

From: Desiree Galassi

Date: June 7, 2022 at 8:32:28 AM PDT

To: Cameron Harding <Cameron.Harding@redondo.org>

Cc: Bill Brand <Bill.Brand@redondo.org>, Todd Loewenstein <Todd.Loewenstein@redondo.org>, Zein Obagi <Zein.Obagi@redondo.org>, Christian Horvath <Christian.Horvath@redondo.org>, Nils.Nerenheim@redondo.org, Laura Emdee <Laura.Emdee@redondo.org>, Eleanor Manzano <Eleanor.Manzano@redondo.org>, Michelle Pinedo <Michelle.Pinedo@redondo.org>, Kelly Orta <Kelly.Orta@redondo.org>, Mike Witzansky <Mike.Witzansky@redondo.org>

Subject: Re: Pickleball Community Play Day Redondo Beach

CAUTION: Email is from an external source; Stop, Look, and Think before opening attachments or links.

Good morning Cameron,

None of those locations work for a community play day. We need 8-12 pickleball courts in one location to accommodate the volume of people that will show up and to host a proper event with ample room and facilities for those waiting. Parking is also more convenient at Alta Vista. Manhattan Heights this past weekend had 250-300 people cycling through the day.

Also, spread out over three locations won't generate a cohesive feeling event and will require three sets of vendor set ups, raffles and whatever else we decide to plan. That's a lot to ask of volunteers, and of staff.

There is no reason why we can't have an event at Alta Vista. In fact we should have done this months ago., years ago.

Thank you,
Desirée Galassi

(Please excuse unintentional iPhone spell-check 🙄)

On Jun 7, 2022, at 6:14 AM, Cameron Harding <Cameron.Harding@redondo.org> wrote:

Good morning Desiree;

As you are aware, we are currently working to install Pickleball courts at three locations including Perry, Anderson, and Franklin Parks.

We'll be happy to work with you on a Community Play Day once the courts are installed.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Thank you

Cameron Harding
Community Services Director
City of Redondo Beach

On Jun 6, 2022, at 10:54 PM, Desiree Galassi

<[REDACTED]> wrote:

CAUTION: Email is from an external source; Stop, Look, and Think before opening attachments or links.

Dear Mayor Brand and Councilmembers,

Late 2021 I began asking for a pickleball community play day for Redondo Beach. I was told we had to wait until the Recreation and Parks Commission meeting to see what they would recommend.

On the 10th of January after the Recreation and Parks Commission meeting at which recommendations were voted on for courts at Alta Vista and Perry Park I connected with Redondo Beach Recreation and Parks Department and offered my help to run a community play day, as a goodwill gesture and informational activity for the community, until courts were realized. (See email thread below). I met via zoom with Michelle Pinedo and talked through my ideas and followed up with a plan of action.

I was told we had to hold off again "until the council voted on the Alta Vista/Perry Park recommendation."

After the council voted AGAINST Alta Vista 1 court conversion (with lack of vision for any other Alta Vista solution), I asked again for a community open play day at Alta Vista using 2-3 courts for one day. I was told that "emotions are running high and maybe sometime in the future...."

Early January, a resident in the city of Carson engaged his recreation and parks department and on the 22 of January they hosted 2 community play events, one at Victoria Community Park and one at Hemingway Park. Both were heavily attended by people from Carson and beyond. Their rec and parks department as well as several council members came to interact with residents, understand the culture of this community and also learn to play the game. They now have been given the blessing by the city to run open play on the weekends, every weekend on shared courts with tennis. Imagine that.....

This past weekend, the Manhattan Heights pickleball community in conjunction with their recreation and parks department ran an hugely successful community open play pickleball event that was planned out and executed in mere days. They utilized 2 tennis courts and their 3 dedicated pickleball courts and hosted a free open play from 8am - 8 pm. Again, hugely successful! (See attachments)
The recreation and parks department showed up to play pickleball and forged a relationship with the community.

It's embarrassing that Redondo cannot give an inch when other cities seem to be able to get great community events together effortlessly, not to mention support their PB community with real courts.

Again I am asking, give us your blessing and support to plan and run a free community open play day at Alta Vista in September when people are back in town. Free...unless of course you are ready to support pickleball in a real way and have it be a fundraiser for PB nets and striping at Alta Vista because you realize the vote you took was too hastily made and with little to no data?
Alta Vista needs to be re-voted.

The pickleball community from Redondo and neighboring cities are ready to roll up their sleeves to help with a community event and I know Manhattan Beach rec and parks can be a great resource for us too. Please respond, we are anxiously waiting.

Thanks for your service to our great city.

Sincerely,
Desirée Galassi
Redondo Beach resident and moderator of:
Redondo Beach Pickleball FB group
Nextdoor Redondo Beach Pickleball Group
Change.org petition

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Desiree Galassi
<[REDACTED]> Date:
Mon, Jan 10, 2022 at 10:38 AM
Subject: Pickleball Play Day Redondo Beach
To: Cameron Harding
<Cameron.Harding@redondo.org<<mailto:Cameron.Harding@redondo.org>
[rg](mailto:Cameron.Harding@redondo.org)>>, Ted Semaan
<ted.semaan@redondo.org<<mailto:ted.semaan@redondo.org>>>, Mike
Witzansky
<Mike.Witzansky@redondo.org<<mailto:Mike.Witzansky@redondo.org>
>, Kelly Orta
<Kelly.Orta@redondo.org<<mailto:Kelly.Orta@redondo.org>>>
Cc:
<todd.loewenstein@redondo.org<<mailto:todd.loewenstein@redondo.org>
[rg](mailto:todd.loewenstein@redondo.org)>>

Dear Cameron,

Todd Loewenstein recommended I share my idea with you, I'm copying the rest of the group here for input and ideas.

Since it will be a while until we have dedicated courts in Redondo Beach I would like to organize a Community Play Day where temporary courts

can be set up either at one of the Alta Vista tennis courts, or in the parking lot by Ruby's, or coordinate use of one or more of the courts at the high school through RBUSD. Removable tape is available for the specific purpose to outline courts, I have access to a number of portable nets and I would bring experienced players to help me run this event and show people how to play. We could set up courts for brand new players to learn and others for people who already play. Additionally, we could consider having a couple of vendors, informational booths and community sponsors. To be clear, this is not a tournament, but an opportunity for our community to learn the game and meet other people who play.

Attached please find a flier from a fellow pickleball player, Tony Senior, who is running a similar event through both the city of Carson and LA County. He is a private citizen like me, passionate about what the game brings to communities, the health benefits, and the socialization in the open air. I plan to attend his events to get ideas, maybe you'd like to also attend.

I am an experienced player, I am in 2 pickleball leagues and have played in some tournaments as well. I am a former classroom teacher and have been successfully teaching free pickleball lessons to anyone who has wanted to learn as a community service for our city, I believe in access for all and not everyone is able to afford costly lessons. Some of those players have now competed in local tournaments at El Segundo and Manhattan Heights! I currently chair a large committee in a non-profit organization where I coordinate the work of over 100 volunteers, so I can easily run this event (and I have taught about 25 of those folks as well!). I author and moderate Redondo Beach Pickleball on Facebook, a community of over 100 members and growing. And I also serve our city as a member of the Preservation Commission.

So.....

Let me know when we can talk about the logistics. I'd be happy to meet via zoom or in person with a couple of my head volunteers.

Best regards,
Desiree Galassi

Please note that email correspondence with the City of Redondo Beach, along with attachments, may be subject to the California Public Records Act, and therefore may be subject to disclosure unless otherwise exempt. The City of Redondo Beach shall not be responsible for any claims, losses or damages resulting from the use of digital data that may be contained in this email.

From: Jonathan Frey [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 8:19 AM

To: Nils Nehrenheim <Nils.Nehrenheim@redondo.org>; Bill Brand <Bill.Brand@redondo.org>; Todd Loewenstein <Todd.Loewenstein@redondo.org>

Cc: CityClerk <CityClerk@redondo.org>

Subject: Concerns about pickleball at Alta Vista

CAUTION: Email is from an external source; *Stop, Look, and Think* before opening attachments or links.

Pickleball Concerns at Alta Vista

1. **Noise** of 16 people playing pickleball adjacent to tennis matches. Ridiculous noise for adjacent tennis players, important league matches. The home on Jaunita would be severely impacted and probably be inclined to start a lawsuit over the nuisance. The front-page Los Angeles Times article, March 3, 2022 issue discusses the nuisance of pickleball in communities around the country. Irvine law firm Lubin, Pham and Caplin have represented 10 California communities against homeowners' associations regarding pickleball nuisance claims, primarily driven by noise. This law firm hired an engineering firm (Spendiarian and Willis Acoustics and Noise Control) to document noise while pickleball was being played from Palm Springs to Massachusetts to Canada. Their findings were that pickleball produced noise at 85 decibels more than 50 feet away, whereas tennis is below 60 decibels. The decibel scale is a logarithmic scale, so 85 decibels is 150 times louder than 60 decibels. As a point of reference, gas leaf blowers which are banned in Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach are at 75 decibels, which is 10 times less noise than pickleball.
2. **Incompatibility** of quiet, disciplined tennis match versus loud, crowded pickleball play with 16 people on court and additional people in queue waiting for play. Tennis players respect each other and maintain quiet on the court when others are playing. A congregation of pickleball players hovering around the court waiting for their turn to play, just outside ongoing tennis matches will be a disruption, especially for a tournament.
3. **Additional people create parking concerns** –
 - a. 8 tennis courts, 4 people per court = 32 cars, plus additional cars on the hour for court changeover.
 - b. 7 tennis courts, 4 people per court plus 4 pickleball courts, 4 people per court = 28 + 16 = 44 cars, plus additional cars on the hour for court changeover.
 - c. Likely increased need for handicap spaces for pickleball players – will reduce total number of spaces available in lot
4. **Additional people create crowding of facility** – 16 players on court with 16 to 64 people waiting around to jump in to play. On round robin mornings 12 to 30 people are attending to play

doubles. When the community room and gazebos are rented, add up to 155 additional people to the numbers on the courts requiring parking and rest room facilities. The community garden locating to Alta Vista will also increase demands on Alta Vista. During the daytime there are routinely 3 to 6 motor homes spending the day in the parking lot or conducting business (nail salon, massages, etc.), which you probably aren't aware of. Similarly, there are people riding electric bikes all over the soccer field during the day and people flying drones in the park about 5:00 pm most days. When soccer and baseball are in session, there are an additional 100 to 200 people in the park. Look at what all the whole park has going on currently and try to find space for additional pickleball players. On USTA and Marine League tournament days, there are 20 to 24 plus players. Most tournament days are concurrent with round robin play. I love Alta Vista Park, I spend 4 to 6 hours a day there most days, as do many other tennis players.

5. **Tennis has grown in participation** U.S. tennis participation surges in 2020, Physical Activity Council (PAC) report finds

February 11, 2021

Tennis is the perfect social-distancing sport—and the numbers continue to prove it.

Tennis participation in the U.S. increased by 22% in 2020, with 21.64 million people hitting the courts, according to recent data from the Physical Activity Council's Participation (PAC) report produced by Sports Marketing Surveys. The survey and report monitor more than 120 different sports and activities participated in by Americans.

Of the more than 21 million Americans saying they played tennis last year, 6.78 million were either new or returning/lapsed players. Nearly 3 million of those were first-time players, a 44% increase over new players in 2019. Additionally, the 3.82 million Americans who returned to the sport after time away was a 40% increase over the same measure in 2019.

18522_C_NY_21_USTA_PACStudy_infographics

"We are thrilled that so many new and existing players came back to the sport—especially in what was such a challenging year for so many people," said Mike Dowse, USTA Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director. "These new participation numbers are a testament to the hard work, passion and commitment of a united industry that worked together to ensure that tennis not only survived, but that it thrived.

"Even though we continue to face challenges, it's evident that many people recognize tennis as the ideal social-distancing sport, which puts it in a great position to continue to grow and allow people to stay active and social in a healthy and safe manner."

20200511_generic 6_A

In addition to the increase in participation highlighted in the PAC report, the Tennis Industry Association—the trade association that assists in monitoring the entire U.S. tennis industry—reported that racquet sales in the entry-level category have seen significant year on year growth of nearly 40%.

With its inherent social distancing, along with many other health benefits, tennis continues to show strength in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. To that end, the USTA—with input from the USTA Medical Advisory Group—established in 2020 a series of recommendations and guidelines on how to play tennis safely for both players and facilities. Additionally, a recent study, which analyzed the surface of balls used in various sports, showed that tennis balls used during normal play are unlikely to put players at risk of developing COVID-19.

Tennis' positive health impacts are well documented and have recently been further highlighted by one of the largest sport-specific studies to date. The study, published in the July 2020 edition of the Journal of Medicine and Science in Tennis, showed that those who play the sport have higher general, physical, social and mental health scores than the general population.

"We are excited to see these positive trends and such significant growth in our sport," said Craig Morris USTA Chief Executive, Community Tennis. "We are energized to continue putting forward key industry partnerships and quality programming to ensure new and existing players of all ages and abilities have the best experience playing the sport for a lifetime."

Estimated Pickleball Players Within the United States

Pickleball grew in 2021 to 4.8 million players in the US, according to the 2022 Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Single Sport Report on Pickleball. SFIA is the premier trade association for top brands, manufacturers, retailers and marketers in the American sporting goods and fitness industry.

This 14.8% growth from 2020 to 2021 follows on the heels of 21.3% growth the previous year and contributes to a 11.5% average annual growth rate over the past 5 years.

Of the 4.8 million Total participants, 3.5 million were "Casual" players who play 1-7 times a year
1.4 million were "Core" players who play 8 or more times a year

While the number of Core participants did not grow from 2020 to 2021, Casual players grew by 22%
60% of total participants are men and 40% are women, with a slightly faster rate of growth among women

The average age for all players continues to drop, to 38.1 years old in 2021, a decrease of 2.9 years from 2020

The average age of Core players is 47.9 and Casual players 34.3 years old

52% of Core players are 55 or older while 79% of Casual players are 54 or younger

Growth of total participants from 2020 to 2021 was the fastest among players under 24 years of age (21%)

Annual growth among players 55 and older was a more modest 10%

The percentages by age of Total, Core, and Casual participants in 2021 are:

AGES	TOTAL	CORE	CASUAL
6-17	21.2%	14.2%	23.9%
18-34	28.8%	16.8%	33.5%
35-54	20.4%	17.0%	21.8%
55-64	12.0%	19.2%	9.2%
65+	17.6%	32.7%	11.6%

As you can see by the respective tennis and pickleball associations figures, the number of new additional tennis players in 2020 alone is 3 million, which is almost as much as the entire population of pickleball players (4.8 million). Please don't be fooled by the comments in emails and letters falsely stating that tennis is a dying sport, quite the contrary.

6. **Alta Vista Tennis Courts are best in the South Bay** – The court surfaces and Alta Vista tennis facility is undisputedly the best place to play tennis in the South Bay, drawing players from El Segundo to

Compton to Palos Verdes and San Pedro Long Beach area. The revenue the heavily booked facility would surely drop were it overrun with pickleball players.

7. **Cost to build a tennis court versus pickleball court** – The cost to build a tennis court is significantly more expensive than a pickleball court due to size, surface requirements, fencing and lighting. Pickleball can be played on a parking lot, driveway, playground and other locations with portable nets and striping of the surface. Converting a high-quality tennis court to pickleball is fiscally foolish. Doubtful the city would ever spend money to build another tennis court to replace what they would cannibalize for pickleball.
8. **Considering that tennis at Alta Vista generates** revenue via court fees, professional instruction, and tournaments; reducing this for a non-revenue activity like Pickleball doesn't make sense. As you know, pickleball is a game of 11 or 15 points and lasts about 15 minutes. The players leave the court after the game and another foursome takes the court. Since players are on the court for such a short period of time, they don't feel they should be charged. There are no public pickleball courts that charge for play; private clubs that offer a pickleball membership are the only pay for play facilities in the public domain. I don't think it would be easy to charge money for pickleball at Alta Vista; it would require a full staff members time to police it. If you don't charge for pickleball, but charge for tennis at Alta Vista, I wouldn't think that is fair, especially since your revenue comes from tennis. Putting pickleball into a setting where there's no paid tennis courts make much more sense. Tennis players book courts for 1 to 2 hours at a session and play the entire time and are quite happy to pay for a reserved court. All players at Alta Vista are members paying \$25/year to reserve courts.
9. **Viable alternatives to Alta Vista for pickleball** – The paid feasibility study the city commissioned focus primarily on existing tennis and basketball courts for quick, inexpensive conversion. Building a set of pickleball courts on a grass field where no concrete or blacktop surface exists is expensive. Since the scope of the study was limited to existing parks, several viable alternatives were not considered. I suggest the city consider several other locations, namely King Harbor parking lot near Ruby's or the rooftop level of the parking garage at King Harbor. These locations have numerous advantages; large flat surface requiring minimal surface preparation, ample parking, restrooms on location, gorgeous views. As you know King Harbor is being reimagined with lots of renovations, why not include this in the plans? It could also be included in the Seaside lagoon renovation. The current Ruby's parking lot is very underutilized except for Beachfest weekend. A pickleball court could be quickly constructed at King Harbor for low cost. Another huge advantage to putting pickleball in the King Harbor area is there's no noise concerns, wave noise masks the sound and no houses within an earshot. The Galleria campus would be another great location for pickleball, lots of flat, open underutilized space, no expensive homes in an earshot either. Similarly, the dog park parking lot on 190th street has space too. Redondo High School is another obvious choice. I think there is plenty of viable, inexpensive space suitable for pickleball in Redondo Beach without losing an expensive tennis court at Alta Vista, all of which were outside the scope of the city funded feasibility study.
10. **Pickleball Expansion Tactics** – The tactics that pickleball national organizations are using to expand around the country are all similar. The national pickleball associations have recruited local players in most communities to strong arm local parks and recreation departments and municipalities to convert tennis courts to pickleball courts. The letters, emails and petitions are suspiciously similar. In most cases they have decided to take over tennis courts without informing the tennis communities of their intentions. In most cases they are "demanding" communities provide free places to play with no regard to tennis players. Searching the internet will yield countless stories of pickleball players strong arming communities for free courts, in disproportionate numbers to the actual number of pickleball players. Tennis players outnumber pickleball players 4 to 1 yet are being negatively impacted by the national pickleball associations tactics. Most of the private clubs (South End, West End, Manhattan Country Club, Palos Verdes Tennis Club, and others were similarly targeted by the Pickleball

associations and have regretted the decision to add pickleball courts due to noise and disturbance. I am also fearful of retribution from the pickleball community for standing up to them, they have created many confrontations around the country with those opposed to their tactics. Hopefully, I will not be target of their retaliation.

Pickleball's racket problem

It's accessible, fun — and loud. Neighbors across the country are suing over the noise.



JUDY LOUGH, left, and Kathi Scarminach play pickleball at a community center in Goleta. (Genaro Molina Los Angeles Times)

BY CONNOR SHEETS

GOLETA, Calif. — Seven days a week, dozens of retirees, college students, children and working parents flock to a sunbaked patch of pavement in this oceanside city just west of

Santa Barbara. They're here to play pickleball, a nearly 60-year-old sport that's seen a surge in interest during the pandemic, wreaking genteel havoc from coast to coast.

On Feb. 18, as the waning winter sunlight filtered through the surrounding chain-link fence, Mike Myers dominated most of the competition. A dedicated player and leading local advocate for the sport, the 56-year-old holds court here at the Goleta Valley Community Center, smacking balls away with boastful shouts tempered by words of encouragement and advice.

"Right on the line!" he exclaimed, gesticulating across the court with his paddle after executing a particularly skillful forehand. "Nice try," he said after another. "No way you were getting that one."

His opponent, a 23-year-old college exchange student from Bavaria named Max Krautter, responded later in the game with a brief education in the fluid use of German expletives.

A democratizing sport with a low barrier to entry, anyone can quickly pick up pickleball without spending much money or taking years of lessons. The rules are relatively easy to learn, and the basic strokes are simple enough to get down during a couple of friendly games.

Because the playing surface is about one-fourth the size of a tennis court, there's little ground to cover, especially in doubles. The sport is so physically forgiving that it's unremarkable to see a gray-haired pair put a beating on their teenage grandkids.

But the rapid rise of the game — and the decibel levels, crowds and vocal advocacy it generates — has precipitated an intense backlash in communities across the country.

In a lawsuit against Newport Beach, a Corona del Mar woman [claimed](#) the sounds of people playing pickleball 100 yards from her home caused her "severe mental suffering, frustration and anxiety." A South Carolina couple [filed suit](#) against a country club near their home, alleging that late-night pickleball games caused "unreasonable interference" with their "enjoyment of their property." In dozens of legal proceedings, people have successfully claimed that allowing pickleball violates local municipal codes or homeowners' or condominium associations' rules.

In New Jersey, a local blogger wrote [last year](#) that a village with about 25,000 residents had "declare[d] war on pickleball." Earlier this month, a local news outlet published nearly 4,000 words about a months-long showdown over the sport on a sparsely populated British Columbian island in [an article](#) titled "The pickleball coup."

Some of the language used to describe the internecine pickleball debate is extreme, but it matches the tenor of the confrontations, which often turn neighbors against one another.

Goleta, best known as the home of the UC Santa Barbara campus, has been embroiled for months in one such battle, over the future of pickleball on a 27-year-old tennis court at the Goleta Valley Community Center in the city's old town district.

Last year, the center asked the City Council to greenlight a plan to permanently convert the tennis court into four pickleball courts, resurface and paint the playing surface, install fixed net posts, and replace damaged fencing. The outdoor facility is owned by the city, but the nonprofit center has leased it for years and said it would pay for the upgrades.

During several hours of public meetings beginning in November, local officials read and heard testimonials from hundreds of pickleball fans who support the project and a handful of nearby residents who consider it a nuisance. The final meeting on the topic — at least for now — unfolded Tuesday.

::

There's no question that pickleball is noisy.

Researchers have shown that the sound of a solid pickleball paddle hitting one of the sport's hard plastic wiffle-ball-like balls can be more than 25 decibels louder than that of even the hardest-swung Wilson connecting with a felt-covered tennis ball.

Katie Pazan lives in a luxury townhome complex within earshot of the Goleta Valley Community Center. During a virtual City Council meeting in January, she decried the "nuisance" sounds of people playing pickleball on the community center's courts.

"We hear the ball hit the paddle from inside our homes all day long, 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.," she said. "I want to stress that it's all day, nonstop."

Myers, the pickleball enthusiast, dismissed those concerns, claiming the sound of the play drops to a minimally bothersome level by the time it reaches nearby homes.

Tim Hayes, a 65-year-old engineer who says he lost 35 pounds playing pickleball regularly, acknowledged that "the sound aspect is real" in an interview after coming off the community center courts on Feb. 18. He said a neighbor has a pickleball court about 200 yards from his Goleta house, and he can often clearly hear the game being played.

"I don't mind because I just love the sound of it. I'm jealous that someone's got it in their backyard," he said.

And yet, like more than 300 other pickleball players in this town of about 30,000 people, Hayes strongly supports the court revitalization plan and cast doubt on claims that pickleball noise bothers nearby residents.

"You've got to be kidding. We've got the airport, Highway 217, the bus depot and the 101,"

he said. “This has got to be the noisiest place in Santa Barbara County, and somebody complained about the noise?”

And so a line was drawn in the grass between two groups of residents in this little corner of Goleta. The same thing has happened in communities across the country as the sport has moved into new towns and suburbs accustomed — and in many cases entitled under the law — to hearing less of a racket.

Over the last two years, Nicholas Caplin, a founding partner at Lubin Pham & Caplin in Irvine, has represented members of more than 10 California residential communities with newly built or converted pickleball courts in claims against the homeowners’ associations that allowed the changes.

Caplin said he could not discuss the specifics of the cases because they all settled via mediation and are typically subject to confidentiality or nondisclosure agreements. But he said that in case after case, HOA codes and covenants included noise provisions that the pickleball courts were ultimately found to have violated.

“Homeowners’ associations say, ‘Let’s do a nice thing and make tennis courts into pickleball courts.’ The outcome of that is additional noise,” he said. “The HOA is convinced of their exposure and takes action to avoid escalation, usually by settling, by either agreeing to no pickleball or drastically reducing noise associated with pickleball.”

Legal claims against municipalities in California and across the country have forced similar resolutions, because volume levels associated with pickleball violate noise restriction ordinances for residential areas. The claims often result in “really ugly neighborhood drama,” Caplin said, but people who live near the courts typically win out.

::

To substantiate claims of excess volume from pickleball courts, Caplin and other attorneys sometimes turn to companies like Spendiarian & Willis Acoustics & Noise Control.

For about a decade, Lance Willis, principal acoustical engineer at the Tuscon-based firm, has performed pickleball-related acoustical analysis in communities from Palm Springs to Massachusetts to Canada.

Often, he is hired to measure the sound levels emanating from pickleball courts so the results can be compared against volume thresholds outlined in municipal codes or HOA rules.

Sometimes that requires him to set up his handheld NTI Audio XL2 audio and acoustic analyzer on a tripod at multiple points on or near a court during play to determine how

loud it is. Or Willis will set the device up on the property line of an adjacent home to measure how much noise is actually reaching neighbors.

The loudest sound produced hundreds of times during a pickleball match — the two-to-four-millisecond “impulse sound” generated when a paddle connects with a ball — is inherently louder than those of sports like tennis or basketball, he said.

While researchers [have found](#) that even a “loud” tennis shot will usually fall short of 60 decibels, Willis said he’s recorded peaks of 85 decibels from a backyard more than 50 feet away from a pickleball court.

Extended exposure to 80-decibel noise can cause hearing damage; it’s equivalent to hearing a freight train from just under 50 feet away, [according to](#) a Purdue University study. The sound of a blender comes in at 88 decibels.

“Pickleball may not appear to produce high levels of acoustical energy, but it does,” he said. “It is not equivalent to tennis or basketball or a lot of the other common activities that you hear at parks. It really has a higher noise impact.”

That higher noise impact can mean the difference between violating rules and regulations, as evidenced by numerous places where tennis has been deemed permissible without sound mitigation but pickleball has not. It can also have negative consequences for nearby residents, according to Tom Spendiarian, principal architect at Spendiarian & Willis.

“One guy was a Vietnam vet, an old guy, and he said it sounds like a mortar being dropped in a mortar tube — the plunk sound” of a paddle and pickleball colliding, Spendiarian said. “It freaks him out.”

::

By the time the lights over the Goleta Valley Community Center’s four pickleball courts came on one recent Friday evening, dozens of games had already been played. Unlike tennis, in which a single match between two good players can tie up a court for hours, many pickleball matches last just 15 to 30 minutes.

The sport is perfectly suited for high-turnover open play. Multiple times an hour, a fresh crop of players steps out on the courts, gets their blood pumping, then steps back outside the fence.

Some pickleball players scoff at concerns about noise and commotion and emphasize the sport’s benefits.

“There’s just people out there that are just cranky,” Lori Brakka, a 59-year-old Goleta grandmother, said after finishing a match at the community center that Friday afternoon. “They don’t enjoy hearing people laughing and having a good time.”

JoAnne Plummer, parks and recreation manager for Goleta, highlighted pickleball's good side.

"From a recreational standpoint, the passion for pickleball and the need is nice to see. It's nice to see people passionate, being outdoors and doing something social," she said last month.

But she acknowledged the concerns about the noise, and about whether the community center's plan to permanently install pickleball courts — and charge usage fees — would shut out lower-income residents and people of color.

Plus, some athletes in Goleta and beyond believe that permanently converting courts for pickleball unfairly reduces the number of locations where people can play tennis or other sports.

::

Pickleball is undergoing a major surge in popularity. According to USA Pickleball, about 4.8 million people played the sport at least once in the U.S. [in 2020](#), an increase of nearly 40% in just two years.

But tennis remains far more popular, with tournaments around the world, four of the most-watched global sporting events and more than 21 million people playing the sport in the U.S. in 2020, [according to](#) a 2021 study by the Physical Activity Council. That's a 22% increase of total players in 2020, nearly 3 million of whom played tennis for the first time that year.

Fans frequently call pickleball "America's fastest-growing sport." But while the data show the pandemic has driven large numbers of people to the courts, they don't say whether they're swinging pickleball paddles or tennis racquets.

At Goleta's January City Council meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Stuart Kasdin pushed back against a claim by local pickleball advocate Chuck Riharb that "trends" show "tennis people are moving to pickleball" locally and nationally.

"The assertion that people aren't playing tennis anymore, that it's just a dying sport or something like that, I think is unfounded," Kasdin said. "People are playing tennis."

But they're also playing pickleball.

And now Goleta has four more courts permanently dedicated to the sport. On Tuesday, the city's council unanimously approved the Goleta Valley Community Center's court revitalization proposal.

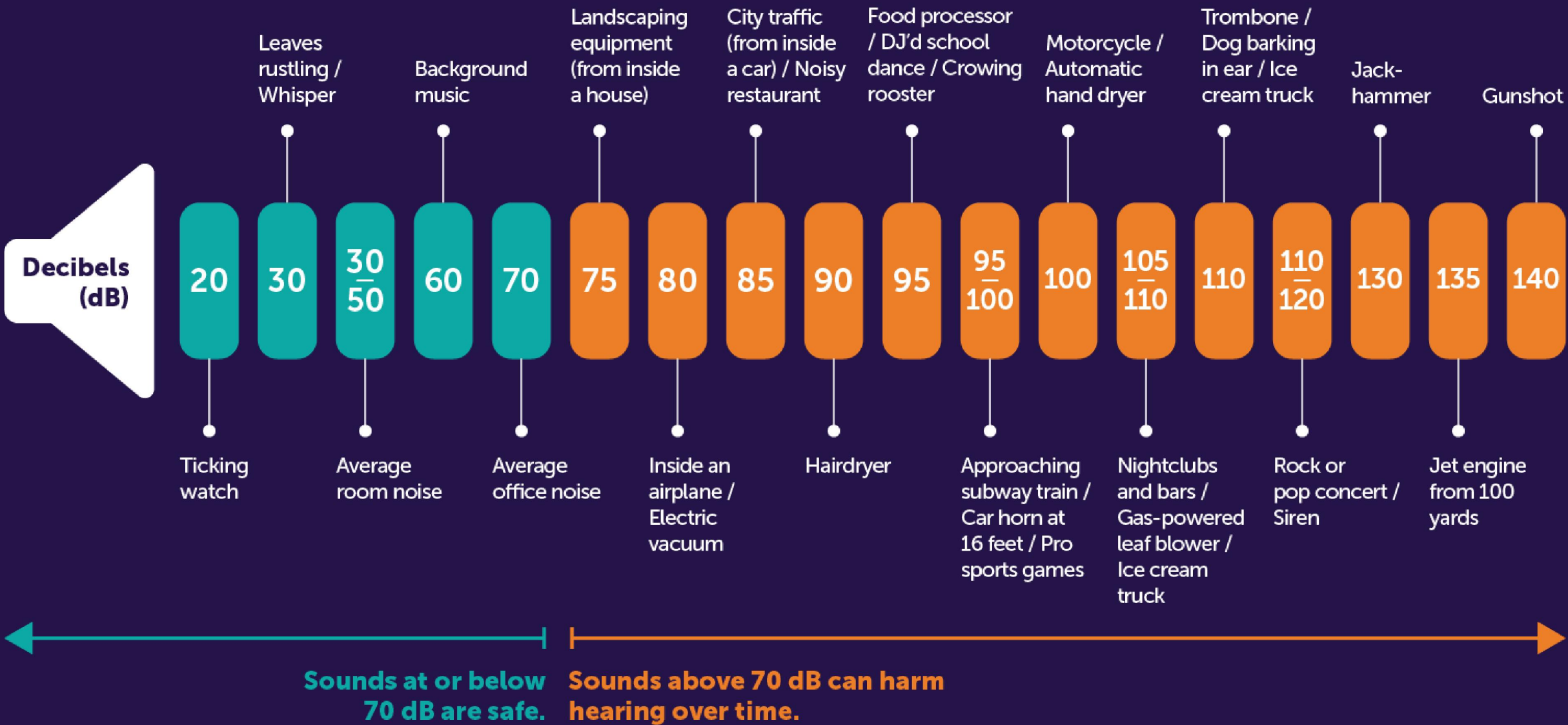
First, the center had to agree to take steps to address neighbors' concerns, including

adding sections of windscreen and wooden fencing to dampen sound, offering free monthly pickleball workshops and eliminating most usage fees.

“We listened, they listened, and they came up with a compromise I can live with,” Mayor Paula Perotte said at the council meeting Tuesday evening.

“We have some pickleball advocates very happy tonight.”

NOISE LEVELS



From: CityClerk
Subject: FW: Budget and More

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Epstein <Barbara.Epstein@redondo.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 7, 2022 3:08 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@redondo.org>; Bill Brand <Bill.Brand@redondo.org>; Todd Loewenstein <Todd.Loewenstein@redondo.org>; Nils Nehrenheim <Nils.Nehrenheim@redondo.org>; Mike Witzansky <Mike.Witzansky@redondo.org>; Cameron Harding <Cameron.Harding@redondo.org>; Zein Obagi <Zein.Obagi@redondo.org>
Subject: Budget and More

CAUTION: Email is from an external source; Stop, Look, and Think before opening attachments or links.

Sorry to miss the council meeting tonight. We are experiencing extraordinary difficulties over here.

Beach Cities Health District is gifting public property and amenities to a private corporation, same thing that ruined Redondo Beach in the first place. I consider this a "taking," just as CenterCal was. NEVER let this happen again. And watch out for "public/private" agreements. Good chance the "public" will get left out of any benefit from the deal.

Just want to say that if the Harbor Amenities Plan comes up, I ask you to keep Moonstone Park whole. It is the last remnant representing our historic Moonstone Beach. It helped make Redondo the popular destination from 1880s to 1920s, after which the opportunists started nibbling away until nothing was left.

I also ask that Seaside Lagoon be expanded, and not shared with other "amenities."
I respectfully suggest that our major swim complex be planned at Aviation. Seems the old pool was there, now maybe underground?
Our kids and other humans deserve this, and I think Nils has seen such wonders that he mentioned a while back. (My model community is Camarillo for quality of life facilities, as far as I've observed. They have all the good stuff.)

Budget

Permanent homeless housing planned between the Beach Cities in a location(s) near transportation, stores, and service.

Aquatic Complex

Extend Summer hours at Wilderness Park to coincide with Daylight Savings time.
Re-organize management for Wilderness Park decision-making, putting someone in charge that is interested, and shares the public's vision.
Remediate years of inattention.

Thank you again for all you do.
We are on the right track!

Barbara Epstein