

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Dear Neighbor,



142 South Gary Ave.  
Bloomington, IL  
60108

T (818) 710-6100

F (818) 710-6116



@stratfordcrossing

stratfordcrossing.com

newmarkmerrill.com

I hope you had a special and meaningful Thanksgiving. This has been a very challenging year to say the least, but while we aren't at the end of the crisis, I think it is fair to say we are at the beginning of the end. With the loss of over 250,000 fellow citizens, over 13,000,000 infected, countless jobs lost, savings destroyed, and lives changed forever, we can still find ways to be thankful.

In record time we have vaccines on the horizon, treatments are improving, our first responders have risen to the challenge and we have all adapted. But our neighborhoods are facing a real threat in this final stretch – losing our favorite small businesses forever, the jobs they bring, memories they hold and those to be created still.

So, we need your help.

As we get closer to a vaccine, the pandemic is fighting back. As infections, hospitalizations and deaths rise (hopefully for the last time), our businesses are being challenged again – indoor and outdoor dining closed or severely restricted, limitations on the numbers of shoppers, movie theaters closed, gyms closed or restricted, our favorite gathering spaces locked down.

This holiday our family plans have been disrupted, our traditions rocked, but we hope by next year this will be just a bad memory and these traditions will return. However, for our businesses, your local stores, retailers, and restaurants, there may not be a next year.

There are some ways we can help these members of our community survive and make sure this holiday is not their last. ***We want to make every day small business day.*** We know times are tough, but if you are going to buy something or eat something, do it with one of our local small businesses. There are many ways to help:

1. Our restaurants deliver, they have on-site pick-up or you can park and have food brought right to your car.
2. Our centers have designated pick-up zones. Call your favorite retailer, tell them where you are parked and have them bring out your order directly to your car.
3. We have taken many measures to ensure you are safe when you visit. Masks, hand sanitizer stations, increased cleaning of high touch areas, and social distancing. Visit your favorite store and give them a word of encouragement and share why they are important to you.
4. For your holiday shopping, our shopping centers are a good one stop location. With local owners, local employees, and often local sourcing, every time you make a purchase from one of our businesses you are also investing in your community. While I love Amazon and Wal-Mart, I don't want them to be the only options for our neighborhoods, it is our small tenants who make up the fabric of our cities.

Our goal has always been “no one left behind.” Whether it is one of our merchants, those in the neighborhood in need, or those who are suffering from isolation, we have tried to provide safe engagement options, had outreach for seniors, first responders, teachers, and those at risk.

This is a chance for all of us to make sure when this pandemic ends our community goes back to what made it special. Please keep our retailers and restaurants in your thoughts, and when possible make them part of your holiday shopping plans. If there is something we can do to make our community centers better, please let me know.

With much appreciation and wishes for a great holiday season,

Sanford D. Sigal  
President and Chief Executive Officer