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City Provides Coronado and Wells Park Update

Will close one park, moves forward on making another a reality

ALBUQUERQUE – After taking the past month to evaluate and lay out next steps, the City is announcing that Coronado Park will close in August. The City will continue to make multiple offers for services and housing options to everyone using the park. In addition to the standard resource offerings, the City will make limited property storage available to folks who are interested. The Clean City Program will also step up patrols in the Wells Park area to assist with the closure.

The park has been the centralized drop off and pick up site for the West Side Emergency Shelter for nearly a decade. During Covid times and in light of shifts related to legal rulings regarding encampments, the city had relaxed some park regulations. However, increasingly dangerous conditions, like narcotics trafficking and usage, combined with prolonged damage to the park's irrigation and vegetation that have created safety concerns, were the leading factors in the City's decision. As the City works to close Coronado in a safe and timely manner, it will continue to consider next steps which may range from permanent closure, eventual re-opening as a park, or repurposing for piloting a safe outdoor space program for the unsheltered. Until an appropriate next use decision is reached, the park will remain closed and transportation will shift to centralized, multi-site routing for pick up and drop off for those in need of shelter and services

Although one park is closing, another one will open to provide needed green space and recreation for the greater Wells Park community. The City has fully funded and is now in the final design stages to transform the Walker Property, adjacent to the Wells Park community center, into a brand-new, expansive park for the community to enjoy. Preliminary work on the property will begin later this year and the project will be fully underway next year. Initial renderings feature an iconic 'unique destination' playground and community safety informed design.

In his [State of the City](#), Mayor Keller announced that City departments were reevaluating their policies in regards to encampments to address the situation in Albuquerque. Coronado Park has been the focal point for the city's struggle with the national homelessness crisis. Future options for the park may also depend on various City Council actions regarding the zoning of the property and evaluation of potential alternative uses for the property.

“The status quo will not stand,” **said Mayor Tim Keller**. “This remains a complex issue, and while we work to determine what’s next for Coronado, we’ll keep stepping up to get folks connected to the right services and resources.”

“Homelessness at Coronado has been a challenge for nearly a decade, but we have to draw a line and simply stop a situation that is obviously unacceptable, regardless of what we do next,” **noted CAO Lawrence Rael**.

The current state of Coronado Park is a result of the pandemic, when CDC guidance was to not move encampments in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The City will continue offering services to the unhoused, while doubling down to assert the rules where there are real safety issues and in places where there is youth programming.

“The City is committed to finding solutions that work for people who are unhoused but also keep our neighborhoods safe,” **said Carol Pierce, Director of Family and Community Services**. “The administration has made sure that critical resources like housing vouchers and shelter beds are more available than they were in the past. Now it’s time to move forward so that we can reach safe, humane outcomes for our city.”

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