



## PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

PRC 26-02  
January 13, 2026  
Regular Business

### AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	PRC 26-02: Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Endorse the draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy.	

<b>STAFF:</b>	Ryan Daly, Recreation Manager
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy (Clean Version) 2. Draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy (Redline Version)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek endorsement from the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) on Exhibit 1, the proposed Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy (Exhibit 1).

- The Recreation Division's 2025-2026 Workplan identifies "*Develop(ing) and implement(ing) a Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy.*"
- The Recreation Division currently provides public access and limited reservations to Sport Court facilities absent a formal policy.
- On [October 20, 2025](#), staff sought initial input from the PRC for the development of a Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy.
- On [November 6, 2025](#), staff presented a draft policy based on operational experience, community and PRC input.
- Staff have completed a legal review and updated the draft policy based on input received from the PRC at previous meetings. Exhibit 2 provides a redline version of the draft policy that highlights revisions from the version reviewed at the November 6, 2025 PRC meeting.

### BACKGROUND

The City of Mercer Island provides public access to tennis and pickleball courts ("Sport Courts") located throughout multiple parks, serving a diverse and growing user base. These facilities are maintained and operated by Parks and Recreation staff to support recreation, health, and community connection.

Currently, the City manages Sport Court use with posted rules and limited permitting opportunities but without a formal allocation policy. This approach has also led to inconsistencies and challenges as demand has grown, particularly for pickleball.

The Recreation Division's 2025–2026 Workplan, as adopted by the City Council, includes the following directive: 1.1.4 – *Develop and implement a Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy to address the priority use of pickleball and tennis courts, for endorsement by the Parks and Recreation Commission.*

On [October 20, 2025](#), staff presented an overview of existing Sport Court use and sought initial PRC input on policy direction. At the [November 6, 2025](#) meeting, staff returned with a draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy for further discussion. The policy has since been refined to reflect PRC feedback on the draft, operational considerations, and community use patterns.

## ISSUE/DISCUSSION

The Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy is intended to balance competing demands for a finite public resource while maintaining flexibility for staff to manage facilities responsibly and equitably. It also provides transparency and predictability for community members, instructors, and event organizers.

The draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy (Exhibit 1) establishes guiding principles and standards for how City-managed courts are accessed and used. Key policy elements include:

- Affirming drop-in play as the predominant use of all Sport Court facilities.
- Allowing limited, permitted reservation-based use where it serves clear community benefit.
- Establishing clear definitions and criteria for Private Reservations, Programs, and Special Events.
- Limiting the size, frequency, and timing of scheduled activities to minimize impacts to parks, adjacent facilities, and general park patrons.
- Exempting City-coordinated uses and certain Mercer Island School District activities from the policy.

Tonight, staff are seeking the PRC's endorsement of the draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy as presented. Exhibit 2 provides a redline version of the draft policy that highlights revisions from the version reviewed at the November 6, 2025 PRC meeting, reflecting input from the PRC and changes made following a legal review.

## NEXT STEPS

Following the PRC's endorsement of the policy, staff will:

- Conduct a final review and the Director will sign and formally adopt the policy.
- Finalize internal procedures for permitting reservations, programs, special events.
- Coordinate messaging and promotion of the policy to inform user groups and stakeholders.
- Begin accepting eligible Sport Court reservation requests (anticipated February 1<sup>st</sup>).

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Move to endorse the draft Sport Court Allocation and Use Policy.