

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 21, 2022

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: PICKLEBALL PROJECT UPDATE

FROM:

Vince Musacchio, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To provide an update on direction from Council received April 26, 2022.

Report Highlights

- Pickleball is an emerging sport experiencing a popularity boom in Canada, particularly among older adults and seniors
- Staff initiated a Pickleball Study in 2021 through recommendations of the 2018 Active Together Master Plan
- A pilot project at seven (7) tennis courts for shared-use was implemented for the 2021 playing season with positive feedback received overall
- In April 2022, the results of the Pickleball Study were presented and supported by Council to continue incorporating pickleball as shared-use with tennis and to develop new dedicated pickleball courts city-wide based on identified provision standards
- Council directed staff to consider potential partnership opportunities for building pickleball courts and to explore the opportunity to retrofit existing tennis courts into pickleball courts and report back in June
- Staff met with Corte Group and had a preliminary discussion about their interest to develop a dedicated pickleball hub through a public-private partnership
- Staff also identified the opportunity to develop dedicated pickleball courts as a retrofit of existing tennis courts at LeParc Park and the potential for pickleball courts at the new Carrville Community Centre and District Park

Recommendations

1. THAT one (1) existing tennis court at Le Parc Park be converted to two (2) dedicated pickleball courts with funding for design and construction to be included in the 2023 capital budget submission;
2. THAT consideration of additional pickleball court locations for retrofit and new development be included in the scope of work of the Tennis and Racket Sports Court Strategy planned by staff to be undertaken in 2023;
3. THAT development of dedicated pickleball courts at the new Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park be considered and that staff negotiate a project change order to facilitate this work to be funded within approved capital budgets; and
4. THAT staff continue to explore the potential of developing a public-private partnership for pickleball with the Corte Group and report back to Council in Q1 2023.

Background

A Pickleball Study was initiated in 2021 based on recommendations of the 2018 Active Together Master Plan which identified pickleball as an emerging sport experiencing a popularity boom in Canada, particularly among older adults and seniors

On April 12, 2022, staff presented the results of the Pickleball Study which included a comprehensive community engagement strategy and public survey. A key component of the study was to review the feasibility of using existing tennis courts through re-lining to accommodate shared-use between pickleball and tennis. Seven (7) tennis courts at six (6) park locations across the City were implemented as a pilot project for shared-use with pickleball and tennis for the 2021 playing season. The pilot was received with positive feedback and the pickleball court lines will remain in place for continued shared-use with tennis at these locations.

On April 26, 2022, Council approved the staff recommendations to continue to incorporate pickleball as shared-use with tennis and to develop new dedicated pickleball courts based on the city-wide provision standards. Furthermore, Council provided direction that:

1. Staff meet with the Corte Group in response to their deputation to obtain more information and a better understanding of pickleball, and discuss the potential of developing a public-private partnership in building pickleball courts; and

2. Staff explore the opportunity to retrofit existing tennis courts into pickleball courts, and report back before the end of June.

Previous Reports/Authority

[Committee of the Whole \(2\) April 12, 2022 \(Item 5, Report No. 19\)](#)

Analysis and Options

Council expressed an interest in advancing development of pickleball in Vaughan including dedicated pickleball facilities and retrofit of existing tennis courts for shared-use with pickleball

With Council approval of the Pickleball Study and recommendations in April 2022, pickleball courts will now be offered as part of the City's standard level of service for park facilities to be considered in the future as part of park programming to serve new growth areas or at existing parks as guided by the Park Redevelopment Strategy or through the park asset renewal program. New pickleball courts will be developed as either shared-use with tennis or as dedicated pickleball courts, depending on geographic distribution as well as local factors including identified community interest and proximity to adjacent residential properties where noise from pickleball has been identified as a nuisance.

Standard Level of Service: The following criteria will be considered when planning and implementing new pickleball courts:

1. Courts will be developed in pairs and to provincial standard dimensions
2. Courts will utilize fixed pickleball net equipment for dedicated pickleball courts and tennis net equipment at shared-use locations
3. Courts to include perimeter fencing and entry gates
4. Court surfaces are to be painted acrylic on suitable hardscape
5. Court lighting to be provided at District and Regional Parks and considered on a case-by-case basis at Neighbourhood Park locations
6. Court signage to include courtesy and game rules
7. Court locations will consider potential for noise nuisance to adjacent properties

Enhanced Level of Service: Pickleball facilities associated with higher capital and maintenance costs may be considered through sponsorship and/or or donations from an affiliated organization or through special funding or grants, which could include:

1. Wind screens
2. Court lighting
3. Notice board
4. Other supporting site amenities to support leagues and tournaments

To assist the review of potential locations to retrofit existing tennis courts into pickleball courts, the following site selection criteria was used to help determine suitable pickleball court sites

Building upon the findings of the Pickleball Study survey, background research on pickleball, and information collected through consultation user groups, staff considered the following site selection criteria to identify potential locations:

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| <p>A. User Base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Service area populationii. Local interestiii. Permitting restrictions | <p>C. Amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Court lightingii. Access to parkingiii. Access to washrooms |
| <p>B. Existing Tennis Court Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Number of tennis courtsii. Surfacing materialiii. Surfacing conditioniv. Court wind exposure | <p>D. Nuisance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Potential nuisance due to game play noise |

Several options were explored for potential pickleball locations and based on the analysis completed by staff, the retrofit of existing tennis courts at LeParc Park and development of new dedicated pickleball courts at the Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park has been identified for consideration

Retrofit existing tennis courts into pickleball based on the park asset renewal program

Tennis court renewals are currently being planned at four locations in 2023:

- a) Ohr Menachem Park (55 Autumn Hill Boulevard, Block 10) – 2 tennis courts
- b) Rainbow Creek Park (5450 Highway 7, Block 51) – 2 tennis courts
- c) Mosswood Park (641 Thornhill Woods Drive, Block 10) – 2 tennis courts
- d) LeParc Park (172 Connie Crescent, Block 16) – 2 tennis courts

Of the four above locations, staff recommend considering development of dedicated pickleball courts at LeParc Park due to availability of parking and supporting infrastructure. Given that the park is located within a predominantly employment and industrial area, there are no residential uses in proximity to this site where noise would be a nuisance. The location would also respond to local demand as evidenced through the community survey results.

Existing facilities at LeParc Park include two tennis courts which are due for renewal. An opportunity exists as part of the tennis court renewal program to convert one (1) of the existing tennis courts to two (2) pickleball courts. Staff recommend maintaining one (1) tennis court at this location due to community interest and will include this court for renewal as part of the project planned for 2023.

Dedicated pickleball courts at a new park locations

Staff reviewed a variety of new park developments for opportunities to incorporate dedicated pickleball. Most locations are in proximity to residential development and do not have sufficient setbacks to help protect from noise nuisance complaints. Staff recommend considering dedicated pickleball courts at the Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park due to proximity with the community centre building, parking availability, washrooms, court lighting, and supporting infrastructure. The location meets potential noise nuisance criterion as there are no residential uses in proximity to this site where noise would be a nuisance. The location would also respond to local demand in evidenced through the survey results.

The tender for construction of Carrville CC, Library and District Park was recently awarded. The project scope of work includes development of three (3) new tennis courts. There is an opportunity at this early stage of the contract to consider including pickleball through a variety of different options that include:

1. Shared-use tennis and pickleball (3 tennis/3 pickleball)
2. Dedicated tennis (2 courts) and dedicated pickleball (2 courts)
3. Dedicated pickleball only (6 courts)

Staff recommend Option 2 to provide a balance of tennis and pickleball at this location. To facilitate this option, a change to the existing contract will be required. Subject to Council approval, staff would negotiate a contract change order, with funding for the development of two (2) pickleball courts to be offset by a reduction of one (1) tennis court, plus associated works, to be funded from within approved capital budget.

A location map for LeParc Park and the future Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park is appended as Attachment 1.

Staff met with the Corte Group and discussed their interest to develop a dedicated pickleball hub through a public-private partnership

Staff met with the Corte Group on May 11, 2022. Preliminary discussions included initial introductions, a brief presentation of company background and experience, high-level review of potential business models, typical number of pickleball courts required (10 to 15 courts), examples of existing models in Canada and United States, and growth potential for the sport. Additional supporting information from the Corte Group regarding their request has not yet been received at the time of this report. Further discussions can be coordinated in the coming months to further explore opportunities that would be mutually beneficial to the City, residents, and the Corte Group.

A Tennis and Racket Sports Court Strategy is also being planned for implementation in 2023 and staff recommend including a review of pickleball as part of this study

Staff have identified a need to develop a Tennis and Racket Sports Court Strategy. The objectives of this study will be to review current tennis court inventory, research best practice models in surrounding communities, review current community tennis club operations, community interest and requests and consider upcoming accommodations in response to upcoming outdoor racket sports such as pickleball and padel. The study would make recommendations for the City to implement new standards for a variety of racket sports provision and opportunities for private/public partnerships, accompanied by policies and procedures. Based on this study future pickleball court locations can also be determined.

Staff are recommending to report back to Council through the study on considerations and future locations for pickleball courts.

Financial Impact

The cost to retrofit one (1) existing tennis court into two (2) pickleball courts at LeParc Park is estimated to be approx. \$125,000 excluding cost escalations, tax, contingency and administrative charges, for full court reconstruction. Funding for this project can be identified in the 2023 Capital Budget submission utilizing a combination of Community Services DC funding for growth components of the project and non-DC sources for park infrastructure renewal.

The cost to develop two (2) new pickleball courts at the Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park can be substantially offset by the reduction of one (1) tennis court from the current scope of work. Additional costs are expected to be nominal and are proposed to be funded from the approved capital project. A contract change order will be required for this work.

No additional operating costs or revenues are anticipated as a result of these projects.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

None

Conclusion

Pickleball is an emerging sport experiencing a popularity boom in Canada, particularly among older adults and seniors. Based on the results of the 2021 Pickleball Study, a pilot project at seven (7) tennis courts for shared-use was implemented with positive feedback received overall. In addition to the pilot projects, staff explored the opportunity to retrofit existing tennis courts into pickleball courts and identified two locations for Council consideration, including retrofit of existing tennis courts at LeParc Park and development of new dedicated pickleball courts at the Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park. Staff also met with the Corte Group to discuss their interest to

develop a dedicated pickleball hub through a public-private partnership. Further discussions are required to explore potential opportunities.

For more information, please contact: Michael Habib, Acting Manager, Parks and Open Space Planning, Extension 8092

Attachments

1. Park Location Map

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