



City of Leavenworth

700 Highway 2 / Post Office Box 287
Leavenworth, Washington 98826
(509) 548-5275 / Fax: (509) 548-6429
Web: www.cityofleavenworth.com

City Council
Carl J. Florea - *Mayor*
Carolyn Wilson
Mia Bretz
Sharon Waters
Clint Strand
Jason Lundgren
Anne Hessburg – *Mayor Pro Tem*
Zeke Reister
City Administrator - *Vacant*

May 5, 2020

Community Members,

Today my message to you is in a different vein. I am sharing a letter I just wrote and have sent to our County Commissioners. Not a real happy camper today. Please, please, stay safe!



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Commissioner Bob Bugert
Commissioner Kevin Overbay
Commissioner Doug England
400 Douglas St. Suite 201
Wenatchee, WA 98801

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to you to express my grave disappointment with your recent decision to lift the moratorium on overnight rentals. This conflicts with Governor Inslee's continuance of the "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" proclamation through the end of the month, and the ongoing prohibition on nonessential travel (food, medical care, and essential work).

This decision essentially gives a free pass to all those who wish to flaunt the governor's directives, or who are just tired of being at home while putting the rest of our community in danger and lengthening the timeline for reopening the local economy. New estimates for the number of cases of COVID-19 we will experience nationally, and the number of deaths we can expect from this disease in the next few months, have grown dramatically because of the recent relaxation of the stay home orders before the data would indicate it is safe to do so. Similarly, this decision will most likely result in a longer recovery time and more deaths locally.

Because this disease impacts areas of greater density more harshly, this action is most troubling to the Leavenworth community due to the potential greater negative impact. Yet there have been no communications with us to find a safe path forward. It is getting harder and harder to hold back the floodgates of people interested in traveling to Leavenworth. I daily watch the numbers of vehicle traffic increase on Highway 2. I toured our downtown over this past weekend, and saw many people walking through our downtown without masks, without social distancing. This, despite our downtown still being essentially closed.

The reinstatement of vacation rentals in our area alone (estimated at over 500 units) could result in 1,000's of people coming to town. I have started a focus group of healthcare and business people to plan for a responsible and gradual reopening of our city when the data supports it. *We want to do this right.* We want to do it in a way that makes the safety of our residents, our workers, and our guests our top priority. We do not have nearly enough supplies of such things as masks and sanitizers in place, or even available, to start this now.

Your decision greatly and negatively challenges our ability to reopen this community safely. I request you reconsider your action. I also hope that this action is not a harbinger of things to come of further unilateral action. It is my sincere desire that we can all come together, in this great time of need, to interact and deal with issues that impact us all in a collegial, informed and balanced manner. I encourage an "all city and county" video meeting to seek ways to serve our communities and keep our public safe and ready for an eventual, careful reopening.

Sincerely,

Carl Florea
Mayor



Carl J. Florea, Mayor

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