


**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM**  
**#23-2020**

**DATE:** May 5, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

**FROM:** Heather Geyer, City Manager 

**SUBJECT:** Northglenn New Normal Plan Overview

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**PURPOSE**

To provide City Council with an update on the development of the *Northglenn New Normal plan* overview and next steps in our COVID-19 response.

**BACKGROUND**

On March 5, the first COVID-19 case was identified in Colorado. On March 13, 2020, Mayor Leighty issued an emergency declaration as a result of COVID-19. Beginning on March 14, City facilities were closed to the public and City facilities remain closed until further notice. On March 26, Governor Polis issued his Stay-At-Home Executive Order, which expired on April 26. Tri-County Health Department issued a local stay-at-home order extension until May 8. The City activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in early March and is approaching week 8 of an active COVID-19 response. As part of this response, the City needs to shift focus to planning to reopen City facilities to the public.

Based on information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Governor Polis, and Tri-County Health Department, *the Northglenn New Normal plan overview is a phased reopening approach and not a return to normal*. This plan overview is designed to be updated as the City moves into the month of May in the short-term. The long-term horizon for COVID-19 response is projected to be 18 months. This plan is intended to be fluid and updated based on new guidance from the agencies listed above. The *Northglenn New Normal plan* requires focus on long-term recovery with short-term flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances. We will continue to follow state and county health guidelines as we work to reopen for our community.

Included below is a snapshot of the current workforce:

- Essential 75%
- Non-essential 25%
- Telecommuting 30%

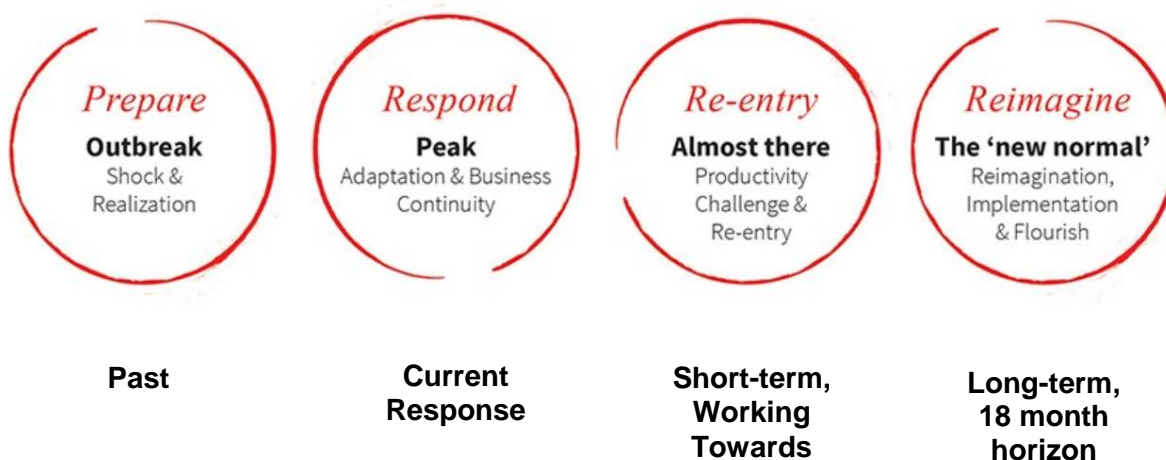
The desired outcome of this plan is to reopen non-essential services to the public when it is safe for both employees and the community. Staff is continuing work on physical modifications to workspaces and review of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) guidelines for temperature testing.

The intent of the May 5 discussion is to provide a high level overview of the steps the City is taking to plan for reopening. This overview is included as Attachment 2. There are multiple variables and a lot of moving pieces to this effort. The City is not rushing to reopen given there is so much uncertainty and we continue to provide services successfully. Attachment 3 includes a memo on recreation programming impacts that will be discussed on May 5. This is one area of City services that requires creativity and a new approach to figuring out the new normal that is time sensitive.

It is important to use this plan as a guide knowing that it will change based on new public health data and guidance from state and local agencies. Ongoing communication and collaboration is taking place on a regional level with staff and elected officials in developing an approach to reopening.

On May 5, the Adams County Maintaining Community Health and Economic Prosperity REOPEN Plan Taskforce kicked-off. This Taskforce consists of city managers and the county manager. The taskforce has several subcommittees focused on: 1) Highly Vulnerable Populations (Rupa Venkatesh, Assistant to the City Manager), 2) Businesses (Debbie Tuttle, Economic Development Director), 3) Public Spaces (Amanda Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture), 4) Communications (Diana Wilson, Director of Communications), 5) Monitoring and Compliance (Heather Geyer, City Manager), and 6) Conditions for Reductions of Restrictions (Heather Geyer, City Manager). All of the work started on Friday and consists of multiple meetings today. As the work is completed and put in a final draft form, managers will be sharing this information/plans with their elected officials.

### Reference Point - Stages of Recovery Visual



### Future COVID-19 Response Debrief

The City has been successfully providing essential services during the COVID-19 response per the State Stay-At-Home order. A quality of high-performance organizations is to take a step back and reflect on how well the organization did, and in this case, our COVID-19 response. When the City is in a position, outside of immediate response to COVID-19, we will debrief. This will not likely occur until sometime in 2021 given the 18 month horizon. A commitment has been made to evaluate how the use of telecommuting has worked within the organization that may result in future policy changes. Details and an overall approach will be designed in early 2021.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is requesting feedback from City Council on the proposed plan overview as drafted, specifically, the Principles for Northglenn New Normal and Reopening Guidelines. Staff will continue to bring forward specific items related to COVID-19 response for Council discussion and direction as appropriate. On May 5, staff will present an update on recreation programming.

### BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

There are financial impacts as a result of the COVID-19 response. City Council is scheduled to receive an update on the City's Road to Economic Recovery at the May 5 Study Session.

**STAFF REFERENCE**

If Council members have questions or comments, they may contact Heather Geyer, City Manager, at [hgeyer@northglenn.org](mailto:hgeyer@northglenn.org) or 303.450.8706.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Presentation on Northglenn New Normal Plan Overview
2. Draft Northglenn New Normal Plan Overview
3. Memo on Impacts to Recreation Programming



# COVID-19 RESPONSE – NEW NORMAL REOPENING PLAN OVERVIEW

**City Council  
Study Session  
May 5, 2020**

# STEPS TAKEN TO DATE

- First documented case of COVID-19 on March 5
- City Manager activated the EOC in early March
- Mayor Leighty issued an emergency declaration on March 13
  - City Council extended this declaration until termination thereof
- City Manager closed City facilities to the public on March 14
- Gov. Polis issued his Stay-At-Home Executive Order on March 26
- Tri-County Health Department issued a Stay-At-Home extension until May 8
- Awaiting direction from Tri-County Health

# WHY A NEW NORMAL?

## Moving With the Crisis

ICMA

Planning/  
Preparation

Initial  
Response

Response +  
Initial  
Recovery

Future  
Recovery/  
Restoration

# STAGES OF RECOVERY



# SAFER-AT-HOME FRAMEWORK

## TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

**Through April 26:  
Stay At Home**



- Last Day of Stay at Home Order
- Safer at Home Order Issued

**April 27:  
Safer at Home**



- Retail - Curbside can begin
- Real Estate - showings can resume

**May 1 (Friday):  
Safer at Home**



- Can open if implementing best practices:
- Retail
  - Some personal Services

**May 4 (Monday):  
Safer at Home**



- Can open if implementing best practices:
- Office work at reduced density





# SAFER-AT-HOME PRINCIPLES

- Work to suppress the virus
- Increased ability to conduct testing and containment
- Additional protections for those who are most at risk for COVID-19
- Ability of health care system to handle increased demand
- Sustainable social distancing policies that allow for economic growth and stability
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and their impact

# SAFER-AT-HOME

- The goal of this phase is to maintain 60-65% physical distancing.
- Critical businesses will remain open with strict precautions (social distancing, masks for all employees, more frequent cleanings, etc.).
- Retail businesses may open for curbside delivery and phased-in public opening with strict precautions.
- Elective medical and dental procedures begin, with strict precautions to ensure adequate personal protective equipment and the ability to meet critical care needs.

# SAFER-AT-HOME

- Personal services (salons, dog grooming, limited personal training, etc.) will open with strict precautions. (starting May 1st)
- Telecommuting continues for offices. Starting on May 4, up to 50% of staff can work in person (with social distancing in place).
- Nightclubs, gyms and spas will remain closed.
- No group gatherings of more than 10 people.
- K-12 schools remain online only for the 2019-2020 school year.
- Vulnerable populations and older adults must stay home unless absolutely necessary.

# SAFER-AT-HOME

## **What Does This Mean for the General Public?**

- Follow Safer at Home guidelines
- Strongly advised face coverings and staying 6ft apart in public
- No gatherings over 10 people
- Sick people may not go to work
- Limit non-essential travel

## **What Does This Mean for Older Adults and Vulnerable Populations?**

- Continue to Stay at Home except when absolutely necessary
- Utilize special industry hours for vulnerable populations

# SAFER-AT-HOME

## What Does This Mean for Seeing Friends and Family?

- People should still limit interactions except with immediate household
- If you do see limited family or friends outside of your household, be extra cautious to stay 6 ft apart, wear face covering, and limit contact
- Stick to solo and non-contact recreation activities like running, walking, or hiking in your local community. Do not travel outside of your local community for recreation. Avoid contact sports or equipment.

# SAFER-AT-HOME

## What are Next Steps for the Safer-at-Home Phase?

- The state is working to develop best practices and specific guidance for different industries during the Safer-at-Home phase and will have more details in the coming days. This includes:
  - Retail
  - Offices
  - Elective Medical and Dental Services
  - Childcare
  - Personal Services
  - Real Estate

# SAFER-AT-HOME

## How Will Local Governments be Affected?

- Under the Safer-at-Home phase, local governments will have a variety of options.
- Operates under the state's Safer-at-Home executive order and public health orders.
- They can go farther than the state, including but not limited to stay at home orders or additional protective measures.
- They can apply for a variance from the state. To do so, they will need to demonstrate proof of very low case counts of COVID 19 and/ or 14 consecutive days of decline of infection of COVID-19 in the county. They also must submit an application that includes a written COVID-19 suppression plan approved by the appropriate local public health authority. All local hospitals and elected officials must sign off on the plan.

# SAFER-AT-HOME

## What is the timeline for the Safer-at-Home phase?

- **Sunday, April 26:**

- Last day of Stay at Home Order

- Safer at Home Order Issued

- **Monday, April 27:**

- Public Health Order and guidance to be issued:

- Retail - Curbside can begin
    - Real Estate - showings can resume

- **Friday, May 1**

- Retail and Personal Services can open if implementing best practices

- **Monday, May 4**

- Offices can reopen at 50% reduced capacity, if best practices are being implemented. Note: if you can continue telecommuting at higher levels, you are encouraged to do so.



# CITY OF NORTHGLENN

- Snapshot of the current workforce

Essential 75%

Non-essential 25%

Telecommuting 30%

*Please note: these are ballpark figures, not exact*

# PRINCIPLES FOR NEW NORMAL

- The health, safety and well-being of our employees and the public will be a top priority throughout reopening to eventual recovery.
- Northglenn will continue to take a cautious and conservative approach to managing the City budget. We will continue to monitor, analyze and make adjustments to revenue forecasts as new data is available. The City has made discretionary funding reductions and will continue to take steps to tighten our financial belt as necessary to weather this crisis.
- Northglenn will work to support the economic recovery of our community and our organization while protecting the health and well-being of our residents and employees.
- Northglenn will take a phased approach to reopen our facilities with extreme caution and care while acknowledging the risks of doing so.

# PRINCIPLES FOR NEW NORMAL CONT'D.

- Northglenn will remain nimble and flexible in our planning and decision making as we anticipate unpredictable circumstances throughout reopening to recovery.
- Leadership will commit to work together and remain aligned in our recovery efforts.
- Northglenn will continue to follow state and county health guidelines regarding physical distancing and other restrictions. (\*State Guidelines are forthcoming).
- The City remains committed to involving the community in the recovery process, including seeking to understand varying comfort levels and abilities to embrace changes to physical distancing and activities.

# REOPENING GUIDELINES

- Department leadership will follow these City guidelines when determining reopening scenarios for their teams. Because no department is the same, each leader will have flexibility to manage their reopening under these guidelines.
- Any employees that are currently working from home remotely, and can effectively continue to do so either in full or in part, should continue to do so. Leaders are expected to take a consistent approach across their entire team/s when making decisions about returning to the office, continuing to work remotely, and/or altering schedules. Decisions need to be shared with the City's leadership team.
- We all must remain flexible and nimble in order to effectively adjust and enhance these guidelines as we move forward.
- The State will allow a process for local governments to modify state standards based on local conditions.

# REOPENING GUIDELINES CONT'D.

- The City will take a phased approach to reopening our facilities - We will open to the public only when appropriate measures are taken to mitigate the risk of virus exposure and spread and only when we are in compliance with state and county health guidelines.
- Physical measures to help mitigate risk of virus exposure and spread should be determined with the help of Risk Management, and Facilities Management and in support of the leadership team collectively.
- Additional measures to support our employees in order to mitigate virus risk should be discussed with all stakeholders prior to implementation.
- The City will provide adequate levels of PPE for all of our employees along with appropriate cleaning and disinfection maintenance throughout the reopening phase and in accordance with state guidelines.



# REOPENING GUIDELINES CONT'D.

- Employees will be required to wear face coverings whenever speaking in person with the public. Additionally, employees need to social distance when interacting with team members and wear masks when social distancing is not possible. Essential city operations should continue while adhering to state and local guidelines for social distancing and wearing coverings. Physical/social distancing requirements will be managed and strictly enforced by department leadership.
- Employees are required to stay at home if they are sick.

# MUST HAVES FOR REOPENING

- Welcome and Reception areas
- Safety and Sanitation
- Circulation and Common Areas
- Signage and Communications
- Workspace Modification
- Reduce Contact Points

# REOPENING TIMELINE

- Adams County Maintaining Community Health and Economic Prosperity REOPEN Plan Taskforce
- June 1<sup>st</sup> (following the lead of Adams County)
- Reopening to the public:
  - City Hall
  - Maintenance and Operations Facility
  - Justice Center
- The City will work towards a soft reopening of non-essential City services on or before May 18 and use of a two-week look ahead
- City expectation of the public:
  - Reopening City facilities will come with the expectation that members of the public wear a face covering per State and Tri-County Health guidelines.



# REOPENING TIMELINE CONT'D.

- April 27 – Public Works began phasing in non-essential services in order to maintain our existing level of service for things such as street sweeping, striping, road maintenance, etc.
- May 4 – Code Enforcement Officers return to patrol and enforcement activities.
- Mid-May – Municipal Court will be holding trials and in-person appearances

# REOPENING TIMELINE CONT'D.

- *The following City facilities will remain closed until further notice:*
  - The Recreation Center, Senior Center and Theatre. *Alternate use of the recreation center to provide emergency childcare for essential employees is being proposed.*
  - Park playgrounds, pavilions, skatepark, dog park, athletic fields
- Parks, trails and park restrooms will remain open.
- *Updates to closure decisions:*
  - Kiwanis Pool will not be opened for the summer.
  - City's 4<sup>th</sup> of July event has been canceled.

# FIRST PIECE WRAP UP

- Not in a rush to reopen
- Follow State and Tri-County Health guidelines
- Top priority safety of community and staff
- Questions or comments?

# IMPACTS TO RECREATION PROGRAMMING

- Operating Assumptions
  - Recreation Center will be closed at least through May
  - Playgrounds, skatepark, dog park, pavilions, sports fields also remain closed
  - Social distancing requirements impact Parks & Recreation service provision differently than some other city services
- Developed Priorities
  - Put people back to work at or nearing full capacity in a **safe** and **meaningful** way
  - Provide necessary and purposeful **service** to the community
  - Respond in a **fiscally responsible** manner

# IMPACTS TO RECREATION PROGRAMMING

- Financial Overview

- March, April & May Revenue are near \$0
- Average summer revenue is over \$100,000 a month
- Seasonal employees cost \$300,000 a year (10% of total personnel budget)

- Considerations

- Eliminate all or most seasonal positions for 2020
- Discontinue paying part-time employees for hours not worked
- Re-assign employees with a needed skill set and those that are not working a full schedule to alternate program areas

# ALTERNATE PROGRAM POSSIBILITIES

- **Childcare**
  - Allowable use of the facility
  - Helps parents return to work/economic benefit
  - Revenue producing
- **Parks Maintenance**
  - All regular park maintenance is still needed
- **Park Rangers/Ambassadors**
  - Educating park visitors
  - Seeking compliance with changing regulations
- **Virtual Programming**
  - Staying connected with our participants

# CHILDCARE

- **Most staff intensive to implement**
  - Guided by Colorado Office of Early Childhood Education
  - Licensees are encouraged to provide care
- **Strict regulations in place**
  - No more than 10 children per designated space/room
  - Staff are assigned to a consistent group of children
  - Temperature checks are mandatory
  - Social distancing measures required
  - Cleaning protocols followed
  - Staff education, experience & training requirements adhered to
- **Service to Community & Financial Responsibility**
  - Meets essential childcare need for working parents
  - Puts approximately 20 staff members back to work
  - Operating cost is \$35,000; revenue is up to \$72,000
    - Operating cost only, excludes personnel; assumes full capacity of 40 children

# PARK MAINTENANCE

- **Service to Community**
  - Even without special events and rentals park maintenance is an ongoing need
  - Parks and trails are highly utilized
  - Staff can be trained to perform the work that seasonals would generally be expected to do
- **Service to Community & Financial Responsibility**
  - Puts approximately 5 part-time staff members back to work
  - Helps fill a portion of the role that would have been filled by seasonal employees (generally 10-12 positions)



# PARK RANGERS/AMBASSADORS

- Service to Community
  - Education regarding new and changing regulations is key to seeking compliance
  - Parks and trails are highly utilized
  - Staff can be trained to perform the work that seasonals would generally be expected to do
- Service to Community & Financial Responsibility
  - Four staff members are currently filling this part-time alternate role; puts 2-3 additional part-time staff members back to work
  - Helps fill a portion of the role that would have been filled by seasonal employees (generally 2 positions)

# VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

- Service to Community
  - Virtual programming is already occurring
  - Can increase capacity in some areas
- Service to Community & Financial Responsibility
  - Helps maintain a connection with the community, and provide an alternative means of accessing programming
  - Does not return any additional individuals to work, but would increase some part-time staff members to their full allocation

# DIRECTION

- Items of note
  1. Each recommendation is intertwined with the others
  2. Providing alternative programming is a season-long commitment, and will require time to transition out
- City Manager recommendation to move forward with plan as outlined
- Questions?

## City of Northglenn

### COVID-19 Response – New Normal Reopening Plan Overview

#### DRAFT

#### **City New Normal**

Based on information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Governor Polis, and Tri-County Health Department, *the Northglenn New Normal plan is a phased reopening approach and not a return to normal*. The City has been successfully providing essential services during the COVID-19 response per the State Stay-At-Home order. The desired outcome of this plan and what the City is striving for is to reopen non-essential services to the public when it is safe for both employees and the community.

This plan is intended to be fluid and updated based on new guidance from the agencies listed. It is anticipated that we will be operating in the new normal for an indefinite period (at minimum 14 months). The *Northglenn New Normal plan* requires focus on long-term recovery with short-term flexibility to adjust to changing circumstances. We will continue to follow state and county health guidelines as we work to reopen our community.

Recap of important steps taken to date:

- First documented case of COVID-19 announced on March 5.
- City Manager activated the Emergency Operations Center in early March.
- Mayor Leighty issued an emergency declaration on March 13. City Council has extended this declaration until the Council terminates the declaration.
- City facilities were closed to the public on March 14.
- Governor Polis issued his Stay-At-Home Executive Order on March 26.
- Tri-County Health Department issued a Stay-At-Home extension until May 8.

#### **Safer-At-Home State Principles Guiding City New Normal Decision Making**

- Work to suppress the virus
- Increased ability to conduct testing and containment
- Additional protections for those who are most at risk for COVID-19
- Ability of health care system to handle increased demand
- Sustainable social distancing policies that allow for economic growth and stability
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and their impact

Additional guidance:

- Please refer to the one-page Safer-At-Home summary sheet attached that breaks down the new State guidelines.
- The goal of this phase is to maintain 60-65% physical distancing. Starting May 4, up to 50% of staff can work in person with social distancing in place. This is a challenge for some City service areas more than others. We are committed to having physical modifications in place and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff to address any challenges departments may have.

### **Principles for Northglenn New Normal**

- The health, safety and well-being of our employees and the public will be a top priority throughout reopening to eventual recovery.
- Northglenn will continue to take a cautious and conservative approach to managing the City budget. We will continue to monitor, analyze and make adjustments to revenue forecasts as new data is available. The City has made discretionary funding reductions and will continue to take steps to tighten our financial belt as necessary to weather this crisis.
- Northglenn will work to support the economic recovery of our community and our organization while protecting the health and well-being of our residents and employees.
- Northglenn will take a phased approach to reopen our facilities with extreme caution and care while acknowledging the risks of doing so.
- Northglenn will remain nimble and flexible in our planning and decision making as we anticipate unpredictable circumstances throughout reopening to recovery.
- Leadership will commit to work together and remain aligned in our recovery efforts.
- Northglenn will continue to follow state and county health guidelines regarding physical distancing and other restrictions. (\*State Guidelines are forthcoming).
- The City remains committed to involving the community in the recovery process, including seeking to understand varying comfort levels and abilities to embrace changes to physical distancing and activities.

### **Reopening Guidelines**

1. Department leadership will follow these City guidelines when determining reopening scenarios for their teams. Because no department is the same, each leader will have flexibility to manage their reopening under these guidelines.
2. Any employees that are currently working from home remotely, and can effectively continue to do so either in full or in part, should continue to do so. Leaders are expected to take a consistent approach across their entire team/s when making decisions about returning to the office, continuing to work remotely, and/or altering schedules. Decisions need to be shared with the City's leadership team.
3. We all must remain flexible and nimble in order to effectively adjust and enhance these guidelines as we move forward.
4. The State will allow a process for local governments to modify state standards based on local conditions.
5. The City will take a phased approach to reopening our facilities - We will open to the public only when appropriate measures are taken to mitigate the risk of virus exposure and spread and only when we are in compliance with state and county health guidelines.
6. Physical measures to help mitigate risk of virus exposure and spread should be determined with the help of Risk Management, and Facilities Management and in support of the leadership team collectively.
7. Additional measures to support our employees in order to mitigate virus risk should be discussed with all stakeholders prior to implementation.

8. The City will provide adequate levels of PPE for all of our employees along with appropriate cleaning and disinfection maintenance throughout the reopening phase and in accordance with state guidelines.
9. Employees will be required to wear face coverings whenever speaking in person with the public. Additionally, employees need to social distance when interacting with team members and wear masks when social distancing is not possible. Essential city operations should continue while adhering to state and local guidelines for social distancing and wearing coverings. Physical/social distancing requirements will be managed and strictly enforced by department leadership.
10. Employees are required to stay at home if they are sick.

### **Must Haves for Reopening**

These are core areas that are in progress:

- Welcome and Reception areas
- Safety and Sanitation
- Circulation and Common Areas
- Signage and Communications (awaiting next steps from Tri-County Health)
- Workspace Modification
- Reduce Contact Points

### **Emergency Response Team**

- The Emergency Response Team will continue to meet daily and virtually to provide important updates and guidance as needed.

### **Communication (City Council)**

- The City Manager will continue to provide the Mayor and City Council updates twice daily (one in the morning and an evening update) in order to keep Council informed during this crisis.
- The City Manager will continue to provide COVID-19 Response reports to the City Council and community at Regular Council meetings.
- The City Manager will continue to bring time sensitive COVID-19 items for City Council discussion as needed.
- City Council meetings will continue to be conducted virtually through the end of May and/or as determined by City Council per State and local guidelines.

### **Boards and Commissions**

- Board and Commission meetings will continue to be conducted virtually through the end of May and/or as determined by City Council per State and local guidelines.

### **Reopening Timeline**

The phased reopening plan to the public is a fluid situation in regards to timing. The City will operate under a two-week look ahead (unless any State or local guidance shifts this perspective). Given current State guidelines and local public health orders, it is not feasible for the City to reopen the following City facilities to the public before **June 1**.

- City Hall
- Maintenance and Operations Facility
- Justice Center

City expectation of the public - reopening City facilities will come with the expectation that members of the public wear a face covering per State and Tri-County Health guidelines when entering and conducting business inside a City facility. The City will post signage that encourages this use. Staff is working through the logistics of how to safely and appropriately enforce this type of requirement for the public.

*The following City facilities will remain closed until further notice:*

- The Recreation Center, Senior Center and Theatre. *Alternate use of the recreation center to provide emergency childcare for essential employees is being explored.*
- Park playgrounds, pavilions, skate park, dog park, athletic fields

Parks, trails and park restrooms will remain open.

*Updates to closure decisions:*

- Kiwanis Pool will not be opened for the summer.
- City's 4<sup>th</sup> of July event has been canceled.

Staff is working on how to add non-essential services back as we ease into this next phase of COVID-19 response in keeping with the Governor's guidelines. The City will work towards a soft reopening of non-essential City services on or before **May 18**. This does not mean reopening the above City facilities to the public. This means the City will provide non-essential services in services areas where it is possible to do so while protecting employees by following state and local guidelines. We anticipate we will be able to safely provide for the following:

- April 27 – Public Works began phasing in non-essential services in order to maintain our existing level of service for things such as street sweeping, striping, road maintenance, etc.
- May 4 – Code Enforcement Officers return to patrol and enforcement activities.
- **Mid-May** – Municipal Court will be holding trials and in-person appearances

### **Reopening Messaging (Employees)**

The health and safety of our employees is our top priority. Fortunately, as a result of quick action in closure of City facilities, we have been able to weather this storm with no confirmed positive cases of COVID-19. It is our priority to continue to focus on the health of our employees during this vulnerable time. City facilities remain closed to the public until further notice and City facilities will not reopen under the guidance above before **June 1**. Employees need to seek guidance from their supervisor/manager/director on next steps as to work priorities.

***Denotes dates that are subject to change based on further guidance from the State and Tri-County Health Department.***

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
MEMORANDUM #14-2020**

**DATE:** May 5, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

**THROUGH:** Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*

**FROM:** Amanda J. Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture *ajp*

**SUBJECT:** Projected Impacts of COVID-19 on Recreation Programming – Update

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this discussion item is to provide City Council with an update regarding the projected impacts of COVID-19 on recreation programming, specifically the opportunity to provide childcare for essential employees and other working parents within the community.

**BACKGROUND**

As a result of the public health emergency caused by COVID-19, the recreation center, senior center and theatre have been closed since Saturday, March 14, 2020. As per the Stay-at-Home order issued by Governor Polis, these facilities and all associated programs remained closed through April 26, 2020. Tri-County Health Department issued an extension to the Stay-At-Home Order through May 8 keeping these facilities closed until further notice.

An assessment of the potential impacts of COVID-19 on recreation programming in the months to come was provided at the study session on April 20. During that study session, staff provided an overview of potential scenarios that we could be facing, depending upon restrictions and recommendations that are in place from local, state or national entities. Staff proposed that cancelations or closures be assessed on a case by case basis, with program cancelations to occur two to 12 weeks prior to the scheduled program date. This approach allows for flexibility for those programs that can be easily restarted, and the ability to make decisions earlier for those programs with a longer lead time.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Safer-at-Home Order, along with recommendations that have been issued by other national, state and local entities, do not allow for the recreation center to open for regular programming. In addition to requirements for social distancing, mask wearing and gatherings to be limited to 10 individuals, there are other guidelines that simply don't allow for the facility to be open. Swimming pools, splash pads and gyms explicitly remain closed; social/non-essential gatherings of any type are still discouraged; and older adults and at-risk populations are still recommended to follow the more stringent Stay-at-Home guidelines. Our parks, playgrounds, skatepark, tennis courts, splash pads and picnic areas are to remain closed; team sports/contact sports are still not allowable.

Staff has been taking steps to prepare the building for when it can be opened. The plexiglass shields have been installed at the front desk, with other areas in progress. Orders have been placed for the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies that would be required to offer any programming within the building. Carpet cleaning has been scheduled for early May, and staff have prepared a schedule for other annual cleaning tasks to be completed.



With approximately 75% of recreation employees unable to complete their typical job responsibilities when the building is not open to the public, and an understanding that the recreation center will not open during the month of May and is likely not to open for typical use in June or possibly beyond, staff have developed a plan to re-assign staff to alternative programs. This plan was developed with three priorities in mind 1) Put people back to work at or nearing full capacity in a safe and meaningful way; 2) Provide necessary and purposeful service to the community; and 3) Respond in a fiscally responsible manner.

The proposed approach would eliminate all or most seasonal employees, and would reassign as many regular full-time and regular part-time employees as possible. Employees who either are not working at or near their full capacity or those that have a skill set that could be better used in a different program area would be reassigned to the following program areas:

1. Park Maintenance – without seasonal employees and with higher use of park areas for individual physical activity, a higher level of service can be provided by shifting some recreation employees into parks maintenance. Employees would receive training in this new role, and safe social distancing practices would be adhered to. The parks maintenance staff has already established staggered schedules, minimized shared equipment and minimized access to the administration building.
2. Park Rangers – four individuals have already been temporarily reassigned to this role. As park use increases during the summer season and the health regulations continue to change, it will be important to have staff that can educate park visitors to seek compliance with these regulations. This effort would be expanded to include weekends and a greater number of hours each day; again, staff would be trained to fill this role.
3. Childcare – as a licensed childcare facility, we are allowed and encouraged to re-open our facility to help meet the childcare needs of essential employees and other parents who have returned to the work place. This program would be significantly modified from our current day camp and preschool program, and would follow all state standards. These standards have been developed specifically for childcare programs during COVID-19, and include limiting group size to 10 children, assigning staff members to a single group of children, requiring masks, sanitizing procedures for equipment and rooms, monitoring children and staff for fever or any other signs of illness, and regular state and Tri-County Health inspections.

This would be the most challenging program to stand up, but staff has done enough assessment during the past two weeks to feel comfortable that it can be done in a safe, high-quality and cost-effective manner. The education and experience of staff that are currently on board have been assessed, and staff have begun to identify individuals that fully meet the state staffing requirements. The program would be available for children ages 3-12, with one preschool classroom and three school-age classrooms. Children will be grouped by age and family.

The cost for care would remain the same as our typical day camp fees, at \$150 per child, per week for a resident or city employee. Priority would be given to essential employees

and working parents, and would first be opened to city employees and residents. Staff is currently reaching out to families that are already registered for day camp to identify if they

would use care if it was available, and if the parents are either essential or need care to return to work.

Assuming 12 weeks of service for 40 children, the total operating cost for the program is anticipated to be approximately \$35,000. The total revenue for the program would be approximately \$72,000. In order to provide staff with an appropriate level of training, prepare the building for this use, complete necessary state requirements, secure all necessary PPE and other program materials, the earliest childcare would begin is Tuesday, May 26.

4. Virtual Programming – staff is already conducting virtual programming, this is anticipated to continue throughout the duration of the closure/limited facility use. Some staff who are currently responsible for virtual programming may have skill sets better utilized in one of the areas identified above, and others may be assigned to do additional virtual programming.

This transition to alternative roles and an unknown return to normal, as well as our commitment to a 2-12 week cancellation notice, has the following additional near-term implications:

1. All theatre programs that are performance based (i.e. Northglenn Players, Northglenn Youth Theatre) that have a live show prior to July 31, 2020 will either be canceled or modified to a virtual experience.
2. Sports special events, including Mudapalooza and Paddle and Run, that are scheduled to occur prior to July 31, 2020 will be canceled.

These two program areas have a long lead time due to rehearsals, securing supplies, set development, marketing, etc. and need to be canceled with the full 12 week notice.

## **TIME IMPLICATIONS**

Although the Safer-at-Home Order is only in place through the end of May, it is currently unknown whether that order will be extended, modified or lifted at that time. In addition, it does not appear that near-term modifications to the current recommendations (masks, limited group size, limited social interactions, etc.) are likely to be conducive to a return to “normal” recreation programming. It is anticipated that that return may take as long as 15 months; though that, too, is only an educated estimate.

Making a decision now to not hire/minimize the hiring of seasonal staff and/or open the facility for childcare purposes only will mean that we will not be able to quickly pivot to “normal” recreation programming if those restrictions are lifted sooner or more abruptly than anticipated. If current staff are reassigned to do parks maintenance or as park rangers, they will need to stay in those roles until the end of the season, with a gradual shift back to their typical roles. If seasonal staff are not hired and current lifeguards are reassigned to alternate responsibilities, the outdoor pool likely won’t be able to open this summer. Reopening the indoor pool, fitness classes, sports activities, theatre performances, etc. may all be on different timelines. If the staff that would typically provide those programs are working in a childcare program, there will need to be time to transition the childcare program back to a more typical day camp and preschool program before they can shift back into those other program areas.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

With an anticipated impact that will extend throughout 2020 and beyond, the following budget implications have been identified:

1. A recreation division operating budget reduction of 10% equates to about \$100,000 in 2020. This was the initial budget exercise that was completed previously.
2. Recreation revenue is generally over \$100,000 per month during the summer months (average revenue during the first three months of the year was \$59,000 per month).
3. The 2020 budget for all seasonal positions is approximately \$300,000 for 2020.
4. Discontinuing pay for hours that are not worked for non-benefited, part-time staff will not result in a direct, quantifiable savings, but could allow for the hours allocated to those employees that could be reassigned to essential and allowable duties. The cost associated with the regular wages of this group of employees is approximately \$64,000, if carried through the remainder of 2020.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends moving forward with the following actions:

1. Opening a modified day camp and preschool program to serve the childcare needs of essential employees and other parents who have returned to work.
2. Re-assigning staff to meet the current needs of the city and the community, to include childcare, park maintenance, park rangers/ambassadors; with continuation of virtual programming, customer service and administrative/supervisory responsibilities.
3. Hiring only the minimum number of seasonal employees to meet the needs outlined above that cannot be met through the reassignment of current employees (this number may be zero, but cannot be fully identified until staff re-assignments are complete).
4. Temporarily discontinue paying approximately 17 part-time, non-benefitted employees who generally work an average of 13.5 hours or less each week or are unable to meet the department's current needs.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTION**

1. Recreation Center remains closed, without childcare, until such time that the building can open more fully.

If City Council selects not to move forward with the provision of childcare, an additional 12-18 individuals in full-time, part-time and benefitted positions would either need to be reassigned to one of the remaining alternate roles, or a decision made to either continue or discontinue paying staff for hours not worked.

### **STAFF REFERENCE**

If Council members have any questions or comments, please contact Amanda Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture, at [apeterson@northglenn.org](mailto:apeterson@northglenn.org) or 303.450.8950.