



I. Background on Outdoor Activity

The San Antonio and Bexar County joint [Stay Home, Work Safe Orders](#) defined outdoor activity as: activity in an outdoor open space, such as walking, biking, hiking, or running, as long as individuals comply with social distancing requirements of six feet. With all schools, many employers, and most retail stores closed, more children, residents and families are spending time outdoors and at parks. And for some households, it could be safer to be outside together than inside the housing unit. New York is actually piloting a project to close some streets to cars and make them safer and accessible to residents.¹ This gives people room to practice six-foot social distancing rules as they pick up groceries, get physical activity, and grab some fresh air amid the coronavirus lockdown. But some cities and states are closing parks, playgrounds, restroom facilities and community centers amid virus fears. These restrictions worsen existing inequities in access to green and open spaces during a time that is more important than ever.²

II. Proposal

As more people visit parks and trails, it gets harder to navigate the six-foot rule and especially if only 42% of residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park, which likely increases driving to bigger parks like Hardberger and Brackenridge. Overcrowding in public spaces is a serious issue, but limiting public open spaces is likely not the answer. The PHAC proposes the following recommendations to help people decrease their risk of transmission to others while engaged in outdoor activities.

Enforcement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure law enforcement and park personnel understand six feet of separation is only necessary between people who do not share a household. Ask residents if they live together before enforcing the order.³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarify to law enforcement that outdoor activity is not restricted to “moving” and outdoor recreational activities are permissible if they are limited to household groups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor and limit vehicular traffic at select parks to alleviate overcrowding (% capacity like state parks).⁴
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dallas Park rangers hold signs reminding visitors to maintain boundaries and will remain along the trail every day until sundown during the order. The city’s Code Enforcement and Parking Enforcement departments, and the Dallas Marshal’s Office, will help.⁴ City of Plano parks and recreation workers and library staffers are being deployed to major city parks, as well as neighborhood parks on a rotating basis, to serve as “friendly monitors.”⁵
Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage community leaders to promote social distancing with culturally appropriate messages. Grassroots efforts are more effective in gaining support among neighbors than law enforcement or code compliance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colorado Springs initiative “Get Out and Spread Out” to help locals find alternatives to crowded open spaces.⁶ SATX social ride could do videos for cyclists.
Maintenance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide cleaning and sanitization of restrooms and water fountains multiple times a day.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain hand soap supply in restrooms.

III. Recommendation

The PHAC strongly recommends that parks, trails and open spaces can continue to be used in a safe manner with additional enforcement support and maintenance efforts. Physical activity and recreation are essential to health and well-being to reduce stress and improve mental health during the current crisis. The theme of family and social connectedness is especially important in Latino neighborhoods and we need to remain sensitive to how households of all race/ethnicities, ages, and sizes navigate public space. Also, preserving and expanding access to safe outdoor space will, in the long run, increase public tolerance and cooperation for these social distancing measures.

	Publication	Article
1	Boston Globe	Cuomo says NYC may close some streets to cars, open them to pedestrians amid coronavirus pandemic
2	Salud America	The State of Latino Housing, Transportation, and Green Space: A Research Review
3	City of San Antonio	COVID-19 Updates [note correction below]
4	Dallas News	Dallas warns it could close all parks, trails if people don't follow social-distancing rules
5	Dallas News	Plano to enforce 'social distancing' in city parks amid coronavirus concerns
6	KOAA Covering Colorado	Get out and spread out: A COVID-19 resource to prevent open space overcrowding



COVID-19
SOCIAL DISTANCING IN PUBLIC PARKS & TRAILS
 DISTANCIAMIENTO SOCIAL EN PARQUES PÚBLICOS Y SENDEROS

- Do not use parks, trails, or amenities if you are exhibiting symptoms.
No use parques, senderos o servicios si presenta síntomas.
- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to and during use of parks or trails.
 Wash hands, carry hand sanitizer, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
Siga las pautas del CDC sobre higiene personal antes y durante el uso de parques o senderos. Lávese las manos, lleve desinfectante para manos, cúbrase la boca y la nariz al toser o estornudar.
- Follow CDC guidance on the recommended size of social gatherings.
Siga la guía del CDC sobre el tamaño recomendado de las reuniones sociales.
- Observe CDC's recommended social distancing of 6' from other persons at all times.
Observe el distanciamiento social recomendado por el CDC de 6' de otras personas en todo momento.
- To observe social distancing while on trails, warn other users of your presence and step aside to let others pass.
Para observar el distanciamiento social en los senderos, advertir a otros usuarios de tu presencia y hazte a un lado para que otros pasen.

Questions about COVID-19? Please visit www.sanantonio.gov/covid19 or call 311.
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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
 PARKS & RECREATION
 INRPA National Recreation and Park Association
 Mantén siempre distancia a great pace