

**DATE:** October 23, 2024

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission and Urban Forestry Board

**FROM:** Faryal Saiidnia, Senior Project Manager  
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**VIA:** Edward Arango, Acting Public Works Director

**SUBJECT:** Pickleball Court, Project 23-36—Draft Pickleball Study Findings

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Review and comment on the revised pickleball court layouts and number of courts, and recommend a preferred site location and number of dedicated pickleball courts for approval to the City Council.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2015, the City launched a pickleball program using a temporary painted asphalt court at Rengstorff Park. The program quickly grew in popularity within the community and, in 2018, three pickleball courts were installed 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. On [June 28, 2022](#), Council approved the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), establishing a new project for a preliminary study and design to identify possible locations and schematic design for new dedicated pickleball courts.

On [June 13, 2023](#), Council authorized a professional services agreement with Verde Design, Inc. (Verde), to provide a preliminary study and conceptual design services for the project, and Verde began work in November 2023.

An online public survey with over 400 responses was conducted in February 2023, and a community meeting with 75 attendees was held in April 2023, in which participants expressed preferences for new court locations, number of courts, and amenities.

Staff analyzed all City properties, and a portion of Cuesta Park (Location A), east of the tennis courts, was identified as the most feasible location for new courts due to available open space, existing infrastructure, and proximity from neighbors (see Figure 1). This area consists of a large grass area

with landscape berms on three sides (eastern, western, and southern edges) that are currently being used as an off-leash dog area. The existing infrastructure at this location, including lighting, parking, and restrooms, allows the project to take advantage of these amenities—though the existing berms may require removal and/or significant grading to accommodate the courts, depending on the final layout selected.



Figure 1: Cuesta Park Locations (Presented to PRC June 12, 2024)

### Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

On [June 12, 2024](#), the Draft Preliminary Study Findings (Study Findings) were presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) to obtain a recommendation to Council for the preferred site location and number of dedicated pickleball courts. The PRC discussed the Study Findings and layouts presented at the meeting, provided feedback on changes to number of courts and location, and requested additional information and staff to return with additional options for Location A. Location B was not selected by the PRC due to proximity to neighbors.

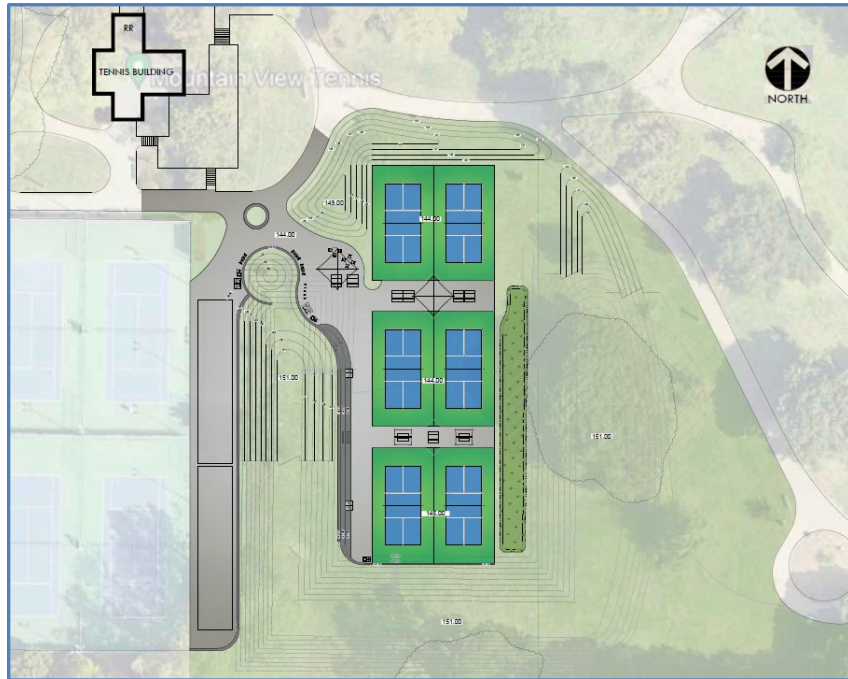
## **ANALYSIS**

Following the June 12 staff presentation of the layouts and discussion, the PRC provided the following comments to assist with a revised layout development:

- Reconfigure layout at Location A to reduce use of open space;
- Assess relocation of off-leash dog area elsewhere in Cuesta Park;
- Assess opportunities to enhance other areas within Cuesta Park;
- Assess opportunities to utilize existing paved areas within Cuesta Park, including the ball wall area;
- Assess off-site property alternatives; and
- Return to the PRC to continue discussion of the recommendation to the City Council.

Three preliminary revised Location A concept layouts (east of the Cuesta Park tennis courts) were prepared to address the comments received:

- Concept Layout A-1 (see Figure 2) provides six dedicated pickleball courts, preserves the existing berms along the east, west, and south edges, and provides a separation barrier between tennis and pickleball programs;
- Concept Layout A-2 (see Figure 3) provides eight dedicated pickleball courts and a preserved open space north of the new courts; and
- Concept Layout A-3 (see Figure 4) provides 10 dedicated pickleball courts.



**Figure 2: Cuesta Park Concept Layout A-1 (6 courts)**



**Figure 3: Cuesta Park Concept Layout A-2 (8 courts)**



**Figure 4: Cuesta Park Concept Layout A-3 (10 courts)**

Each of the three layouts provides the following benefits:

- Reduces lighting and noise concerns for adjacent neighbors due to the central location in the park;
- Expands existing lighting system at tennis courts by utilizing the existing infrastructure;
- Reduces the project footprint and number of courts from previous layouts to limit impacts to open space;
- Utilizes excavated material to create an additional berm along the north edge of the site to provide a sound and visual barrier;
- Preserves the large stone pine Heritage tree on the eastern edge and allows for landscape enhancements surrounding the courts; and
- Add Alternate: If either Concept Layout A-2 or A-3 option is selected and funding allows, the old bleachers at the east side of the tennis courts may be replaced with a joint tennis-pickleball bleacher solution as part of the project.

The general layouts shown above identify the footprint needed for the number of courts and general amenity space. Once a location and number of courts are selected, further development of the

layout will be conducted, and a more detailed conceptual plan and assessment of amenities will be brought back to the PRC for review and Council for approval.

A comparison of the three layouts with a rough order of the magnitude of the project’s estimated cost is shown in Table 1. The estimated cost includes design and construction costs.

**Table 1: Cuesta Park Location A—Concept Layout Comparison**

Location	Estimated Cost	Opportunities	Constraints
<b>Concept Layout A-1:</b> 6 courts	\$2,800,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserves existing berms along the east, west, and south edges.</li> <li>• Can include terraced seating to accommodate spectators.</li> <li>• Requires smaller retaining wall/structures.</li> <li>• Significantly reduces grading and provides a separation barrier between tennis and pickleball programs.</li> <li>• Additional berm north of courts creates a noise and visual barrier.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less courts than requested by the community.</li> <li>• Existing bleachers cannot be shared with pickleball program, although terraced seating can be included for the pickleball-side only.</li> <li>• Area will be more segmented with berm remaining.</li> <li>• Requires removal of one tree.</li> </ul>
<b>Concept Layout A-2:</b> 8 courts	\$3,500,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open space north of courts is preserved.</li> <li>• Additional berm added north of courts creates noise and visual barrier.</li> <li>• Can accommodate bleachers that can be shared by tennis and pickleball programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher construction costs due to larger pickleball complex and soil grading.</li> <li>• Requires larger retaining wall, estimated 11’ height.</li> <li>• No separation between tennis and pickleball programs (other than bleachers).</li> <li>• Less courts than requested by the community.</li> <li>• Requires removal of one tree.</li> </ul>
<b>Concept Layout A-3:</b> 10 courts	\$3,900,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger number of courts to accommodate more players.</li> <li>• Additional berm added north of courts creates noise and visual barrier.</li> <li>• Can accommodate bleachers that can be shared by tennis and pickleball programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher construction costs due to larger pickleball complex and soil grading.</li> <li>• Requires larger retaining wall, estimated 11’ height.</li> <li>• No separation between tennis and pickleball programs (other than bleachers).</li> <li>• Requires removal of one tree.</li> <li>• Reduces open space more than the other options.</li> </ul>

Based on balancing the demand for pickleball courts and loss of open space, staff recommends Concept Layout A-2 with eight new dedicated pickleball courts. This location and number of courts allows for a portion of open space to remain while including a larger number of courts and aligns with the community’s feedback and the park’s existing programming. Some new/upgraded amenities could be shared with the tennis program at this location, such as bleacher seating, water fountain, restroom, and/or accessibility upgrades.

### **Cuesta Park Off-Leash Dog Area**

Location A is currently used as an off-leash dog area. Staff has evaluated the opportunity to utilize the previous alternative location for the pickleball courts (Location B in Figure 1), and further expanding on it for use of the off-leash dog area. This location near the north side of the park and adjacent to the Cuesta Park main-western parking lot, consists of an open grass area and is comparable in size to the existing off-leash dog space. The area is not currently programmed and would be ideal as it is a short distance from the parking lot, which would help reduce dog owners walking dogs elsewhere within the park off-leash. If this site is selected, Community Services Department staff will initiate a parallel development process for this alternative off-leash dog area location, including identifying fencing for this area (see Figure 5).



**Figure 5: Alternative Off-Leash Dog Area**

### **Enhancements to Cuesta Park**

Staff evaluated possible opportunities and locations for other enhancements to Cuesta Park and identified several shown in Figure 6. These include additional landscaping, trees, seating, and other

improvements. The cost-estimate range for the enhancements shown is between \$250,000 and \$350,000. Once the scope for the enhancements is confirmed through the development process, a more detailed cost estimate will be provided. Staff will conduct additional evaluation of these items after the pickleball court location is selected as part of the concept design phase and will return to the PRC with more information. Enhancements to other areas of Cuesta Park can be a separate parallel development process to the pickleball-court project.



**Figure 6: Park Enhancement Opportunities**

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|---|---|
| 1. Enhancing landscaping.                                   | 5. Adding trees or a large specimen tree. |
| 2. Adding native or pollinator plantings.                   | 6. Added benches or shaded seating.       |
| 3. Adding fencing or landscaping at the off-leash dog area. | 7. Adding bicycle racks.                  |
| 4. Moving or improving the existing owl nest box.           | 8. Updating signage.                      |
|   | 9. Repaving pathways.                     |

### **Use of Existing Paved Areas**

Staff reviewed existing paved areas within Cuesta Park as potential locations for conversion to dedicated or dual-use pickleball courts. The ball wall area north of the tennis courts and the two existing parking lots were identified as possibilities and evaluated in detail. The existing parking



lots are heavily utilized by existing park users, and adding dedicated pickleball courts will only increase parking demand. Removal of parking spaces while increasing parking demand with additional park amenities may result in parking impacts in the surrounding areas. Therefore, repurposing parking areas for pickleball courts is not recommended.

There is an ongoing high demand for the ball wall by existing tennis users, making conversion to a dual use for pickleball a net loss of amenities for the tennis users. In addition, there would be an increased need for maintenance and operations from debris from numerous nearby trees and managing the overlapping user groups. Similarly, staff does not recommend conversion of the ball wall to dual tennis and pickleball use.

### **Off-Site Property Alternatives**

Staff reviewed off-site property alternatives, including purchasing or leasing property for new indoor or outdoor pickleball courts. The cost of purchasing property to accommodate six to 12 courts ranges from \$8 million to \$12 million, not including the costs of design and construction. Leasing a similar-size property was also considered, and for consistency of use at a single site and the investment that would be needed, a minimum 10-year lease would be recommended. The total leasing costs for a 10-year period range from \$6 million to \$14 million, not including the costs for design and construction. The high real estate pricing in the area makes this option cost-prohibitive and, due to viable options at City-owned parks, staff does not recommend purchasing or leasing property for this purpose.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Pickleball Court Preliminary Study, Design and Construction, Project 23-36, is funded with \$1.2 million from the Park Land Dedication Fund.

With the current approved budget, there is sufficient funding for the development of the study, conceptual plan, and final design for new dedicated pickleball courts. Once the study is finalized, a more refined cost estimate will be determined to identify the additional funding needed for construction.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will submit the PRC's recommended location and number of courts to Council for consideration of approval in December 2024. If Council approves the recommendation, the design consultants will prepare a conceptual plan for PRC review and Council consideration in early 2025, where final design would then begin. Final design is anticipated to be completed in late 2025 and, depending on available funding, construction could begin in spring 2026.

**PUBLIC NOTICING**

In addition to the standard agenda posting, property owners and residents within an expanded area of 1,000' of the park received notices of the PRC meeting. A notice was also placed on the City website, Collaborate MV project website, and emailed to the City's pickleball project's interested subscribers list, Mountain View Pickleball Club, Mountain View Tennis Club, and Mountain View Tennis Academy.

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cc: PWD(A), APWD(A)—Byrer, PPM—Printy, SPM—Saiidnia, F/c (23-36)