



Staff Report

Date: November 10, 2022

To: Mayor Kuhl and Council Members

From: Richard Simonitch, Public Works Director/Town Engineer
Gretchen Castets, Recreation Manager

Subject: Town Council Discussion Regarding Potential Addition of Pickleball on Existing Tennis/Padel Ball Facility in Ross.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Town Council review the information provided related to the logistics and cost of different options for adding pickleball to the existing Ross Tennis/Padel Ball facility and provide direction to the Town Manager on how to proceed including the additional appropriation of funds, if necessary, from the Facility and Equipment fund.

Background and discussion:

The Ross Town Tennis/Padel Ball facility is located in Frederick Allen Park and comprised of two tennis courts and one padel ball court. These courts are limited to Ross residents and keys are sold through the recreation department for \$200 for a 2-year period. The courts are utilized for Ross Recreation tennis classes (youth and adult) and all courts are on a first come, first served basis. There is weekly maintenance performed on the courts and they are open sunrise to sunset. The courts are not on a reservation system therefore it is not possible to know the exact amount of usage per day/week. The number of keys that have been sold since the locks were re-keyed in October 2021, is approximately 150, which gives an idea of how many residents have access to the courts. Although the exact usage of the courts is unknown, Town staff and residents that frequently walk by the courts have provided feedback that the padel court is under-utilized.

At the request of Councilmember McMillan and Mayor Pro Tempore Brekhus, staff has explored the options, costs and logistics of adding pickleball lines to either one of the tennis courts or the padle ball court.

The popularity of pickleball has increased dramatically across the country and is a very social game. To paraphrase a local bay area newspaper article, pickleball is similar to tennis but with courts about a quarter of the size, smaller rackets, lighter balls and shorter games. Pickleball is easier to learn than tennis, allowing people of all skill levels and ages to play together.

The four options that staff has researched are as follows:

1. Maintain the status quo. Residents interested in playing pickleball on the Town's courts can purchase a set of temporary markers for approximately \$150 - \$200 from a retailer and place them on the padel ball court whenever they wish to play the sport. After the game finishes, the players would pick up their markers. Play would be limited to the existing padel ball court because the existing net can also be used for pickleball.
2. Implement a pilot program by painting additional lines (in a different color) onto one of the existing courts to create a temporary multi-use court. Users of this multi-use court could either play pickleball or tennis/padel ball. "Rolling" nets stored on edges of the courts would be set in place by the players. After a period of time the Town could evaluate users' experience with the multi-use court and decide to make it permanent or not.
3. Permanently convert the padel ball court into one pickleball court.
4. Permanently convert one tennis court into pickleball courts. One tennis court can be re-striped to create up to four pickleball courts.

While some Ross residents have expressed interest in adding pickle ball lines to either the tennis or padel ball courts, there are also avid tennis players who will likely oppose the idea of more lines being added to tennis courts. It could also draw more people to the courts, limiting the availability of the courts for playing tennis. Also, the sound of a ball hitting a pickleball paddle is louder than that of a tennis racket and the noise could impact the nearby residents.

Fiscal, resource and timeline impacts

Option 1 (maintain status quo and allow residents to use their own pickleball temporary markers on the padel ball court) No cost to Town.

Option 2 (implement a pilot program for a multi-use court on the existing padel ball court or tennis court) Estimated cost is approximately \$2,000 to paint additional lines for each pickleball court with a maximum of approximately \$8,000 to paint lines for four pickleball courts and to purchase the rolling nets needed.

Option 3 (permanently convert the padel ball court into one pickleball court) Estimated cost is about \$1,800 assuming the net can be used for pickleball.

Option 4 (permanently convert one tennis court into 1-4 pickleball court(s)) estimated cost is about \$2,000 per pickleball court (\$8k if four pickleball courts are painted) including a net for each pickleball court.

The adopted FYE23 budget does not include funding for adding pickleball play to the Town's tennis/padel ball facility. If the Town Council directs staff to implement Options 2,3, or 4 then it is necessary for the Town Council to appropriate funding up to \$8,000 from the Facilities & Equipment Fund to cover the associated costs.

Alternative actions:

The alternative action would be to leave the courts as they are now and not make any modifications.

Environmental review (if applicable)

The project is categorically exempt under the following Sections:
CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1 – Existing Facilities.

Attachments

- Examples of possible pickleball court configurations

