

Carey Certo

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Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 1:52 PM
To: Community Development Email
Subject: CHS Tennis Project

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To Whom It May Concern,

As the principal of Camas High School, I am writing to express my support for the proposed partnership with the United States Tennis Association Pacific Northwest (USTA PNW) to develop a sustainable, weather-resistant indoor tennis facility on our campus. This initiative promises to significantly enhance equitable access to tennis for our students and the broader Camas community.

In the Pacific Northwest, our spring seasons are notably wet, which poses substantial challenges for outdoor sports. Camas, Washington, experiences an average annual rainfall of approximately 61 inches, with precipitation occurring on about 169 days each year. *Specifically, during our girls' tennis season in the spring*, the frequency of rainy days is particularly high – in March there are on average 13 rainy days, totaling around 6.68 inches of rain. In April, the chance of a wet day starts at 47% at the beginning of the month and only decreases to 35% by the end of the month, which leads to May when there is a 30% chance of rain on an average day (weatherspark.com).

These conditions often lead to frequent disruptions in our tennis schedules, impacting consistent practice and competition.

The proposed indoor facility would address these challenges by providing a reliable venue for our student-athletes to train and compete, regardless of weather conditions. Our girls' tennis program (over 100 girls each year) and our boy's (about 80-90 students each year) program, would greatly benefit from uninterrupted access to quality courts. Moreover, our Physical Education classes would utilize the facility, introducing more students to tennis and promoting lifelong fitness habits.

Beyond the immediate benefits to our school, this partnership with USTA PNW extends its positive impact to the entire Camas community. USTA PNW has a long history of collaborating with communities to enhance tennis infrastructure and accessibility. For instance, in a similar initiative, USTA PNW increased the amount of free tennis court hours provided to local high schools in Vancouver, ensuring that cost was not a barrier to entry. In our case, USTA PNW plans to offer regular open court times for senior citizens, granting them free access to the facility. This initiative develops engagement and promotes active lifestyles among all age groups.

Additionally, USTA PNW's commitment to inclusivity is evident through their scholarship programs designed to eliminate financial barriers, ensuring that tennis is accessible to everyone, regardless of economic background.

It's important to acknowledge concerns from local tennis facility owners who may have some concerns regarding potential competition. However, given the current shortage of covered tennis facilities relative

to our population, this project aims to meet existing demand rather than divert business. The facility is designed to complement, not compete with, existing establishments by focusing on community access and youth development.

On a personal note, I picked up a tennis racquet in high school for the first time and with great coaching and a lot of practice, I received a scholarship to play at a division 2 and then a division 1 college. I grew up in Colorado with many days of sunshine and was able to take advantage of the climate. I want my students to have these same opportunities.

In conclusion, the proposed indoor tennis facility represents an opportunity for Camas High School and the surrounding community. It promises to provide equitable access to tennis, promote physical and mental well-being, and develop a sense of community across all age groups. I wholeheartedly support this project and encourage others to recognize its substantial benefits.

Sincerely,

Kelly O'Rourke

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