



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Darwin McClary, City Manager

**Phone:** (517) 629-7172

**E-mail:** [dmclary@cityofalbionmi.gov](mailto:dmclary@cityofalbionmi.gov)

## **COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUES TO IMPACT CITY SERVICES**

### *City Manager Extends Closure of Nonessential Operations*

**ALBION, MICHIGAN, April 13, 2020**--- Albion City Manager Darwin McClary is extending the closure of all nonessential city operations and services through at least April 30 as a result of the continuing COVID-19 public health emergency. The City Manager's actions are in accordance with Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-42 requiring all individuals not engaged in critical infrastructure work or basic business operations to stay home and stay safe. City Manager Darwin McClary notified employees and the Albion city council on Sunday of the decision.

The city of Albion previously closed all nonessential city operations on March 23 as a result of the growing number of Michigan coronavirus cases. The City Manager has designated public safety, finance and treasury, essential building permitting and inspections, critical code enforcement, water treatment plant, and wastewater treatment plant operations as essential, but department directors will have authority to designate other services as essential if needed in compliance with state law. Many public works operations, including street, park, and cemetery maintenance, cemetery burials, and essential vehicle and equipment maintenance, will also continue on staggered schedules.

Nonessential personnel will not report to work and will not lose their regular pay, although these employees must be able to perform work from home or be available for work assignments if called upon during their normal working hours.

McClary's decision was the result of recent similar actions by state, county, and other local governments. The City Manager will continue to assess the Covid-19 situation in the area and will decide the fate of city operations after April 30.

On March 16, the Albion city council authorized the City Manager to close city hall to the public to limit person-to-person contact and to encourage citizens to stay at home, although employees continued to work. City hall closed on March 17. City council also approved a moratorium on water service shut-offs and restoration of water service for delinquent accounts during the health emergency to encourage residents to shelter in place and assist struggling families who may be temporarily out of work. Governor Whitmer later ordered all municipalities to take similar action.

The city has implemented additional temporary changes. The city's income tax filing deadline has been extended. Residents and workers in the city can now file local income tax returns and payments by July 31 without penalty instead of the usual April 30 deadline. Also, city council and other essential meetings are being held virtually online using GoToWebinar. Instructions on how to attend and participate in those public meetings are posted prior to meetings on the city's home page at [www.cityofalbionmi.gov](http://www.cityofalbionmi.gov). While walking, hiking, biking, and using the city's park open spaces is permitted under the governor's executive order, no public gatherings of any size are allowed, and social distancing of at least six feet must be maintained

at all times between individuals who are not members of the same household. Playground and other similar outdoor equipment have been cordoned off to prevent public use.

“Ensuring the health and safety of our citizens and our employees during this difficult time is our top priority,” says McClary. “We are doing everything we can to continue providing core municipal services for our citizens while encouraging as much social distancing as possible between employees and within the community.”

McClary adds, “The public must understand that the COVID-19 public health emergency is a matter of life and death and that it is extremely important that citizens take responsibility for protecting themselves and others with social distancing and wearing appropriate nose and mouth coverings while in public.”

Deputy Public Safety Chief Jason Kern is serving as the city’s emergency management liaison and is advising the City Manager, Chief of Public Safety, and Mayor Dave Atchison on all emergency operations. The city operates under Calhoun county’s hazard mitigation plan for emergency planning and response.

#### **ABOUT THE CITY OF ALBION AND CITY MANAGER**

*The City of Albion, Michigan, is an historic, diverse, progressive, welcoming, and affordable community of 8,600 residents nestled between Battle Creek and Jackson along the I-94 corridor in eastern Calhoun county. Albion serves as the proud home of Albion College. The City Manager is the chief administrative officer of the city government, responsible for the efficient and effective operations of all city departments, services, and personnel.*

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For more information on this topic, please call City Manager Darwin McClary at (517) 629-7172 or E-mail [dmcclary@cityofalbionmi.gov](mailto:dmcclary@cityofalbionmi.gov).