

## January 2023 Update for Tennis & Pickleball: Shared Use

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Fri, Jan 20, 2023 at 5:39 PM

To: <PB and tennis community>

Cc: <CH P&R and town staff>

Good day All,

We hope everyone is having a great 2023 thus far.

Based on feedback received, Parks and Recreation staff has designed a plan for shared use of the tennis court facilities at Ephesus Park. We will continue to preserve opportunities for tennis and pickleball play while we explore ways to support the significant growth of pickleball and interest in playing in our parks.

We hold the perspective that all courts in our park system are community resources which should be able to be used in a manner to address current demand and trends. Shared use of tennis courts by tennis and pickleball players has worked successfully in other communities, and we believe our proposal for a pilot is a compromise that will address multiple interests.

### **Pilot (Trial) Shared Use Schedule for Ephesus Park**

We acknowledge that Ephesus Park has traditionally been a desirable site for tennis in Chapel Hill. We acknowledge that the resurfacing of these courts was completed mid-November and that tennis play could decline during the winter months. We also understand that while pickleball's numbers at the outdoor courts will likely also decrease in the winter, the sport's growth makes it likely that there will continue to be significant demand for court time even in the winter. To that end, we recognize a unique opportunity to **pilot (trial)** shared use on a limited basis. We intend to do this as follows:

- A pilot shared use program will **begin on January 27, 2023 and end on March 24, 2023**; if deemed successful we intend to provide seasonal shared use again from **December 2023 to March 2024**.
- For the duration of the pilot program temporary pickleball lines (2 courts) will be marked **on court 4 of the tennis facility** and portable nets will be on site to create two pickleball courts during designated days and times. **Tennis play may continue on courts 1-3 but pickleball will have priority on court 4 on Wednesdays and Fridays from 2pm-11pm**. Lines and nets will be removed from the site at the completion of the pilot program.

- Tennis will retain priority on courts 1-3 year-round; and 1-4 seasonally.
- Parks and Recreation, Schools, and contracted facilitated usage for formal tennis programming which may occur during this time will continue to take priority over other uses of the tennis courts including this shared use pilot schedule.
- Parks and Recreation staff will monitor the courts as much as feasible during times of scheduled shared use to assess use and to attempt to minimize negative impacts on either user group. Staff will observe and document usage of and demand for the pickleball and tennis courts to inform decisions regarding the potential for future shared use.
- Potential expansion of the shared use will be re-evaluated following completion of other tennis court projects.

Parks and Recreation reserves the right to discontinue or modify the pilot program at any time.

### **Drop-in Play**

Parks and Recreation does not regulate or enforce drop-in use parameters at our outdoor athletic facilities provided that the alternative use(s) does no harm to the site. In the interest of maximizing use of our limited facilities and reducing the likelihood of conflict, we provide the following updated guidance on drop-in play:

- Tennis play is to remain the priority for use of the tennis courts and pickleball is to remain the priority for use of the pickleball courts.
- When tennis courts are not being used, pickleball players may choose to use the tennis courts for informal play such as warm-up until a tennis player arrives on-site. At that point, we ask that pickleball players vacate the tennis courts so that tennis play can commence without distractions and ensure that all nets are returned to their normal position.
- When tennis is occurring on the courts, other sports will be asked to refrain from using the backboard.
- Players of both sports are asked not to block the sidewalk accessing the courts. We will explore relocating the paddle holder utilized to queue pickleball players who are waiting to play
- Signage may be adjusted to reflect the above changes.

### **Other Updates and Information**

Consistent with a recommendation from the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission, we will add pickleball lines to the basketball courts at Southern Community Park (SCP) and pilot a shared use schedule at that location.

**Additional Pickleball opportunities for 2023: (beginning approximately April 1):**

Location	Day	Time	Notes
SCP– Basketball	Mon/Wed/Fri	7:30am-1pm	Walk-up play
SCP- Basketball	Tuesday	3pm – 10pm	Leagues and Clinics
SCP – Hockey	Saturday	4pm-10pm	Walk-up and Clinics

**Additional Tennis opportunities for 2023 (beginning February 2023, 4-6 class sessions on select dates):**

Location	Day	Time	Notes
Ephesus	Tuesday	12pm-1pm	Adv Beg to Int Lessons
Ephesus	Saturday & Sunday (Select Dates)	1:30-3pm	Community Tennis Days
Ephesus	Wednesdays	6pm-7pm	Beginner Clinics
Ephesus	Saturday	11am-12pm	Cardio Tennis
Ephesus	Sunday	10am-11am	Brunch Tennis Clinic

We are also pleased to report that Council has allocated the necessary funding so that the tennis court resurfacing project can move forward at Hargraves Park and has authorized the Town’s application to the Park and Recreation Trust Fund – Accessibility for Parks grant for Cedar Falls Park. We will continue to support addressing the short- and long-term needs of both groups including future facility related projects supported by the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission.

Please reach out to staff if you have questions or comments. Nikiya Cherry, Recreation Manager; and Jonathan Ray, Sr. Athletics Supervisor, continue to be staff points of contact for scheduling, programming, and court related requests. Anita Badrock, Senior Ombuds, is also available as a resource. Nikiya, Jonathan, and Anita are copied on this correspondence.

We greatly appreciate the time, commitment, and perspectives of the volunteer leaders of both pickleball and tennis and look forward to continuing to build our relationship as we move forward.

See you soon at your respective meetings taking place this month.

Have a great weekend; take care,

**Atuya O. Cornwell, CPRP, Interim Director**

Parks & Recreation Department

**Town of Chapel Hill**

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