

## Aurora eases some restrictions on park use

As the COVID-19 curve begins to show some early signs of flattening, some restrictions put in place in response to the pandemic have begun to ease.

Following the Province's decision to allow garden centres, landscape companies, and other businesses with the space for curbside pickup to begin working with customers again, the Town of Aurora has eased some restrictions around the use of park spaces.

On Thursday, the Town announced a return to 'limited' use of public open spaces across Aurora, with the exceptions of play structures and playgrounds, swings, washrooms, benches, picnic tables, shelters and the off-leash dog park.

'By allowing our residents to use our open park spaces, we are providing much-needed access to families of the same household to spend time outdoors,' said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. 'This will aid in the health and wellbeing of our community and give residents a chance to flatten the COVID-19 curve and practice safe physical distancing, washing our hands often and following the provincial orders.'

'Aurora will fully reopen its parks and facilities once it is safe to do so. Our number one priority is the safety of our residents, visitors and community.'

As Provincial Orders are still in effect, the ban on organized public events, gatherings of more than five people (inclusive of gatherings on private property, but excluding family members who reside at the same address) physical distancing of at least two metres for non-household members during all outdoor activities, and entry to and use of certain outdoor recreational amenities still stand.

Examples of activities permitted once again in parks by the Town include playing catch or kicking a soccer ball, flying a kite, exercising and stretching on a yoga mat, but not in a class, and letting young children run around these green spaces.

Open spaces owned by local school boards and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, including Sheppard's Bush, remain closed.

**By Brock Weir**