

Council Priorities Retreat

COVID-19 Response and Plans

FY21 COVID Response – Recreation

- Adjusted classes to virtual classes, offering approx. 20 free classes a week. To highlight the new virtual offerings, the Department created a “Virtual Community Center” that allowed residents to easily view and register for classes and programs.
- In an effort to have residents stay active, the department created a Recreation Approved Resources (RAR) page on the City website. The page includes virtual tours, fun games, and other exciting activities from various websites that can be easily done at home.
- Purchased PPE for Staff - cloth masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, hand-held electrostatic foggers (4).
- Coordinated a Graduation Drive for Takoma Park HS Seniors - The route had participants travel through each ward. Graduates decorated their car(s) and drove around town, residents cheered as they drove by.
- Replaced the traditional Summer Camp program with REConnect. The virtual program provided participants an activity bag full of at home activities with Recreation staff leading daily projects and activities. The popular program was also offered in the Fall.
- Organized a “Phone a Neighbor” program for Seniors. The program paired volunteer families with Takoma park seniors that were experiencing isolation during the pandemic.
- Provided refunds for Recreation program participants. Refunds greatly impacted department revenue for classes, camps and aftercare.
- The Department offered over 10 in-person Fall classes. All classes were outdoors and maxed out at 8 participants to ensure proper social distancing.
- Revamped Halloween offerings so that residents could have fun while meeting social distance requirements.
 - 2 virtual events (magic show and storytelling)
 - Chalk & Walk - walking along Sligo Creek, Chalk Riot made templates for participants to color in, chalk for kids to free hand draw
 - Halloween Walk-Thru - 7 different locations, volunteers set up tables along with the Rec Dept and gave out candy bags to those that came by
- Partnered with the County Health Department to provide free COVID testing at the Takoma Park Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue.

FY22 COVID Response – Recreation

- Camps - Recreation staff are planning to offer in-person camps this summer. We also anticipate physical distance requirements will still be in place which would cap the number of participants and reduce our staff to participant ratio to 1 staff to 8 participants (previously 1-15 ratio). Further challenges which may reduce the number of camp participants will be the actual number of rooms/spaces available due to Library relocation and construction, and the availability of MCPS facilities for community use. Part-time staff will be needed to serve residents needing camps.
- Childcare - The Department is anticipating schools to reopen the upcoming school year thus increasing the need for childcare for Takoma Park residents. Our plan is to offer in-person before and aftercare services for Takoma Park and Piney Branch Elementary School families at both the Community Center and Recreation Center. We also anticipate physical distance requirements will still be in place which would cap the number of participants and reduce our staff to participant ratio to 1 staff to 8 participants (previously 1-15 ratio). Further challenges which may reduce the number of child care participants will be the actual number of rooms/spaces available due to Library relocation and construction. Part-time staff will be needed to serve residents that need child care.
- In-Person indoor classes will resume this coming fall. Classes will provide much needed socialization and stress relief from this past year's pandemic for all ages.
- Fall Drop-In Programs - with the additional space needed for aftercare programs and library renovation, typical drop-in locations may be repurposed (Game Room) and or max out at a smaller number (Teen Lounge).
- Recreation will reinstate program fees and generate revenue in FY22. However, we anticipate an increased need for fee scholarships and fee waivers for City residents. Staff is working to make the application process and criteria easier for residents to apply and participate in programs. Revenue projections are expected to be lower than previous years as we anticipate the continuation of physical distancing requirements along with room/facility capacity limitations.