



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30 Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Christy Poirier, Manager, Communications & Grants

TELEPHONE: 250-550-3539

COVID-19 update: City reviewing *BC's Restart Plan* for recreation opportunities

The City of Vernon is reviewing *BC's Restart Plan* to help guide decisions around the timing for the reopening of outdoor recreation spaces and Greater Vernon Recreation Services facilities and programs.

During Wednesday's release of the four-phase approach, Premier Horgan emphasized steps to reopen facilities and activities across the province will be slow and deliberate, and group gatherings of 50 people or more will not be allowed for the foreseeable future.

Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC's Provincial Health Officer, reiterated we must continue to practice physical distancing measures to protect our communities and healthcare system, so we don't unravel the work we've done to contain the spread of COVID-19 over the last several weeks.

At this time, Recreation Services is working closely with the BC Recreation & Parks Association (BCRPA) on a framework for reintroducing activity, programs and recreation to our citizens in a way that will allow for participation while meeting the criteria that Dr. Henry has outlined.

"We will be working with the BCRPA to develop enhanced protocols that align with Public Health and Safety Guidelines, including but not limited to: limiting numbers to reduce contacts, physical distancing, improved hygiene, and increased cleaning of touch points," said Doug Ross, Director, Recreation Services.

The BCRPA will also be working closely with VIA Sport, which has been tasked by the Province of B.C. to provide direction and guidelines for the reopening of sport in the Province. Via Sport will be working with Provincial Sport Organizations (PSO) to create those guidelines and plans for how to restart each of the sports in a safe way. The PSO's will in turn work with the Local Sport Organizations on how to implement those plans in our community.

"By working with these organizations, the City of Vernon will be able to better navigate the decisions that will need to be made on how and when to reopen facilities," said Ross. "Initially, we are going to be focusing on what outdoor activities and summer camps we can offer. However, it will be some time before indoor facilities are reopened."