



## News release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 13, 2020

# Local Governments in the interior Okanagan taking coordinated approach to phased reopening

Following the recent unveiling of the [BC's Restart Plan](#) outlining the phased reopening strategy for British Columbia, municipalities and districts across the interior Okanagan have been working closely to determine how it applies to local and regional programs, services and indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.

In addition to parks, beaches and sports fields which are currently open for casual use, the following spaces will reopen in the coming weeks:

- skate parks
- disc golf fields
- BMX and bike parks
- tennis courts
- pickleball courts

More information on specific dates of reopening will be provided in the near future by each respective municipality.

Physical distancing measures remain in place and anyone exhibiting symptoms are asked to remain home and not use public facilities. Adaptations will be in place to allow for these spaces to open and each municipality may have varied approaches to the modifications of these spaces. More detailed information will be available through each local government.

Indoor recreation facilities will remain closed at this time and local government representatives are working with provincial agencies to determine when and how it will be safe to progressively reopen recreation centres and arenas.

Also remaining closed for now are playgrounds, waterparks, basketball and volleyball courts, and outdoor fitness equipment, but are under consideration for reopening at a later date if sufficient measures can be implemented to provide for safety.

For more information regarding the phased reopening of programs and facilities in your area, please visit your local government website.

-30-

**City of Kelowna:**

"As we navigate reopening plans, it's encouraging to be part of a coordinated and thoughtful approach that sees the region progressing at the same pace where possible." says Jim Gabriel, Division Director of Active Living & Culture, City of Kelowna. "The reopening process is continuing to evolve through collaborations with provincial agencies and will proceed as long as citizens continue to physical distance and follow the guidance of our Provincial Health Officer."

**District of Lake Country:**

"Recreation and parks engage people and build social cohesion, generating healthy, inclusive communities," said Shaun Lesowski, Parks Superintendent, District of Lake Country. "Returning recreation and parks services for safe public use is a priority."

**City of West Kelowna:**

"We're excited to be entering this new phase and to begin staging the re-opening of our outdoor recreation facilities for casual use. We will provide more information on the opening date and the enhanced protocols at our amenities in the days ahead," Stacey Harding, Parks and Fleet Operations Manager.

**Westbank First Nation:**

"We encourage people to get out on the land and participate in the activities they enjoy," says Maria Reed, Director of Community Services, Westbank First Nation. "During this time, it is important to look after your mental and physical health, while still maintaining good hand hygiene and social distancing."

**District of Peachland:**

"Never before has it been so clear that parks and recreation are essential services that are most needed in times of stress and uncertainty," says Cheryl Wiebe, Director of Community Services, District of Peachland, "our coordinated regional approach has allowed us to collaborate and give thoughtful consideration to our reopening plans following the guidelines of the Provincial Health Officer."

**District of Summerland:**

"The District of Summerland recognizes the importance of ensuring our residents have access to green spaces as well as opportunities to keep active and healthy over the coming months," says Lori Mullin, Recreation Manager, District of Summerland. "We are looking forward to implementing the reactivation of parks and recreation as part of BC's Restart Plan through a coordinated approach across the Okanagan region."

**City of Penticton:**

"Penticton is moving ahead with a phased approach to re-opening of our outdoor recreational facilities and amenities. The City has been working with the BCRPA, Sports BC and various provincial organizations to ensure a safe return to these activities," says Bregje Kozak, Director of Recreation and Facilities, City of Penticton. "While we are looking forward to offering these amenities to our community, folks should remain cautious and be reminded to practice safe social distancing, wash or sanitize your hands frequently, avoid sharing sports equipment and to continue following the guidance of our Provincial Health Officer."

For more information, contact:

**City of Kelowna**

Tom Wilson  
Communications Manager  
250-469-8663

**District of Lake Country Contact**

Shaun Lesowski  
Parks Superintendent  
250-766-5650

**City of West Kelowna Contact**

Stacey Harding  
Parks and Fleet Operations Manager  
778-797-8849

**Westbank First Nation Contact**

Mandi Carroll  
Communications and Economic Development Manager  
250-769-4999

**District of Peachland Contact**

Cheryl Wiebe  
Director of Community Services  
250-767-2133

**District of Summerland Contact**

Lori Mullin  
Recreation Manager  
250-494-0447

**City of Penticton Contact**

Philip Cooper

Communications Manager  
250-490-2583

**Regional District of Central Okanagan Contact**  
Murray Kopp  
Parks Services Director  
250-469-6232