



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY  
COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 10/27/2025

ITEM NO: 1

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DATE: October 24, 2025  
TO: Parks and Sustainability Commission  
FROM: Nicolle Burnham, Parks and Public Works Director  
SUBJECT: Consider Making a Recommendation to the Town Council Regarding the Future Use of and Potential Improvements to the Tennis and Pickleball Courts at La Rinconada Park

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Forward a recommendation to the Town Council regarding the use of existing courts at La Rinconada.

**BACKGROUND:**

At its meeting of June 4, 2018, the Los Gatos Parks Commission (now Parks and Sustainability Commission, referred to herein as "Commission") received a report from staff recommending that the tennis court at La Rinconada Park (Park) be striped to accommodate pickleball and that a pilot program for pickleball be initiated. The Commission supported this recommendation.

In Fall of 2018 the Town of Los Gatos entered into an agreement with First Serve Productions to layout and stripe four pickleball courts on top of the existing tennis court at the Park.

On April 1, 2019, the Commission heard a staff report indicating that the pickleball pilot had been successful and recommending that the courts be programmed two days each week for pickleball under the guidance of Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation (LGSR). The Commission supported this recommendation.

On August 5, 2019, the Commission heard a report from LGSR regarding their pickleball program. The report indicated that programming was scheduled Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM to 12 PM.

Since 2019 pickleball use at the Park has grown to seven days per week. At present, LGSR runs pickleball programs at the Park six to seven days a week with a combination of Lessons and Pickleball Club play. Approximately 20 to 30 hours per week is dedicated to LGSR use depending on the season. All other times courts are available for open play.

**PREPARED BY:** Nicolle Burnham  
Director, Parks and Public Works

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There is no record of additional discussion of pickleball in Commission meeting minutes until December 5, 2022, when a representative of LGSR discussed the need for additional pickleball courts and asked to convert courts at Blossom Hill Park from tennis to pickleball.

Since that December 2022 meeting, the Commission has received numerous comments at almost every meeting from the public regarding the need for more pickleball courts, and about the adverse impact of pickleball noise on the residential properties near the Park. In addition, staff regularly receive noise complaints about this activity at the Park.

On October 10, 2023 staff presented to the Commission alternatives for play at the courts in this Park. These alternatives were: 1) cease play of pickleball at the court; 2) install acoustic barriers; 3) require use of pickleball equipment that reduces noise; 4) limit the hours of play by posting signage at the court; and 5) convert one tennis court at Blossom Hill Park to four pickleball courts. The Commission recommended that Options 4 and 5 be considered. Residents adjacent to Blossom Hill Park provided public comment at the meeting expressing concern over noise from pickleball.

Staff created new signage for the court at the Park with the hours of play set to 8 AM to 7 PM April 1 through October 31; and 8 AM to 6 PM all other times. This has resulted in some reduction of concerns from the neighbors but has generated new complaints when pickleball is played before 8 AM or after the posted hours.

In the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget a project was created to resurface the court at the Park and to convert one tennis court at Blossom Hill Park to four pickleball courts. After the budget was adopted staff carefully assessed the requirements to convert one Blossom Hill tennis court to pickleball and encountered technical challenges. With numerous tennis courts inside one fenced area, converting one court to four pickleball courts presents the potential for conflicts in play that would necessitate fencing between the pickleball play area and the adjacent tennis court. The placement of fencing would reduce the available run out space for tennis players.

During the development of the Fiscal Year 2025-26 CIP staff recommended that the project be converted to allocate all available funding to improvements at the Park. The improvements include: resurfacing the court, installing sound insulating fabric and installing an auto-locking gate on the court to prevent access before 8 AM and after 6 PM or 7 PM. Staff has been working to implement these improvements and plans to execute the construction in spring 2026.

The use of the Park for pickleball has remained a contentious issue for pickleball players (who want better courts) and residents (who want less noise, less traffic and fewer people using the space). In Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 vandalism incidents at the court resulted in the need for

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extensive staff time to repair the damage, and threatening behavior from certain pickleball players toward neighbors of the park. There are no suspects in the vandalism incidents.

Public comments both for and against pickleball continue to be heard at every Commission meeting. On October 7, 2025 LGSR received a cease and desist notice (Attachment 1) that they shared with the Town of Los Gatos. On October 10, 2025, LGSR notified the Town that it would cease all pickleball related activities at the park until the issue can be discussed further and that all equipment owned by LGSR had been removed.

#### DISCUSSION:

Concerns regarding the use of the courts at La Rinconada have included:

1. **Noise** from pickleball play and from use of the court (e.g., yelling, etc.). Town Code Section 16.20.030(a) states that on public property *"No person shall cause, make, suffer or allow to be made by any machine, animal, device or combination of same, on public property a noise level more than fifteen (15) dB noise level specified for that particular noise zone, as shown on the Noise Zone Map, during that particular time frame, at any point outside of the property plane."* The Noise Zone Map<sup>1</sup> specifies that the ambient weekday noise levels shall be 47 dBA from 6 AM to 1 PM, and 53 dBA from 1 PM to 10 PM, indicating noise levels of 62 dBA and 68 dBA at the property line are acceptable. Staff does not have any validated noise analysis from the period of time when the courts were in use.
2. **Parking** along the roadway at the park inhibits pedestrian and cyclist use of the streets. Parking along both sides of Granada Way is permitted and no restrictions are in place. Pickleball players are asked to park on the east side of the street to reduce impacts to residents and generally this request seems to be honored, although there is no specific data to confirm. Residents of the area have expressed concern that the parked cars make the area unsafe, as pedestrians are forced into the road. Sidewalks on Granada Way exist for approximately 200 feet south from the intersection of Wedgewood Avenue.
3. **Cracking of the court** surface. Surface cracking has occurred on the court surface, leading to trip hazard concerns from users.
4. **Threatening behavior** and lack of accountability for such behavior. Residents have expressed noise concerns to Town staff and to pickleball players. Since the court is not staffed, residents have approached court users regarding off-hours play and/or use of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38492/Noise-Zone-Map>

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leaf blowers at various times. Following the last vandalism incident in April 2025, neighbors were verbally threatened by players and received written threats via mail. Police reports have been filed.

Alternative management options to mitigate the concerns about the court include:

1. **Limiting the number of pickleball courts at La Rinconada.** The typical conversion is for one tennis court to four pickleball courts. The courts at this park followed that conversion pattern. With these courts the Town of Los Gatos offers four pickleball courts for public use. The City of Saratoga has two courts. Campbell has none. San José has 49.

The tennis nets at La Rinconada were not removed and permanent pickleball nets were not installed, but striping for four pickleball courts was completed. The intent was to allow tennis to still be played at this location. Neighbors of the courts have asked that two pickleball courts be removed to reduce the impact of noise and parking.

If the number of courts are reduced to two staff would not recommend moving forward with the improvements to this court that were mentioned above (i.e., installation of acoustic panels and an auto-locking gate, plus resurfacing the court). That funding could be redirected to converting one tennis court at Blossom Hill Park to four pickleball courts.

2. **Eliminate LGSR Programming of this space.** As noted above, LGSR programs 20 to 30 hours of pickleball play time at the La Rinconada courts depending on the time of year. If the Town removed this space from the LGSR use agreement then all hours of court usage would be available for public play. It is not clear how many hours of use the courts would receive if this occurred. After LGSR ceased programming these courts on October 10, 2025, public play has continued on the courts. Observations by staff have shown some periods with 16 players (all courts in use) and other periods with no players. Without detailed and consistent player counts from before or after October 10, 2025 staff cannot draw any clear evidence based conclusions about the impact of LGSR programming on the level of play; therefore, we cannot say that eliminating LGSR programming would achieve the goal of the residents. LGSR has indicated they may be willing to have staff at the court during all hours of programming to monitor use if this space is not removed from the use agreement.
3. **Reduce Hours of Play.** Play at La Rinconada Courts is currently slated for 8 AM to 6 PM November 1 through March 31; and 8 AM to 7 PM from April 1 through October 31. Generally speaking, court users seem to adhere to the hours, but there have been instances of play before 8 AM. Installation of an auto-locking gate will prevent entry to

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the courts before 8 AM. It would be possible to further reduce the hours of play, starting later in the morning and ending earlier in the afternoon. Players would be adversely impacted by being forced to play in the hotter hours of the day.

4. **Mandate Quiet Paddles.** Quiet pickleball paddles are available, but at generally higher price points than regular paddles. Experienced players express that the quiet paddles interfere with and hinder their play. Regardless, some Towns are either requiring or requesting the use of quiet paddles for pickleball courts. Laguna Beach mandated the use of quiet paddles at one of its parks starting April 10, 2025. Available quiet paddles are available for purchase in their community center. USA Pickleball provides a list of quiet paddles on their website (<https://equipment.usapickleball.org/acoustic-equipment/>).

In the Bay Area, Cupertino has requested that players use quiet gear in the early morning (dawn to 9 AM) and in the evening (7 PM to 9 PM).

There are currently no staff resources in Los Gatos to monitor and enforce this requirement if it were implemented.

5. **Close Courts until Work is Completed in Spring 2026.** The installation of sound paneling on two sides of the court facing the residential property, an auto-locking gate, and resurfacing the court is proposed to be completed in Spring 2026. Staff expects these improvements will at least partially address the concerns of the players and neighbors alike. The sound netting manufacturer has indicated that an average of 30 decibel noise reduction can be expected. Staff does not have a validated sound study of existing noise levels at the court. In addition, noise levels are dependent on many factors – wind direction, humidity, personal experience, etc. so it is not possible to say for certain that the noise curtains will mitigate all neighbor concerns, but it is the best available technology for noise reduction.

Court resurfacing will address concerns from the community about cracking and potential trip hazards. The auto-locking gate will hinder court access during hours not posted for play.

6. **Develop Rental Fee and Reservation System for Courts.** At present the courts are reserved during certain hours by LGSR, but there is no public calendar to communicate when the courts would be open for public play. As such, players arrive at the location without knowing if a court is available for their use. During busy hours this results in additional cars in the residential area and additional players lingering near the court while waiting to play. If a rental fee and reservation system was implemented for these courts the number of cars and players might be more effectively managed.

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Staff recently updated the reservation software for picnic areas in parks, and this software can be used to manage sport court reservations. Implementing this change in the software would be relatively simple. A fee would need to be developed that covers the cost of managing the reservation system. There are currently no staff resources in Los Gatos available to monitor use of the courts so the fee would need to include the staff time to manage the reservations, likely by adding hours to the existing part-time Park Service Officer Aide position.

Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation manages court reservations for the City of Saratoga and may be amenable to managing reservations at La Rinconada as well.

7. **Implement a Permit Parking Program for Park Frontage.** As noted earlier residents have concerns about parking along Granada Way. The Town does not currently have a residential permit parking program but policies are in development for this. It may be possible to implement a permit program for parking along the east side of Granada Way. With this alternative, the technology exists within Town's existing online permit parking program to issue parking passes for non-residents to park in this area. This alternative would need to be discussed and reviewed by the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department as they would need to support the enforcement.

#### CONCLUSION:

This staff report has provided potential options for use of the courts at La Rinconada to manage interactions between residents and pickleball players. Some of the solutions, like a reservation system and use of quiet paddles would be challenging for staff to enforce without dedicated staffing for park management, but it may be possible to support the necessary staff through the proposed fees to be charged.

Until direction is provided by the Parks and Sustainability Commission and Town Council, staff will allow the courts to remain open for public play, without programming from LGSR.

## CEASE AND DESIST LETTER

7 October 2025

From: Waldo L Joseph MD and the Granada Way Neighbourhood Association

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

To: Nancy Rollet, Executive Director

Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation

Address: 208 East Main Street, Los Gatos, CA 95030

Email: nrollett@lgsrecreation.org

Re: Notice to Cease and Desist

Dear Director Rollett,

This cease and desist letter is being served upon Los Gato- Saratoga Recreation by the above parties for the following reasons:

1. Continuing to allow, and even advocating for increasing the volume of, pickleball play at La Rinconada Park without instituting appropriate measures for noise mitigation, in spite of multiple neighbor complaints, hence creating a nuisance in the neighborhood and depriving the neighbors of the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of their residences.
2. Failing to develop measures to adequately ameliorate or address verbal harassment and threats by Pickleball Club members upon the immediate neighbors of La Rinconada Park.

Brief background: The Town of Los Gatos authorized the initiation of pickleball play by Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation at La Rinconada Park in 2018 without prior neighborhood engagement and without any noise mitigation measures, despite previously being aware of

the contentious nature of the sport and its known associated noise issues. Despite multiple neighbor complaints since that time, and repeated attempts to engage both the Town and Los Gatos-Saratoga (LGS) Recreation (represented by Todd Badger) in noise mitigation measures, both the Town and Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation have repeatedly delayed adoption of such measures while at the same time continuing to allow ongoing pickleball play, and even advocating for increasing the volume of this play. The residence closest to the park had formally recorded impulsive noise levels of >80 dB inside its front window, which is approximately 25 feet beyond its property line, which is in turn <90 feet from the court at the park. This noise level is in violation of the allowable limits by the Town's Noise Ordinance.

Recent vandalism of the court at the Park has resulted in false and unsubstantiated allegations by LGS Pickleball Club members of supposedly purposeful defacement of the court perpetrated by the neighbors. This has resulted in multiple verbal plus written insults, including racial insults, as well as verbal and physical threats towards the immediate neighbors of the Park by LGS Pickleball Club members and by "anonymous" letter writers. Despite neighbor complaints and multiple appeals to Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation to admonish and terminate this behaviour, Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation has failed to hold the involved Club members accountable for this unacceptable activity.

If the above activities continue unaddressed, it is our intent to seek a Temporary Injunction in the District Court against both Los Gatos-Saratoga Recreation and the Town of Los Gatos to halt all pickleball play at La Rinconada Park until such time that these issues have been resolved. Though we hope this recourse is not necessary, we have our interests to protect and will actively do so.

You will not receive another letter from us. If you do not confirm in writing that you will immediately address the above issues by no later than November 7, 2025, we will immediately pursue the injunction.

This letter is sent through electronic mail and certified mail.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by

Waldo L Joseph MD      7 October 2025