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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Lowell Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the number of confirmed and presumptive cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Massachusetts has increased to 92 as of March 10, representing a significant increase of cases in recent days. While there have been no cases of COVID-19 in Lowell to date, the City of Lowell has announced several precautionary measures in compliance with enhanced mitigation guidelines issued by Governor Baker upon his declaration of a state of emergency.

Effective immediately, the City will prohibit work-related out-of-state travel. Additionally, the City will cancel any discretionary large gatherings involving external parties, including conferences and seminars and will prohibit the scheduling of such gatherings until further notice. The City will continue to observe any subsequent guidelines recommended by state officials aimed at reducing the spread of the virus and keeping the number of impacted individuals within the capacity of the state's healthcare system.

At this time, there is no recommendation from the Department of Public Health to close schools or public buildings, thus all City of Lowell departments and the Lowell Public Schools will remain functioning at full operation. The City has enhanced sanitation efforts at all buildings, including schools, prioritizing the disinfection of surfaces.

Governor Baker and the Department of Public Health have not recommended the cancellation of public events including sporting events, concerts and other similar gatherings at this time. Elderly individuals and people with known health conditions are being urged to avoid such events. The City of Lowell is advising local establishments to advise their patrons accordingly.

As the situation surrounding the spread of COVID-19 has evolved in Massachusetts, the City Manager's office has been in constant communication with the Health Department and the City's emergency response team to monitor developments and to implement preparedness measures in the event of heightened local circumstances.

The Lowell Health Department has engaged in extensive efforts to ensure the City's preparedness, and have been in daily communication with the Department of Public Health to remain apprised of developments and best practices for municipalities. While this specific virus is new, the Lowell Health Department has a great deal of experience in preventing the spread of disease in our community, and is well prepared.