



CITY OF MANCHESTER

Joyce Craig
Mayor

Members of the Honorable Board,

As you know, the COVID-19 global pandemic has changed everything about our lives and has continued to create widespread uncertainty, with data changing on a nearly daily basis. As we collect more information and become better prepared to face challenges, we have, and will continue to pivot to best meet the needs of our community.

One week ago today, on June 15th, the Governor let the Stay at Home order expire, easing restrictions on public gatherings and also allowing public pools to open along with “free swim”.

While the number of COVID-19 cases in Manchester has currently plateaued, we have not yet experienced the downward trajectory of cases many other communities in New Hampshire are seeing. So while we’re easing into reopening our community, the City must proceed with caution, always keeping the health and safety of the public and our employees as our top priority. I’ve been working with both the Health Department and the Parks & Recreation Division in reviewing the latest data, and the recent changes in state and federal guidelines and requirements/limitations in opening public aquatic venues in the City. Again, as things change, we learn more and must pivot to best suit the needs of our community.

So with that, I am recommending that the City open Crystal Lake, Dupont Splash Pad, Hunt Pool, and continue with opening the irrigation sprinklers at various parks. Things will be different, social distancing will be required, and universal public health prevention strategies and guidelines must be complied with in order to ensure the safety and health of our community, but our youth and adults will have access to some of our aquatic facilities to cool off during hot summer days.

The total estimated cost is \$71,657, however in working with Sharon Wickens in Finance and Leon LaFreniere in Planning & Community Development, we identified GOFFER funds as well as CDBG monies that the BMA approved for Fun in the Sun that will be reallocated to opening aquatics facilities. I’ve requested a phone poll be done because time is of the essence to hire employees so we can open these facilities as soon as possible. I am respectfully requesting that

the BMA approve opening Crystal Lake, the Dupont Splash Pad, and Hunt Pool and in doing so, agree to cover up to \$26,902 from contingency.

Please note that opening the aquatic facilities is contingent upon hiring staff. Once they are open, the City will continue to monitor local data and changes to state and federal guidelines. It's important to keep in mind that if things take a turn for the worse, and our COVID-19 numbers spike, the City may need to scale back service delivery or even close the aquatic facilities.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce Craig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joyce Craig
Mayor

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE:

I. Current Situation & Ongoing Monitoring

As of June 17th, Manchester represents 27% of statewide cumulative cases of COVID-19 (1,462 cases) while representing only 8.3% of New Hampshire's population. 70% of Manchester's current active COVID-19 cases (204 cases) are attributed to community transmission outside of long term care facilities, which have experienced many institutional outbreak clusters across the State. Moreover, Manchester has not experienced a downward trajectory of documented new cases reported within a 14-day period as recommended in the White House Guidelines to States for Reopening. Since mid-April, cases have remained stable averaging between 15-20 cases per day in Manchester.

While both Manchester hospitals have managed to handle 60% of all hospitalizations in the State for COVID-19, we have successfully "flattened the curve" avoiding the use of an offsite surge facility. The continued pacing of reopening services has been critical to preventing a spike in cases that could exceed capacity of the local health care delivery system. In the month of June, we have experienced an average of 44 positive cases per day being cared for in Manchester hospitals. These facilities have also experienced their own internal outbreak clusters, with the most recent occurrence at the end of May for both hospitals.

In addition, we know that our most vulnerable populations fall into several high risk group categories that include a combination of age, chronic conditions, and immune system deficiencies for the most adverse outcomes from the virus, such as hospitalization or death. Going into the pandemic, Manchester's rate of chronic conditions was higher than most other communities in the State. In addition, we have higher rates of social and economic risk factors. For example, 28% of all of the hospitalizations for COVID-19 in New Hampshire have occurred among Manchester residents, and statewide, 36% of positive cases have occurred in residents who are 60 years of age or older. Throughout many communities, we have also seen a disproportionate percentage of positive cases in Hispanic and Latino residents, and the City of Manchester is the most racially and ethnically diverse community in New Hampshire.

As it pertains to the reopening of recreational destinations during the summer months, it is important to note that although children have experienced a relatively lower rate of documented infection, this could be an artifact of lower testing rates within this age group, in general. Also, with a broader definition of family, grandparents are playing a more active role in children's lives across the City, some even serving as the primary caregiver/guardian. In New Hampshire, it is estimated that over 4000 grandparents are primary caregivers of children. If these children are exposed to COVID-19, they may put primary caregivers who are 60 years of age and older at greater risk for the virus, and ultimately, the potential for adverse outcomes, such as hospitalization. Lastly, we know that a serious illness known as Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) has been linked with COVID-19. To-date, New Hampshire has had one documented case of MIS-C in its second largest city with more than 250 cases documented in the United States.

Given this, taking a measured approach to reopening City services is highly recommended from a public health perspective. This approach should allow for opening city assets, *if* universal public health prevention strategies and NH guidelines are complied with, such as wearing masks, ensuring social/physical distancing, and frequent hand washing/sanitizing. This requires operational enforcement of the guidelines, as well as individual compliance in adhering to the guidelines. Moreover, prevention strategies should be coupled with a maintenance or decrease in pertinent data measures. At any time, our community should scale back service delivery, if warranted, based on public health data measures. This will require close data monitoring over time, including but not limited to:

- **Downward trajectory documented cases over a 14 day period.** *Downward trajectory = fewer than 10 cases per 100,000 population over 14 days.*
- **Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period with stable or increasing test volume.** *Downward trajectory = less than 1% positivity.*
- **Downward trajectory of Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI) or COVID-Like-Illness (CLI) reported over a 14-day period.** *Downward trajectory = comparison of cases between the prior and current 14-day period.*
- **Treat all patients without crisis care in local hospitals.** *Jurisdiction inpatient & ICU beds < 80% full for 7 consecutive days.*

The City of Manchester Health Department has created a daily data update and a weekly data dashboard that is posted publicly on the City of Manchester homepage (www.manchesternh.gov) to assist with monitoring for the data measures that are most readily available. MHD is working with the NH Department of Health and Human Services to gain access to additional data measures to support ongoing surveillance in accordance with the benchmarks listed above. These data have been utilized to inform local decision making and ensure the ongoing health and safety of all Manchester residents as reopening occurs.

II. Specific Public Health Guidance for Recreational Destinations

Reopening City recreation destinations will require operational modifications, as well as the public's cooperation in adhering with universal guidelines such as maintaining social/physical distancing. These guidelines are only effective if they are fully and consistently implemented. The following table provides an overview of the public health guidelines as identified by local, State, and Federal sources that we should adopt locally to ensure the health and safety of the public.

Recreation Destination	Operational Guidelines	Universal Guidelines
Public Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ensure Social/Physical Distancing At All Times</u>: defined as at least 6 feet between patrons in the pool, during activities, and on the pool deck. • <u>Reduce the Bather Load</u>: to allow for social/physical distancing at least 6 feet between patrons both in and out of the pool (see information below). • <u>Assign a Safety Manager</u>: who is on site during all hours of operation to monitor and enforce social distancing and safety guidelines. • <u>Conduct Staff Symptom Checks</u>: Managers shall check-in with staff at the beginning of each shift to ensure worker health and review proper hygienic practices. • <u>Staff Must Wear Cloth Face Coverings</u>: masks need to be worn over their nose and mouth when at work. • <u>Ensure Water Quality</u>: pool sanitizer chemical levels and water chemistry need to be maintained at all times and pumps and filters are fully functioning and in good condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Post Health Education Signage</u>: reminding staff and patrons to stay home while sick, as well as other educational messages regarding washing hands often, covering coughs, wearing masks, and social/physical distancing. • <u>Provide Handwashing Stations</u>: If handwashing is not readily available, provide alcohol based hand sanitizer (of at least 60% alcohol) or sanitizing wipes for staff and patrons. • <u>Encourage Patrons to Wear Face Masks</u>: the use of cloth face masks should be encouraged and signage should be posted requesting patrons use them (a supply should be provided as well). • <u>Older Adults and People of Any Age Who Have Serious Underlying Medical Conditions</u>: are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID19 and should take extra precautions to minimize risk. • <u>Control/Monitor Restrooms</u>: limit occupancy to group restroom facilities or make portable toilets available. • <u>Frequently Clean Restrooms</u>: ensure the soap and towel dispensers/hand drying devices are stocked and/or functional at all times. • <u>Frequently Clean and Sanitize High Touch Surfaces</u>: including door handles, chairs, furniture, and gate latches, etc. • <u>Provide Touch-free Garbage Cans</u>: for disposal of refuse.
Splash Pads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ensure Social/Physical Distancing At All Times</u>: defined as at least 6 feet between patrons using the water elements and surrounding the splash pad. • <u>Limit Occupancy</u>: via reductions in code capacity to allow for social/physical distancing both in and out of the water elements (see information below). • <u>Assign a Safety Manager</u>: who is on site during all hours of operation to monitor and enforce social distancing and safety guidelines. • <u>Conduct Staff Symptom Checks</u>: Managers shall check-in with staff at the beginning of each shift to ensure worker health and review proper 	

	<p>hygienic practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Staff Must Wear Cloth Face Coverings</u>: masks need to be worn over their nose and mouth when at work. • <u>Ensure Water Quality</u>: splash pad sanitizer chemical levels and water chemistry need to be maintained at all times and pumps and filters are fully functioning and in good condition. 	
Lakes (Inland Beaches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ensure Social/Physical Distancing At All Times</u>: defined as at least 6 feet between patrons in the water, during activities, and on the beach. • <u>Limit Occupancy</u>: via reductions in bather load to allow for social/physical distancing both in and out of the water (see information below). • <u>Modify Fixed Seating Areas</u>: picnic tables must be spread out 10 feet apart to maintain social distancing. • <u>Assign a Safety Manager</u>: who is on site during all hours of operation to monitor and enforce social distancing and safety guidelines. • <u>Conduct Staff Symptom Checks</u>: Managers shall check-in with staff at the beginning of each shift to ensure worker health and review proper hygienic practices. • <u>Staff Must Wear Cloth Face Coverings</u>: masks need to be worn over their nose and mouth when at work. • <u>No Group Activities</u>: permitted in the water or on the beach per NH Guidelines. 	

Bather Load Calculations:

Facility	Maximum Bather Load/Occupancy Area/27ft per person	50% Bather Load/Occupancy
<i>Hunt Pool</i>	416^	208^
<i>Dupont Splash Pad</i>	375-473*	183-236*
<i>Crystal Lake Beach</i>	75 spots**	300**
<i>Crystal Lake Water</i>	667***	333***

^ The size and spacing of the deck area might limit the number of people, outside of bather load

* MFD 473/ MHD 11250ft²/30= 375

** Beach 240x75-18000ft²

10x10' per spot, 6 feet between rows and columns=75 Spots; 75x 4 people per spot

***Estimated swimming area 18000ft/27=667 (actual size was undetermined as the ropes/buoys are not out)

NOTE: These calculations are only an estimate based upon other suggested guidance. The actual number of bathers/participants which is manageable to maintain effective social distancing may be different and will likely need to be adjusted

Reference Documents:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/park-administrators.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html>

New Hampshire Guidelines

- <https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt381/files/files/inline-documents/guidance-universal.pdf>
- <https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt381/files/files/inline-documents/guidance-pools.pdf>
- <https://www.covidguidance.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt381/files/files/inline-documents/guidance-state-parks.pdf>

PARKS & RECREATION DIVISION RECOMMENDATION ON OPENING MANCHESTER AQUATICS FACILITIES:

Please note:

- 1) Opening of any of the below locations would require the hiring of an Aquatics Supervisor at approximately \$7,153 for the summer.
- 2) Cost information below assumes that all cleaning/disinfecting will be performed by outside contractor and reimbursed with COVID-19 funds.
- 3) We are assuming opening for Manchester residents only.
- 4) All scenarios contemplate capacity reductions from normal. We are working with the Health Department in order to establish these. They will likely be 25%-50% of normal occupancies and may fluctuate based on crowd behavior.

I. Crystal Lake Beach

Timeline: Upon approval and funding to hire the following positions, it could take *up to four weeks* to recruit, interview, hire and train the individuals.

Staffing: The following seasonal positions would be required. Costs are based on a best-case scenario of operating for *seven weeks*.

- ☐ **2 Rec Aids** (1-2 onsite at any one time) @ \$2,310 each
 - Responsibilities: staff entrance, check IDs (Manchester residents only), keep numbers within Health Dept COVID-19 capacity limits, assist with parking issues
- ☐ **2 Rec Specialist II** (1 onsite at any one time) @ \$3,710 each
 - Responsibilities: act as site supervisor and safety manager, per Health Dept guidance; principal person monitoring safety guidelines and resolving conflicts

Total Seasonal Personnel Cost: \$12,040 covered as follows:

- \$7,420 (the 2 Rec Specialists II are COVID-19 related) will be reimbursed through the GOFERR funds
- \$4,620 will need to be transferred from contingency

Hours of Operation: 8 AM to 8 PM (staffed from 12 PM to 8 PM), seven days per week, through Aug 28, may be extended based on funding and staff availability

Additional Information: Staff report a long history of issues at this location, ranging from interpersonal conflicts to illicit behavior to parking problems that spill over into the neighborhood. This should be a controlled environment. When capacity limits are reached, police presence may be needed.

Recommendation: We recommend opening Crystal Lake Beach, with safety guidelines in place. Consideration may be given to opening sooner without staffing. This may create crowding issues beyond the Department's control.

II. Dupont Splash Pad

Timeline: Upon approval and funding to hire the following positions, it could take *up to four weeks* to prepare the splash pad for use and to recruit, interview, hire and train individuals.

Staffing: The following seasonal positions would be required. Costs are based on a best-case scenario of operating for *seven weeks*.

- ☐ **4 Rec Aids** (2 onsite at any one time) @ \$2,310 each
 - Responsibilities: staff entrance, check IDs (Manchester residents only), ensure safety rules are followed throughout facility
- ☐ **2 Rec Specialist II** (1 onsite at any one time) @ \$3,710 each
 - Responsibilities: act as site supervisor and safety manager, per Health Dept guidance; principal person monitoring safety guidelines and resolving conflicts

Total Seasonal Personnel Cost: \$16,660 covered as follows:

- \$7,420 (the 2 Rec Specialists II are COVID-19 related) will be reimbursed through the GOFERR funds
- \$4,990 or 54% of the remaining costs will be covered with repurposed Fun in the Sun CDBG monies (per June 16 eligibility determination from Planning & Community Development)
- \$4,250 will need to be transferred from contingency

Hours of Operation: 11 AM to 7 PM, seven days per week, through Aug 28, may be extended based on funding and staff availability

Additional Information: When capacity limits are reached, police presence may be needed.

Recommendation: We recommend opening the Splash Pad, with safety guidelines in place.

III. Swimming Pools

Timeline: Upon approval and funding to hire the following positions, it could take *up to six weeks* to prepare a pool for use and to recruit, interview, hire and train individuals.

Staffing: The following seasonal positions would be required to open one pool, Hunt Pool would be the recommendation, for *approximately five weeks*.

- ☐ **2 Head Lifeguard Supervisors** (1 onsite at any one time) @ \$3,250 each
 - Responsibilities: act as site supervisor and safety manager, per Health Dept guidance; principal person monitoring safety guidelines and resolving conflicts
- ☐ **8 Lifeguards** (6 onsite at any one time) @ \$2,838 each
 - Responsibilities: typical lifeguarding duties, plus assist with physical distancing and other safety measures
- ☐ **4 Rec Aids** (2 onsite at any one time) @ \$1,650 each

- Responsibilities: staff entrance, check IDs (Manchester residents only), check bags, keep numbers within Health Dept COVID-19 capacity limits

Total Seasonal Personnel Cost: \$35,804 covered as follows:

- \$2,838 (one Lifeguard is COVID-19 related) will be reimbursed through the GOFERR funds
- \$22,087 or 67% of the remaining costs will be covered with repurposed Fun in the Sun CDBG monies (per June 22 eligibility determination from Planning & Community Development)
- \$10,879 will need to be transferred from contingency

Hours of Operation: 1 PM to 5 PM; 6 PM to 8 PM, seven days per week, through Aug 21

Additional Information: Opening our pools for the year is a long and complicated process that involves extensive cleaning, restarting of utilities, purchasing and adding chemicals, preparing outside grounds, servicing mechanical systems and more. None of this has been done this year because of the decision not to open pools as a result of COVID-19.

It is unlikely we could find enough personnel at this late date to open more than one pool. The more time passes, the harder it will be to find employees. Even if we were to receive direction and staffing to open a pool by late June, it is unlikely we would be able to do so before early August. This would allow for only two to three weeks of swimming.

Swimming pools are difficult locations in which to maintain order, even under normal circumstances. Maintaining social distancing requirements will be more labor-intensive under COVID-19 protocols. When capacity limits are reached, police presence may be needed.

Recommendation: We do not recommend opening any swimming pools.

IV. Irrigation Sprinklers

On a couple of hot days last week, sprinklers were turned on at Central Practice Field (by Beech Street School/JFK) and Piscataquog River Park Baseball Field. Water sprayed from varying irrigation points on the fields so kids could run through and cool off.

We are looking to continue this in the future and expand the number of locations.