

**DATE:** May 19, 2022

**TO:** Tennis Advisory Board

**FROM:** Stephanie Lum, Senior Recreation Coordinator  
Colin James, Recreation Supervisor  
Kristine Crosby, Recreation Manager

**SUBJECT:** **Community Survey Input Results Related to Pickleball and Recommended Pilot Program**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Review and forward staff's recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding a pilot program to add dual striping of pickleball courts on a select number of tennis courts:

- Dual striping a total of six pickleball courts on Court Nos. 3 and 4 at Rengstorff Park Tennis Courts;
- Implement designated times of play for each sport on dual striped Court Nos. 3 and 4— 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday for Pickleball play only; Monday through Friday 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for tennis play only; and
- Staff to monitor this pilot program for one year following implementation and return to the Tennis Advisory Board with findings in fall 2023.

**BACKGROUND**

Pickleball is a racket sport similar to tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. It is played on a small court the size of 20' by 44', using wood paddles, shortened net, and a hard plastic Wiffle ball. Pickleball is dubbed the "fastest-growing sport in America" and has grown in popularity in recent years with all age groups. This social sport can be played with two to four players with often quick rounds allowing multiple people to play in a short period.

In 2015, the Community Services Department's Recreation Division worked with a volunteer pickleball advocate to launch a pickleball program marketed through the Senior Center. The program was launched using the asphalt pad located adjacent to the ball wall area of Rengstorff Park. This program utilized one temporary court and met once a week. Due to the popularity of

the program, the use expanded to add temporary taped lines to multiple tennis courts at Rengstorff Park. Volunteer instructors brought the necessary equipment to offer the program, including nets, paddles, balls, and tape to create temporary boundary lines. Once the program began using the tennis courts, staff received complaints from tennis players with regards to noise, residue from the tape on the courts, and court time being taken away for this program. During this time, the pickleball group requested the installation of permanent pickleball “blended lines” on two of the eight tennis courts at Rengstorff Park for designated pickleball-only play during off-peak hours. At the time, staff received input from Mountain View Tennis Club, Cuesta Tennis operator, and the Tennis Advisory Board. Mountain View Tennis Club was not supportive of blended lines due to additional noise and distraction of the additional lines on the court. However, the Tennis Advisory Board and Cuesta Tennis operator both supported the effort to include blended lines and welcomed pickleball to be played during off-peak hours.

In 2017, the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) approved staff’s recommendation to add three stand-alone, dedicated pickleball courts at Rengstorff Park, adjacent to the tennis courts, through the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, the PRC recommended staff explore appropriate locations and policies regarding pickleball courts and using tennis courts as multi-use (Attachment 1—April 12, 2017, PRC Staff Report). Staff returned to the PRC in January 2018 following a review of potential locations for pickleball courts and completing a community survey related to multi-use on tennis courts. The PRC approved staff’s recommendation to install the three dedicated courts at Rengstorff Park and requested staff to monitor the use of these courts once installed (Attachment 2—January 10, 2018 PRC Staff Report). In August 2018, three stand-alone pickleball courts were opened at Rengstorff Park, two courts dedicated with nets and one court lined without a net to provide flexible use for pickleball or “ball wall” users.

## **ANALYSIS**

Pickleball, like tennis, has increased in popularity since the pandemic began as it is a safe, outdoor social and physical activity for residents to participate in. Since the pickleball courts opened, staff, the City Council, and the PRC have received requests from the public to create additional access to pickleball through more courts, dual-striped courts on tennis courts, lighting of the existing pickleball courts, and indoor options during the winter season.

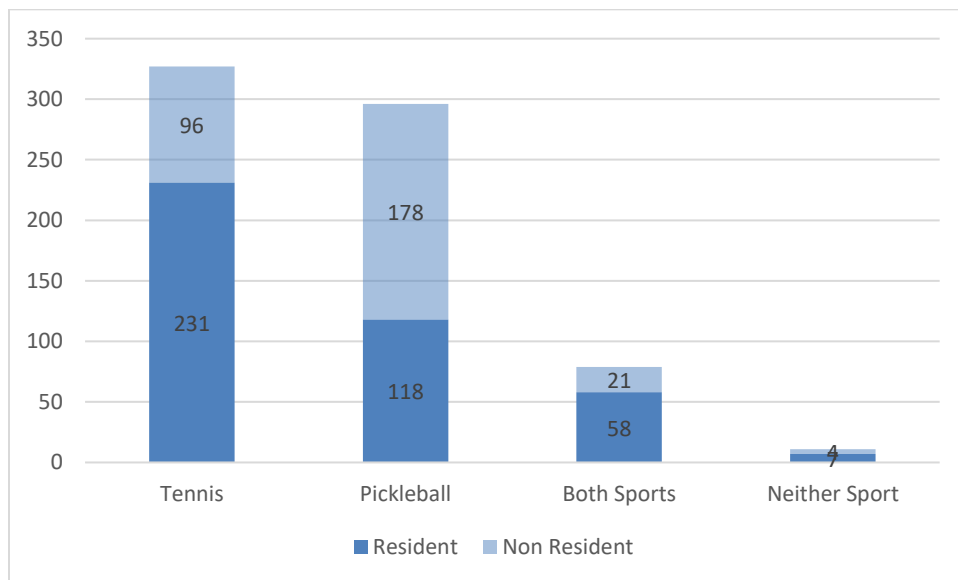
In response, staff created an indoor Pickleball program through the Adult Drop-in Sports program at the Mountain View Sports Pavilion in November 2021. This program expands access for pickleball during the evenings and when the weather is not suitable for outdoor play. The indoor program is available Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. On average, 20 people participate in this program each week. While this effort to provide more pickleball programming in the community was appreciated, staff heard that more outdoor options are highly desired compared to indoor options.

With an increase in requests for pickleball access, staff looked for appropriate ways to create recommendations for the Tennis Advisory Board and PRC to review in an effort to increase access to pickleball. Staff created a community survey and completed court monitoring and benchmarking with other agencies to provide helpful information to the advisory bodies.

### **Public Input Process**

The public input process began on February 17, 2022 with a staff presentation to the Tennis Advisory Board to introduce an input process, timelines, and milestones to gather more information and data for staff to return with recommendations. At this meeting, staff received 11 comments from community members: three tennis players, five pickleball players, and three dual-sport athletes.

Following the Tennis Advisory Board meeting, staff launched a community input survey on March 11, 2022, which was open for three weeks through March 25, 2022. Staff publicized the survey by posting signs with a QR code to the survey at all tennis and pickleball court locations in Mountain View; notice was provided to all known user groups, such as Mountain View Tennis Club, Mountain View Tennis (Cuesta Tennis Operator), and Mountain View Pickleball Club; and information was posted to the City website and shared via City social media channels and NextDoor. Staff received 713 complete survey responses, and of these, 414 respondents were Mountain View residents equating to 58% of the respondents. Out of the resident responses, 231 are tennis players, 118 are pickleball players, 58 play both sports, and seven do not play either sport. Figure 1, Survey Respondents by Sport, shows the breakdown between residents and nonresidents by each sport.



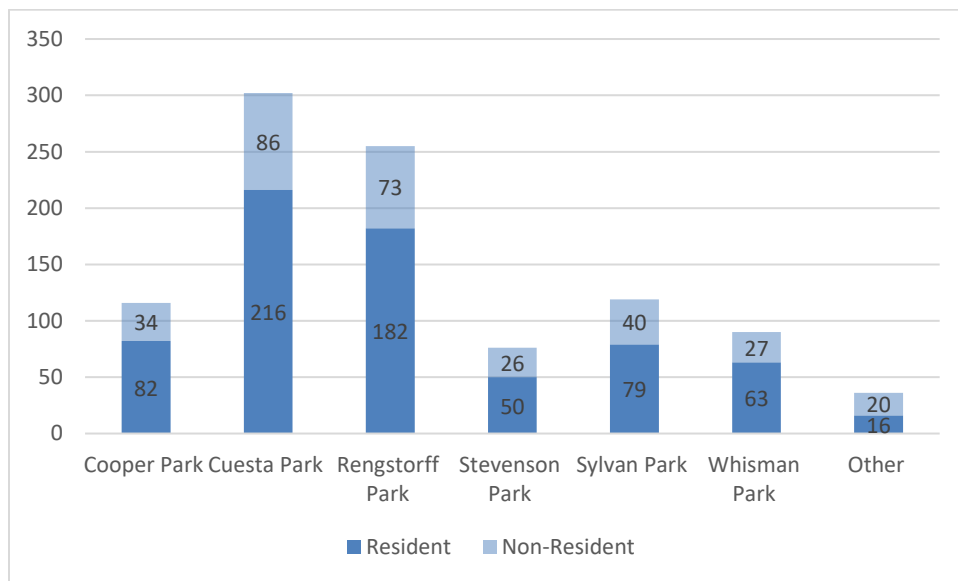
**Figure 1: Survey Respondents by Sport**

## Survey Responses

The survey included questions related to tennis and pickleball player facility use, including location, days and times of use, dual-striped court layout and location preference, open-ended comments, and demographic information. The following section provides information from the survey responses.

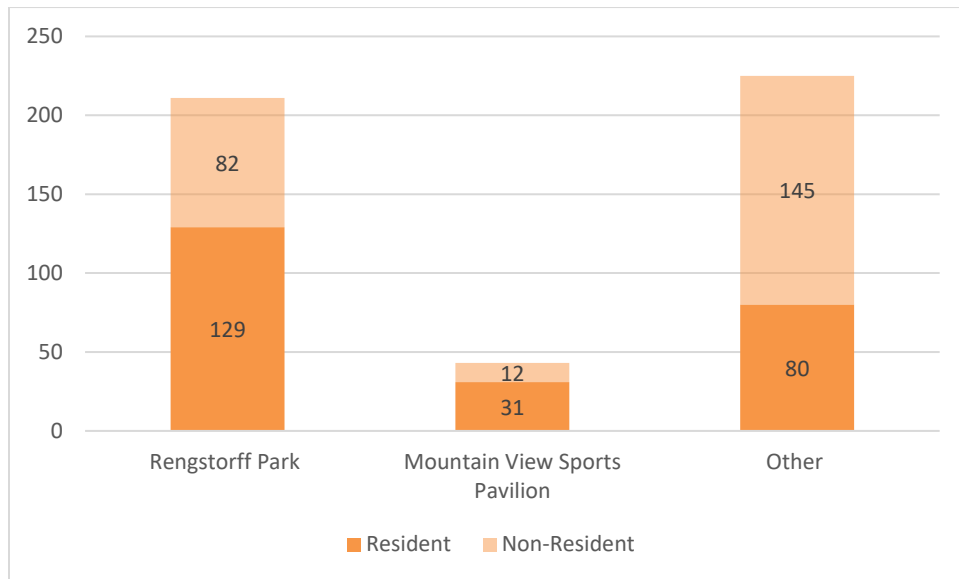
### *Most Preferred Location of Play*

Of the six tennis court locations within Mountain View, Tennis players ranked Cuesta Tennis Center as the location they primarily play most with Rengstorff Park as the second-highest location. Smaller tennis court locations, such as Stevenson and Whisman Parks, were the least preferred locations. Figure 2 shows where survey respondents are most likely to play tennis.



**Figure 2: Locations Most Likely Played by Tennis Players**

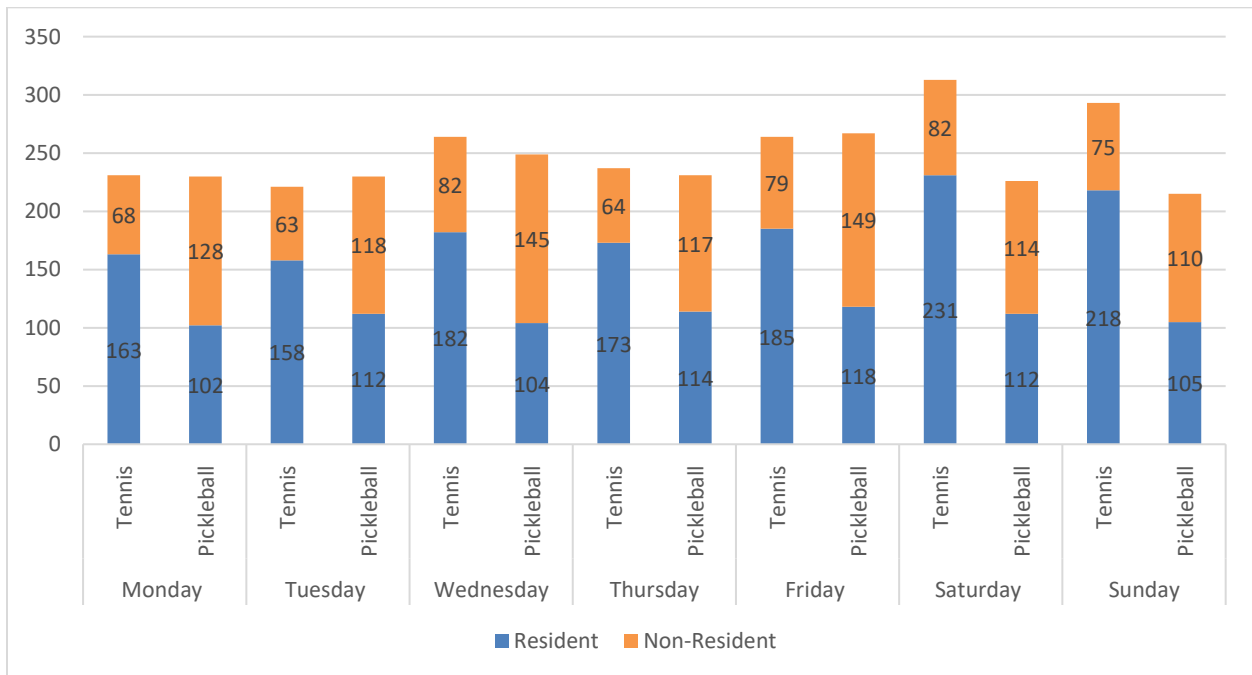
Pickleball players mostly play at the dedicated Rengstorff Park Pickleball Courts, while the second choice for Mountain View residents is to play in another municipality. Out of the 80 Mountain View pickleball residents who responded they play in other locations, 63 stated they play at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto. Figure 3 details where pickleball players mostly play in Mountain View.



**Figure 3: Locations Most Likely Played by Pickleball Players**

*Days of the Week*

Survey respondents were asked to share which day(s) of the week they are most likely to play their sport. Of the residents who responded, Saturday and Sunday were selected by tennis players as the days they mostly play tennis while resident pickleball players were most likely to play throughout the week with Friday having the highest concentration of play, with 118 respondents. Figure 4 outlines when each sport is most likely to be played during the week, segmented by resident versus nonresident.

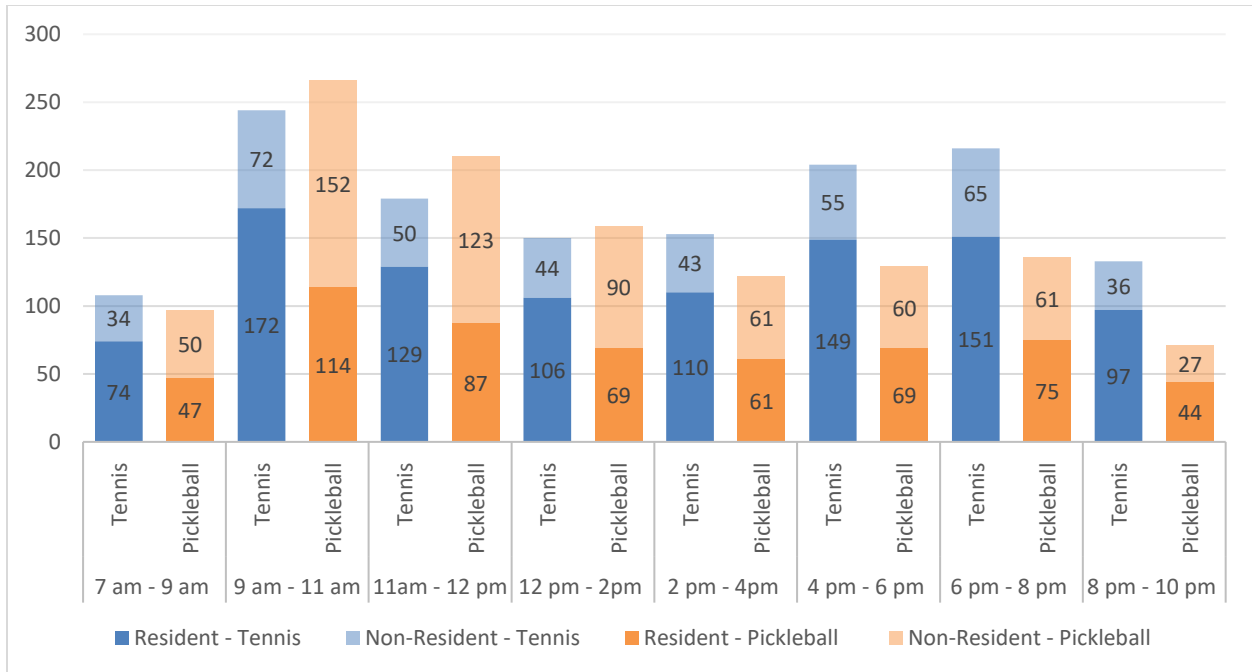


**Figure 4: Day of the Week Played by Sport**

*Times of Day*

Survey respondents were asked to share what time of day they are most likely to play their sport. Results indicate that tennis players’ top three times to play are, in preferred order, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Pickleball players’ top three times to play are, in preferred order, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and 6:00 p.m.

to 8:00 p.m. Figure 5 outlines the preferred time to play by each sport and by resident versus nonresident respondents.



**Figure 5: Time of Day Played by Sport**

*Designated Hours*

Within the survey, staff asked if there should be designated hours for pickleball play versus tennis play if tennis courts were to be dual-striped for pickleball; 51.78% of tennis players and 59.12% of pickleball players agree that designated days and times for each sport on dual striped courts are preferred.

**Court Monitoring Program Findings**

Recreation staff embarked on a tennis court monitoring program to confirm assumptions of when tennis and pickleball courts are in use. Staff utilized a software system to randomly select three times per day for staff to visit all court locations daily over a three-week time frame, March 21, 2022 through April 10, 2022. At each visit, staff recorded the number of people playing and the number of people waiting to play at each tennis and pickleball court location.

Cuesta Park Tennis Courts, followed by Rengstorff Park Tennis Courts, are the most used courts according to the court monitoring evaluation. The pickleball courts at Rengstorff Park were the third most populated racket sports court. Table 1 shares the number of players observed at each court over the three weeks.

**Table 1: Court Monitoring Observations**

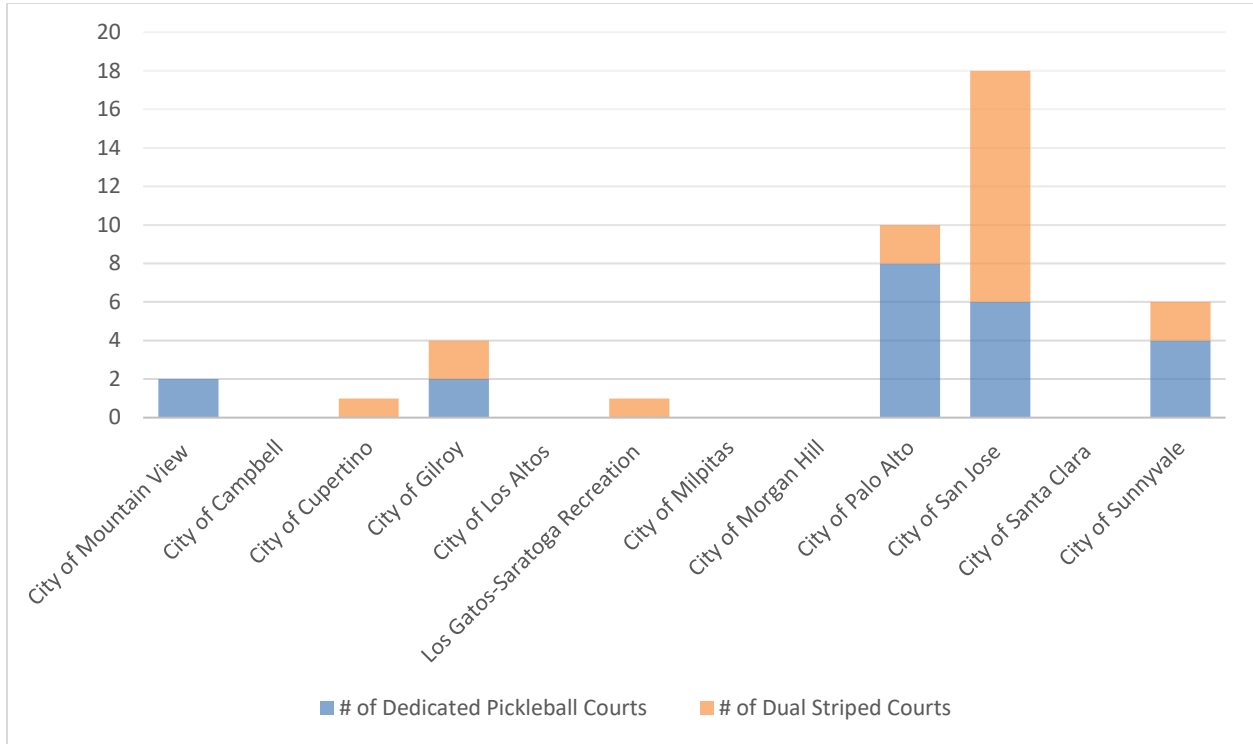
<b>Court Location</b>	<b>No. of Players</b>
Cuesta Park Tennis Courts (12 courts)	1,254
Rengstorff Park Tennis Courts (eight courts)	677
Rengstorff Park Pickleball Courts (three courts)	356
Sylvan Park Tennis Courts (four courts)	244
Whisman Park Tennis Courts (four courts)	218
Stevenson Park Tennis Courts (three courts)	176
Cooper Park Tennis Courts (four courts)	166

**Municipal Agency Benchmarking**

Staff completed a benchmarking survey with California Municipal Agencies regarding pickleball court facilities. Statewide, staff received 26 agency responses, 11 of which were from Santa Clara County. From the Santa Clara County respondents, including Mountain View, there are 22 municipal-operated, dedicated pickleball courts, 20 dual-striped pickleball courts, and



310 dedicated tennis courts. Figure 6 shows the number of types of pickleball courts available by each agency surveyed in Santa Clara County.



**Figure 6: Pickleball Courts in Santa Clara County**

For the agencies that have dual-striped pickleball and tennis courts, having designated times for each sport is a best practice. Sunnyvale, Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation, Palo Alto, Burlingame, and Belmont all utilize dedicated times and days for each sport. Staff has learned through this survey that Los Altos and Santa Clara have received similar requests from their residents to add pickleball lines to tennis courts, and they may be embarking on a similar community outreach process in their communities. San Jose currently does not have designated times for each sport but included they have experienced issues with the first-come, first-served model. Cupertino recently completed dual striping courts and is studying adding dedicated times.

### **Recommended Pilot Program**

After careful analysis of the data collected from the Community Survey, Agency Benchmark, and Court Monitoring, staff has developed the following recommendations for the Tennis Advisory Board to consider:

- Staff recommends adding six dual-striped pickleball courts on Rengstorff Park Tennis Court Nos. 3 and 4, the two most adjacent courts to the permanent pickleball courts at Rengstorff Park. Rengstorff Park Tennis Courts were the highest requested location for additional courts through the community survey. Pickleball is considered a social sport requiring court locations to be adjacent to help foster community and play. Dual striping at Rengstorff Park Tennis Court will also provide an opportunity for players to check out pickleball nets for play on a first-come, first-served basis from the Community Center since the dual-striped courts will not have permanent nets.
- Staff recommends implementing designated times of play for each sport on dual-striped Courts Nos. 3 and 4. Pickleball players will have access to Court Nos. 3 and 4 from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. These courts would then be available for tennis play from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. This practice helps reduce any conflicts that may arise and will reduce the impact on tennis players. This schedule also mirrors Palo Alto's designated times for dual-striped courts at Mitchell Park.
- Throughout the duration of this one-year pilot program, staff will continually monitor court use and return to the Tennis Advisory Board and the PRC in fall 2023 with an update.

In addition to the above recommendations for the pilot program, the City Council provided direction through the April 12, 2022 Study Session on the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Capital Improvement Program to develop a feasibility study to review potential locations to add dedicated pickleball courts. The CIP will be brought back to Council in June 2022 for adoption. If funding is approved, Community Services Department staff will work with Public Works Department staff to begin this feasibility study in fall 2022.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Following this meeting, staff will bring the Tennis Advisory Board's recommendation to the PRC on June 22, 2022 for consideration. If approved by the PRC, staff will target this summer to stripe Court Nos. 3 and 4 with pickleball lines and begin the pilot program. Staff will monitor the use of the courts over the coming year to provide an update to both the Tennis Advisory Board and PRC in fall 2023.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Staff estimates the cost to add pickleball lines to Tennis Courts Nos. 3 and 4 at Rengstorff Park at \$2,200. To support the pilot program, staff will purchase portable pickleball nets for use on the dual-striped courts to be checked out on a first-come, first-served basis from the front desk at the Community Center. Staff estimates that \$1,600 will be needed for these supplies. The total of \$3,800 for striping and supplies can be absorbed within the Community Services Department's existing operating budget.

### **PUBLIC NOTICING**

In addition to the standard agenda posting, meeting notices were posted at each tennis and pickleball facility at Cooper Park, Cuesta Park, Rengstorff Park, Stevenson Park, Sylvan Park, and Whisman Park. In addition, notice was posted to the City website, City social media channels, and on *Nextdoor.com*. Staff sent notifications to Mountain View Tennis Club, Cuesta Tennis Operator Mountain View Tennis, and all pickleball players that have contacted the City in the past year.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Suggest different tennis court locations to install pickleball lines.
2. Recommend not dual striping pickleball lines on tennis courts.

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- Attachments:
1. April 12, 2017 PRC Staff Report
  2. January 10, 2018 PRC Staff Report