



# THE CITY OF ERIE

JOSEPH V. SCHEMBER, MAYOR

Media Release – For Immediate Distribution

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## **City of Erie Closes All Park Facilities**

ERIE, PA (April 06, 2020) – In an updated response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and with guidance from the Erie County Department of Health, the City of Erie has decided to close all City tennis courts.

The U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) issued a statement on Friday, “Although there are no specific studies on tennis and COVID-19, medical advisors believe there is the possibility that the virus responsible for COVID-19 could be transmitted through common sharing and handling of tennis balls, gate handles, benches, net posts and even court surfaces.”

To date, the following City facilities are all closed:

- Basketball courts – the rims were removed on Friday, April 3
- Tennis courts – the nets have been removed and the gates zip tied
- Dog parks (residents can still walk their dogs, but the gates are closed to vehicles)
- Playground equipment
- Skate park
- Picnic areas
- Group exercise in parks

“We continue to receive reports of large groups of residents gathering in our parks playing recreational sports, particularly tennis and basketball.” said Mayor Joe Schember. “Experts are predicting that this week will be one of the biggest spikes in COVID-19 cases. Seven new cases were reported in Erie County today. We must do everything we can to flatten the curve by staying at home.”

In the meantime, we encourage everyone to stay active and healthy with at-home exercise or by walking, hiking, biking, or running in City parks which is still permitted.

We strongly urge residents to maintain six feet of distance between each other and to avoid touching objects and surfaces (handrails, water fountains, crosswalk buttons) with your bare hands. We know that people can be contagious, but have no symptoms. It is vital for everyone to wear a mask or scarf over their mouth and nose when it is necessary to go out.

The press release will be available on the City of Erie’s website at [cityof.erie.pa.us](http://cityof.erie.pa.us).