



MEMORANDUM

TO: BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
FROM: STEVE JANISZEWSKI, PARK OPERATIONS MANAGER
CC: NICOLE OLIVER, PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: CORNWALL MEMORIAL PARK USAGE: NORTH PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AND SPORTS COURTS CONVERSION
DATE: 02/26/2024

Staff will provide an update for City Council on two upcoming projects and change in use at Cornwall Memorial Park:

1. North Pedestrian Bridge currently closed due to damage; and
2. Sports court conversion project

North Pedestrian Bridge

In 2022, a Cedar tree fell on the pedestrian bridge at Cornwall Memorial Park, damaging an already dilapidated structure. After conducting a thorough inspection, staff closed the bridge. We determined that the structure is at the end of useful life, needing full replacement, and will be removed pending permits needed for demolition. Currently, there is a second bridge crossing located 265 feet downstream from the old bridge providing safe and easy access across Squalicum Creek. We solicited comments regarding the bridge demolition at a public meeting held on December 5, 2023.

On January 10, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommended the demolition of the existing pedestrian bridge and requested that we add a total of \$500,000 to the budget for a new bridge in the 2027-2028 biennium. Staff will take steps to improve wayfinding signs and conduct restoration of the creek banks. A placeholder for the bridge removal will be added to the 2027-2028 biennium budget. This will allow us to repair other priority bridges in the park system.

Sports Court Conversion

In 2018, a project funded by Park Impact Fees converted two (2) of the tennis courts to six (6) pickleball courts. This project had full support from the neighborhood and the newly formed Bellingham Pickleball Club.

In response to the ongoing interest in pickleball by the community, staff solicited feedback from the community regarding the conversion of the remaining two (2) tennis sports courts in the park.

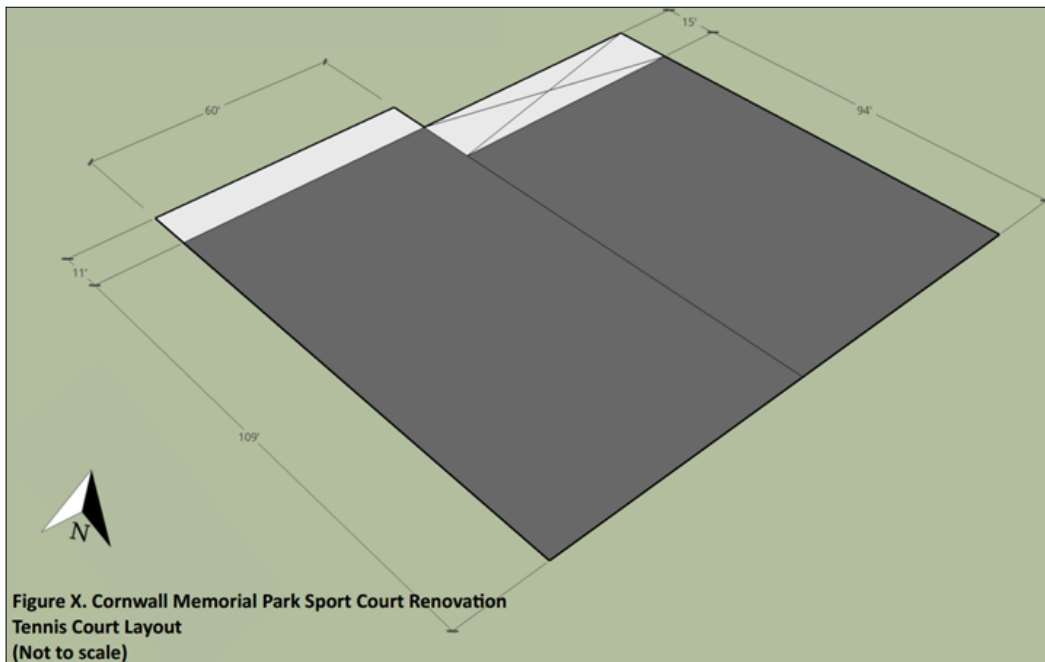
On December 5, 2023, staff hosted a public meeting in City Hall Chambers to solicit feedback on the sports court conversion project. In addition, we received multiple emails sent to the departmental email account. Approximately 70 community members participated in person and online.

Responses were as follows:

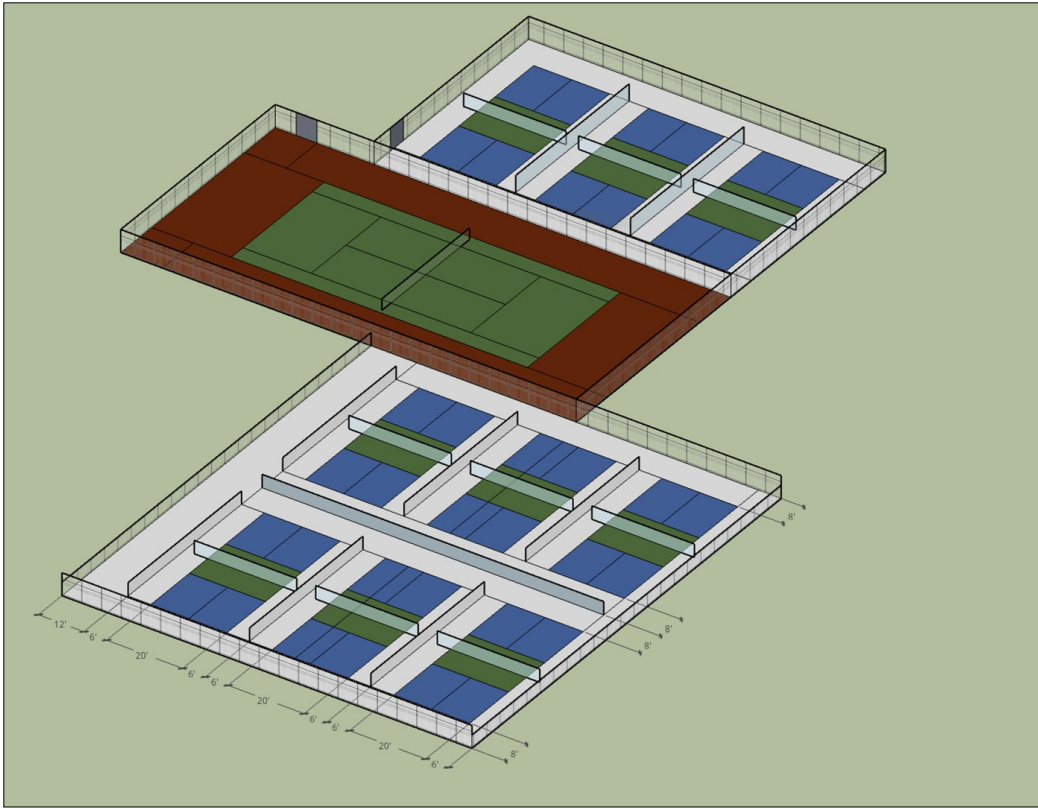
	All Pickleball	Keep Tennis	Do Both	63 Emails
	27	18	9	9
Public Meeting	27	1	6	All comments supported fixing bridge
Totals	54	19	15	

As is evidenced by the table above, removing tennis entirely would not be in accordance with the public comment received. On January 10, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommended the expansion of the sports courts to include one tennis court and optimize the number of pickleball courts.

Staff are proposing a conversion of one tennis court to three (3) pickleball courts, and the other a resurfacing to a full-sized tennis with lines for pickleball as well, resulting in four (4) new pickleball and one (1) tennis court. This will require extending the asphalt to accommodate additional needed square footage as follows:



Cornwall Sports Courts – Full Layout



Aerial View



The current budget of \$165,000 will accommodate these changes. Project scope will include:

- Asphalt repairs
- Tree root barriers
- Resurfacing/Striping/Nets
- New fencing and gates
- New signage

We anticipate the project to be completed by October of this year. No trees will be removed as part of this project.

Next Steps

Staff will be finalizing scope and permits for bridge demolition and completing the full design for sports court conversion using job order contracting for construction.