



*From the desk of Jim Watson, Mayor, City of Ottawa*

## Kindness and COVID-19

The residents of Ottawa have experienced some drastic changes over the last couple of months. We've had to make major adjustments to our lifestyles, adapt to new work environments, and plan our days in an entirely new manner. As a person who loves to get out in the community and spend time in all four corners of the City, these changes haven't been particularly easy for me, either.

Although much of the news we're reading and hearing about can take its toll on us, I find it truly heartwarming to see so many residents and businesses in our community who are coming forward to assist others in this time of great need. A few weeks ago, I asked residents to share stories of kindness and ingenuity, and the following examples make me so proud to say I'm the Mayor of this great and compassionate City.

It's residents mobilizing behind groups like **Nepean Neighbours**, who are matching volunteers with residents in isolation who need help running errands like picking up groceries and medication, dog walking, and any other need they may have.

It's local chefs like **Joe Thottungal** of **Thali** and **Coconut Lagoon**, **Adam Vettorel** of **North & Navy**, **Tim Stock** of **Thyme & Again**, and **Patrick Garland** of **Absinthe**, who are providing meals to homeless residents and low-income families.

It's medical students like **Pamela Bejjani**, **Jamie Ghossein**, and **Daniel Milad**, who have created a GoFundMe campaign called "**Frontline Feeds Ottawa/Gatineau**" – with the goal of raising money to deliver food from local restaurants to frontline workers on the job, every single day.

It's musicians like **Dave Kalil**, who plays live shows on Facebook every Wednesday and Saturday to lift the spirits of his friends. Dave raised \$13,000 in less than an hour during a virtual benefit concert in support of the **Ottawa Food Bank**.

The list goes on and on.

Once again, my sincere thanks to the residents of Ottawa who continue to do their part in planking the curve – staying home and following Ottawa Public Health guidelines. We can change the impact that this pandemic has on our City when we all work together. We can't forget that COVID-19 affects everyone, regardless of age and current health status. It is important for all of us to continue to practice physical distancing.

Let's remember there are brighter days ahead. We will come out of this as a community, stronger than ever.

It is important to recognize that the COVID-19 situation is evolving very quickly. Please refer to [OttawaPublicHealth.ca/Coronavirus](https://ottawapublichealth.ca/coronavirus) to stay up-to-date on the latest information.