

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FROM: Office of the Mayor
City of Ottawa
301 W. Madison Street
Ottawa, Illinois 61350

Re-opening of open spaces at public parks

In light of Governor Pritzker's recent executive order to begin a phased re-opening of state parks and to begin easing restrictions on the Stay at Home Order, the City of Ottawa will be re-opening the open spaces of all public parks on April 25, 2020. This includes Allen Park, Eastside Park, Fox River Park, Hollywood Park, Kiwanis Park, Lincoln Douglas Park, Peck Park, Rigden Park, Thornton Park, Turnberry Park, Varland Park, Walsh Park, Washington Square, and the I & M Canal path located within the City limits of Ottawa. The re-opening of the parks permits use of the open spaces of the parks and use of public benches as long as social distancing is maintained. Additionally, the use of the pavilions is permitted as long as no more than ten people are gathered in the pavilion at any one time. However, picnic tables will not be set out for public use to avoid the gathering of individuals. Additionally, fishing will be permitted from the shores of the Illinois River and Fox River. Boat launches will remain open and the City will begin installing docks; however, consistent with the Governor's recent order, only groups of two people will be permitted.

For the health and safety of all citizens in Ottawa and to slow the spread of the coronavirus, all playground equipment, including the splash pad, and all sport amenities will remain closed and public use is not permitted until further notice. This includes basketball courts, baseball fields, softball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, pickleball courts and the skate park will remain closed. However, use of the frisbee golf course will be permitted as long as social distancing is maintained. Additionally, golf courses will be permitted to re-open on May 1st as long as they comply with the strict guidelines issued by the State and social distancing requirements.

Lastly, for the safety of the citizens of Ottawa, public restrooms will remain closed until further notice.

The City would like to remind everyone that while in open spaces they must still follow the social distancing requirements and maintain a distance of at least six feet while in public parks. Additionally, the gathering of more than ten people is still prohibited. The City will be performing the recommended cleaning on the public benches on a regular basis. However, the City also wants to remind individuals to ensure they continue to take action to slow the spread of the coronavirus by washing your hands or using hand sanitizer after touching objects, wiping down surfaces, avoid touching your face, covering your mouth when coughing or sneezing, wearing face coverings, and to not go out in public if you are feeling sick. The City would like to thank the public for their cooperation during these unprecedented times and believes the community will continue to follow these restrictions until it is safe to fully re-open the community.