

Upcoming consultations on the draft Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

General speaking points about pickleball for the verbal, virtual consultation sessions

Speaking Point	Rationale / Comments
<p>Build dedicated pickleball only courts in public parks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stittsville Howard McGuire Park (Parade Drive) a great example; model of 1 tennis court next to 2 dedicated pickleball courts (with 2 nets) accommodates 8+ pickleball players on the same amount of land as 1 tennis court (with pickleball using a tennis net) • This should be considered for <u>new parks</u> (e.g. Stittsville), as well as <u>older parks</u> where underutilized tennis courts could better serve more members of the community through conversion into 2 or 4 pickleball courts (land optimization). As well, <u>open land in existing parks</u> could also be used for purpose built pickleball courts. Some cities have used the model of converting 1 unused tennis court into 4 dedicated pickleball courts, while others have opted for 2 pickleball courts to replace 1 tennis court. <i>One great model is where there is space for 3 tennis courts; instead of 3 tennis courts with 3 temporary pickleball courts laid on top, consider 2 permanent tennis courts and 4 independent permanent pickleball courts where the 3rd tennis court would have been</i> • Many other Ontario cities (much smaller than Ottawa) have already started doing this; Ottawa’s approach of simply painting pickleball lines on existing tennis courts is not the approach other communities are taking. <i>Ottawa is way behind the province in this regard.</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce playing conflicts between pickleball and tennis for the same shared court time • Avoid the confusing and competing lines and court colours on shared courts that diminish the quality of the playing experience for both sports
Develop pickleball hubs with 4-6 courts per location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because pickleball is very social and often attracts large groups of people coming together who welcome newcomers, <u>pickleball hubs with 4-6 courts</u> are even more valuable than simply dedicated pickleball only courts, to ensure pickleball can be played the way the community wants to play pickleball. • Pickleball, unlike tennis, can really build community and friendships – particularly for isolated seniors, but this is dependent on the ability for pickleball to be played for 2-3 hours without interruption, with sufficient court capacity to accommodate large groups of players – hence, the social and health value of the dedicated pickleball hub. Many of these seniors thrive with the social stimulus of pickleball and the many friendships that naturally form when large pickleball groups are provided the opportunity to gather – with the pickleball hub becoming an almost daily meeting place for groups of friends to socialize and exercise together. • Families also enjoy playing pickleball together, and kids like playing with other kids, and opportunities for the cross-mixing of these groups can't really happen on public tennis courts. Dedicated hubs that are known and attract the pickleball community will provide the opportunity for families to meet other families organically, with different generations

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	<p>playing together, as well as the mixing of children from different families. This is unlikely to happen with temporarily pickleball lines on 2-3 tennis courts, where 30 minute playing limits are imposed on all players. The “community building” quality that a multi-court pickleball hub could provide would be particularly valuable in vulnerable neighbourhoods, where children would benefit from the friendship, exercise, and welcoming nature of the pickleball sport and the people who play it. In fact, pickleball is full of generous, spirited individuals that could really serve as role models to children in vulnerable neighbourhoods – and pickleball hubs would really facilitate that benefit to the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Ontario cities (much smaller than Ottawa) have pickleball hubs with 4+ courts at each location, with groups of 20+ players gathering to play at different times of day. <i>Ottawa is way behind the province in this regard.</i>
<p>Consider dedicated times (2-3 hour blocks) during the week for each sport on shared tennis/pickleball courts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social nature of pickleball means the natural gathering of people, with many short games with multiple playing partners over the period of 2-3 hours. Tennis, on the other hand, is typically played by 2 or 4 people who arrive together and play together in an exclusive small group. • The 30-minute playing limit applicable on all public courts does not reflect the different nature of how tennis is played, and how pickleball is played. In tennis, a small group of 2-4 tennis players typically plays one a single court. On the other hand, larger groups of pickleball players tend to play together (more than 4 players per court), and rotate in and out of games (taking turns) – so the 30-minute

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	<p>playing principle that is applicable to a self-contained group of tennis players does not translate to pickleball's larger groups of players. The expectation that anyone using a public tennis court is limited to 30 minutes is not fair to pickleball when 6-8 players (residents) are using the same court that would only be used by 2-4 tennis players, and often causes confusion and fairness issues when tennis and pickleball players are both hoping to use the same courts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 743 1414 1318"> <p><i>Instead of back to back 30 minute sessions, more pickleball players can be accommodated by allowing dedicated pickleball court time for 2-3 hours with multiple people playing simultaneously and rotating in and out of games, rather than playing for 30 consecutive minute then having to stop. Only by having dedicated pickleball only times (without the risk of interruption by tennis players) can pickleball be played the way most people play pickleball. These dedicated times will encourage pickleball players to all show up at the same time, and free up court time for tennis players at other times of the week.</i></p>
<p>Ensure shared courts have adjustable nets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1339 1414 1644"> <p>Improve the quality of the pickleball playing experience by allowing players to adjust the tennis net to the correct height for pickleball. Pickleball players will sometimes weight down non-adjustable nets with backpacks or other objects to lower the net to the correct height, causing premature deterioration of the tennis nets.</p> <li data-bbox="565 1661 581 1686"> <p>•</p>
<p>Consider painting pickleball lines on smooth hockey rinks or other surfaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1707 1414 1780"> <p>Use these unused/underutilized spaces (hockey rinks) to provide pickleball courts.</p>

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with walls/natural barriers to keep Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nets – consider permanent nets (removable in winter) (asking the local pickleball community for fundraising assistance if necessary), or work with community associations to make portable nets available to residents (e.g. storage box under lock and key) (like Carp Community Association)
Teach pickleball to kids in vulnerable neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage volunteers from local pickleball community to teach/share their passion for pickleball in vulnerable neighbourhoods (free lessons)
Indoor pickleball capacity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While some recreation and community centres offer pickleball, many do not. Those that do offer pickleball are beyond capacity, with residents often having to line up or register hours in advance to ensure they get the opportunity to play. These capacity issues will continue to grow. • Creative options should be explored to offer more pickleball capacity (e.g. repurposing of underutilized spaces, such as arenas)

Specific questions the city is asking in the online survey

15. Currently, there are 176 Pickleball Courts, 1 per 5,700 residents. The recommendation is to set this level to 1 per 3,500 residents. This means 61 new Pickleball Courts will be needed by 2031. (note that shared tennis and pickleball courts are counted as one tennis court and one pickleball court; see page 119-126 for details)*

- **Agree with recommendation**
- **There should be more than the recommendation**
- There should be fewer than the recommendation
- No opinion

25. Based on your answers, please provide your thoughts regarding the citywide targets for parkland and facilities for 2031, to meet the needs of residents. Please include the specific type of facility or amenity your comments are related to. **CONSIDER USING SOME (NOT ALL) OF THESE SUGGESTIONS, USING YOUR OWN WORDS (PARAPHRASE)**

- Agree with recommendation for 61 new pickleball courts by 2031, as the sport is growing faster than the city can handle
- Recommend that some of the new pickleball courts to be built be pickleball only (no tennis), to:
 - Avoid conflicts between two groups
 - Reduce confusing court designs with two different court colours and lines
 - Optimize land use (2 or 4 pickleball courts uses the same land as 1 tennis court; this optimal land use is only possible if the tennis court is not there and the space is exclusive to pickleball)
 - Tennis and pickleball are very different. Pickleball typically attracts large groups of people who welcome strangers to play with them, requiring sufficient time (2-3 hours) of interrupted play for the community to play together in a series of short games with people regularly switching partners. Tennis, on the other hand, is typically played by 2 or 4 people in an exclusive group.
 - On a court shared with tennis, pickleballs roll very far away from the court, requiring a long walk away to retrieve a ball (particularly challenging for seniors); dedicated pickleball only courts (with fences/barriers closer to the court boundaries) will better serve the pickleball players
 - Ensure proper net height for both pickleball players and tennis players, and eliminate the need to adjust the net when sports change (if the net is even adjustable)
- For shared tennis/pickleball courts, recommend certain times of the week to be dedicated to pickleball only (this has been done in the past, such as the courts at the South Fallingbrook Community Centre); a dedicated 2-3 hour window for pickleball only allows for the natural gathering of pickleball players and uninterrupted play that most of the pickleball community is looking for
- Several recreation centres offer pickleball drop in for the community, while several do not. Those that do often sell out well in advance, and its very difficult to get in. The demand will continue to grow, so I think creative options to be explored to offer more pickleball capacity (e.g. repurposing of underutilized spaces, such as arenas)

26. To help us with the implementation of this plan, please tell us your thoughts about the parkland, facilities, and amenities in your community. The information you provide will be considered in other upcoming plans, such as Asset Management.

- Encourage participants to comment on the availability of pickleball (indoor and outdoor) in your local community. Are the courts in good quality? Do they have lighting for night play, and washroom facilities? Are the tennis courts underutilized (i.e. potential for conversion to pickleball only courts).**