



COME TOGETHER & THRIVE

**For Immediate Release**

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**CITY OF SOUTH EUCLID ANNOUNCES CURRENT AND FUTURE IMPACTS TO PARKS, RECREATION AND YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR SUMMER 2020 IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

*South Euclid, Ohio* – The City of South Euclid has made the difficult decision to close many of its recreation facilities for the 2020 summer season, including the Bexley Park Swimming Pool and Quarry Park Splash Park. The closings are health and safety measures being implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the unpredictable and highly contagious nature of the disease.

Other impacted facilities and programs include city playgrounds, ballfields and the dog park, as well as the issuance of permits for block parties and garage sales until such time as deemed safe by local and state public health officials. These closures are designed to ensure social distancing, prevent congregating and protect the health of the public and employees.

The City continues to base decisions on science, data, guidelines, recommendations and orders from Gov. Mike DeWine, the Ohio Department of Health and Cuyahoga County Department of Health. This can be a challenge as circumstances change often and quickly, but it's clear that social distancing will be part of life in Ohio and Greater Cleveland for many months to come.

Data from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health continues to show that South Euclid remains a hotspot for COVID-19 infections in Northeast Ohio and must continue to prioritize the health, safety and welfare of residents and employees. As a result, the city is bracing for a future that unfortunately drastically changes services and programs this summer.

"These are not decisions we made lightly given the popularity of South Euclid's recreation and youth programming, as well as our many popular summer programs and events," said Mayor Georgine Welo. "But due to the continuation of social-distancing protocols and the need to ensure the health and safety of our residents and employees, opening our pools and recreation facilities at this time is not in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of our community."

The City of South Euclid is also following the recommendations of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) which has stated that *"given the current situation and the guidance from public health officials on physical distancing, limiting in-person social interactions, avoiding spaces where people congregate in close quarters, and the concerns around transmission of the virus being spread through surfaces, we believe that playgrounds and play structures should temporarily close in an effort to reduce community spread"*.

"Given the COVID-19 pandemic and associated state imposed restrictions, we are faced with making these arduous and unfortunate decisions," said Mayor Welo. "However, as the summer proceeds, if the forecast changes and we are able to provide summer services beyond what is currently planned, we will do so as resources allow – but only if deemed safe by state and local health officials."

For more information contact Keith Ari Benjamin, Director of Community Services at [kbenjamin@seuclid.com](mailto:kbenjamin@seuclid.com) or 216.288.6378.



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## **COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN FOR PARKS, RECREATION & PUBLIC PROPERTIES & COMMUNITY EVENTS**

### **What is Currently Closed for Summer 2020?**

#### **Bexley Park Pool and Quarry Park Splash Park**

Outdoor aquatic facilities will not open this summer. The level of public congregation that takes place at aquatic facilities and the level of staff required to operate these facilities will make it impossible to open and manage these facilities safely this summer.

#### **Restrooms and Drinking Fountains**

The proximity of people's mouths and noses to drinking fountains while they are in use creates an unacceptable level of risk for spreading COVID-19, so drinking fountains will remain closed. At this point, the City cannot guarantee the high level and frequency of disinfection needed to keep COVID-19 from spreading at public restrooms, so restroom buildings will also remain closed.

#### **Ballfields & Athletic Fields**

Athletic fields and courts **at all parks** are closed to the following:

- No organized youth leagues or organized contact sports and no congregating of more than the state recommended limit for non-household congregating (currently 10 people).
- Volleyball nets will not be installed this summer at the Victory Park Sand Court.

#### **Playgrounds & Pavilions/Shelters/Tents**

- Playgrounds are unfortunately also closed until further notice because it is not possible to effectively sanitize playground equipment to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Until further notice, the issuance of permits and congregating in the pavilions is prohibited.

#### **Quarry Park Dog Park**

- The dog park will remain closed for the near future to ensure social distancing protocols.

#### **All Program Buildings**

- Program buildings remain closed to the public until further notice. This includes the Community Center and City Hall. Until further notice, no permits will be issued for room rentals at all public facilities.

***Remember that this is a fluid situation based on current information and changes/modifications may be made as summer progresses.***

***Continued...***

## **What is Canceled or Postponed for Summer 2020?**

- **All City sponsored and affiliated programs, events and team sports that do not allow social distancing are currently canceled or postponed through Labor Day. This includes:**
  - The Summer Youth Experience Program is canceled, except for the Summer Lunch Program, which will take place as a “grab and go” program. Details will be announced in the near future.
  - Spring and summer sports leagues are canceled, along with classes and programs unless they can be done virtually or adjusted for social distancing. The City is working with our community partners to create alternative programs for community youth and these will be announced and listed on line at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom) as soon as they are available.
  - Consistent with what's happening throughout Northeast Ohio, all South Euclid programs and events including the following will not proceed this summer:
    - Memorial Day Parade
    - “Rock the Block” Summer Festival
    - One South Euclid's “Intersection” May/Green Festivals
    - MyCom Summer Youth Experience Programs
    - South Euclid MyCom Movie Nights
    - “Bexley Bash” Summer Festival
    - South Euclid Garden Club's GardenWalk
    - The Commission on Aging's “Taste of Cedar Center”.
    - Annual Recycling Club events “FreeCycle” & “E-Cycle”
    - Community Band Concerts
    - Block Parties & Tent Rentals
    - Garage Sales
  - All summer programs and team sports that do not allow social distancing are canceled.
  - The issuance of permits for Block Parties and Garage Sales are postponed for the near future to ensure social distancing protocols. We are hopeful that we may be able to allow these programs later in the summer or fall.
  - The hiring of most seasonal and temporary recreation employees is on hold.

***We remain hopeful that some programs and events may be able to be rescheduled and take place in late summer/fall.***

***Continued...***

## What is Open for Summer 2020?

### **Parks and Trails**

All parks and trails remain open, including the Oakwood Green Nature Preserve, Euclid Creek Metropark (and other Emerald Necklace Parks) and walking paths in other community parks. Residents are encouraged to be as active as possible this summer and take advantage of city and regional amenities that are open, using the following guidelines:

- Bring a water bottle. Water fountains remain turned off for the health and safety of park users.
- Bring disinfectant wipes or hand sanitizers. Restroom buildings remain closed.
- Do not visit parks or trails if you feel sick. This includes fever, body aches, coughing, nasal congestion, runny nose and sore throat.
- Stay at least six feet apart from other park users not part of your household.
- Wash your hands immediately before and after visiting a park.
- No group activities with people from outside your household.

### **Community Gardens**

- Residents that participate in the City's Community Garden Program may continue to harvest their plots, as long as social distancing protocols are observed.

### **Youth Programs**

- While many of our annual youth programs are canceled for this summer, the City is working with our community partners to establish safe alternative programs for our community's youth. As soon as these programs are available, they will be posted at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom).
- The Summer Food Lunch Program will continue this summer as a collaboration between the City, School District & Cuyahoga County Public Library. The program will be a daily "grab and go" program similar to the program currently in place by the School District. More details will be announced when available and posted at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/MyCom).

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## **Please Stay Informed!**

The City has many resources for residents to stay up-to-date on community services and potential changes and revisions as the summer proceeds:

- Visit the City's website at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com) for updated information as the summer proceeds.
- Sign-up for the City's E-Newsletter. Newsletters are emailed on a regular basis to subscribers and contain a wealth of information and resources for residents. Sign up on the City's homepage at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com) and scroll down to the "E-Newsletter Sign-Up" section.
- **Visit us on social media:** The City maintains active pages on Facebook, Twitter & Nextdoor & usually posts updates daily about South Euclid information & community activities.  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/southeuclid](http://www.facebook.com/southeuclid) **Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/SouthEuclidLive](http://www.twitter.com/SouthEuclidLive)
- For information on alternative programming for youth, please visit the city's MyCom Page at [www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/mycom](http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/mycom). Information will be updated on a regular basis with programs offered by the city and our community partners.