Action Team. In fact, the City is providing [grants](#) to neighborhoods that want to form their own BATs.

Having lived in Los Altos for 35 years, I know the power this community holds. I encourage all of us to be kind and thoughtful to each other. We are made stronger through kindness and love. Call loved ones, check on neighbors, extend a hand to those in our community who need help. The actions we take today will set precedence throughout the County, State, and the world.

Los Altos, we are strong, and we will all get through this together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jan Pepper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Jan Pepper