

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** June 28, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Eric Stepura, Director, Recreation and Culture  
Jim Gordon, Director, Engineering and Municipal Operations

**SUBJECT:** White Rock Pickleball Request for a Dedicated Court at Centennial Park

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Council:

1. Approve dedicating the northwest tennis/pickleball court at Centennial Park as pickleball only;
  2. Authorize White Rock Pickleball (WRPB) to hire an approved contractor, at their cost, to repaint the lines on the northwest court at Centennial Park for pickleball;
  3. Approve expand the pickleball priority use hours on the northeast tennis/pickleball court at Centennial Park to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily (and maintain other court times on this court as shared use, first come, first served for tennis or pickleball as per present court use regulations);
  4. Approve the installation of new court use signage to clarify the above changes for the general public;
  5. Consider funding in the amount of \$50K in the City's 2022-2026 Financial Plan to construct new permanent pickleball courts, new surfacing, line marking, net posts and other court amenities for the northwest court;
  6. Consider allocating \$300K in the City's 2022-2026 Financial Plan for the installation of tennis/pickleball court lighting at Centennial Park tennis courts; and
  7. Consider allocating \$1.5K/year for tennis/pickleball court lighting electrical power operating costs in the City's 2022-2026 Financial Plan.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the Regular Council meeting held June 14, 2021, a delegation from White Rock Pickleball (WRPB) asked Council for the following court improvements to benefit the sport of pickleball at Centennial Park:

Phase I

1. Designate the northwest tennis/pickleball court at Centennial Park for permanent pickleball only play.
2. Authorize the WRPB to hire a contractor, at their cost, to paint over the white tennis lines on the northwest court.

3. Extend the pickleball priority use hours on the north east tennis/pickleball court from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily (and maintain other court times on this court as shared use, first come, first served for tennis or pickleball as per present court use regulations).
4. Provide new clear signage to clarify the above changes for the general public.

#### Phase II

5. Request the City of White Rock to approve and construct four (4) new permanent pickleball courts on the northwest court. At minimum, this would include permanent net posts, and a repainted court surface with pickleball only court markings. Additional features such as dividing netting between courts, benches, windbreak screens and other enhancements can also be considered.

Following the presentation from the delegation, Council approved the following motion:

“THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a corporate report for June 28, 2021, that addresses the delegation request of making one (1) tennis court (suggested the upper northwest tennis court at Centennial Park) a permanent pickleball court, using a phased approach. Phase 1 will include a transition of the court on a temporary basis with temporary line painting and use of portable nets. A second corporate report will be brought forward in future regarding Phase 2 (making the change of the one court to permanent).”

Staff have provided some historical background on the past and current uses of the Centennial Park tennis courts, reviewed the above requests from WRPB, and have responded both phases of their court improvement requests in this corporate report, along with recommended actions for Council to consider to meet the current and future court facility demands of both tennis and pickleball players in White Rock.

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

The following recent Council motions dealt with the pickleball courts in White Rock.

<b>Motion # &amp; Meeting Date</b>	<b>Motion Details</b>
Motion # 2019-306 July 22, 2019	That Council directs staff to conduct research to determine a suitable location to build four (4) to eight (8) outdoor dedicated pickleball courts in White Rock.
Motion # 2021-117 March 08, 2021	That Council consider the Maccaud Park project at an upcoming priorities session to potentially allocate \$500,000 from the Community Amenity Contributions to increase the project budget from \$250K to \$750K to include pickleball courts.
Motion # 2021-206 April 12, 2021	THAT Council receive the petition supplied "On-Table" petition with 100 signatures, with the following statement "I believe that Maccaud Park in White Rock BC should remain a public green space, and therefore I am opposed to the City of White Rock installing pickleball or tennis court in Maccaud Park".
Motion #2021-171 March 29, 2021	“THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a corporate report regarding lighting at Centennial Park court area including the cost and the number and how many hours that would extend the Courts at Centennial.”
Motion # 2021-213	

June 14, 2021	THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a corporate report for June 28, 2021, that addresses the delegation request of making one (1) tennis court (suggested the upper west tennis court at Centennial Park) a permanent pickleball court, using a phased approach. Phase 1 will include a transition of the court on a temporary basis with temporary line painting and use of portable nets. A second corporate report will be brought forward in future regarding Phase 2 (making the change of the one court to permanent).
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## **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

The sport of tennis has been played on the public tennis courts at Centennial Park since the early 1970's. The sport of pickleball is a more recent use of these courts (approximately 10 years), and currently, two (2) of the original five (5) public tennis courts are shared use and marked for dual sport use. Pickleball currently gets priority use of two (2) of these courts (northwest and northeast) daily from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (noon), then outside of these hours, the courts are available on a first come, first served basis by both tennis and pickleball players. The three south tennis courts are designated as tennis only, and do not have pickleball lines.

With the rapid growth of the population, and the increasing popularity of tennis and especially pickleball, additional court time is now required for both of these court sports throughout the Peninsula.

The City of Surrey has addressed some of their demand by adding 12 new dedicated pickleball courts at the South Surrey Athletic Park. There are other combination tennis and pickleball courts located at South Surrey Athletic Park (6), Crescent Park (6) and Morgan Creek Park (6). Pickleball is also played indoors at the South Surrey Recreation Centre.

In addition to the City's current eight (8) outdoor pickleball courts, for the two years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Peace Arch Curling Club has offered drop-in pickleball on four (4) indoor pickleball courts on Mondays to Fridays from 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and Tuesday and Thursday nights from 6:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. during the spring/summers months. It is anticipated that this indoor court use for pickleball play at the Peace Arch Curling Club will be made available again effective spring/summer 2022.

It is noted that many of the participants who play pickleball at Centennial Park are not White Rock residents. A recent survey done by WRPB indicated that of the estimated 300 people playing pickleball at Centennial Park, 108, or 36% are White Rock residents. However, there are some White Rock residents who also play pickleball at South Surrey's indoor and outdoor facilities located at the South Surrey Athletic Park, as well as other Surrey Parks.

For the past several years, representatives of the local pickleball community have been asking White Rock City Council for dedicated pickleball courts on which to play their growing sport.

In 2019, two local pickleball players Chuck Lefaive and Bert Coates asked Council to add pickleball court markings to the Taylor Lacrosse Box and the remaining three (3) tennis only public courts at Centennial Park. Staff conducted a survey of local tennis and lacrosse players, and these sport groups strongly opposed adding pickleball markings to the remaining tennis only courts and the lacrosse box.

At the July 22, 2019 meeting, Council approved staff recommendations not to add pickleball court markings onto the lacrosse box and three (3) remaining tennis only courts at Centennial

Park, and directed staff to identify a location for four to eight dedicated pickleball courts, and to consider including funding for these pickleball courts in the City's 2021-2025 Financial Plan.

Staff researched and reviewed all potential City owned or leased property sites that may be suitable for 4-8 dedicated pickleball courts. Two potential location options were identified, which were:

- a portion of the waterfront parking lot west of Oxford Avenue that is leased from BNSF Railway; and
- Maccaud Park.

Staff contacted BNSF Railway requesting approval to add pickleball court markings on the asphalt parking lot west of Oxford Avenue that the City leases for parking. BNSF rejected this request for active use of this land.

City staff then worked with a landscape architect to develop a concept design for four to eight pickleball courts at Maccaud Park, for Council's consideration for the 2021-2025 Financial Plan. This site option was opposed by Council due to public opposition to the proposed loss of passive greenspace.

At the Regular Council meeting held March 29, 2021, the following motion was approved:

“THAT Council direct staff to bring forward a corporate report regarding lighting at Centennial Park court area including the cost and the number and how many hours that would extend the Courts at Centennial.”

In response to this motion, staff proceeded with researching the cost of adding court lighting at the existing tennis courts at Centennial Park to increase the playing time available for local tennis and pickleball players. Once built, these courts would be playable later in the afternoon and evening throughout the year, except during periods of inclement weather. Comments and information related to the cost and viability of this court lighting option is noted further in this corporate report.

### **Recent Request from WRPB**

At the Regular Council meeting held June 14, 2021, a delegation from WRPB asked Council for the following court improvements to benefit the sport of pickleball at Centennial Park:

#### Phase I

1. Designate the northwest tennis/pickleball court at Centennial Park for permanent pickleball only play.
2. Authorize WRPB to hire a contractor, at their cost, to paint over the white tennis lines.
3. Extend the pickleball priority use hours on the northeast tennis/pickleball court from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily (and maintain other court times on this court as shared use, first come, first served tennis or pickleball as per present court use regulations).
4. Provide new clear signage to clarify the above changes for the general public.

#### Phase II

5. Request the City of White Rock to approve and construct new permanent pickleball courts on the northwest court. At minimum, this would include four pickleball courts with permanent posts, nets and a properly painted court surface with pickleball only court markings. Additional features such as dividing netting between courts, benches, wind break screens and other enhancements can also be considered.

Staff have reviewed the five above requests from WRPB and provide comments and options Council could consider, to address the current and future facility demands of both tennis and pickleball players in White Rock.

#### Phase I Requests from WRPB (above)

1. Council could choose to designate the northwest tennis/pickleball court as pickleball only. A notable consequence may be considerable opposition from the local tennis community.

If Council approves designating the northwest tennis/pickleball court at Centennial Park as “pickleball only” the WRPB could then proceed with hiring an approved contractor to paint over the white tennis lines on this court, on the condition that the City’s Engineering and Municipal Operations staff oversee the work and approve the contractor.

2. Extend the hours per day that pickleball receives priority use currently from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (noon), to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A notable consequence may be considerable opposition by the local tennis community.

If Council approves designating the northwest court as pickleball only and extending the hours on the northeast court to 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., staff will arrange to have signs communicating these court use changes installed at each of these two courts. Funding for these signs will be from existing operating budgets.

#### Phase II requests from WRPB (above)

If Council approves designating the northwest court as pickleball only, then consideration should be given for Council to approve funding in the amount of \$50K in the City’s 2022-2026 Financial Plan for the following upgrade work to make this court more suitable for pickleball:

- Remove all tennis infrastructure including posts and the net, fill net post holes and resurface the court, repaint with court markings for four (4) pickleball courts and install wind screens, benches and permanent pickleball net posts. Estimated cost is \$40K.
- Install a tennis practice backboard on one of the south tennis courts. This will discourage tennis players from using the pickleball courts to access the existing backboard. Estimated cost is \$10K.

The total cost for Phase II Court Improvements is approximately \$50K.

#### **Court Lighting**

In response to a Council motion made at the Regular Council meeting held March 29, 2021, staff have researched the option of adding court lighting at the existing tennis courts at Centennial Park to increase the playing time available for local tennis and pickleball players. Once built, these courts would be playable later in the afternoon and evening throughout the year, except during periods of inclement weather.

The benefits of adding lights to the public tennis courts at Centennial Park are as follows:

- Increased playing time will be provided for both tennis and pickleball players in the community. It is estimated that the addition of court lighting will add another 1,000 hours/court/year x 5 courts = 5,000 hours/year of court time for local tennis/pickleball play at Centennial Park.
- Adding lights will maximize the use of existing tennis/pickleball courts, rather than taking away existing greenspace elsewhere to meet this growing need.

- The increased playing time would allow staff to reallocate court time on the existing public courts to give dedicated one sport only facilities to both pickleball and tennis players on courts that aren't dual marked, and with appropriate permanent court nets.
- The estimated cost to install lighting on the five (5) tennis courts at Centennial Park is estimated at \$300K. This lighting would consist of nine (9) light poles fitted with shades to direct the illumination directly on the courts to avoid light spillage onto adjacent properties. The estimated cost to light all five (5) courts is \$300K. The cost to light only the three (3) south tennis only courts is estimated at \$220K.

The electricity costs to operate these lights 1,000 hours per year is \$1.5K.

Notable considerations include the location of the light poles and electrical trenches for the court lighting could potentially negatively impact eight trees if only the three south tennis only courts are lit, or nine trees if all five (5) courts are lit. The trees will be significantly damaged by electrical trenching between the two north courts and many will need to be removed or replaced. As an alternative, staff are looking at the option of locating the electrical trenches just inside and parallel to the northwest or northeast court fence, then repairing the court surface so that the trees are not impacted.

It is recommended that neighbors living immediately adjacent to the Centennial Park tennis courts be consulted about increased court lighting before any work is done.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated cost for Phase II improvements to the northwest court for pickleball is \$50K.

The estimated cost to install lighting on the five (5) tennis courts at Centennial Park is estimated at \$300K.

The cost to light only the three (3) south tennis only courts is estimated at \$220K.

A recommended source of funds for these court improvements is from the City's Community Amenity Contributions.

The estimated annual operating cost of providing power for the court lighting for all five (5) courts is approximately \$1.5K/year.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

A survey of adjacent White Rock residents should be conducted to seek feedback on increased and expanded court lighting.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

The City's Municipal Operations and Engineering Department would project manage the lighting installation work and be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the lights.

The City's Recreation and Culture Department will work with local tennis and pickleball players to establish a schedule of use of the court playing time, arrange for any new signage and notify the court users of any court use changes.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Additional power consumption will occur if the increased court lights are approved.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Provide safe, reliable and sustainable infrastructure for the community while minimizing impacts on the environment.

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Not support dedicating the northwest tennis/pickleball court to pickleball only which would eliminate the need for the WRPB to hire an approved contractor to paint over the tennis lines and funding of \$50K for related improvements.
2. Not extend pickleball priority use of the northeast court to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. which would eliminate the need for funding in the amount of 300K and installation new court use signage.
3. Consider only lighting the three tennis only courts in the amount of \$220K reducing the estimated annual electrical power from \$1.5K/year for five courts to \$900/year.

### **CONCLUSION**

The sport of tennis has been played on the public tennis courts at Centennial Park since the early 1970's. The sport of pickleball is a more recent use of these courts (approximately 10 years), and currently, two (2) of the original five (5) public tennis courts are shared use and marked for dual sport use for tennis and pickleball.

At the Regular Council meeting held June 14, 2021, a delegation from White Rock Pickle Ball (WRPB) asked Council for several court improvements to benefit the sport of pickleball at Centennial Park. These improvements are outlined in this corporate report.

Staff have provided some historical background on the past and current uses of the Centennial Park tennis courts, reviewed the court improvement requests from WRPB, and have responded to all of their court improvement requests contained in this corporate report, including recommended court upgrades for Council's consideration to better meet the current and future court facility demands for both tennis and pickleball players in White Rock.

It is noted that the local pickleball players have been advocating for a number of years for dedicated pickleball courts on which to grow their sport, Council may consider immediately designating the northwest court at Centennial Park for pickleball only, then address the need to increase the overall court use playing time shortage, by approving funding for court lighting in the City's 2022-2026 Financial Plan.

The ideal timing to carry out any court improvements, would be to begin with the installation of court lighting, and then allocating increased court playing time to be shared between the two sports, so that it is equitable for both tennis and pickleball user groups.

Respectfully submitted,



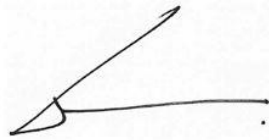
Eric Stepura,  
Director, Recreation and Culture



Jim Gordon,  
Director, Engineering & Municipal Operations

**Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer