

**Town of Newmarket  
Memorandum**

TO: Mayor and Council  
CC: Ian McDougall, CAO  
Jeff Payne, Commissioner, Community Services  
FROM: Colin Service, Director, Recreation & Culture  
RE: Follow Up on the Provision of Pickleball Report (Dec 4<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole)  
DATE: December 5, 2023

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At the Committee of the Whole on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 members of Council were provided with an update report on the development of a new Pickleball Facility. There was a deputation from a member of the public raising some questions and providing alternative suggestions. Additionally, there were questions from various members of Council. This memo will serve to address the outstanding questions and suggestions.

Site Selection Process

Town staff reviewed all property within its inventory for the viability of a Pickleball Facility. The following criteria were carefully evaluated for each potential site:

- Ability to accommodate 14 to 20 courts with the capacity to bubble all of them during winter months.
- Achieve the highest number of courts we can within the range (14 to 20) based on site, design, bubbling, and funding considerations.
- Distribution of recreation facilities throughout the Town.
- Minimize potential displacement of other recreational facilities or amenities.
- Consideration of proximity to residences and buffering of the site.
- Parking capacity.
- Permitting and regulatory approval considerations.
- Complexity of site preparation (servicing, grading, and construction mobilization)

Based on the above noted criteria, the only site that met the criteria is in the northern portion of George Richardson Park. There are currently four mini soccer fields located in the northern portion of the park.

Based on discussions with the Lake Simcoe and Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), the south-east field site has been deemed suitable for placement of a pickleball facility while the south-west field, closer to the watercourse, would have additional constraints. The two northern fields are not suitable.

Conversations were held with the Newmarket Soccer Club as the primary user of the current soccer field facility, regarding the proposal. The Club was supportive of the proposal and Town staff provided assurances we would work with them to continue to meet their needs.

Table 1 outlines considerations related to the two fields.

Table 1 – Evaluation of the south-east and south-west field locations at George Richardson Park.

Criteria	South-east field location (Preferred for Pickleball Facility)	South-west field location (Site not suitable)
Ability to accommodate 14 to 20 courts with the capacity to bubble all of them during winter months.	The site is large enough to accommodate a bubbled structure for four seasons operations.	Same
Achieve the highest number of courts we can within the range (14 to 20) based on site, design, bubbling, and funding considerations.	The site will allow for a design that achieves 20 courts; the maximum number of courts identified with in the specified range and funding.	This site would have higher cost associated with the placement of the facility further to the west (further detailed in this table).
Distribution of recreation facilities throughout the Town.	The site is north of Davis Dr, an area in the Town that currently has no indoor recreational facilities.	Same
Minimize potential displacement of other recreational facilities or amenities.	The site will displace one undersized field currently used for practice. Other fields are available for practice. Even if additional funds were spent to upgrade the south-east field it still has a size constraint for play.	This would remove a high-quality field large enough for league and tournament play. It would be difficult and a cost consideration to replace this field elsewhere in Town.
Consideration of proximity to residences and buffering of the site.	The site has existing buffers that can be enhanced (the berm and additional tree plantings).	The site is further away from residents, but it would require new buffering that is not in place (open field), these plantings could further constrain the south-east field.
Parking capacity.	Planning and scheduling can be used to reduce peak parking periods/times of year. Additional parking could be considered and developed in the park.	Same
Permitting and regulatory approval considerations.	LSRCA has confirmed this site can be approved for the facility as described in the draft site plan.	This site is closer to the water course and an approval further to the west might result in the loss of both fields based on the placement of the facility on the site.
Complexity of site preparation (servicing, grading, and construction mobilization).	This site is close to servicing, requires minimal grading and is easy for construction mobilization.	Costs will increase the further the facility is situated from services and the road. Additional mobilization costs would be anticipated.

Given the information above, the south-east field is preferred representing the most cost effective and least impactful site for the new Pickleball Facility.

## Map of Fields



## Noise Mitigation

It is anticipated with the business case that the bubble would be in place from the end of September to the end of April. The bubble will mute all noise associated with play when in service. The bubble would be down during the summer months and careful consideration will be given to potential noise from outdoor play. There has been a significant amount of research conducted around the noise impacts of pickleball and this will be incorporated through the facility design process. At this site the closest home is 185 feet away from the facility. There are several noise mitigation measures that can occur at this site including further development of the already existing berm that backs on to the eastern residences. Additional tree plantings in the area will provide further significant noise mitigation. Lastly, the eastern and northern fences of the new facility are intended to be acoustic fencing that will serve to mitigate the noise significantly. It is fully expected that these measures will reduce noise levels in

the area to below 50 decibels. For reference, 40 decibels is associated with normal background and ambient noise levels in a library.

#### Lighting

The plan is that the courts will not be lit when the bubble is not in place. During the period when the bubble is up there will be lighting within the bubble itself (suspended inside the bubble).

#### Work with Residents in the Area

As an outcome of approval of this site, staff can actively work with residents to provide site specific solutions to address concerns.

If you have any additional questions, or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me at [cservice@newmarket.ca](mailto:cservice@newmarket.ca) or at ext. 2601.