

Proposal for Tennis Courts in Sakai Park

Improvement: Four Courts*

*Hopefully with adjacent vacant land left undeveloped for a future additional two courts.

Cost: \$180,000—\$200,000*

*Estimate from Mid-Pac Tennis Court Builders

Funding: Joint Effort with Parks

Bainbridge Community Tennis Association (BCTA) will spearhead grant applications to the United States Tennis Association (USTA) and other sources, and additionally, will fundraise within the tennis playing community.

Does BI Have Enough Courts: No

The Island is short of outdoor courts according to the National Park & Recreation Association (NRPA) standards, which recommends 11.5 courts for our population base of approximately 23,000. We currently have four fully available courts plus an additional six that are partially available.

Does the Observation that Courts are Often Empty Mean There is not a Need - No

Just like soccer fields, tracks, baseball diamonds, etc., tennis has a season, and when that season is in full swing, there needs to be enough courts to satisfy the population's needs.

Does BIMPRD Have a Responsibility to Provide a Reasonably Sized Tennis Facility for the People of Bainbridge Island: Yes

The six tennis courts at BHS are a mainstay to tennis players who rely on public courts, however, these courts are unavailable much of the time. Metro League is currently considering returning to a format of boys tennis in the fall and girls tennis in the spring. This possibility, combined with winter's waning light, would render these six courts unavailable on weekdays from September through May.

Need for a Toilet

BHS Courts do not have available restroom facilities most of the year.

Are Single or Double Courts the Best Configuration: No

There are mainly two types of tennis players: those who play a few times a year, and serious tennis players. The courts at BPP, SH & Eagledale Park satisfy the former group; the courts at BHS satisfy the latter. Why? Serious tennis players need courts that are well-maintained, and grouped together.

Why Tennis Players Choose to Play at Multi-court Facilities:

- Waiting time to get on court is usually 20 minutes or less at multi-court facilities of four-plus courts.
- Tennis is a social game. Tennis is often played in group settings such as BCTA provides, requiring multiple courts in one location.

Why the USTA and City & Park Agencies Now Build Multiple Court Facility Rather Than Neighborhood Courts:

- Multi-courts are cost effective
- They grow the sport
- Maintenance is easier
- They allow for instructional and recreational programming
- Use per court is increased
- Agencies can make money

How to Make Money From Courts

Programming: Park Districts offer affordable outdoor group programming for both adults and juniors.

Reservations: Most outdoor park facilities, e.g. Greenlake, provide an on-line court reservation system.

Tournaments: Multi-court facilities make it possible to run USTA sanctioned or local tournaments.

Why a Public Multi-court Tennis Facility is Needed Even Though BI Has a 5-Court Private Club

Private clubs are expensive and exclusive.

Tennis Courts Compatibility

Being in the Winslow core, Sakai Park is likely to be more densely developed than outlying parks, but it will still need a balance between "open area" and building. Tennis courts can provide this amenity. Modern city tennis courts often incorporate attractive features such as three foot side fencing, cut-off corners, low border gardens and viewing benches, thus providing additional place to relax in a beautiful setting while viewing recreational play. Also, waiting individuals may play tennis while family members are engaged in other Sakai Park activities.

Kids Need to Exercise More

Sakai Park is an ideal location to build an inexpensive facility that can keep Island kids active outside for decades:

- A high school C-Team
- Intermediate & middle school after-school programs
- Fall & spring elementary programs
- Teen informal pick-up games
- Families playing with their kids

Exercise Community for Adults

Sakai Park is located within Winslow's dense population base, centrally located on BI, and near existing courts. These conditions will provide opportunities for hundreds of more people to engage in tennis, especially if new park programs are implemented. Cities that provide the best tennis multi-court infrastructures have the most active tennis populations.

Timeline

Courts could be up and running while other more complicated projects are being considered and developed. The courts could occupy 120 front feet along Madison Ave on one edge of the property leaving the remaining 600'+ frontage section for a future building.

BIMPRD Mission Statement . . .

. . . paraphrased, is to "build a healthy community . . . through . . . recreation opportunities." Tennis satisfies both these objectives at once. It is a social sport that lends itself to fostering friendships while at the same time contributing to improved health, potentially, from ages nine to ninety!

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TENNIS PARTICIPATION

(Source: Sport Courts, Technical Paper, Portland Parks & Recreation, June 2008)

A prior USTA summary report for the Pacific Northwest Section, illustrated trends of participation in a regional context. Growth of tennis depends on the following things:

1. Recruiting new players, especially youth and underrepresented populations.
2. Retaining existing players through lessons and more opportunities for organized play.
3. Recovering lapsed tennis players.

New and improved facilities are essential to continued participation. Public tennis facilities are important because new players tend to play at schools or public parks while private clubs are less likely to reach new players.

Participation will largely depend on the kinds of facilities and programs that are developed. Without an adequate base of facilities, opportunities to cultivate new players and maintain the existing base of players are limited, but without any growth in facilities and programs, participation will likely remain at its current level or decline slowly.

Focus on facilities, programs and participation can be profitable and benefits the building a foundation for continued growth and participation.

In general, single tennis courts are not efficient in accommodating the needs of tennis players. A facility with more than one court increases the likelihood that a court will be available within an acceptable time. Single courts are high-risk propositions for tennis players who do not want to invest valuable travel time to visit a single court where the waiting time may be long. Single courts are also difficult to use for classes.

Tennis generally requires a higher level of instruction and mastery to fully enjoy the sport. Instruction contributes to interest in playing more among new players. Organized play is also a factor to reach and retain players, and increase frequency of play, in leagues, community associations and regularly scheduled social matches with friends. These require multiple groupings of courts.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

(Source: Sport Courts, Technical Paper, Portland Parks & Recreation, June 2008)

Generating performance measures for outdoor courts in parks are difficult. Use is unprogrammed and knowledge is anecdotal or comes from observation. The most efficient way to measure the use of tennis courts is likely observational surveys conducted at different times of the day and week with a sufficient number of sampling times to create a reliable snapshot of tennis court use around the city.

Low levels of participation need to be viewed with caution. It may be attributed to lack of indoor courts, which limits year-round participation, and in the spring, when outdoor tennis begins to increase, almost all available courts are being used by public schools.

TENNIS AND HEALTH

(Source: Tennis Talking Points, TIA and USTA (updated April, 2016))

People who participate in tennis three hours per week (at moderately vigorous intensity) cut their risk of death in half from any cause. (Dr. Ralph Paffenbarger, Harvard University School of Public Health)

Exercise such as playing singles tennis briskly for 30 minutes or longer, 3 to 4 times a week, can help condition the heart and lungs. (American Health Association)

Tennis builds strength in upper body, legs, hips and abdomen and improves speed and overall flexibility. (Vitality Magazine)

Since tennis requires alertness and tactical thinking, it may generate new connections between nerves in the brain and thus promote a lifetime of continuing development of the brain. (Scientists at the University of Illinois)

Tennis outperforms all other sports in developing positive personality characteristics and physical fitness development. (Dr. Jim Gavin, Concordia University, author of The Exercise Habit)

Competitive tennis burns more calories (528 to 610 for an hour of singles) than aerobics, inline skating, or cycling, according to studies on caloric expenditures.

Tennis participation has tremendous physiological and psychological benefits for older individuals. (Dr. James Rippe, Rippe Lifestyle Institute)

Tennis players scored higher in vigor, optimism and self-esteem while scoring lower in depression, anger, confusion, anxiety and tension than other athletes or non-athletes. (Source: Dr. Joan Finn, et al., Southern Connecticut State University)