

DATE: June 12, 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 Preliminary Study Findings

RECOMMENDATION

Review and comment on the Draft Pickleball Court Preliminary Study Findings and recommend a preferred site location and number of dedicated pickleball courts for approval to the City Council.

BACKGROUND

Pickleball, a racket sport that mixes tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, has become one of the fastest-growing sports in America over the last few years. 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.

The City has seen a large increase in the number of pickleball players utilizing the temporary and permanent courts as well as an increase in the number of community requests for additional pickleball courts to be installed. To accommodate these growing requests in the short term, a pilot program for additional dual-striped tennis/pickleball courts was implemented at Rengstorff Park.

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 that will 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.

ANALYSIS

Community Engagement

As a first step to gather data, public interest, and feedback from the community, staff conducted an online public survey and held a community meeting.

Online Public Survey

Staff released an online survey in February 2024 that was open for two weeks. The survey was promoted via the City’s website, neighborhood contacts, newsletters, flyers, project email subscribers, social media, and stakeholder groups, including the Mountain View Pickleball Club, Mountain View Tennis Club, Mountain View Tennis Academy, and Tennis Advisory Board.

The survey consisted of 17 questions regarding the court locations, number of new courts, amenities, play frequency, and other input. Staff received 412 responses from the public. A summary of the responses and details of the survey are discussed later in this memorandum.

Community Meeting

On April 8, 2024, an in-person community meeting was held at the Community Center to similarly receive feedback on court locations, number of new courts, and provide an opportunity to provide verbal and written feedback.

Approximately 75 members of the community attended, including residents, Mountain View Pickleball Club members, and Mountain View Tennis Club members. The meeting allowed for general public comment and questions and included a breakout group session with many members submitting feedback in writing. Results of the public meeting are discussed in the next section.

Public Input Summary

Staff and Verde have analyzed the survey results, community meeting input, and other comments and feedback received to assess feasibility and prepare concepts for potential park locations. The public feedback has been generally summarized below and is further detailed in Attachment 1.

The seven top locations requested (in order) include:

- Cuesta Park
- Rengstorff Park
- Cooper Park
- Whisman Park
- Eagle Park
- Sylvan Park
- Shoreline Park

The most common number of courts requested was a minimum of 12 courts at one location to allow for tournament play.

The most common amenities requested were:

- Lighting
- Quality netting
- Court dividers/fencing
- Windscreens
- Seating
- Noise barrier
- Management/reservation system
- Water fountain
- Paddle racks
- Storage

Other public comments included:

- Appropriate court drainage.
- Court design to promote community and socialization.
- Dedicated pickleball courts, not converting or installing dual-stripe on existing tennis courts.
- Request to build as soon as possible.

Although the majority of public input received was supportive of building dedicated pickleball courts, some feedback expressed concerns that the noise from pickleball play may be a nuisance to nearby residential or school areas.

Previous Parks and Recreation Commission Input

In prior Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) meetings discussing other City park projects and the pickleball program items, the PRC had provided feedback/input, such as:

- Avoid selecting locations near schools or residential areas due to potential noise concerns.
- Preserve open space and avoid over-programming City parks (Rengstorff Park, specifically).
- Smaller parks, such as Cooper Park or Whisman Park, may not be good candidates for pickleball courts due to proximity to neighbors and potential noise concerns.
- Avoid removing trees, as much as possible.

Given the similar subject, staff considered PRC comments relevant to the project and site location assessment process. The design team incorporated these comments into the analysis and top location concepts.

Draft Findings and Recommendation

The consultant and staff analyzed the data and suggestions received from the community engagement process, evaluated all existing City parks and City-owned land for potential location options, and assessed amenities, such as parking, lighting, and seating, as well as considered noise, construction feasibility, and accessibility for each location. The major factors reviewed for feasibility at each potential location were:

- Open space preservation;
- Existing and future programming;
- Parking;
- Electrical/lighting infrastructure;
- Restrooms;
- Neighborhood proximity and noise;
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance;
- Tree impacts; and
- Environmental impacts.

Based on these factors, many of the community's suggested locations were noted as having constraints. Except for Cuesta Park, Table 1 lists the key constraint considerations for the community's top park locations.

Table 1: Park Locations Assessment

Park	Key Constraint Considerations
Rengstorff Park	High level of programming and proximity to residential area (more information outlined below).
Cooper Park	Limited open space, proximity to school and residential area, potentially significant tree removal required.
Whisman Park	Proximity to school and residential area, potentially significant tree removal required.
Eagle Park	High level of programming/swimming/sports field use, limited open space, and proximity to residential area.
Sylvan Park	Limited open space, highly programmed with sports users, community users, and field reservations and proximity to residential area.
Shoreline Park	Location is within a closed landfill and environmentally sensitive wildlife area. Insufficient mitigation space to address environmental permitting requirements. The added regulations in this sensitive area would increase permitting/approval timeline and cost, rendering the site less feasible for timely implementation.

As a result of these constraints, staff does not recommend the above locations for new, dedicated pickleball courts.

Rengstorff Park

Rengstorff Park scored the second highest among the community feedback. This park is undergoing construction with the replacement of the Aquatics Center, new all-inclusive playground, and new restroom buildings. These additions, along with the existing Community Center, fitness court, tennis and pickleball courts, skate park, and dog park, have limited the remaining open space in this highly programmed park. As a result, PRC had previously identified maintaining open space as a priority at this park. In addition, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) facilities at this location restricts the use over their facilities to open space use. For these reasons, staff does not recommend this location.

Cuesta Park

Cuesta Park scored the highest overall in the assessment. Staff and Verde's analysis of Cuesta Park concurs with the public input received as a top location for new, dedicated pickleball courts.

Cuesta Park has enough space available to feasibly fit 12 to 18 courts with two potential sites within the park.

Location A, shown in Figure 1 below, is located on the south side of the park, east of the Cuesta Park tennis courts. The existing features within this area consist of bleachers at the east edge of the tennis courts, a small retaining wall, and a grass area with landscape berms on three sides (eastern, western, and southern edges) that is currently being used as an off-leash dog area. The bleachers at the east side of the tennis courts are aging and may potentially be replaced with a joint tennis/pickleball bleacher solution as part of the project if funding allows. The existing infrastructure at this location, including lighting, parking, and restrooms, allows the project to take advantage of these amenities—though the existing berms will require removal and/or significant grading to accommodate the courts. If this site is selected, Community Services Department staff will initiate a parallel development process for an alternative location of the off-leash dog area.



Figure 1: Cuesta Park Concept Layout—Location A

Location B, shown in Figure 2 below, near the north side of the park and adjacent to the Cuesta Park main western parking lot, is an alternative option to consider for up to six new pickleball courts. This location consists of an open grass space. The area is not currently programmed, and

selecting this site would not alter any existing programming in the park. It is also directly adjacent to the parking lot for ease of access.



Figure 2: Cuesta Park Concept Layout—Location B

Both locations are shown with general-concept layouts to identify the footprint needed for the number of courts and general amenity space. Once a location is selected, further development of the layout will be conducted, and a more detailed conceptual plan and assessment of amenities will be brought back to PRC for review and Council for approval.

A comparison of the two location options with rough order of magnitude estimated costs, opportunities, and constraints is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Cuesta Park Locations A and B Comparison

Location	Estimated Cost	Opportunities	Constraints
Location A Cuesta Park 12 courts East of tennis court complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4,600,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large open space with capacity for pickleball complex with larger number of courts and to host tournaments. • Lighting at tennis courts provides existing infrastructure. • Lighting and noise concerns for neighbors are greatly reduced due to central location within park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant grading required to remove/adjust berms surrounding site. • High construction costs due to larger pickleball complex and grading.
Location B Cuesta Park 6 courts East of main parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,400,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally flat area, very limited grading needed. • More accessible and closer to parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of lighting may be a concern for light pollution to neighbors. • Proximity to neighbors/ nearby residential may be a noise concern.

Staff recommends Location A for 12 new dedicated pickleball courts. This location and number of courts 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. The cost to construct the 12 courts is higher than six courts but would provide a larger facility as a first project.

A subsequent future phase of new pickleball courts for Location B can be considered for additional courts after Location A is implemented, pending funding availability.

FISCAL IMPACT

Pickleball Court Preliminary Study, Design and Construction, Project 23-36, is funded with \$1,200,000 from the Park Land Dedication Fund.

With the current approved budget, there is sufficient funding for the development of a conceptual plan and final design for 12 new dedicated pickleball courts. Once a conceptual plan 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-recommended location and number of courts to Council for consideration of approval in fall 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 following Council approval. Final design is anticipated to be completed in fall 2025, and depending on available funding, construction could begin in 2026.

PUBLIC NOTICING

In addition to the standard agenda posting, property owners and residents within an expanded area of 1,000' plus of the park received notices of the PRC meeting. A notice was also placed on the City website, Collaborate MV project website, and social media 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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Attachment: 1. Community Engagement Results

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