

# Agenda Report

May 11, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** City Manager  
**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF PLANS RELATED TO REOPENING ROSE BOWL LOOP AND OTHER RECREATIONAL AREAS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The following is for information only, no City Council action is required.

**BACKGROUND:**

In response to COVID-19 and the City's desire to maintain physical distancing, City trails, the Rose Bowl Loop and various amenities within parks (e.g. play and fitness equipment; tennis, pickle ball and basketball courts; disc golf; archery range; casting pond; and the Alice Frost Kennedy dog park) were closed. In March, the City Manager administratively ordered these closures as a way to help reduce the risk of the spread of the disease.

On May 4<sup>th</sup> Governor Newsom announced that California would begin the transition to Phase II of reopening the state, therefore now is an appropriate time to review these recreational area closures and consider reopening. While it still is not entirely safe to reopen these or any facilities, there is a lower risk of disease transmission at recreational areas which allow for social distancing and do not have "high touch" points. To this end, it is recommended that the City Council provide direction to staff on reopening the Rose Bowl Loop and trails. The opening of other park amenities will continually be reviewed and analyzed as risk factors decrease.

**Hiking Trails in the Arroyo Seco**

The City's hiking trails within the Arroyo Seco are very popular form of recreation. Staff looked at two options for the hiking trails.

**Open the hiking trails:** With proper safety precautions, trails throughout the Arroyo can reopen. The City will follow and enforce the Los Angeles County Department of

*Public Health Reopening Protocol for Use of Public Trails* (Please see Attachment A) which requires hikers adhere to the following guidance:

- Practice and maintain a physical distance from other hikers of at least six feet;
- All hikers over age of two must wear a face covering at trailheads, parking lots and destination points along the trail;
- Do not gather in groups – only allowed to be with members of your household;
- Communicate when passing others – alert trail users of your presence and step aside to let others pass; and
- Pack out trash – use leave-no-trace principles to protect other trail users, park staff and wildlife.

Signage with the above information will be posted at all trailheads, trail parking lots and other points to remind hikers to practice the safety measures. To further help ensure hikers adhere to the guidance, the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Department will place staff at strategic locations to monitor activity and, when necessary remind park patrons of the above listed guidance. If the trails become too crowded they will be subject to closure.

**Keep the hiking trails closed:** Los Angeles County opened its hiking trails this weekend. The Council could decide to keep Pasadena's closed which would require additional enforcement because hikers may assume all trails in the County are open. Hiking trails provide opportunities for physical exercise and nature appreciation – opportunities that have not be available for quite some time.

### Rose Bowl Loop

With an average of nearly 2,800 visitors a day, the Rose Bowl Loop is one of the most popular recreation destinations in Southern California. Athletes of all ages and abilities enjoy walking, jogging, running, or cycling around the Loop. To make a thoughtful recommendation regarding the possible reopening of the Loop, staff reviewed a number of reopening scenarios. For all options staff considered if the scenarios could lower the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The options staff reviewed are:

- Keep the Loop closed;
- Reopen the Loop and with no operating modifications;
- Reopen the Loop with no operating modifications and restrict parking at the Rose Bowl;
- Reopen the Loop with one-way traffic pattern for vehicles; and
- Reopen the Loop and close the Loop to vehicular traffic.

**Keep the Loop closed:** As noted previously, the Loop is one of the biggest recreational venues in Southern California. Keeping an icon of this caliber closed would not be recommended, particularly when Brookside Golf Course recently reopened. Many Pasadena residents and visitors use the Loop for daily physical activity and are anxious to return to their exercise routines.

**Reopen Loop and with no operating modifications:** Not recommended due to the popularity of the venue and the inability to provide for physical distancing. This would put Loop visitors and staff at a higher risk of infection.

**Reopen the Loop with no operating modifications and restrict parking at the Rose Bowl:** The goal of this scenario is to reduce the number of people using the Loop. With little to no nearby parking, potential users might leave and not use the Loop. An unintended consequence, however, would likely be an increase in parking in the nearby neighborhoods.

**Reopen with one-way traffic pattern for vehicles:** The idea here would be to eliminate one to two lanes of vehicular traffic and expand the area available for those exercising. This scenario requires new traffic striping, signage and an outreach campaign to inform drivers of the changed traffic pattern. This change would be confusing for drivers and pedestrians and could potentially lead to increased traffic collisions.

**Reopen the Loop and close the Loop to vehicular traffic:** This option would be similar to the one employed for enterprise events at the Rose Bowl. This would allow Loop users to spread out and maintain physical distancing. It will require the closure of all parking lots, except B, D and I. Access to the golf course (Lot D) and the COVID testing site at Lot B would be maintained and east/west traffic movement would take place on Seco St. and Washington Blvd.

Loop visitors would only be allowed to park in Lot I. To encourage visitors to park, exercise and leave the area in a timely fashion, without congregating, Lot I would have a 90-minute parking limitation. The Department of Transportation would strictly enforce the parking time limit. For a map and further details of the traffic pattern, please see Attachment B.

Lot I would be staffed 5:30 AM - 8:00 PM which encompasses the Loop's heaviest use. During these hours, staff would monitor attendance at the loop and remind and encourage physical distancing when necessary. Similar to the hiking trails, if at any time the volume of people prevents the ability to maintain physical distancing, the Loop would be closed.

Staff and visitors would wear face coverings at high-density areas; once social distancing is established along the route of the Loop, those who are exercising could remove their mask. Similar to the trails, the following would be required at the Loop:

- Practice and maintain a physical distance from other Loop users of at least six feet;
- All attendees over age of two must wear a face covering at parking lots and other high density points along the Loop;
- Do not gather in groups – only allowed to be with members of your household;
- Communicate when passing others – alert Loop users of your presence and step aside to let others pass; and
- Pack out trash – use leave-no-trace principles to protect other Loop users and staff.

Rose Bowl staff would contact the peloton group that cycles at the Rose Bowl to remind them that due to physical distancing requirements, no organized activities will be allowed at the Loop. Proper signage and changeable message signs would also be deployed at the Loop to remind all visitors of the required behaviors. Additionally, approximately ten City staff members would be placed along the Loop 5:30 AM – 8:00 PM as a further reminder of the need to practice physical distancing.

One month of operating the Loop in this manner has an estimated cost of \$43,000-\$65,000 which includes equipment rental, parking enforcement and contract staff. City staff costs are not included in this total as they would come from the pool of idle staff.

**COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

This action is consistent with the City Council's goals to support and promote the quality of life and the local economy and ensure public safety.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The cost to reopen the Loop for recreation and close it to vehicular traffic has a monthly cost of \$43,000-\$65,000, which includes equipment rental, parking enforcement and contract staff. Rose Bowl staff is reviewing contractual items to determine if they can be performed by City staff. If so the monthly cost will be at the low end of \$43,000. City staff costs are not included in this total as they would come from the pool of idle staff.

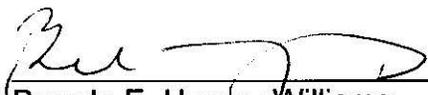
Respectfully submitted,



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City Manager

Prepared by:



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