My apologies for just now getting updated information out to everyone. This will be the first of two emails, one addressing the Coronavirus (this one) and one addressing the Tornado recovery (to follow). Our country, our state, and particularly our local area have been tested like no time I can think of before, save maybe the 2010 flood. Between tornados and the Covid-19 threat, in such a short period of time, we scramble to find resources, support, information and have a sense of wonder on when this is all going to end.

Like many I have been sick (tested negative for Corvid-19) but feeling much better now. I have been under self quarantine since Saturday, March 14th. My family is also adhering to Mayor Cooper’s Safer at Home order to stay home and limit all movement outside their homes beyond what is absolutely necessary to take care of essential needs. What I have attempted to do is gather as much information and resources as possible and put into one document.

On the legislative side, the General Assembly went into recess on March 19th after passing an emergency $39 billion budget. We will be returning to finish up the session, hopefully shore up the budget, and address any and all outstanding bills and resolutions when we reconvene on June 1st.

There is a lot of information in this update so you may want to skip to sections important to you. Please feel free to reach out to me during this time if you have any specific questions or if you believe I can be of assistance. We are all in
this together. Remember to only leave home for essential needs under the city’s Safer at Home order and wash you hands!

**Federal**

Congress has passed a 2.2 trillion dollar stimulus package to rush aid to businesses, workers, health care systems and state governments to combat the coronavirus. Below are the highlights of the package:

**Direct Payments**

One-time payments of $1,200 per adult, $2,400 per couple, $500 per child. Amounts begin phasing out at $75,000 for individuals, $150,000 per couple.

**Emergency Unemployment Insurance**

$260 billion. Includes extra 13 weeks of coverage for people who have exhausted existing benefits. Also covers part-time, self-employed and "gig" economy workers. Weekly benefit increase of up to $600.

**Health Care**

$150 billion. Includes $100 billion for grants to hospitals, public and nonprofit health organizations and Medicare and Medicaid suppliers.

**Small Businesses**

Includes $350 billion in loans for companies with 500 employees or fewer, including nonprofits, self-employed people and hotel and restaurant chains with no more than 500 workers per location. Government provides eight weeks of cash assistance through loans to cover payroll, rent and other expenses, much of which would be forgiven if the company retains workers. Also $17 billion to help small businesses repay existing loans; $10 billion for grants up to $10,000 for small businesses to pay operating costs.

**Education**

$31 billion. Includes $13.5 billion for states to distribute to local schools and programs, $14 billion to help universities and colleges.

Loans and guarantees to businesses, state and local governments: $500 billion. Includes up to $50 billion for passenger airlines, $8 billion for cargo carriers, $17 billion for “businesses critical to maintaining national security.”
Companies accepting loans may not repurchase outstanding stock; must maintain their employment levels as of March 13, 2020 “to the extent practicable”; and bar raises for two years to executives earning over $425,000 annually. Companies are not eligible for loans if top administration officials, members of Congress or their families have 20% control.

**Veterans**

$20 billion, including $16 billion for treating veterans at VA facilities; $3 billion for temporary and mobile facilities.

**Coronavirus Treatments**

$27 billion for research and development of vaccines and treatments, stockpiling medical supplies.

**Tax Breaks**

Temporarily waives penalties for virus-related early withdrawals and eases required minimum annual disbursements from some retirement accounts; increases deductions for charitable contributions. Employers who pay furloughed workers can get tax credits for some of those payments. Postpones business payments of payroll taxes until 2021 or 2022.

**Aid to state and local governments**

$150 billion, with at least $1.5 billion for smallest states.

**Department of Homeland Security**

$45 billion for a disaster relief fund to reimburse state and local governments for medical response, community services, other safety measures. Extends federal deadline for people getting driver's licenses with enhanced security features, called REAL ID, from Oct. 1, 2020, to Sept. 30, 2021.

**Transportation**

Includes $25 billion for public transit systems; $10 billion for publicly owned commercial airports, intended to sustain 430,000 transit jobs; $1 billion for Amtrak.

**Food and Agriculture**

$15.5 billion for food stamps; $14 billion for supporting farm income and crop
prices; $9.5 billion for specific producers including specialty crops, dairy and livestock; $8.8 billion child nutrition. Money for food banks, farmers’ markets.

**Defense**

$10.5 billion for Defense Department, including $1.5 billion to nearly triple the 4,300 beds currently in military hospitals; $1.4 billion for states to deploy up to 20,000 members of National Guard for six months; $1 billion under Defense Production Act to help private industry boost production of medical gear. Money cannot be used to build President Donald Trump's proposed wall along Mexican border.

**Social Programs**

Includes $3.5 billion in grants for child care and early education programs; $1 billion in grants to help communities address local economic problems; $900 million in heating, cooling aid for low-income families; $750 million for extra staffing for Head Start programs.

**Economic Aid to Communities**

$5 billion in Community Development Block Grants to help state and local governments expand health facilities, child care centers, food banks and senior services; $4 billion in assistance for homeless people; $3 billion for low-income renters; $1.5 billion to help communities rebuild local industries including tourism, industry supply chains, business loans; $300 million for fishing industry.

**Native American Communities**

$2 billion for health care, equipment schools and other needs.

**Diplomacy**

$1.1 billion, including $324 million to evacuate Americans and diplomats overseas; $350 million to help refugees; $258 million in international disaster aid; $88 million for the Peace Corps to evacuate its volunteers abroad.

**Elections**

$400 million to help states prepare for 2020 elections with steps including expanded vote by mail, additional polling locations.

**Arts**
$150 million for federal grants to state and local arts and humanities programs; $75 million for Corporation for Public Broadcasting; $25 million for Washington, D.C., Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

**Congress**

$93 million, including $25 million for the House and $10 million for the smaller Senate for teleworking and other costs; $25 million for cleaning the Capitol and congressional office buildings.

**State**

At the time the update was written there are 957 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Tennessee. A catch all Corvid-19 website by the Tennessee Department of Health can be found [HERE](#). The CDC has pledged $10 million for Tennessee’s efforts to fight COVID-19. Tennessee has purchased additional testing capacity and supplies per guidance from the CDC. Governor Lee’s orders:

- Prohibits social gatherings of 10 or more people.
- Restricts restaurants and bars to drive-through, take-out, and delivery.
- Permits establishments to sell alcohol by take-out or delivery with the purchase of food.
- Recommends schools close through at least April 24.
- Unfortunately, still no shelter in place order.

**Department of Safety**

**Drivers License**

Starting March 20, 2020 the Department is waiving its requirement that citizens appear in person and have a new photograph taken through October 1, 2021. This will allow many customers with expiring credentials to renew online and not visit in person.

All Driver Licenses, Learner Permits, Commercial Driver Licenses, Photo Identification Licenses (ID), and Handgun Carry Permits that would expire between March 12, 2020, and May 19, 2020, will be extended for six months from the original expiration date.

The requirement that new TN residents obtain a TN driver license within 30
days of becoming a resident has been extended to June 17th, 2020

Real ID's

Real ID implementation date of October 1, 2020 will be extended to October 1, 2021. The official announcement should be on the Federal Department of Homeland Security website in the coming days. As you all know, the Department has temporarily stopped issuing Real IDs. This extension will help make sure we can issue a Real ID to everyone who wants one before the deadline, while making sure people are not coming into centers during this time of social distancing.

Additionally, due to staff availability, some centers are experiencing limited services or closures. Please visit the Department’s website for daily updates on centers that may be closed.

Department of Human Services - TANF Emergency Benefits

The Tennessee Department of Human Services will be issuing Emergency Pandemic TANF which is an emergency cash assistance program for those impacted by COVID-19. Emergency Pandemic TANF will utilize existing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds. These benefits will be available for up to 2 months.

Cash assistance for those affected by Covid-19

Families can apply online at https://tdhs.service-now.com/relief?id=relief_registration - To qualify, a family must:

Have been employed as of March 11, 2020 and have lost a job or lost 50% of their earned income due to COVID-19

Have children in the household

Be at or below the 85th percentile of the State Median Income - Example: below approximately $52,000 a year for a family of 3 - Emergency TANF cash assistance provides two monthly cash payments to those who qualify.

$500 for a household of 1 to 2 persons.

$750 for a household of 3 to 4 persons. $1000 for a household with 5 or more persons - This assistance is available in addition to any unemployment benefits an individual may be receiving. - Once the application and verifications have been submitted online, no further action will be needed. Applicants do not
need to call their local DHS office for an interview. Applicants will receive a notification of denial or approval via email. - If approved applicants, can expect an electronic benefit transfer card (EBT card) to be mailed within 5-7 days of approval.

**Child Care and Human Services**

The Department of Human Services has deployed on the $10 million emergency response and recovery grants for existing child care facilities. A church, gym, or non-profit can open an emergency temporary child care facility by registering with the Department of Human Services. Additional information can be found [here](#).

Gov. Lee has directed the Department of Human Services to personally reach out to each existing child care facility in the state to help organizations secure supplies.

**Department of Labor – Unemployment**

We have seen a 1,300% spike in unemployment up to March 21st.

When a Tennessee business closes to help slow the spread of the virus and temporarily has to lay off employees, those workers can collect unemployment benefits, if they meet other eligibility requirements.

The state of Tennessee is working with the United States Department of Labor to find flexibility of the job search requirement. As of March 17, if you don’t have a return to work date, you are still required to do job searches. We will update this page if that changes.

If you are quarantined by your doctor, an executive order from Governor Lee allows you to receive unemployment benefits if all other eligibility requirements are met.

For further information and updates regarding unemployment, please visit the web address listed below:


**Small Business Administration**

Loans available to Tennessee small businesses harmed by coronavirus outbreak are now available. Gov. Lee announced that Tennessee has received a declaration for Economic Injury Disaster Loan assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration in response to a request submitted on Wednesday,
March 18. More detailed information can be found:

Local

Nashville, like many local governments, is also addressing the Coronavirus. Mayor Cooper’s office has set a Covid-19 response page. It can be found HERE

Nashville’s Safer at Home Order

Safer at Home is the Mayor’s order directing all residents to stay home and limit all movement outside their homes beyond what is absolutely necessary to take care of essential needs. If outside your home for necessary tasks, stay at least six feet away from others. The order is in effect until April 6, 2020.

1. Hotels and commercial lodges remain open.

2. All bar and restaurant on-site services are closed but can serve customers through delivery, take-out, curbside, and drive-through.

3. Essential services remain open, including government offices, post office, airports, financial institutions, grocery stores, hardware stores, pharmacies, health and mental care facilities, utilities, legal/judicial services, gas stations, veterinary offices and businesses that depend on deliveries, including florists.

4. Daycare and childcare businesses remain open with a priority on families working in essential services.

5. Services that require direct human contact, including hair, nail, massage, tattoo and other such facilities will close. Gyms also are closed.

6. Print, online and broadcast media may continue their work.

7. All gatherings are strongly discouraged, and those with greater than 10 people are prohibited. Gatherings include any event or convening unrelated to essential services that brings together groups of individuals, including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.

8. Metro Parks has announced the immediate closure of playgrounds, dog parks, basketball courts, tennis courts, picnic shelters and skate parks.
However, Metro Nashville Parks golf courses, parks and greenways remain open. Patrons should maintain 6 feet distance from others. Community centers are closed.

9. WeGo transit services remain fully operational.

**Utilities**

To assist people who have been laid off in this time:

Utilities will not be disconnecting service through the end of May and are offering relief with payment plans.

Metro Water Services has suspended cut-offs and will waive late fees.

NES has suspended all disconnects for nonpayment and will waive late fees.

Piedmont Gas has suspended all disconnects.

Comcast is allowing postponement of payment.

Eviction notices in Davidson County are suspended until further notice.

**Grocery Stores**

There has been a rush on grocery stores. Below are the major grocers in our district. Please click on the store of your choice that will reflect the adjusted operating hours and for seniors shopping only operating hours:

Aldi, Dollar General Market, Kroger, Publix, Target and Wal Mart

**Mental Health Resources**

We cannot stress enough the importance of mental health during this time of self-isolation. Here are a few resources for individuals who may not feel Safer at Home.

- Metro’s Crisis Support Center: 615-244-7444
- Metro’s Mobile Crisis Unit: 615-726-0125
- Metro Nashville’s Behavioral Health and Wellness Services
- National Alliance on Mental Illness of Middle Tennessee
- YWCA Nashville’s Domestic Violence Crisis and Support text line (available 24/7): 615-983-5170

**Job Placement**

Many grocery chains and delivery services are hiring. Here is an updated list:

https://www.visitmusiccity.com/covid-19-information/covid-19-resources-
Metro Schools

Metro schools will remain closed until at least April 24th to help contain the spread of Covid-19. There will also be a virtual town hall scheduled for Monday, March 30, at 3pm. Students, parents, and staff can submit questions for MNPS leaders by 5pm Friday, March 27.

Nutritional Services

The MNPS nutrition services and transportation teams have delivered more than 7,000 breakfast and lunch meals this week at 15 school sites and more than 35 transportation stops in Davidson County. And they plan on doing it every weekday that school is out.

**Breakfast and lunch for students:** Starting Monday, March 23rd, and continuing every weekday that schools are closed, breakfast and lunch will be available to anyone under the age of 18, regardless of their school status; however, they must be present to collect the meals, per federal law. The bagged or boxed meals will be provided in a drive-through setup.

Meals will be available for pickup between 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

**Delivery meals:** Six MNPS school buses will be used to pick up approximately 250 meals each from preparation kitchens and brought to locations where children are able to pick up the meals.

Locations and **estimated times of arrival** are listed HERE

**Free books:** Book’em will be offering free books to students at rotating sites where meals are being provided. The books will be pre-bagged and separated into age ranges for those children who are present to pick up meals. Book’em’s schedule is:

Thursday, March 26: Glencliff High, H.G. Hill Middle, I.T. Creswell Middle, Two Rivers Middle

Friday, March 27: Buena Vista Elementary, Cole Elementary, Rose Park Middle

**School Supply Kits:** PENCIL foundation will be distributing school supply kits designed for students grades K-6 at the following locations during meal delivery:

Thursday, March 26: Lakeview Elementary, Shwab Elementary

Friday, March 27: Napier Elementary
The MNPS staff will be reviewing recently announced guidance from the Tennessee Department of Education as they develop plans for the remainder of the school year.

Grand Old Opry

You may be aware that in its 94-year history the Grand Ole Opry has not missed a show. That tradition continues. The 7pm radio broadcast and livestream on Saturday, March 28, from the Grand Ole Opry House will be a family affair with Vince Gill, Amy Grant, Jenny Gill, and Corrina Grant Gill on the lineup. Even without an audience, Nashville keeps the music playing! Opry Live will air on television via Opry’s television network, Circle – and again be available for livestream on Facebook and YouTube starting at 7pm CT / 8pm ET.

HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND! PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING AND WASH YOUR HANDS!