

From: Dorsey Burger [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, July 19, 2020 7:55 AM
To: Parks Commissioners <parks_commissioners@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Pickleball and Tennis require independent courts

To Whom it May Concern:

I was alarmed to learn recently that recreation infrastructure managers in Ashland were considering painting pickleball lines on one or more tennis courts at Hunter Park.

Pickleball and tennis require independent courts. This has been demonstrated by the debacle that has taken place on the Lithia Park tennis courts. Here pickleball lines were painted onto the tennis courts without consulting the area's tennis players. The lines themselves disrupted the game for many tennis players. As well, the taking over of the tennis courts by pickleball players at popular times discouraged (and continues to discourage) many tennis players from playing there. These courts, historically popular and once favored by many tennis players as the best place to play in the Valley, became an afterthought for them. Very few of the players I once played tennis with at Lithia will even consider attempting to get a court there now. This is a shame, and surely not what the Parks & Rec Department and the Commission intended. The situation at Lithia should be remediated, with the tennis courts resuming play for tennis only.

Compounding the mistake at Lithia by painting a tennis court or courts at Hunter would be a step in the wrong direction. Pickleball's increasing popularity should not come at the cost of the degradation of the tennis game and experience. Pickleball requires its own infrastructure separate from tennis, and I implore you to devise a solution that respects this.

Sincerely yours,

Dorsey Burger

From: City of Ashland, Oregon <administration@ashland.or.us>
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 11:26 AM
To: Parks Commissioners <parks_commissioners@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Contact the APRC Commissioners Submitted

Name : **Andrew Stallman**

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

Subject: **Pickleball**

Message : Dear Commissioners,

Dear Commissioners,

As you work to find ways to satisfy the growing needs and desires of the tennis and pickleball community, I offer some perspectives that I hope will not only help you come to the decisions about court priorities and usage, but perhaps gain some understanding about the pickleball dynamics that might not be apparent to those not playing the sport.

Ashland Parks & Rec has offered (and once we get past the pandemic, will again?) pickleball classes, which further promote the fastest growing sport in America. OLLI offered classes as well. While encouraging the growth of the sport, should expanding the accommodations for this increase go hand in hand? I believe it should.

Many players here use the app “Playtimescheduler.com” to find games in our area. If you’re at all curious to see a sampling of the activity in Southern Oregon, I encourage you all to take a look. There are also many players who do not use this scheduling tool, and players using Lithia Park seldom post their sessions (and “open-play” referenced below is never listed, but all 6 courts fill up frequently, often with a queue of players waiting to rotate in). The point is: there is a lot of Pickleball being played daily in Southern Oregon!

Lithia Park schedules “open-play” for Pickleball Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8-11 a.m., which serves as a terrific opportunity to learn the game, meet players, and be a part of this growing community. I started this way. I would encourage a similar opportunity for the tennis community. I played tennis for many years, but have lost touch with the current roster of players, and would welcome the chance to get back into the game. Could “open-play” at Hunter Park become that invitation? If you move towards multi-use courts, creating sanctioned times for each sport could be a step towards acknowledging this opportunity for players.

Like tennis, the game of pickleball changes dramatically as you progress. The differences between beginner, intermediate, and advanced play are significant, and the current structure of “open-play” is terrific for beginning and newer intermediate players. There is no differentiation between court assignment, and players with more experience and abilities must expect to play with people just starting out if they want to attend these “open-play” sessions. More advanced players usually look elsewhere for more challenging playing opportunities. So like tennis players, they do not consider these sanctioned times as viable playing options. I travel to Medford, Talent, or Central Point to find appropriate games during these times, and I am not alone. I would very much welcome the chance to play locally more often. Defining the nature of “recreational open-play” should be discussed, but I believe that is secondary to the decisions you are currently trying to make. If that discussion were to take place in the future, I would welcome the chance to participate.

Regarding intramural tennis and Big Al’s tournament: Hunter court already had signs posted saying that the courts are reserved for those events. Big Al’s draw for the opening days of the tournament also require matches to be played on other courts in town, and those have also been reserved for them accordingly. I do not see the connection between pickleball affecting those occurrences. Pickleball takes the same backseat that tennis does during those scheduled times.

While looking to the future of these sports in Ashland, Helman School should be discussed, since quite a few letters from the tennis community mention this as support for segregation. We understand that these courts will be removed when the school is remodeled and expands.

While striped for 8 courts, they are seldom used beyond 2 or 3; some of the reasons I mention might be helpful to consider as you make your decisions when creating new venues of play:

- 1) Players are not allowed to use courts during school hours
- 2) Lack of restrooms (closest one is at the Dog Park)
- 3) Must bring your own net – there is no equipment, as there are at all other Pickleball venues
- 4) Often very windy : Pickleballs are about half the weight of tennis balls; wind affects gameplay

Some of the previous letters from the tennis community also mention the loss of tennis courts on SOU's property. The courts on Wightman St. next to the stadium sit unused and are deteriorating, and the courts near the dorms have been gone for a long time. Rather than see this resource go to waste, is it possible for the city to negotiate a lease with the university? Again, I comment on the need to do more with less. Could these courts become multi-use? If your desire is to preserve Hunter courts as "tennis-only", could bike polo be moved here as well?

Many letters from the tennis community also mention the annoyance of multiple lines and the confusion it creates. With the lack of dedicated pickleball courts, anyone playing pickleball must get used to this (and it is not a difficult adjustment). An advantage that tennis players have is that the boundaries of the courts are colored differently. Pickleball players don't share that advantage, and at some indoor venues, the courts are lined further to accommodate basketball and volleyball, to name just two sports that share the space.

Financial priorities: If dedicated courts at Oak Knoll are removed from consideration for now, could the money allocated to that project still be used towards Pickleball in another way? Lithia park courts need help, just as Hunter Park does. The Pickleball nets at Lithia Park are wearing out. I've repaired many of them, but they will need to be replaced before too long. Please consider whether continuing to use temporary versus fixed nets would save enough money so Lithia Park courts could be repaired and re-surfaced. Setting up these nets is simple and quick, but obviously not as luxurious as fixed nets.

Court Possibilities – segregate sports v.s. multi-use?

A) Segregate

If preserving Hunter Courts for tennis-only, should Lithia Park become Pickleball-only?
Could the upper court be striped to match the way the lower courts are striped for 4 Pickleball courts (thereby adding 2 more courts, totaling 8 dedicated pickleball courts in Lithia Park?)
If the Pickleball courts still used temporary nets (eliminating the cost of installing permanent Pickleball nets), would the savings be enough to get Lithia Park re-surfaced instead of looking towards a grant?

B) Multi-use

In the spirit of spreading court usage and possibilities for both tennis & pickleball in more locations than just one:
Stripe 2 tennis courts to add 4 Pickleball courts at Hunter (2 courts closest to batting cage)
Lithia Park has 4 dedicated pickleball courts (lower) plus 2 shared with tennis (upper)
Again, my suggestion would be to still use temporary nets and save money.

C) Multi-use option similar to B, but increase Pickleball courts to 8 instead of 6 in Lithia Park.
(Upper tennis courts in Lithia remain shared, but stripe for 4 instead of 2 Pickleball)

Thank you for your consideration! - Andy Stallman [REDACTED]

From: Peggy Cheng [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 2:03 PM

To: Parks Information <parkinfo@ashland.or.us>

Cc: sopapickleball@gmail.com <sopapickleball@gmail.com>; Andy Stallman [REDACTED]

Subject: Pickleball in Lithia Park

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing in support of one of Andy Stallman's suggestion of dedicated pickleball courts in Lithia Park.

1. There are many dedicated courts for tennis but none for pickleball. There are many, many more pickleball players than tennis players. SOPA has a membership of about 500 players. Clearly, we have a shortage of courts for pickleball; we are underserved.

2. The Lithia Park courts can better serve more pickleball players than tennis players. One tennis court can accommodate two tennis players since they usually play singles, but the same court, with lines re-drawn, can serve 16 Pickleball players. Imagine 32 players at the same same time in the same space as opposed to 4 tennis players!

3. It is madness and completely unfair that our better players have to go to Medford and Talent to play. The open play in Ashland is great, but it takes away court time from the better players. In order for players to improve, they need the better players to stay in Ashland to teach them and practice with them.

4. Very often, we have to compete with tennis players for the courts. It's a frustrating waiting game for us if they get there first. Tennis players never have to wait. They just move along to other tennis courts. We have nowhere to go, but stay put and wait. Every pre-pandemic Wednesday, well over 20 players from around the valley converge for ladies' night in Lithia Park. Imagine our frustration when tennis players get there first!

5. Pickleball is a social sport and a social event. We switch around players all the time— all the more reason why we need to be all in the same place.

6. There is nothing more frustrating and aggravating than scheduling a time to play, only to find the courts are occupied by tennis players. Just kills your mood and enthusiasm to play, and when you finally get to play, it's almost dinner time.

7. Many pickleball players play tennis or used to play tennis, so we are friends with some of them. The competition for the courts has become contentious and has created some animosity. For example, if we ask them when they'll be done, they say we are putting pressure on them.

8. We are a retirement community. Look at other retirement communities touting pickleball courts in their brochures! We go to Medford to teach our retirees in OLLI how to play pickleball.

9. Without dedicated courts, we have to install the nets each time we play. All the nets are in disrepair. Andy has fixed some of them, but they are torn in so many places. Many players have resorted to hauling their own net systems to the courts. Not exactly convenient or fair to them. Permanent net systems are cheaper in the long run.

10. We want to take pride in Ashland being a pickleball-friendly community, and the first step is to have eight dedicated courts in Lithia Park.

Thank you.
Peggy Cheng

From: Ren Kolar [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2020 2:41 PM
To: Parks Information <parksinfo@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Pickleball info for upcoming decisions

Good afternoon

Just wanted to take a moment to share some thoughts about pickleball and the Parks and Rec Commission's upcoming decisions.

First a couple of facts. Pickleball is arguably the nation's fastest growing sport. Up 650% in the last six years per a 2019 study! In Jackson County it is growing incredibly with new players emerging daily and groups struggling to find enough open places to play. The number of players on the courts when Covid is not a factor is easily double the number that play currently.

Tennis on the other hand is a declining sport, but that doesn't mean it doesn't have a place as well.

The problem as I see it and as many have noted, is our lack of places to play in Ashland. When we were planning on getting dedicated courts at Oak Knoll, that felt like a great solution to our overcrowding issues. Hunter could remain a great place for tennis. Lithia and Helman courts could be shared by both sports and Oak Knoll could be just for pickleball. But now I hear Helman is going to be removed and without Oak Knoll that leaves the hundreds of pickleball players with 6 tired and shared courts at Lithia. This is why so many Ashland players go to Medford and surrounding towns to play. And with our travel to these other towns, so goes our money spent in restaurants breweries and vineyards etc. This is a social sport that brings people together and gets them out enjoying the towns they play in.

Most towns large and small are finding ways to include dedicated courts for pickleball because they know it is growing. They know it brings people to their towns for tournaments and social games. This leads to spending at restaurants hotels etc. Tourism increases, people get engaged in their communities and create entire social groups based on this sport. Klamath falls has dedicated courts, Medford, Grants Pass and Bend all have dedicated courts and it is increasing tourism and generating revenues with pickleball tournaments and the people that they bring to the area. Ashland should be able to do the same. Using the SOU courts, Making Lithia exclusively Pickleball or creating new courts either at Oak Knoll or elsewhere are all good options. Sharing the courts at Hunter or sharing half of the courts at Hunter would help. But surely there is a place where we can make courts available to our sport and courts that won't annoy the tennis players. Ideally they'd be separate courts, but if the budget doesn't allow it then we'll all have to find a way to play nicely and have tolerance for each other's enjoyment. I know that isn't a problem from my side. Tennis and the players I know are great fun. But we need to measure the courts by the number of players needing them, not by the loudest voices.

Bottom line is if the funds are not there to build courts, there is nothing to do about that. But if you look at what

we have available and the number of players needing that same space, at a minimum those who play pickleball should have the same opportunities that the tennis players have.

Thanks for your time

Ren Kolar
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 10:55 PM
To: Parks Information <parksinfo@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Pickleball courts in Lithia Park

Dear Parks Committee,

Those of us who are regular and enthusiastic pickleball players here in Ashland we were saddened to hear that the APRC had reallocated the funds set aside for dedicated pickleball courts at the Oak Knolls Country Club. We understand that the pandemic has affected all lives in many varied ways and that includes the City of Ashland. Be that as it may, we are asking the counsel to consider turning the present tennis/pickleball courts into 8 full time pickleball courts to accommodate the hundreds of present and future players of this wonderful sport. As we all know there are no dedicated pickleball courts in Ashland as we share our playing space with tennis players. If the city would be willing to undertake a comparison of the number of tennis vs pickleball players who utilize Lithia courts each day/week they would see the numbers of pickleball players far exceed tennis players. Tennis players have had sole access and use of the courts for many, many years. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in America and it would benefit the city to change with the times as the number of daily pickleball players shows. We lost our place at Oat Knolls, please consider allowing us to have our own place in Lithia Park. Thank you all for your consideration in this matter.

Philippe Sprague
[REDACTED]

From: Sally Jones [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2020 6:54 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Tennis Courts at Hunter

To Park Commissioners:

I have already written to Park Commissioners, but would like to add more comments.

After playing at Helman School this summer, this suddenly came to my attention. Why don't the pickleball players ask for lines to be put on the paved areas at elementary schools? There are paved playground areas that are not used to the maximum during the summer and after school.

Also what's the possibility of putting pickleball courts in elementary school gymnasiums? I'm not sure what the scheduling is after school hours, but this seems like a worthy idea during the winter months when outdoor courts are wet or icy.

Please add this to the conversation. Sally Jones

From: adrienne simmons [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 12:27 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Testimony for Aug. 12 Regular meeting

As an Ashland resident who has become an avid pickleball player, I hope you will make enhancements for all of us pickleball players who would like good courts for playing in Ashland.

Thank you,

Adrienne Simmons
[REDACTED] Ashland

From: Louise Shawkat [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 2:41 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public testimony for Aug 12 Regular meeting

Re : pickle ball nets

So far the frames are usable.

The nets themselves are fine, but the bindings and the middle prop needs fixing....if you believe in repair and not throw-away, I think it would be worth asking the local Deluxe awning shop if they can repair them. It would give a local company business and model waste reduction.-for starters.

[REDACTED]
Louise D Shawkat

[REDACTED]
Ashland, Oregon 97520 [REDACTED]

From: Allen Baker [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 4:17 PM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Input – August 12, 2020

Honorable Parks Commissioners --

I play tennis at Hunter Park on a regular basis, and there are not enough courts in the prime morning hours to accommodate all the tennis players. So the idea of striping the courts for pickleball use as well would result in further overload, and that's not a good thing.

This morning (Friday, August 7), all eight courts were full well before 8:30 a.m., and I counted 14 people waiting to play. Let that sink in a bit. We had 14 people waiting, and it wasn't even a weekend. Most of the courts had doubles matches going. So somewhere close to 40 people were out there playing or wanting to play.

Pickleball lines on a tennis court are NOT benign. The added lines are a distraction and make it harder to see and hit the ball as a tennis player. The obvious question is how you can accommodate pickleball players and tennis players on these eight courts if they already have an oversupply of tennis players at prime times.

Yes, it's pretty quiet on those courts after 11:30 or so. It's also blistering hot playing at that time. I remember moving to Ashland from Alaska and coming out to play with my daughter at 4 in the afternoon. We didn't last twenty minutes.

I have been a morning player in the last few years, but I used to play in the early evening and there was a significant tennis crowd at that time also.

Remember, the Stadium Courts at SOU are locked and can't be used this summer.

Courts at Lithia Park already are striped for pickleball and, as a result, are not really suitable for tennis any longer. Helman School courts also have pickleball lines already. And the YMCA has indoor pickleball courts.

Those eight courts at Hunter are basically the entire inventory available for tennis players in Ashland. And there are a lot of us, as this morning illustrates.

Hunter Park is also the main venue for the annual big A's Tennis Tournament. Big A's is arguably the largest amateur sporting event in Ashland. It's a big draw for players who come here and then spend money at our local restaurants, motels and other businesses. Striping the Hunter Park courts for pickleball would depreciate that event and reduce the attendance.

Pickleball might well be an up-and-coming sport. But there is clear evidence that pickleball and tennis don't go together well. Aside from the confusion that results from adding pickleball lines to tennis courts, the sound is sharp and distracting to tennis players to play when there's pickleball happening just a few feet away on an adjoining court. I have experienced that as well. The sound of pickleball is more like ping-pong, but louder. There are plenty of reports of tennis players, and even neighbors of new pickleball venues, complaining about the noise of the sport. Tennis has much more subdued sounds.

The proposal for new pickleball courts at the Oak Knoll Golf Course is a good one. But that's probably too expensive for us to contemplate in the current economic conditions. So I'd suggest that the department investigate other areas with substantial patches of asphalt for new pickleball facilities.

One that comes immediately to mind is the already asphalted area uphill from Market of Choice near the OLLI complex on the SOU campus. That's centrally located, has plenty of nearby parking, and would have decent security if a portable restroom is needed. Some negotiations with SOU would be needed, but that area has not been used a lot since the new dorms were built. SOU might welcome the idea of jointly developed pickleball courts to serve students on the campus who play the sport as well as the general public.

In any case, I ask you not to wade into a whole new problem at Hunter Park and leave the tennis courts there for the tennis player who, incidentally, have contributed their volunteer time to cleaning and maintaining the grounds around the courts.

I would request a slot to address you in person at next week's meeting, but I would be covering much of the same ground, and I know those meetings can run long at times. Thanks to all of you for serving, and thanks for reading my thoughts on the tennis matter.

Allen Baker, [REDACTED]

From: NANCY ZAHOV [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 12:36 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Hi

We have heard that you will be discussing pickleball at hunter park TENNIS COURTS. Today there were over 10 people waiting to play tennis before 0900 . I think with covid being a real part of our lives , more people want to play outside then the inside club. So if you add pickleball to the agenda at the park, we will not be able to play . Also i played at helmsman school once with all the lines , it is very confusing . I Realize that a lot of people are now playing pickleball and need more courts but what we only have eight for Tennis. I Have not tried to play at lithia park as it seems like it is a pickleball court . Please keep hunter a place for tennis not pickleball . We all need something to help with the stress of everyday living . Thank you and I hope you will take this letter into consideration when making your decision Nancy and Chris Zahov 🎾

From: Stuart Douglas [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 4:54 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Tennis player concern

Good afternoon Sean,

Please understand that our tennis courts should be for tennis players. All were full today with waits. There are other ways to have pickle ball courts other than putting lines on tennis courts. Certain schools, the Y, and there was talk of building pickle ball courts on Oak Knoll golf course property. Let's get real and do this right. Thank you for understanding, Stuart Douglas

From: ward anderson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 5:11 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Opposition to the over-laying of pickle ball lines on tennis courts at Hunter Park

August 7, 2020

Parks & Recreation Board
Mr. Sean Sullivan

Dear Mr. Sullivan

I am opposed to over-laying of pickle ball lines on the tennis courts at Hunter Park. I have played on such dual-lined courts and found them confusing and making it difficult to play, perhaps even the distraction is dangerous.

The tennis courts are well used at Hunter Park and have been since middle spring when the weather was reliable. For example, on Friday, August 07, 2020, the courts were completely taken in the morning with 12-13 people waiting for an open court. Some people came and found no courts left. Adding pickle ball players to the mix would make it even worse.

These are two different sports and should not be mixed.

Please seek another option if the pickle balls players have proven that they need for additional courts in Ashland.

Thank you,

Andy Anderson

Ward (Andy) Anderson
[REDACTED]
Ashland

From: City of Ashland, Oregon [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 5:38 PM
To: Parks Commissioners <parks_commissioners@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Contact the APRC Commissioners Submitted

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Name : **Nancy Walz**
Phone: [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

Subject: **tennis courts**

Message : First of all, I want to thank you for prioritizing the resurfacing of the tennis courts at Hunter Park. The cracks are becoming tripping hazards and repairs are badly needed. I hope the resurfacing project will correct the underlying issues so the cracks won't recur any time soon. I play pickle ball occasionally but am primarily a tennis player. I have heard about a discussion to share the courts with pickle ball players. I am opposed to this idea because: - The Hunter courts are the go-to courts for tennis players and during prime time (morning) hours in the summer are full most days. This morning people were waiting for courts. There just isn't enough room for more activities! -SOU tore out their best courts and the remaining courts are virtually unplayable. Limited courts and pickle ball lines at Lithia mean that they are rarely used by tennis players, leaving limited options. - Pickle ball lines are very distracting for tennis players. It limits our ability to use the courts for competitive events like Big Al's and high school tennis. I also think the use of Hunter courts for bike polo should be reconsidered given the resurfacing project. Bike polo has caused visible damage to the court surface. The net is not easy to take up and down and has been damaged as well. Tennis has always been the PRIMARY usage for the Hunter courts. I am all for shared facilities when they make sense and don't diminish the use for the primary purpose - in this case: tennis. Thanks for your consideration, Nancy Walz

From: JENIFER STURGES [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, August 07, 2020 8:20 PM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>

Subject: Public Testimony for Aug 12 Regular Meeting-Pickleball Striping of Hunter Park Tennis Courts

I cannot attend the Aug 12 meeting but would like to strongly urge you NOT to move forward with the potential striping of the Hunter Park Tennis Courts with pickle ball lines.

I have been an Ashland resident since 1976 where I played tennis at SOU , participated in innumerable tennis tournaments, including Big Als, and I currently play 4 days a week with a local and longstanding group of seniors.

Since as long as I can remember tennis court usage and time slot shortages have been a problem. The fact that SOU eradicated the 6 courts where there are now dorms and their locking of and disarray around the 6 courts across from the SOU track and field has detracted from our ability to play tennis as well. Adding pickle ball players to the remaining Hunter Courts will only create more shortages, duress and conflict. At Hunter we already have to wait while Parks and Rec lessons occur, private lessons take place and of course the high school play in the spring always takes precedence. I see that is would be a sheer disaster to add yet the pickle ball slant.

There are already pickle ball lines at Lithia Park, Helman School and I believe at the Y. It does appear that at the corner of Holmes and Normal there would be ample space to build and develop pickle ball courts when time and money allows. Pickle ball seems to be growing in popularity. In fact should I become more disabled I may take up the sport. I believe the time has come to have some designated specialized pickle ball courts somewhere in Ashland.

Please let me add add that pickle ball lines are very distracting to tennis play. In addition pickle ball action creates a lot of distracting noise to a potential adjacent tennis player The ball hitting noise is way and above that outside visitors, Ashland attention and tourist money. It is hard to believe that out of town players would not be disgruntled by these pickle ball markings. I would assume it would be to the City's benefit to keep this tournament thriving.

I appreciate your considered reading and thought towards this very important issue.

Sincerely,
Jen Sturges

[REDACTED]
Ashland
[REDACTED]

From: Jane Ferguson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 08, 2020 8:31 AM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Tennis courts at Hunter Park

Dear Sean,

I would like to reiterate some of Allen Baker's wise words for the record:

I play tennis at Hunter Park on a regular basis, and there are not enough courts in the prime morning hours to accommodate all the tennis players. So the idea of striping the courts for pickleball use as well would result in further overload, and that's not a good thing.

This morning (Friday, August 7), all eight courts were full well before 8:30 a.m., and I counted 14 people waiting to play. Let that sink in a bit. We had 14 people waiting, and it wasn't even a weekend. Most of the courts had doubles matches going. So somewhere close to 40 people were out there playing or wanting to play.

Pickleball lines on a tennis court are NOT benign. The added lines are a distraction and make it harder to see and hit the ball as a tennis player. The obvious question is how you can accommodate pickleball players and tennis players on these eight courts if they already have an oversupply of tennis players at prime times.

Hunter Park is also the main venue for the annual big A's Tennis Tournament. Big A's is arguably the largest amateur sporting event in Ashland. It's a big draw for players who come here and then spend money at our local restaurants, motels and other businesses. Striping the Hunter Park courts for pickleball would depreciate that event and reduce the attendance.

Please consider other options for pickleball courts and preserve the Hunter Park courts for tennis!
Thank you!!!

Jane Ferguson

From: Sascha [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 08, 2020 12:48 PM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Community input

As a member of this community. I have a child at the high school and one at the middle school.

I strongly support and desire for a footsol surface. Currently we have to drive to central point to join the footsol team. That's ridiculous.'

Please, get us one here. I'm sure you know how popular footsol is? There are hundreds of teams that play and compete in the valley.

The multiplex in Medford was fully booked for hours and they also had to rent another two gyms and hold back to back games to accommodate last season.''''

From: Amy Stewart [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 08, 2020 2:00 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Input August 20, 2020-- Futsal court

Hello there Mr. Sullivan,

I would like to express my support for creating one court at Hunter Park that would be for multi-sport use, including futsal. My son LOVES to play futsal, has attended many winter futsal groups at the AMS gym, and often his ASC team would play in one of the Hunter Park courts in order to practice their speed work. Our family would love to have one of the courts dedicated to that use.

Thank you!
Amy Stewart
[REDACTED] Ashland

From: joy rineman [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 08, 2020 2:51 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Multi-Sport use court support

Hello,

Just wanted to express my support of allocating a court at Hunter Park to Multi-Sport purposes. The tennis courts are rarely full and the soccer kids would benefit from playing Futsal there.

Thank you for your consideration,
-Joy Harwood, mother of Eion age 9

From: Dorsey Burger [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 09, 2020 8:39 AM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Testimony for August 12 Regular Meeting

Dear ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

As I wrote in my last letter concerning this matter, pickleball and tennis are incompatible sports and need separate facilities. The pickleball community is doing itself a major disservice by imposing its needs onto others and, in so doing, creating adversaries rather than alliances. The parks and recreation commissioners must not fuel this adversarial relationship by taking away exclusive tennis facilities, as they have done at the Lithia courts.

In times of budget shortfalls amid a pandemic, parks and recreation managers should not be taking away from a vibrant and thriving tennis community, nor should they be creating adversarial conditions. The imposition of pickleball onto the tennis courts at Lithia was a mistake, perhaps fueled by the false equation of the 2 sports because they are both 'racket' sports. This is a slippery slope that the commissioners have embarked upon, and any pickleball use of Hunter's tennis courts would compound this mistake and should not be allowed.

Instead, the expanding local pickleball community and the recreation commissioners who serve them and the wider community need to devise viable short-term solutions that do not create conflicts. The longer-term solution is clearly the creation of exclusive pickleball facilities. There are many paved flat surfaces in Ashland and elsewhere in the Rogue Valley that are unused or used very little and could be used at the present time for pickleball; the pickleball community and the commissioners should identify the ones that meet their needs and do not impose on others.

Thank you for your attention, and for the work you do in contributing to the excellent recreation opportunities in our area. Please enter my comments into the public record.

Sincerely,

Dorsey Burger

From: Dale Gates [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 09, 2020 2:19 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Re: Tennis/Pickleball Striping Public Meeting

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in regard to the proposal to re-surface the Hunter Park tennis courts and stripe them for pickle ball. I believe the intent is to provide a higher standard of play for both sports in an economical manner.

I appreciate your goal of improving the public sports facilities while keeping an eye on the budget. Not all sports, though, are compatible. Bike polo has resulted in damage to several of the courts. Similarly, striping the courts for pickle ball will degrade the value of the tennis courts, which, I feel, is a false economy.

I play and enjoy both sports. I find it far easier to find an opportunity to play pickle ball than I do tennis--both indoor and outdoor. Eleven people were waiting for a court when I arrived at Hunter last Wednesday at 8:30 am. While the pressure on playing space is very high now and varies throughout the day and year, the courts will be permanently diminished if they're striped for both sports.

I urge you to maintain and enhance this asset through resurfacing and deny the request for re-striping.

Thank you,
Dale Gates

From: william gates [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 09, 2020 2:36 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Hunter TENNIS Courts

Parks and Rec Commissioners,

I am writing in regard to the proposal to resurface the Hunter Park tennis courts and stripe them for pickleball. I know that budget constraints have precluded the building of new courts at Oak Knoll, however, this is not a good solution. There is way too much competition for the diminishing supply of tennis courts.

SOU has taken 12 tennis courts out of public use. Helman school is now striped for pickleball (over a tennis court) but is not available. Lithia Park is striped for pickleball as well. Hunter's 8 courts are all that remain as dedicated tennis courts in Ashland and even that is not quite true. Bike polo has been permitted and has resulted in damage to several of the courts. The additional lines required for pickleball add to the player's confusion and increase the demand for a very limited resource.

I play and enjoy both sports but I find it far easier to find a place to play pickleball than I do tennis--both indoor and outdoor. Fourteen people were waiting for a court when I arrived at Hunter on Friday at 8:30 am. While the pressure on playing space is very high now and varies throughout the day and year, the courts will be permanently diminished if they're striped for both sports.

I urge you to maintain and enhance this asset through resurfacing and deny the request for re-striping

Bill Gates

From: Lucy Erickson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 7:46 AM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Input: August 20, 202

Good morning Sean,

My name is Lucy Erickson and I am a resident here in Ashland, OR. I have 3 kids, 2 of which are avid soccer players. We really love the sport for team building, social interactions, love of the game, and to get their bodies moving. Please consider converting one of the courts @ Hunter for multi-use so our children may utilize it for Futsal. There doesn't seem to be enough fields for the amount of teams here in Ashland for everyone to use them as often as our teams would like to practice. Especially with the tearing down of 6th grade hall @ AMS, that will become one less facility we can use in the off-season.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lucy Erickson

From: Scott Bandoroff [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 12:57 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Input: Aug 20, 2020

Hi Sean, I am writing to express my support for dedicating one of the Hunter Park tennis court spaces for multi use sports. My son and I are avid soccer players and would benefit greatly from having a space to play futsal. I am also a tennis player and never have a problem finding open courts in Ashland. Sacrificing one court seems a reasonable course of action considering all those who would benefit from its use.

Thank you for your consideration.

Scott Bandoroff

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Scott Bandoroff, Ph.D.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ashland, OR 97520

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: G.A. PATTON [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 6:05 PM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Testimony for 8/12 regular meeting

Dear Parks Commission,

This is testimony regarding the unfinished business of resurfacing the Hunter Park tennis courts.

Since my first letter to the Parks Commission I have become aware that the Helman School tennis courts (which are also used for pickleball) are scheduled to be demolished during the school remodel. That makes the crunch for tennis courts and pickleball courts in Ashland even more dire.

Though tennis and pickleball are both ball/racquet(paddle) sports they are not really compatible for play at the same time in the same space. The sound of the ball striking the racquet is very important auditory information for skilled tennis players. The loud noise produced when the plastic ball strikes the pickleball paddle distorts that auditory information. The addition of pickleball lines is also a distraction for tennis players.

Ashland High School rents Hunter Park for the interscholastic tennis season. Each team competition consists of 4 singles and 4 doubles matches. If pickleball lines are painted on some of the Hunter Park courts some players will have the disadvantage of having to play with extraneous lines on their assigned courts. Big Al's Tennis Tournament is also played at Hunter Park. We get a great turnout of locals as well as players from northern CA and other parts of OR. We used to use the courts at both Lithia Park and Helman School for tournament matches but we got so many complaints about the pickleball lines at Helman school we discontinued its use. Hunter Park is a premier location for tournament tennis and I am afraid that adding pickleball lines will make the tournament site less desirable leading to fewer participants and a loss of revenue for the city.

The use of the tennis courts at Lithia Park for pickleball is well established. Paint blended (the same color as the tennis courts but softer tone) lines at Lithia Park so it can be used for both sports. The space needed for pickleball lends itself well to the blacktop area in many of the neighborhood parks, including Garfield, Lincoln and the Railroad park. If more pickleball courts are needed before they are built at Oak Knoll please consider the blacktop space at local parks.

Please retain the Hunter Park tennis courts as the premier public tennis court facility in Southern Oregon and resurface the courts with tennis lines only.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gail Patton

From: Glen G [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:05 AM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>

Subject: Hunter Park Tennis Courts

Dear Sean,

I sincerely hope you do not convert any of the Hunter Park tennis courts to Pickelbal courts. Those courts are the only remaining tennis courts in the area and they often fill up quickly. Tennis is pretty much the only exercise I get these days and I would miss it very much.

Sincerely,

Glen Griffiths

From: marie uhtoff [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:52 AM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>

Subject: August 12, 2020 Public Comment

Hello,

I'm writing to express my support of dedicating one of the courts at Hunter Park to multi-sport use. Our family of five has enjoyed many hours of fun on the Hunter Park courts playing futsal. In our time at Hunter Park we have often played alongside tennis players playing on adjacent courts and our interactions have always been harmonious. The sport of soccer and futsal attracts a diverse population and the Hunter Park facility would be a step in the right direction to creating public recreation spaces in Ashland to promote sport opportunities for all community members, including Ashland's minority community groups. The Hunter Park facility is an excellent location for a futsal court. The fact that it has lights has allowed us to meet other families in the evenings to play futsal games together.

I would love to see Ashland provide more opportunities for public recreation for young families and the dedication of a multi-use court at Hunter Park would make that possible.

Thank you,
Marie Uhtoff

From: Jake Crawford [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 10:24 AM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Testimony for June 10 Study Session

Greetings Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission,

I am a resident of the city of Ashland and am writing in support of designating one court at Hunter Park for multi-sport hard court activities. Thank you for the opportunity to show my support to expand recreation opportunities at Hunter Park and in the City of Ashland. I am a member of the Rogue Valley Bike Polo Club, and we are respectfully asking for your support to serve a more diverse demographic of hard court-based sports by modifying existing facilities and repurposing one existing court at the south end of Hunter Park.

Presently, Court 5 at Hunter Park serves as the location for the Rogue Valley bike Polo Club, which meets regularly rain or shine throughout the year on Monday nights and hosts an annual tournament (in non-covid years) that brings participants and spectators from across the region. We are an inclusive club that welcomes anyone and everyone of all skill levels to come, play or spectate a fun outdoor activity and utilize one of the city's important public spaces.

Our club has been recognized numerous times in the Ashland Tidings/Medford Mail Tribune and has also been recognized in the Seattle Times, and we look forward to growing our participation through a dedicated space.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to play at Hunter Park Court 5, and are requesting the Commission to consider designating this single court for multi-sport to allow other users, including futsal and the Ashland youth soccer club to have a designated space to enjoy outdoor recreation. We recognize that Court 5 also is one of several available courts for local tennis players, however other opportunities remain throughout the city and at Hunter Creek for tennis players to participate in their sport.

In its current form, each Monday night we use Court 5, we must construct and deconstruct the bike polo court by temporarily and safely removing the tennis nets, filling the post holes with fitted wooden pieces and hauling side-boards that we custom built and funded through our club to the court to create a small safety barrier and keep the ball in play.

We ask that you consider a minor modification to the existing infrastructure that will expand existing recreation opportunities for goal-oriented hard court sports by dedicating one court to serve a mix of sports, such as futsal, soccer, and bike polo. This will still allow Hunter Park's current users to enjoy the remaining 7 courts at Hunter Park and the other courts available throughout the city of Ashland.

Designating Court 5 as a multi-sport court will open up access to other sports who otherwise do not have a designated space, increase the safety for its users, limit the maintenance of building and moving the court boundaries, and help foster a more expansive and inclusive sports community in the city.

Thank you for consideration of our request to dedicate a single Hunter Park tennis court to multiple sports.

Respectfully,
Jake

Jake Crawford
Ashland, Oregon 97520
[REDACTED]

From: Peter Finkle [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 11:11 AM
To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Public Testimony for August 12 Regular Meeting

Dear Parks Commissioners,

I am commenting as a tennis player with many friends who are pickleball players. I appreciate your commitment to find ways for everyone to play sports.

(1) Working out a deal between the city and SOU to save four tennis courts near the SOU stadium for both tennis and pickleball striping would be ideal, and should be much less expensive than building new dedicated pickleball courts. **Please continue or initiate dialog with SOU administration to see if a long-range plan could be developed to save those four courts as a win-win for both SOU students and community members.**

(2) **I support converting one tennis court at Lithia Park to dedicated pickle ball striping with permanent nets.**

(3) In practical terms, Hunter Park will be the one public place in town to play tennis for the foreseeable future. I play tennis regularly at Hunter Park, and I have often seen all eight courts in use during the cooler morning

hours this summer. In addition, Hunter Park tennis courts are used by Ashland High School girls and boys tennis teams during their seasons, as well as for occasional tennis tournaments.

(4) I also recognize the need to share facilities. We don't have enough money to make dedicated facilities for every sport. There are more important uses for our limited city finances than that. But we want to encourage sport for physical health, mental health and for joy of life. That said, **I would support the staff recommendation to stripe one court at Hunter Park for both tennis and bike polo. I would also support striping one court at Hunter Park for both tennis and pickleball.**

Thank you for your commitment to our community.

All the best,
Peter Finkle

From: Gayle Titus [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 8:21 PM
To: Parks Information <parksinfo@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Tennis courts

Attn: Sean Sullivan

The few tennis courts in Ashland since I moved here in 1989 are over used by tennis players as it is. We wait for space to play . We don't want more competition for space, nor do we want to play on courts that have pickle ball lines that are very confusing for play.

We had an agreement last year with the pickle ball players to stay off the tennis courts and we would assist them to encourage Parks and Recreation to build pickle ball courts just for them.

Parks and Recreation has modified courts at Helman School and Lithia Park and we don't want the courts modified at Hunter Park.

We would encourage Parks and Rec to work with Ashland schools and the SOU to build more courts to teach and play tennis, which is an International sport that has existed for a long time.

Dale Swire
[REDACTED]
Ashland, Or. 97520