



NEWS RELEASE

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Kent Parks Announces Summer Program, Event Cancellations Due to COVID-19

KENT, Wash. – Kent Parks announced Thursday, May 28, that summer events and programs have been canceled throughout the rest of Summer 2020 due to COVID-19 precautions and public safety.

“Unfortunately, we do not have a confirmed timeline of when King County will be able to successfully move through the phased-in re-opening plan set by the State. Closure restrictions significantly limit our ability to plan and deliver programs and events. It is also unclear what social distancing mandates will be required while we work through re-open phasing, which could place additional burden on the capacity of programs, the ability to provide a quality experience and the cost to deliver programs,” said Julie Parascondola, Kent Parks Director. “We know how important these programs are for kids, adults, families and seniors who depend on them, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or those needing childcare support as businesses start to re-open, however, the collective health and wellness of our community is our highest priority.”

Canceled programs and events include:

- The Summer playground program and Funtastic Fridays at select parks throughout the City, including the summer meals program
- Summer day camp and sleep-over camps
- Specialty day camps – including Science, STEM/TECH, Dance, Art, Cooking, LEGO, Cheer, Music, Skyhawks, sports camps, etc.
- The HERO mobile recreation program
- The life-guarded summer beach program at Lake Meridian
- Adaptive recreation programs for individuals with disabilities
- T-ball/Tossball, boys baseball, girls fastpitch, and youth summer soccer leagues
- Fitness, wellness, enrichment and other programs and classes
- Senior programs, trips and drop-in activities, as well as the Senior Activity Center’s deli café lunch program
- Community art programs and art installations
- All summer events and community gatherings, including the 4th of July SPLASH, Cornucopia Days 5K and the Kent Summer Concert Series.

In addition to the canceled programs and events, the Kent Commons, Teen Center, and Senior Activity Center will remain closed until further notice.

Rentals of athletic complexes, picnic shelters and facilities will be canceled until appropriate re-opening can occur. Smaller rentals for groups under 5 can begin in Phase 2. Rentals for groups less



than 50 will be available in Phase 3. Kent Parks will allow rentals to proceed, both existing and new, where appropriate, within Stay at Home guidelines.

In addition to summer closures and program cancellations, Fall/Winter programming will also be impacted and is dependent upon the re-opening of King County. More information will be provided on Fall/Winter programming later in the summer.

Kent Parks staff are currently processing all applicable program and rental refunds.

Kent's parks will continue to remain open to the public amid the coronavirus pandemic for walking, running, and enjoying nature.

"Parks and greenspace are more essential now than ever, providing much-needed solace and helping people cope with the uncertainty of the health crisis. Where safely allowed, people are finding time to get outside and visit Kent parks and trails to help sustain physical and mental health," said Parascondola.

Similar to Kent Parks programming, the restrictions for parks, trails and green spaces will loosen as King County transitions through each of the re-opening phases. All parks are open for public access. Within parks, all grass areas, paths, trails, dog parks and public fishing piers, docks and boat launches are available for use, with social distancing practices in place.

Riverbend Golf Complex re-opened on May 5th in accordance with State guidelines and is operating under a social distancing model. For more information, or to book a tee-time, golfers can visit www.riverbendgolfcomplex.com.

"The loss of essential community programs is a heart-breaking loss for our staff and for our community. We will be closely monitoring the Stay at Home orders and re-open phasing, working on social distancing planning and will be back as soon as we possibly can," said Mayor Dana Ralph.

For continued information or more details, residents and program participants can visit www.mykentparks.com.

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