

## **Press Release: NCRPA Recommendations for Re-Opening Local Parks in North Carolina**

**Contact:** NC Recreation & Park Association  
883 Washington St, Raleigh, NC 27605  
919-832-5868 | [Media@ncrpa.net](mailto:Media@ncrpa.net)

**(Raleigh, NC, 5/4/20)** During the Stay at Home Order issued by Governor Cooper, most open spaces, greenways, and trails in local parks have remained open to allow North Carolina's citizens to enjoy the mental, emotional, and physical health benefits of being outside. Local Governments have supported the state and national message of maintaining physical distancing by users through online messaging and signage.

As we approach the summer months, local parks and recreation agencies are the primary operators of facilities and programs such as, but not limited to, pools and splash pads, lakes and marinas, community centers, playgrounds, organized athletics, instructional programs and day camps. During the re-opening phases, local park and recreation agencies and citizens should continue following guidelines from the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS).

**NCRPA encourages all local park and recreation agencies to follow the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) Path to Recovery Plan which includes Specific Guidance for Common Park and Recreation Spaces, Facilities and Programs.** Re-opening should proceed when each local government agency has the funding available to hire staff and the ability to secure necessary cleaning and personal protection equipment and operate facilities and programs in a safe manner. Local governments ultimately must determine the re-opening timeline which is best for the safety and well-being of their community.

Park and recreation professionals should recognize that phased reopening plans will not be an immediate return to normal operations, rather, they should include additional mitigation measures to maintain states of low to no community transmission. NCRPA recommends the following resources be consulted frequently while preparing and evaluating reopening plans as new information and guidelines are added.

### **Recommended Resources:**

#### **NRPA Path to Recovery:**

<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/coronavirus-disease-2019/path-to-recovery/>

#### **NRPA Specific Guidance for Common Park and Recreation Spaces, Facilities and Programs**

<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/coronavirus-disease-2019/path-to-recovery/specific-guidance-for-common-park-and-recreation-spaces-facilities-and-programs/>

**Governor Cooper's Phased Reopening Plan for NC:**

<https://www.nc.gov/covid-19/staying-ahead-curve#lifting-restrictions>

**CDC - Parks and Recreational Facilities:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/index.html>

**CDC - Gatherings and Community Events**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>

**About the North Carolina Recreation & Park Association:** Founded in 1944, the North Carolina Recreation & Park Association (NCRPA) is the premier nonprofit education and advocacy organization, dedicated to the advancement of the park, recreation and leisure professions in our state. NCRPA empowers park and recreation professionals and citizen board members through educational opportunities that enhance their ability to change lives and impact communities on a daily basis for the citizens of North Carolina. For an overview of the programs and services offered by the organization, visit <http://www.ncrpa.net>.