

City of Mississauga

Corporate Report



Date: May 25, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services

Originator's files:

Meeting date:
May 27, 2020

Subject

Phased Re-Opening of Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Recommendation

That Council endorse the phased re-opening plan outlined in the report dated May 25, 2020 entitled "Phased Re-Opening of Outdoor Recreation Facilities" and authorize staff to proceed with phased openings of park amenities as outlined in the report, upon consultation with the Medical Officer of Health at the Region of Peel.

Report Highlights

- The Government of Ontario ordered the closure of outdoor recreation facilities on March 30th including playgrounds, sports fields and off-leash dog parks, in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Amendments to these orders were made effective May 19th to permit opening of certain park amenities, subject to physical distancing and other safety requirements.
- Council reviewed information from City staff, Peel Public Health and public health agencies regarding Mississauga's readiness for re-opening and a recommended further review of recent changes announced by the Government of Ontario regarding the re-opening of outdoor amenities on May 19th.
- Staff have refreshed the phased approach to opening amenities to reflect a measured approach that incorporates public health recommendations and current conditions in Peel Region.

Background

The Province of Ontario ordered the closure of outdoor recreation facilities on March 30th, 2020 in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The list of closed amenities was extensive and

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included playgrounds, sports fields and courts, off-leash dog parks, beaches, picnic areas, outdoor community gardens, park shelters and private amenities.

Parks, Forestry and Environment staff worked to ensure closures of amenities where possible (including parking lots), installed signage and in some cases, made physical alterations (ie. removing basketball nets, blocking slides and chaining swings) to signify the closure of outdoor recreation facilities.

Security Services has provided extensive support to inform and educate residents on closures and have assisted in providing static and roaming security officers in higher volume facilities. Security staff have provided both proactive support and response to complaints on a priority basis. Municipal Enforcement staff have assisted with monitoring priority locations for illegal dumping and personal protective equipment littering.

Ongoing communication has been provided to residents including messaging on the City's corporate channels (web site, Twitter, Facebook, e-newsletter blast), on VHO signage, via media releases and promoted social media posts, and shared with our 311 Citizen Contact Centre. In addition, these messages have been reinforced through the COVID-19 Teletown Halls, robocalls and shared broadly by Councillors in their newsletters and social media channels and highlighted by the Mayor through her weekly press conferences, media interviews, videos and social media channels.

The Province announced the re-opening of certain park amenities on Thursday May 14th, to be effective Tuesday May 19th including:

- Leash-free Zones
- Sport Fields, Courts (Tennis/basketball/multi-sport)
- Park benches, picnic shelters (Added May 19)
- Marinas and public boat launches permitted to open as of May 16th

The amendments to the Provincial Orders on May 19th included changes to O.Reg 104/20 (Outdoor Recreation Facilities) and O.Reg 82/20 (Essential Businesses).

Council reviewed information from City staff, Peel Public Health and public health agencies regarding Mississauga's readiness for re-opening and a recommended further review of recent changes announced by the Government of Ontario regarding the re-opening of outdoor recreation amenities.

Peel Public Health has cautioned that we have seen our new reported cases plateau in recent weeks, but we have not seen a sustained decrease in new cases, which is one of the key public health indicators identified in the Province's plan for reopening and requested Peel municipalities develop a phased approach to opening such facilities in consultation with Peel Public Health, starting with lower risk, individual activities.

Present Status

The following outdoor recreation facilities have been opened with safety and operational plans in place to minimize risks associated with Covid-19 (Phase 1):

- Municipal Golf Courses
- Public Marinas and boat launch at Lakefront Promenade- public boat launch at Marina Park will be opened when high water levels subside
- Community Gardens, in partnership with Ecosource

Staff have reviewed the remaining facilities and recommend the following phased plan for Council approval:

Phase 2- To be completed within 5 days of set opening time in consultation with Peel Region Medical Officer of Health.

| Facility | Opening Procedures | Additional Information & Enforcement |
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| Park benches and picnic shelters (2000+ amenities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed where feasible • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened at facilities with designated picnic areas • No permitting of picnic areas (to be re-assessed with park permits after July 3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing • Enforcement of social gatherings (larger than 5 people, not from the same household) |
| Leash-free zones (9 facilities ranging in size from .3 acres to 22 acres) plus Community Common Dog Spot | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation to keep Leash-free zone at Union Park and Community Common Dog Spot location closed until physical distancing restrictions are lifted (due to size of facilities) • General communication to residents and specific messaging to Leash-Free Mississauga • Physical distancing signs to be installed • Specific Leash-Free signage to be installed (based on best practice review of other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Leash-Free Mississauga to provide feedback on issues after opening • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing • Keep gates locked in the open position to minimize touch points where feasible |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> municipalities) • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened in conjunction with leash-free zones | |
| BMX/Skate Parks (11 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed where feasible • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened at BMX/Skate Park facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing |
| Public Tennis Courts (27 locations) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed • Specific tennis court signage to be installed (based on best practice review of other municipalities) • Net installation and final inspection • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened in conjunction with tennis facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every other net installed on public courts to ensure sufficient physical distancing between players • Gates to courts left open where possible to minimize touch points • Singles only play unless you are with a member of your household • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing |
| Community Tennis Clubs (19 locations) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing signs to be installed • Specific tennis court signage to be installed (based on best practice review of other municipalities) • Net installation and final inspection • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened in conjunction with tennis facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community tennis clubs are finalizing their operational and safety plan modelled on the one developed for community gardens (Approved by Peel Public Health). Specific measures include member education, limited access, altered scheduling and ensuring availability of hand washing or sanitizing for members. • Clubhouse use and club group activities remain prohibited under the Provincial orders (except for access to |

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| | | washrooms and ha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every other net installed on courts to ensure sufficient physical distancing between players • Gates to courts left open where possible to minimize touch points • Singles only play unless you are with a member of your household • Enforcement to be conducted by club executives with support from City staff |
| Seasonal Washrooms (24 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume contract cleaning service for seasonal washrooms (washrooms have been prepped for opening) • Arrange delivery of portable washrooms associated with amenities in phase 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 permanent washrooms have remained open • Enhanced cleaning schedules for seasonal washrooms consistent with existing permanent washrooms |

Phase 3- To be completed within 10 days after set opening time in consultation with Peel Region Medical Officer of Health.

| Facility | Opening Procedures | Additional Information & Enforcement |
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| Multi-sport, Basketball and Bocce Courts (50 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed where feasible • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs • Parking lots to be opened at facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 day lead-time needed to re-install all nets and inspect/clean basketball facilities • Provincial order prohibits team play • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing • Enforcement of social gatherings (larger than 5 people, not from the same household) |
| Community Sport Fields (380 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed where feasible • Removal of Covid 19-Closure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport fields that are available for permit only ie, artificial fields will remain closed and locked where possible • Provincial order prohibits team |

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| | signs • Parking lots to be opened at facilities | play (informal use only) • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing • Enforcement of social gatherings (larger than 5 people, not from the same household) |
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Phase TBD- These facilities are closed until further notice by Provincial Order. Playgrounds, splash pads and outdoor fitness equipment to be opened within 10 days of the Province lifting its orders and in consultation with Peel Region Medical Officer of Health.

| Facility | Opening Procedures | Additional Information & Enforcement |
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| Playgrounds & Outdoor Fitness Equipment (297 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General communication to residents • Physical distancing signs to be installed where feasible • Removal of Covid 19-Closure signs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment is currently closed under Provincial order- further review with Peel Public Health will be required before opening • Continued enforcement of closures |
| Splash Pads and Wading Pools (30 facilities) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking lots to be opened on a rolling basis • Public boat launch at Marina Park will open when high-water levels subside | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and educate residents on physical distancing • Enforcement of social gatherings (larger than 5 people, not from the same household) |

Comments

Lower-risk amenities are recommended for re-opening in phase two which represent more single use activities that are easier to ensure proper physical distancing. Communication to the public on the reopening of amenities will include similar tactics used in the closure phase.

Staff have and are continuing to monitor activities and best practices in other municipalities that have taken an earlier approach to opening. There is little consistency between municipalities with respect to procedures, signage and enforcement so the recommendations in the phased plan represent best practices from a combination of municipalities.

Once a phase is approved, staff will provide an update to each Councillor on outdoor amenities that will be opening in their Ward and associated timing.

Financial Impact

Signage and associated staff costs to be allocated to the Parks, Forestry and Environment 2020 operating budget. No additional funding is requested.

Conclusion

The gradual re-opening of outdoor recreation facilities outlined in the phased plan ensures a measured approach to re-opening facilities in Mississauga. Further phases will be implemented in consultation with the Region of Peel Medical Officer of Health. The plan will ensure the City is balancing risk with the key public health indicators in the Region of Peel.

Staff have prepared a comprehensive plan to ensure the City of Mississauga will re-open outdoor recreation amenities only when it is safe to do so.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Physical Distancing Signs

Appendix 2: Tennis Court Rules

Appendix 3: Leash-Free Rules



Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services

Prepared by: Jodi Robillos, Director, Parks, Forestry and Environment