

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth - Parks and Recreation

411 West First Street • Duluth, Minnesota 55802
218-730-4309 • www.duluthmn.gov

*For more information contact Kate Van Daele,
Public Information Officer at 218-730-5309*

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SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation announces updates to recreational amenities

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

Parks and Recreation announces updates to recreational amenities

[Duluth, MN] The City of Duluth Parks and Recreation Division announces the following updates to recreational amenities. The announcements are released in conjunction with the updated Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans Policy. Parks and Recreation offerings and maintenance for Spring and Summer 2021 strive to align as much as possible with allowable activities defined by State guidelines:

<https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/stay-safe-mn/stay-safe-plan.jsp>

The updated Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans Policy applies to park and facility use scheduled on or after April 1, 2021 and can be found at: <https://duluthmn.gov/parks/covid/>

1. Permits and Reservations

Parks and Recreation is currently accepting permit requests for outdoor activities, reservations, and events at parks, trails, pavilions, etc. Proposed activities must comply with State guidelines in effect at the time of the activity. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply to all permits and reservations.

2. Spring 2021 City-owned buildings updates

Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with Property and Facilities Management, has identified a set of buildings to reopen for use by the public through our standard reservation process. Selection of these buildings is based on previous reservation and use patterns, staff capacity for maintenance of facilities, and occupancy limitations on indoor gathering sizes. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply to all permits and reservations.

Now accepting reservations:

- Washington Center Gym
- Evergreen Senior Center
- Morgan Park Community Center
- Wade Stadium

Accepting reservations for dates May 15 and beyond:

- Lafayette Community Center
- Park Point Beach House

Other City-owned facilities that are occupied by tenant-lease agreements continue to operate under the terms of their lease agreements and approved pandemic safety plans. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply to all permits and reservations.

The following buildings will remain closed to reservations until further notice. Inquiries for use of these facilities should be submitted to Chris Severson, cseverson@duluthmn.gov for consideration:

- Grant Rec Center
- Harrison Community Center
- Norton Park Community Center
- Piedmont Community Center

-Portman Community Center

3. Park Point Beach House – Summer Lifeguarding

The City of Duluth will contract with the Duluth Y for Summer lifeguarding services at the Park Point Beach House. Summer hours for lifeguarding and public restroom access will be announced by April 30, 2021.

Private rentals for the beach house should be directed to Chris Severson at cseverson@duluthmn.gov.

4. Sports and Leagues

The City of Duluth will align with State Orders and guidance on resumption of sports and leagues for adults and youth insofar as City maintenance capacities allow. Maintenance capacity among our Park Maintenance workforce remains more limited than prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, but still much greater than in 2020. The City will prioritize maintenance of outdoor athletic facilities according to use patterns as indicated by leagues and reservations. Spring and Summer sports leagues that utilize City facilities are encouraged to contact Parks and Recreation to discuss their intentions for their upcoming seasons and facility use. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply to all organized sports and leagues.

5. Programming

Parks and Recreation has resumed limited programming for the general public and will continue to monitor State guidelines for allowable and safe delivery of programming. Programming opportunities are: family-friendly and offered for various age groups. They range from short, single programs to multi-day Summer camp activities and align with State guidelines. More information is available on the Parks and Recreation website at: <https://duluthmn.gov/parks/programs-events/general-programs/>. Pre-registration remains a requirement. Registration requirements may change based upon State guidance.

Programs that take place within our parks but are organized by a business, association, non-profit or other entity and that meet current State guidelines will be allowed, so long as an agreement or permit is in place. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply.

6. Restrooms and Porta-potties

Park users can anticipate a mix of plumbed restrooms reopening for the season and porta-potties placed throughout the park system. The City will strive to maintain restrooms to a high standard of cleanliness and maintenance, though users should be aware that cleaning schedules and frequency may vary throughout the season.

7. Volunteer Projects

Nonprofit groups with existing agreements or those requesting to continue with routine projects in the absence of an existing agreement with the City of Duluth may conduct volunteer service projects. The Parks and Recreation Pandemic Operations Plans policy will apply to all volunteer projects. Support for individual volunteer projects (neighborhood litter pick-ups, etc.) may be approved on a case by case basis pending need and availability of staff support.

The Volunteer Tool Shed will be available on a limited basis as well.

Contact Cheryl Skafte at cskafte@duluthmn.gov or 218-730-4334 about potential volunteer clean-up projects.

8. Road Closures and Alternate Recreation Areas

To provide the public with enjoyable socially distanced walking and bike riding locations through the Spring, the City will proceed with the following road closures:

Extend these closures through May 31:

- W. Skyline Parkway through Magney-Snively Natural Area
- E. Skyline Parkway along Hawk Ridge
- Lincoln Park Drive

Implement the closure of Skyline Parkway around the South side of Enger Park beginning March 22 through May 31. Hank Jensen Drive will remain open to motor vehicle traffic. Previously scheduled special event(s) in this location will proceed as planned.

9. Natural Surface Trail Conditions

Duluth natural surface trails are now entering the annual the "Freeze-Thaw" season, which makes our trails vulnerable to damage. Please avoid trails if soil is wet or muddy. If you notice that you are leaving footprints or tire tracks in the mud, the trail is too wet for use.

The City may, in coordination with local trail groups, open or close all or some natural surface trails for periods of time during the Freeze-Thaw season and throughout the year in response to precipitation and weather conditions.

Paved and gravel surface trails that remain open for use year round include:

- Campus Connector Trail
- Cross-City Trail
- Duluth Winnipeg Pacific (DWP) Trail
- Lakewalk
- Waabizheshikana: The Marten Trail

To learn more about the City's trails, and to view current conditions and closures, please visit:

<https://duluthmn.gov/parks/trails-bikeways/natural-surface-trails/> or call the trail hotline 730-4321 x1.

Parks and Recreation encourages users to follow current COVID-19 social distancing and face covering guidance while using parks and trails. And, if you arrive at a park or trailhead that is busy or congested, consider exploring a new location or returning at a less busy time.

10. Attractions and Camping

Duluth Indian Point Campground will resume Summer camping operations beginning April 30. More information on camping at DIPC can be found at: <http://duluthindianpointcampground.com/campsites>

Enger Park Golf Course will resume operations beginning in April, once grounds are ready for the season. More information is available at: <https://www.golfduluth.com/>

Lester Park Golf Course will remain closed to golf this season, and will be minimally maintained by the City's third-party golf management company. At this time, Duluth Golf is focused on asset preservation of 18 holes and the driving range at Lester Park Golf Course ahead of reopening in 2023 for one season. This requires regular mowing and agronomy work to prevent the course from overgrowth. The parking lot will remain open unless significant safety issues or damage to the grounds become a concern.

Allowable activities on the Lester Park Golf Course include walking, running, and dogwalking. Dogs must be leashed and owners must pick up after their dogs. All users are prohibited from accessing greens, tees and bunkers on the minimally maintained 18 holes. Golf and bike riding are only allowed on the permanently closed Lake 9. Users traverse the Lake 9 at their own risk— this area of the course it is not being maintained. Inquiries about allowable use should be directed to mbender@golfduluth.com

The **Lake Superior Zoo** remains open to the public. Please check the Lake Superior Zoo's website for up-to-date information on visiting the zoo: <https://szooduluth.org/>.

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area summer offerings include camping, multiple activities at the Adventure Park, outdoor summer camps, mountain bike rentals and lift-served mountain biking and disc golf. Spirit also hosts receptions and banquets. More information is available at <https://www.spiritmt.com>.

Wade Stadium will host the Duluth Huskies, College of St. Scholastica, and other baseball leagues this year. Wade Stadium is also available for private reservations including sport practices, fitness groups, and private events. Private reservations are limited and dependent upon baseball practice and game schedules. Contact Chris Severson at cseverson@duluthmn.gov for details.

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