



City of Takoma Park

## City Manager Comments

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### Report of July 15, 2020

#### *Information to Share*

#### COVID-19 Related Information

#### **City Playgrounds to Reopen Thursday, July 16!**

City playgrounds were closed in Takoma Park in March, soon after the Governor declared the pandemic health emergency in Maryland. At the time we closed the playgrounds, we did not know much about how COVID-19 spread, and there was a strong push for people to remain in their homes as much as possible to quell the pandemic.

Now that we know more about how the virus is spread, there is pretty good adherence to wearing masks in this area, and the number of cases in the Washington, D.C. area has gone down, I have issued the order to open up the City's playgrounds, beginning tomorrow.

We want families with children to have access to our wonderful playgrounds and believe that children can play and enjoy themselves, if adults take precautions with and for their children.

To be clear, we are unable to clean or sanitize the playground equipment. We ask that all parents, guardians, babysitters, daycare providers and older children strictly read and follow these guidelines:

- Because the playgrounds will not have access to soap, water or hand sanitizer, please bring it with you and/or wash before and after visiting the playground areas.
- If you are sick or think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, please stay at home.
- Practice social distancing (at least 6 ft. apart). Please help monitor the playground areas. If there are too many children playing to keep a safe distance, come back another time.
- Wear a mask. All adults and children over 2 years old should wear masks. This helps keep others safe and it discourages putting mouths on playground equipment.

Due to greater health risks, we cannot open basketball courts yet, nor can we turn on water fountains. Please bring your own drinking water.

We have learned that being outside is generally safer than being inside with others outside of our family members. And, we all know that play and exercise is good for us. So, I hope we will be able to adhere to the CDC guidelines and allow the playgrounds to stay open to use. If there is a problem with overcrowding or other activities that cause unsafe situations, we will close the playgrounds again until the health risk is reduced.

Enjoy! And please, send me photos of your children playing while wearing masks and keeping a safe distance. I am sure I will be able to see the smiles through the masks!

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### **Next COVID-19 Testing Being Planned**

Free COVID-19 testing for asymptomatic individuals sponsored by Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services will take place at the Takoma Park Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue tomorrow, July 16, from 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. All 400 appointment slots are filled. If you are signed up, remember not to smoke, eat, drink, or chew gum at least 30 minutes before to ensure the accuracy of your cheek-swab saliva test. When you arrive for testing, enter through the rear entrance of the building where you will be routed through a socially distanced, safe process by DHHS volunteers. Testing results from AdvaGenix Lab are expected within 1-3 business days. We hope to continue to partner with DHHS to schedule regular testing events, as there is a clear need for testing in our City.