

contractor to invest in a conversion project to create permanent courts for a total of six pickleball courts.

2018: The conversion project began. Parks Board member, Tom Widden provided a presentation to Parks Board advocating for expansion of amenities at GRP courts including a waiting area dugout, covered court canopy and addition of lighting to the GRP courts to extend play. These suggestions were not implemented primarily out of concern for the neighbors and park use popularity.

2019: The conversion project was completed and LOPC began to hold exhibitions promoting the sport. After fielding concerns and complaints from neighbors about noise the department researched and implemented a sound barrier system, resulting in a reduction of transmitted noise into the neighborhood. The Department began to offer organized pickleball clinics and workshops to first-time and beginner players.

2020: The Covid pandemic hit and the parks and courts were shut down and when courts were allowed to re-open, capacity limits and other restrictions were put in place. One of those restrictions/requirements was to provide contact tracing for any organized outdoor sport. LOPC approached the Department with a proposal to use Playtime Scheduler (a meet-up reservation system) as a means to control capacity and provide contact tracing, the Department agreed to this approach. Throughout the pandemic this approach has been in place and has enabled community members to have continued access to the GRP courts.

2021: Representatives from the City Manager's Office, Police Department, Traffic Engineering and Parks Department met with Old Town Neighborhood Association Board Members and walked and talked about the neighborhood concerns. This discussion led to a number of changes both in the neighborhood and in GRP. In July, the Department received a complaint and requested information from LOPC about club practices. This complaint resulted in a communication breakdown and LOPC notified their members that the Department would be managing GRP court use. The Department continued to offer play at GRP courts through Playtime Scheduler and also offered organized clinics according to mandates and requirements. The Department implemented a formal process to permit use of the courts in limited hours to address neighborhood complaints. The notice of intent to award the court use permit was given to LOPC in December and LOPC and the Department are in negotiations for reduced permitted court use time.

2022 to Present: At February Parks Board meeting, the OTNA letter was read to the Parks Board as public comment and discussion with no action taken regarding the issues presented. In March, OTNA gave public comment requesting the pickleball courts be removed at the Council meeting and Parks Board will hear public comment at the March Parks Board meeting.

Department Steps: When the permit process with LO Pickleball is completed (expected in April 2022) the Department will be re-signing the courts indicating organized play times, operation times and will be encouraging players to park in the Green Street Parking. The Department is currently modifying organized play schedule at the pickleball courts to reduce the number of play hours in response to the NA concerns.

DISCUSSION

Noise reduction steps for Parks Board consideration:

- Investment in additional sound barrier systems around the east and west sides of the courts
- Recommend and/or require Green Paddle equipment [Best Quiet Pickleball Paddles Reviews & Buying Guide 2022 \(pickypickleball.com\)](#)
- Recommend and/or require foam tennis balls, note these are not Pickleball balls but can be effective for beginners and for warm up and practices [Amazon.com : Gamma Sports Foam Tennis Balls for Children and Beginners - 3 Options Available : Sports & Outdoors](#)

RECOMMENDATION

Direction and decision regarding pickleball at George Rogers Park courts.