



Doug McCorkle
1018 Vermont Ct.
Ames, IA 50014

May 19, 2020

Ames Mayor and City Council Members
515 Clark Avenue
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Ames Mayor and City Council members:

I want to provide input regarding the decisions and processes that are currently being considered for beginning to reopen Parks and Recreation Facilities especially the aquatics facilities. First, I would recommend treating Municipal pool and Furman pool in two different categories for reopening. Each facility is unique and has very different constraints to consider when reopening. For example, Municipal pool has been maintained at a minimum viable state during the current closure. It is my understanding that the facility can be brought back online with minimal cost for programed use. Second, I believe it is important to differentiate two distinct functions of the aquatics facilities and probably most any Parks and Recreation facilities when considering reopening plans. The first distinction is a facility being opened and used for programed use. This distinction would be for activities that are structured, guided/coached, and generally organized. As an example, for aquatics facilities, this would be all activities EXCEPT for open swim. The second distinction is a facility being opened and used for general public use. In regard to the first distinction, when programed activities are operated there is significant control and ability to implement safety policies to ensure the health and well-being of the participants. In the case of the aquatics facilities there are organizations like USA Swimming and US Masters Swimming that provide guidance for safe and healthy operation of lap swimming and competitive swimming training for swim clubs like the ACAC club. In regard to the second distinction, there is far less control over participants and requires far more cost to implement safety and health procedures to insure the health and well-being of the participants.

When considering the options and methods for opening facilities and especially the Municipal Pool I think taking into account and phasing in the use of facilities based on the broad range of groups using the facilities should be considered. Water fitness provides a unique ability to enable people to have a better quality of life that cannot walk, bike, or run for exercise. While many of the parks are open and allow people to access space to still maintain a certain level of mental health and physical health those that rely on water and non-impact exercise have lost that ability to keep their bodies and minds in a healthy state. The city is offering, not closing, opportunities in city parks to play basketball, tennis, running trails, bike trails, and green space. The city is also offering opportunities for people to continue to access WIFI through public spaces and have minimal access to the library. Right now, those that rely on access to aquatics facilities for their fitness and well-being are singled out.

Municipal pool does offer, from my understanding, the least expensive option to provide our community access to aquatics facilities for programmed use in a safe and healthy manner. It is my request that the City Council consider reopening Municipal pool when allowable by the governor with the Parks and Recreation staff serving to provide oversight of the requests for programmed use of the facilities.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DMC', written in a cursive style.

Doug McCorkle

cc: David Martin