

GAZERO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • DECEMBER 2020

COVID-19

SPECIAL REPORT

Wear a mask. Stop the spread.

Lake County entered December as one of 16 counties in the red zone, the most severe category for COVID-19 infection in Indiana.

Those numbers prompted additional cautions from Gov. Eric Holcomb and Dr. Chandana Vavilala, the Lake County health officer, that further restrict attendance at restaurants, bars, gyms and sporting events at least through the end of December.

Councilman Roger Sheeman said the council has agreed municipal buildings will remain closed to the public until Lake County emerges from the red zone.

“That decision coincided with the governor’s guidelines and the fact that two of our Town Hall employees tested positive for COVID in November,” he said. “Our goal is to keep everyone safe.”

As liaison to the Redevelopment Commission, Sheeman has been keeping up with dozens of small businesses adapting to the regiment of COVID while remaining open for business.

“We are encouraging folks who are going out shopping to keep it local,” he said. “Our business owners are coming up with clever promotions, supporting each other and working to keep going despite this virus. They see the community support them and are hanging in there. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. We are very close to getting past COVID.”

For more information: Please visit coronavirus.in.gov for the latest COVID-19 cases and state guidelines as well as highland.in.gov for local updates.



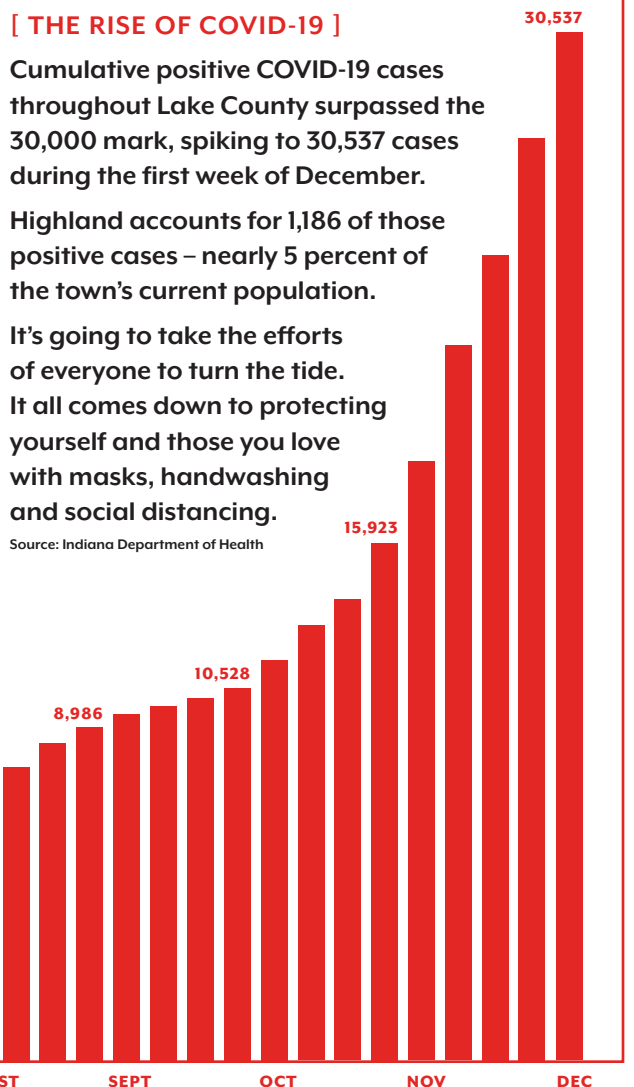
[THE RISE OF COVID-19]

Cumulative positive COVID-19 cases throughout Lake County surpassed the 30,000 mark, spiking to 30,537 cases during the first week of December.

Highland accounts for 1,186 of those positive cases – nearly 5 percent of the town’s current population.

It’s going to take the efforts of everyone to turn the tide. It all comes down to protecting yourself and those you love with masks, handwashing and social distancing.

Source: Indiana Department of Health



MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY AUGUST SEPT OCT NOV DEC

[COUNCIL MEETINGS]

Highland Town Council meetings and study sessions will convene virtually until further notice. Join us via Zoom or live stream on Facebook at 6:30 p.m. Mondays.

[AGENDAS & MINUTES]

Download Highland Town Council agendas, meetings packets, minutes and memos from our document center by visiting highland.in.gov.



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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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The Gazebo Express is produced by:
The Idea Factory • (219) 779-9041
www.theideafactory.us.com

Printed by Lithographic Communications
9701 Indiana Parkway, Munster, IN 46321

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TOWN GOVERNMENT



[**PARKING LOT UPDATE**] Stamped asphalt walks and bikeways put an exclamation point on the redesigned and repaved downtown parking lot. Lights along with a new power supply are in while the depot is taking shape. Final landscaping will be completed when the weather breaks this spring. New signage – including a map of the downtown murals, public art and an historical piece about the former Erie Lackawanna – will be installed on the side of the depot before the end of the year. Redevelopment Director Kathy DeGuilio-Fox said the project was designed to be an asset to the downtown. “Working with those involved in engineering, planning and construction has been an amazing experience. This is one more example of the Highland Redevelopment Commission creating a walkable downtown, one that invites residents and visitors alike to enjoy all we have to offer.” [The Idea Factory photos]

No parking on streets: 1” snow or more

A late November freezing-rain event was an early reminder of what is on the way. Weather alerts activate Operation Snow and put Highland Public Works in high gear – first with the road application of brine that is followed by salt. Snow plows pick up where salting ends, beginning with major thoroughfares and snow routes followed by residential streets.

All vehicles are banned from on-street parking whenever there is an inch of snow — or more.

[**NEIGHBORLY REMINDER**]

The town noise ordinance is in effect year round.

The ordinance bans the use of snowblowers and snowplows in residential neighborhoods between midnight and 6 a.m.

If you contract for snow removal, please ask the company to schedule your service between 6 a.m. and midnight to avoid disturbing your neighbors.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND TOWN

[MUNICIPAL ACCESS & PROCEDURES]



Highland Town Hall will remain closed to the public following new state protocols for counties designated as red zones.

- **Clerk-Treasurer's Office:** Staff will handle all inquiries by phone – (219) 838-1080.
- **Building & Inspection:** Building permits will be completed electronically or over the phone – (219) 972-7595. Inspections will take place on site. Masks and social distancing rules apply.
- **Redevelopment:** The Redevelopment Department will handle all inquiries by phone – (219) 972-7598 – or email Redevelopment Director Kathy DeGuilio-Fox at kdeguilio-fox@highland.in.gov or Assistant Lance Ryskamp at lryskamp@highland.in.gov.

[ANIMAL LICENSE RENEWAL]



All dogs and cats that call Highland home need a license. Information needed are pet name, breed, sex, color, spay/neuter, copy of vet and rabies info. Visit highland.in.gov for the fee schedule. Information and fee can be mailed or dropped in one of the two drop boxes at the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer, Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, IN 46322. Make checks payable to the Town of Highland and include contact information. Once processed, the Clerk-Treasurer's office will call you to pick up the tag, which will be handed to you through the door. Please call when you arrive in the parking lot.

[BUSINESS LICENSE RENEWAL]



Every Highland business is required to get a business license and renew it annually. Visit highland.in.gov to download an application. Mail it along with the appropriate fee to the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer, Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, IN 46322 or place in the drop box. Make checks payable to the Town of Highland and include a contact number. The Clerk-Treasurer's office will mail the new license to you. Allow a few days for processing.

[PARKS & RECREATION]



Lincoln Community Center will remain open following the governor's guidelines. The fitness center, walking track and youth activities are available for use. Room rentals and classes are reduced to no more than 25 individuals. Please visit www.highlandparks.org for the status of activities and classes. Here are a few annual events that have been modified to meet COVID-19 protocols:



FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR: Ring in the new year with a fireworks display at **midnight December 31** at Main Square Park. Bring the family to enjoy the midnight show and fireworks spectacular from your car or wear a mask and social distance if walking around.

TWELFTH NIGHT CELEBRATION: We'll wrap the holidays at **6 p.m. January 6** with a Twelfth Night celebration. Bring your Christmas trees to Main Square Park to light up the night. Masks required. Social distancing rules apply.

[DECEMBER RESTAURANT CRAWL]



The Highland Restaurant Crawl is the last Tuesday of every month with downtown restaurants changing up their menus with \$5 specials and downtown businesses offering late-night promotions. The next crawl is from **5 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, December 29**. Visit highland.in.gov for updates.

NAVIGATING THE CORONAVIRUS IN HIGHLAND

[LAKE COUNTY RESTRICTIONS]

Lake County Health Director Chandana Vavilala has implemented even tighter restrictions because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and red designation for Lake County. The following restrictions will remain in effect until further notice.

Enforcement of mask requirement

All businesses and public accommodations that are open to the public must ensure that all staff, customers and visitors are complying with the mask mandate as set forth in the Governor's Executive Order 20-48.

General health and safety precautions

When individuals must interact with one another outside the home, including at work – at essential and non-essential businesses – they should observe the following precautions:

- Maintain a distance of at least six (6) feet from other individuals who are not part of their own household
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible
- Disinfect frequently used surfaces
- Increase ventilation of indoor spaces
- Hold necessary meetings by telephone or videoconference whenever possible

General rules for gatherings and large events

Social and holiday gatherings – which are not advised – must be limited to 25 people or fewer. Special or seasonal events for more than 25 people must be approved by the Lake County Health Department.

General rules for businesses

Businesses remain open, but must adhere to strict social distancing guidelines.

- Restaurants and retail food establishments may remain open at 50% indoors and 100% outdoors.
- Bars and nightclubs must lower capacity to 25% indoors and 100% outdoors.
- All restaurants, bars, nightclubs and retail food establishments must be closed and cleared of all customers between midnight and 5 a.m.

For more information: Visit highland.in.gov for a complete list of restrictions and the latest updates.



[FLU SHOTS & VACCINES]

Have you gotten your flu shot yet? Public health officials say there is still time to get a vaccine before the 2020-2021 influenza season begins in earnest. Seasonal flu numbers typically begin to build in January, which means time is growing short to get a vaccine that requires about two weeks to become effective. The medical community advocates for the vaccine, saying it will be harder for our bodies to fight the flu and COVID-19 at the same time.

[COVID-19 TESTING]

The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) continues to offer COVID-19 testing at sites across the state. You should consider getting tested particularly if you are at high risk because you are over age 65, have diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure or another underlying condition, or if you have symptoms.

The locations of drive-thru clinics change frequently, so please check www.coronavirus.in.gov to see if there's a drive-thru clinic near you. There is no charge for the test and insurance is not required at Optum/LHI sites, but you must register online at <https://lhi.care/covidtesting> or call (888) 634-1116.