



March 20, 2020

A letter to the citizens and business owners of Helotes:

It's amazing to think that thirty days ago we were all living our normal lives and looking forward to a bright future in Helotes. Today we find ourselves in uncharted water fighting an invisible enemy in the form of the Covid-19 virus. As a result, our lives have been turned upside down and our futures are uncertain.

It's important to have confidence in our President and his Coronavirus Task Force as well as all of the doctors and scientists who are working tirelessly to find a vaccine and cure for Covid-19. The City of Helotes is currently following the Executive Order announced by Governor Abbott yesterday and which begins tonight and continues through April 3rd. A link to the order can be found on our website given below. We are following all of the recommendation published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and recommend that you each do the same. We also encourage you to become familiar with the President's "15 Days to Slow the Spread" guidelines linked on our website.

The directive for obtaining a Covid-19 test is to see your primary care physician for consultation if you develop a fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Your physician will determine whether you need to be tested. If a test is determined to be appropriate, you will be scheduled by your doctor to receive the test. Once in the queue for testing, you will receive a telephone call and be given a two hour window to be tested. This is the only way testing is available to us at this time. Do not go to an emergency room or clinic unless you develop shortness of breath.

Our staff and first responders in Helotes are working tirelessly to continue to provide the quality services you are accustomed to and that are necessary to keep the City operating normally. At this time, City Hall will remain open during regular business hours but with limited access to visitors. We ask that you contact us by phone and conduct other business online as much as possible but we are here if you need to come by in person. All of our public areas are disinfected with a solution that kills viruses for seven days but we have a schedule to spray all surfaces every three days. Flat surfaces and door levers are given extra attention in our effort to combat any infiltration of the virus.

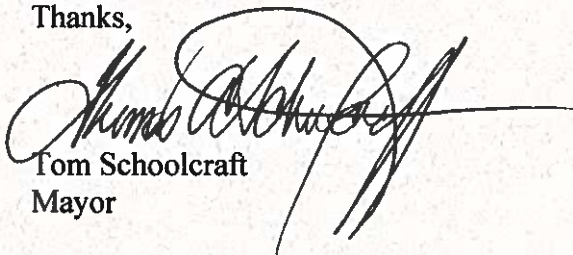
As Mayor, I also serve as the City's Emergency Management Officer and am confident to advise you that we are at a high level of involvement in monitoring all current information about this pandemic. Our Fire Chief also serves as our Emergency Management Coordinator and, generally, attends daily conference calls at the County and State level to obtain the latest information and statistics available. I have attended briefings via conference calls with County Judge Nelson Wolff, the National Association of Counties, and the White House. Much of the information we receive on an almost daily basis is listed, along with important links, on our City

website at helotes-tx.gov and our social media pages on Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor. Our Public Relations Specialist can be reached at publicrelations@helotes-tx.gov.

Our local businesses are in desperate need of our support as we work our way through this pandemic. My wife and I had a retail gift shop and ice cream parlor in Boerne for many years and experienced issues with the economy but I can't imagine what our businesses are experiencing now. They each, whether a large business or small independent business, came to Helotes with a dream to offer their products or services and to succeed long term. They each are unique and are doing everything they can to weather this storm. Some have decided to temporarily close but others are open and willing to serve us, especially many of our restaurants. Even though they have been ordered by the Governor to close their dining rooms, many of our restaurants are offering drive-thru, pick-up, and delivery services. It is imperative that we, the citizens of Helotes, help our businesses survive this ordeal by spending our money in Helotes.

Helotes has a rich history dating back to the 1850s and as Helotians, we have much to be proud of and grateful for. It's critical that we work together during this extraordinary challenge. In my forty years as a citizen of Helotes, I have seen us work our way through many issues but nothing quite like this one. I am confident, however, that we have the resilience to get through this emergency as well. As difficult as it might be at times, stay calm and positive and remember this thought: We can't control what is happening to us but we can control how we treat one another. Stay safe, be careful, and know that our staff and I are here to assist each of you as much as we can.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Schoolcraft", written over a horizontal line.

Tom Schoolcraft
Mayor