

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#29-2020

DATE: May 18, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor Meredith Leighty and City Council Members

THROUGH: Heather Geyer, City Manager *hmg*

FROM: Diana Wilson, Director of Communications *DW*
Amanda J. Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture *ajp*
Steven Stokes, Event Supervisor
Michael Stricker, Cultural Programs Supervisor

SUBJECT: Alternative Events Discussion during Safer At Home and Beyond

PURPOSE

To further determine next steps for community events, to consider alternatives to in-person events during the Safer at Home phase of the response and recovery effort, as related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to seek direction from City Council as to which, if any, proposed alternative events should be implemented.

BACKGROUND

Staff have been tasked with rescheduling current programs or creating new programming during the time of COVID-19 in lieu of traditional in-person events and theatre performances. Currently, all large gatherings within the city have been canceled through the end of July. At this time, events that would typically occur between August and the end of the year are being considered for potential cancellation between six and twelve weeks prior to the event date. These decisions are being made based upon current health guidelines, which continue to evolve.

We are utilizing two defined phases that have been promoted through the Governor's Office, Safer at Home and Protect Our Neighbors, to determine appropriate event size and scope. It is important to note that there are no specific timelines yet associated with the transition from Safer at Home to Protect Our Neighbors. The two phases have been defined as:

Safer At Home Event Opportunities (current status)

Stipulations to current "Safer at Home" include face coverings in public, 6-foot social distancing, no gatherings greater than 10 people, and at risk/vulnerable populations stay at home. This status requires us to limit programming to either virtual events or events that limit participation to homes and neighborhoods and in groups of 10 or fewer.

Protect Our Neighbors (future status)

Safer for people to socialize more normally, while taking significant precautions; strong precautions for vulnerable populations, gathering numbers to increase (size not known now). This may allow us to have some in-person options with limited group participation.

UPDATE

Staff have developed a list of virtual events, at-home events and in-person alternatives. These possibilities are broken down into those that fit within Safer at Home, and those that would likely be a better fit during Protect Our Neighbors. As is true with any of the events or activities that the city produces, each new event will require a preparation window of 8-12 weeks for successful planning, marketing and implementation.

Virtual events should be short enough in duration to hold the attention of a participant via a screen. This is very different than our typical approach to events where we generally aim to entertain large crowds for long periods of time – from several hours to several days. It is anticipated that virtual events would be several hours in duration, at the longest.

In addition to providing virtual engagement, virtual events may also include an “at home” component to provide activities that residents can do independently. Residents could pick up the “Summer Fun” bag at various locations throughout the city and use the contents to celebrate on July 4th and beyond at home with their family.

Once the state moves into the Protect Our Neighbors phase, there may be opportunity to modify some of our traditional event and entertainment offerings in a way that promotes physical distancing, but allows for people to gather to participate in a shared event or cultural arts experience.

SAFER AT HOME OPTIONS

The following event options have been developed that could safely occur during the Safer at Home phase. The assumptions for this phase are that the public is not invited to gather, and the production crews that need to be on site will maintain 6-foot distancing, with group size not to exceed 10. The options that staff recommends, based on planning time and staffing levels, are designated with an asterisk.

1. Northglenn Summer Fun Goody Bag*

Timeframe: Distribute last two weeks of June

Budget: Paid for by census grant funds and possibly CARES Act and city funds, depending on contents.

Potential participants: 5,000 households

This would be an opportunity for residents to be reminded about taking the census and receive a fun goody bag of activities to do while “Safer At Home” from now through the month of July. The goody bag contents options include:

- Census/COVID-19 information
- Water balloons or squirt gun
- Poppers
- Pinwheels
- American Flag
- Beach Ball
- Sunscreen packet(s)
- Sun glasses
- Northglenn bumper sticker
- Northglenn give-away item
- Chalk
- S'mores supplies
- Face covering
- Travel size hand sanitizer

2. Northglenn Players Production of the 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*

Timeframe: mid to late July

Budget: Paid for by Northglenn Arts & Humanities Foundation (NAHF), no additional funds needed

Potential participants: 1,000

Northglenn Players is cueing up to perform its summer show virtually. This show is already cast and actors are learning their lines. What was in-person will now become virtual with audience members enjoying the production from the comfort of their own home.

3. Northglenn Food Truck “Grab and Go”*

Timeframe: Weekly starting in June or July

Budget: \$1,000

Potential Participants: 250-400 daily, 2,400 over the course of 6 weeks

Let's take advantage of our amazing food truck connections for Northglenn Food Truck “Grab-n-Go.” Trucks would stage in parks or neighborhoods, at a scheduled time and place. They would be promoted on Facebook and other city marketing venues; people order online or by phone and pick up will be safe and well distanced. We could have a savory and sweet truck in each location weekly. We would recommend two sites at lunch and two at dinner (one east of I-25 and one west each time), in order to spread the fun around the city. Community members would not gather (or have a place to sit, just “grab and go” in your neighborhood). This both supports the food trucks in the area and gives residents new options for food, which we all seem hungry for. This could be a potential distribution option for Northglenn Summer Fun goody bags.

4. Virtual July 4th: Patriotic Parties*

Timeframe: July 4

Budget: \$2,500

Potential Participants: 500 for the day, 100-200 per activity

The city can host a virtual party for July 4th with multiple online live stream touch points, using special offers from the Summer Fun bag referenced above. All video components would be pre-recorded, and streamed throughout the day on a Northglenn July 4 Facebook event page and/or YouTube. Virtual/streamed activities may include:

- Morning kick-off with Mayor Leighty
- Flag Raising with the Boy Scouts
- Wonderful Wheels Contest - decorate any wheels and do a walk or stroll in your neighborhood (with mask) - submit photographs on social media
 - Pics with most likes gets a yard sign or candy/ice cream home delivery
 - Cars from the car show could be included
- Veteran/Military Recognition
- Chalk Art Prompt/Demo - Hire a professional to do chalk art around E.B. Rains, Jr. Memorial Park or other city location; community members do their own chalk art at home and submit photographs
- Live stream or video of national anthem, with a message or image from each City Council member encouraging everyone to use the poppers and s'mores supplies from their Summer Fun bag to celebrate at home

5. “Get Smart” Northglenn – Virtual Class Series

Timeframe: Starting August 1

Budget: \$1,000 per month

Potential Participants: 100-200 per month

This is a great time to educate kids and adults about fun and unique topics. In the “Get Smart” series, each week would feature a different speaker, entertainer, chef, mixologist, singer/songwriter, or instructor to share a topic that has mass appeal. The sessions would allow residents the opportunity to learn a new skill and have fun in the process. “Get Smart” classes could be geared towards different age groups and can start now, and can also continue for as

long as there's an audience. Teachers could be from the community or from contractors/educators on staff.

6. Virtual Ward Parties

Timeframe: July, August (2 wards per month)

Budget: \$2,000 (\$500 per ward)

Potential participants: 50-100 per ward

Virtual parties for each ward that could be on the same day or spaced out on different days/times. Could include food truck(s) in the neighborhood for people to get food for the party. Party is hosted by ward Council members. They introduce the event and have a theme, could have virtual performances and then encourage people to have a front yard party after, wave at neighbors, grill or have carry out. People can submit party pictures immediately after and we can do a Party Picture Post online or in The Connection with prizes for people to participate. We can add a number of variables to this event – Virtual Bingo, Home Tour, Pet Introduction, Minute to Win it Games, etc.

7. Magic Fest Virtual (only if the in-person event needs to be canceled)

Timeframe: August

Budget: \$5,000 (\$3,500 for entertainment and \$1,500 for enhanced marketing)

Potential Participants: 800-1000

This would be in lieu of an in-person event for August and would feature multiple days of magic (short episodes, separating youth and adult audiences for different types of tricks and different types of comedy). We would hire magicians to create shows on Zoom (to interact with the audience) and share their talent. In the presentations for kids we would teach children how to do some basic magic tricks and could provide a list of things to gather from their house (rubber band, paper clip, penny, playing cards, etc.). In addition, we can provide a magical trick page linking to magical wares people could purchase from vendors to increase excitement of magic.

PROTECT OUR NEIGHBORS OPTIONS

The following event options have been developed for the Protect Our Neighbors phase. The assumptions for this phase are that the public can gather in limited groups, with adequate distancing and other safety precautions. For this planning exercise, it has been assumed that this phase will be in place by August. Should this phase start later, some of these recommendations may need to be modified. Staff recommends moving forward with no more than four of these events during late summer/early fall. The options that staff recommends, based on planning time and staffing levels, are designated with an asterisk.

1. Drive-In Concerts*

Timeframe: August-September

Budget: Paid for by NAHF, no additional funds needed

Potential participants: 50 cars/concert

**Depending on timeline for Protect Our Neighbors, Drive-In Concerts could become Virtual Concerts moving into the theatre and playing "live" online*

Imagine all of the fun of Northglenn's Summer Concert Series, but now in a safer drive-in version hosted at Northwest Open Space (NWOS) for more drive-in fun. This will feature the same great music as the traditional concert series. At the concerts we will also have food trucks who will be

delivering food directly to the attendees who are in their vehicles. Six concerts were planned and funded by the NAHF/Scientific and Cultural Facilities District for this year; the number of concerts would be modified to meet scheduling needs. Safety measures to consider include requiring reservations, check-in at parking location, flier with rules handed to each vehicle and police presence at each event.

2. Drive-In Movies*

Timeframe: August-September

Budget: \$10,000 - City funded, but already paid for in January

Potential participants: 50 cars/movie

Remember going to drive-in movies as a kid? We hope so, because they sure were fun. We intend to extend the fun again in this new drive-in movie series also at NWOS where your radio plays the movie and you can enjoy snacks safe in your own vehicle OR enjoy food delivered straight to your car from a food truck at the event. Four movies were planned and funded for this year; the number of movies would be modified to meet scheduling needs. Safety measures to consider include requiring reservations, check-in at parking location, flier with rules handed to each vehicle and police presence at each event.

3. Magic Fest Timed Event*

Timeframe: August

Budget: \$20,000 (\$17,000 for the event, \$3,000 for additional marketing)

Potential participants: 800-1,200

We recognize that in the times of COVID-19 the traditional Magic Fest is likely not possible, but creating opportunities for people to be excited, in awe, and surprised (and perhaps enjoy a bit of laughter) is still important.

In this new Magic Fest live program, we would set up the venue a little bit like a magic show meets IKEA. We would sell or provide "timed tickets" and families could come to the event in small groups (sizes would be determined by current sizing for "Protect Our Neighbors") and see shows with a limited number of other families/groups.

Attendees would enter the event and then see show after show being guided through the event in lines or queues, only interacting with their initial group plus the magicians along the way. In this approach we would work with the magicians to come up with a backstory (or mystery) that could be solved along the way so the final mystery is resolved at the final show. At the end there would be food trucks so people could sit and eat or grab and go depending on requirements at the time. There is potential to have one of our non-profit community partners sell beer and simple drinks, as well.

4. Timed Entry Events*

Timeframe: August, September, October

Budget: \$3,000 per event (\$9,000 total)

Potential participants: 300-450 per event

Day or series of days with timed experiences in person. Could be all themed OR a variety of activities and people reserve for programs they are interested in at times that work for them. These could be free OR we can charge for tickets. All performance based, including comedy,

talks, meditation, music, dance, etc. Shows would be short and limited to small crowds according to distancing rules at the time of event.

5. Pop-up Performances

Timeframe: September, October

Budget: \$2,500 per location

Potential participants: 150-200 per location

In this hyper local performance option we would pick a local park in each ward and hire a musician to play in a pop-up concert focusing on inviting people just from one ward or event just a few streets at a time. These performers could be musicians, buskers, jugglers, or dancers. We would encourage people to watch from their front yards or in a social distanced way and could also bring in a local food truck from the “Northglenn Grab and Go” series as well. It is a fun opportunity to bring the show to residents and support artists at the same time!

6. July 4th Parade (only possible if we are in “Protect Our Neighbors” by June 1 to allow for project planning time)

Timeframe: July 4

Budget: \$1,000

Potential participants: 500-1,000 depending on route length and location

Option 1. Use a limited entry format of about 25-30 vehicles to drive the streets of Northglenn and share the spirit of Independence Day with the community. We would invite parade participants to gather on wheels (no walking groups allowed) and drive through a pre-determined route that would allow the maximum number of residents to leave their homes and wave as the parade goes by. The entries would consist of the fire department, police department, a few antique or classic cars, and perhaps a few trucks with groups waving to the crowd.

Option 2. Present Northglenn’s first “backwards parade” that has entries line a set street in Northglenn and stay in place. At a designated time, people who want to drive through the parade route can see all of the entries. In this format any family that wanted could come and see the entries, it does not require street closures and we would not need to limit the number or size of entries (as long as they are not greater in size of people than the maximum allowed group at that time). This activity would last for a limited period of time.

BUDGET & TIME IMPLICATIONS FOR JUNE/JULY EVENTS

To be able to effectively plan, purchase supplies and market any alternative events in June and July, decisions as to how to proceed will need to be made quickly. It is important to be able to utilize the June Connection to promote activities to the community; the deadline for this publication is May 22.

The budget for each of the recommended events is as follows:

Summer Fun Goody Bags - \$75,000 (\$15/bag, 5,000 bags)

“Grab and Go” Food Trucks - \$1,000

Northglenn Players Production - \$0 (all production costs are budgeted through NAHF)

Virtual July 4th - \$2,500

No additional city funding is needed. \$37,500 of the \$80,000 that was already allocated for the traditional July 4th Festival would be utilized to cover some expenses. It is important to note that the budget for this event was initially identified as a budget reduction to reach the 10-15% budget reduction target.

The total expenditures, outside of staff time and NAHF funds, include: \$20,000 from the census grant, \$20,000 from CARES Act funding and \$37,500 from the special events budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends moving forward with four virtual events during the months of June and July. These include the Summer Fun Goody Bags, a virtual Northglenn Players production, a virtual July 4th event, and "Grab and Go" Food Trucks. These are all programs that can be done with no or limited person-to-person contact.

Staff is seeking direction from City Council to move forward with the planning, purchase of supplies and marketing of these four events.

Staff will come back to City Council for further direction on the remaining recommendations when the state begins to transition into the Protect Our Neighbors phase, or if the Safer at Home phase extends into August.

STAFF REFERENCES

If Council members have any questions or comments, please contact Amanda Peterson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture, at apeterson@northglenn.org or 303.450.8950 or Diana Wilson, Director of Communications, at dwilson@northglenn.org or 303.450.8713.