City and County Launch Voluntary Masking Campaign

The City and County of Grande Prairie have launched a voluntary face mask campaign to encourage and educate residents on the appropriate use of non-medical face masks to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

Information from Alberta Health suggests voluntary non-medical face coverings are an added measure that may slow the spread of COVID-19, when used in addition to measures such as keeping a two-metre physical distance, washing/sanitizing hands frequently, self-isolating when feeling sick, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoiding touching your face. Non-medical face masks can be particularly helpful where physical distancing is not always possible, such as in public transit, grocery stores, salons and barber shops, and some retail stores.

 "Our goal with this campaign is to increase access to information from health authorities and help residents understand what to do, and what not to do, when wearing a non-medical face mask," said Mayor Bill Given. "With rising cases in the region, and thousands of students about to go back to school, it is important for us all to take collective steps to protect one another and slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community."

"We are pleased to be partnering with the City to share these great resources for residents and businesses outlining how to wear a mask properly to help ensure they are effective in slowing the spread of COVID-19," said Reeve Leanne Beaupre. "There are many retail stores in the region already requiring people to wear a mask when entering the stores, so it is important people understand how to do it properly, otherwise the mask isn't going to help."

Businesses wanting to display educational posters at their location may contact ecdevinfo@cityofgp.com to arrange a poster pick-up/drop-off. Later this week, print materials will be made available at masktogether.ca for download and print.

More information on voluntary masking is available at masktogether.ca. The City and County thank all residents for their perseverance and their willingness to help and protect each other during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alberta Health Recommendations

The campaign is rooted in Alberta Health's recommendations on masking and preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Wearing a non-medical face mask helps protects those around you and can slow the spread of COVID-19 by limiting the exposure to germs found in saliva droplets and vapour. Non-medical face masks are most effective when used by many in a population as they are not proven to protect the person wearing it.

To help slow the spread of COVID-19 it is important to use and dispose of a mask properly. If proper mask usage is not followed you can unintentionally spread infection. Residents should follow these guidelines:

- Clean your hands before touching the mask
- Inspect the mask for damage or dirt
- Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides
- Cover your mouth, nose, and chin
- Avoid touching the mask
- Clean your hands before removing the mask
- Remove the mask by the straps behind the ears or head
- Pull the mask away from your face
- Store the mask in a clean plastic, resalable bag if it is not dirty or wet and you plan to reuse it
- Remove the mask by the straps when taking it out of the bag
- Wash the mask in soap or detergent, preferably with hot water, at least once a day
- Do not use a mask that looks damaged
- Do not wear a loose mask
- Do not wear the mask under the nose
- Do not remove the mask when people are within 2-meters
- Do not wear a dirty or wet mask
- Do not share your mask with others

Media Contacts:

Lydia Sadiq	Lesley Nielsen-Bjerke
Strategic Communications Advisor	Communications Manager
City of Grande Prairie	County of Grande Prairie
780-357-8759	780-814-5090
lsadiq@cityofgp.com	communications@countygp.ab.ca