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# SUMMIT COUNTY PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION

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April 27, 2021

Ann-Marie Sandquist  
Mayor/Town Council  
Town of Silverthorne  
Silverthorne Town Hall  
601 Center Circle  
Silverthorne, CO 80498

Dear Ms. Sandquist:

On behalf of our 300 members, 85 of whom live in Silverthorne, the Summit County Pickleball Association (SCPA) respectfully requests that the tennis pad at Rainbow Park be equipped with lines and temporary nets for eight pickleball courts.

Converting Rainbow Park's tennis courts to multi-use (pickleball and tennis) flows logically from last fall's public comments in the POST Plan update and the SPORT Committee's subsequent deliberations and recommendations. On multiple occasions during the community outreach process, Town of Silverthorne staff members suggested Rainbow Park would be ideal for more pickleball courts. SCPA would be happy to share in the cost of pickleball line painting and net purchase so that the project may proceed swiftly this spring/summer.

To review, in July 2020, SCPA proposed repurposing the tennis pad at Trent Park to dedicated pickleball courts because its' pickleball usage (roughly 40 to 70 players per scheduled summer day) far exceeds tennis usage, and because the short drive to Rainbow's dedicated tennis courts would seem reasonable to ask of the few tennis players. The SPORT Committee added a question about it to POST Planning comment cards.

While 60% of comment card respondents with an opinion favored dedicating the Trent tennis pad to pickleball, and letters to the editor of the Summit Daily News were 6-to-0 in favor, the SPORT Committee rejected SCPA's proposal for three reasons:<sup>1</sup>

1. Trent is designated a "neighborhood park," thus prioritizing the recreational needs and impacts to the immediately surrounding neighborhoods;
2. SCPA had emphasized the economic benefits to Silverthorne of attracting pickleball-oriented tourism (a well-documented national/international trend) for which parking at Trent is insufficient; and

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<sup>1</sup> Source of SPORT Committee reasoning and comment card stats: memo, Danelle Cook to SPORT Committee, 12/11/20. Of 426 cards, 208 favored dedication to pickleball, 141 opposed and 77 were indifferent. Letters to the editor appear at the end of this letter.

3. Town recreational facilities ideally should be configured for shared, multi-use purposes. Hence the elimination of tennis from Trent is disfavored, regardless of the disparity in usage between the two sports.

Instead, the SPORT Committee recommended leaving the Trent Park pad multi-use but repainting the pickleball lines to make six (versus the current four) temporary courts. We accept the committee's reasoning and are GRATEFUL for the promised increase in Trent court capacity.

We now ask that the Town Council designate the tennis pad at Rainbow Park "multi-use" for both pickleball and tennis. This action would further satisfy pickleball demand in the near-term (although demand is growing so fast that dedicated courts will still be needed), while solving all three objections associated with SCPA's Trent Park proposal. Specifically:

1. Rather than a designated neighborhood park, Rainbow is Silverthorne's flagship park and the site of many tourist-drawing events (e.g., heavily-attended 4th of July concert, First Friday celebrations, various tournaments);
2. Parking is abundant, including in Rainbow's lot, the Recreation Center lot, the Silverthorne Pavilion lot across Rainbow Drive, the new garage, and on street; and
3. To be equitable, the town's identified value of multi-use sharing should include sharing both tennis pads, Rainbow Park and Trent Park.

Thank you for your consideration on behalf of current SCPA members, our many new players just picking up the sport, and the large number of visitors who come to play pickleball in Silverthorne each summer. We stand ready to assist the town in any way possible, from enumerating pickleball's health and economic benefits to Silverthorne residents and businesses; to documenting the explosive growth of participation in the sport; and technically and financially assisting with the adaptation of the Rainbow tennis pad to multi-use, pickleball and tennis.

Very best regards,



Lori Miller  
President  
Summit County Pickleball Association

CC: Ryan Hyland, Town Manager  
Kathy Swanson, Chairperson, SPORT Committee (c/o Danelle Cook)  
Danelle Cook, SPORT Committee Liaison

# Pickleball at Trent Park August 27, 2019



Typical pickleball crowd for late-summer weekday

- 16 players in action
- 36 players waiting

# Letter to the editor: Silverthorne's master recreation plan should include pickleball

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | August 31, 2020

**Linda Bush**  
Silverthorne

I urge Summit Daily News readers to support pickleball – America's fastest-growing sport – within [Silverthorne's master recreation plan](#). Combining elements of tennis, badminton and pingpong, pickleball is very affordable, easy to learn, and forgiving of age and physical limitations. K-12 schools now teach it. Seniors find in it new joy and new friends. Many play almost daily. Our local, 350-member club grows 20% annually. Summit vacationers increasingly seek to play pickleball here.

Yet, Summit County, alone among Colorado's top eight counties for tourism, has no dedicated pickleball courts. Rather, 12 of the 36 public tennis courts are equipped for temporary pickleball use. Silverthorne, Dillon, Breck and Frisco each schedule pickleball drop-in two or three days a week.

There are problems. Temporary nets sag even when new, wear out fast (volunteers patch and mend them) and need assembly/takedown, which baffles some. Pickleball court lines, painted in colors chosen to minimally disrupt tennis, can't always be seen. Drop-in sessions are severely overcrowded, typically attracting three times the capacity (50-plus players for 16 slots). Constant location changes, depending on which facility schedules pickleball on any particular day, confuse everyone.

Meanwhile, Colorado towns from Grand Junction to Colorado Springs, Fort Collins to Canon City have built 144-plus dedicated pickleball courts. Vail, Steamboat Springs and others host tournaments drawing hundreds of out-of-town players, including pros.

A quick and economical solution would be to convert Trent Park's tennis courts – seldom used by tennis players given the superb courts nearby at Rainbow Park – to six permanent pickleball courts. The club has offered substantial fundraising. Locals and visitors could then enjoy a quality, healthful recreation experience, anytime of day, every day.

# Letter to the editor: Summit County should get with the times on pickleball

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | September 3, 2020

**Mary Bell**  
Silverthorne

There are over 145 dedicated pickleball courts in the state of Colorado. Summit County has zero. These venues bring in large amounts of tourists and revenue: more than \$93,000 in Vail in 2019 and over one-third of the revenue at the Steamboat Springs tennis center, just to give you an idea of the potential. Restaurants, hotels and activities in our mountains could all benefit from a vacation destination for pickleball players and families from all over the nation.

Why would Summit County not want to jump on this ever-growing opportunity? The Summit County Pickleball Association, a nonprofit with more than 350 members, has offered to fund dedicated Pickleball courts for the County at Trent Park in Silverthorne. Jump on board Summit County. You are behind the times with the fastest-growing sport in the world! Convert one of your 36 public tennis courts into pickleball courts, not only for your people of Summit County but as a huge financial opportunity, as well.

# Letter to the editor: Pickleball deserves equitable treatment alongside tennis

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | September 7, 2020

**Jimmy Margoles**  
Frisco

The town of Silverthorne has a remarkable opportunity to convert lightly used tennis courts at Trent Park into a first-class, six-court dedicated pickleball center. Those who have been introduced to the fastest growing sport in the United States clearly understand the transformative impact pickleball has on one's social, mental and physical existence. When you begin to play pickleball, your spirit soars, a smile spreads across your face, and you are engaged, active and alert. The ease of learning this fun game encourages further development and improvement. Families young and old can share playing pickleball games since most games are played with two on each side (doubles fashion). If you haven't tried this amazing sport, contact the Summit County Pickleball Association for its free beginner class schedule. It is time to recognize that dedicated pickleball courts in Silverthorne are long overdue and our over 300-plus pickleball association members deserve equitable treatment alongside tennis.

# Letter to the editor: Pickleball players deserve parity with our tennis neighbors

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | September 8, 2020

**Pamela Blustein**  
Keystone

A homeowner in Summit County for the last 14 years, living as a full-time resident for the last three, I enjoy everything Summit County has to offer. A longtime tennis player, I discovered pickleball when I was exposed to all the fun they were having in the Silverthorne Recreation Center three winters ago.

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport across the country. Our local club has 350 members and is growing. Under discussion is transforming two lesser-used tennis courts at Trent Park into six full-time, dedicated pickleball courts. Vail and Steamboat Springs have dedicated pickleball courts, and there are over 140 dedicated courts throughout Colorado. Yet Summit County has none! Having dedicated pickleball courts would serve our community and bring in additional tourist revenue for the county. A total win-win.

Tennis players, who have many dedicated courts, plus both the Keystone and Breckenridge indoor year-round tennis facilities, can continue to play tennis all around the county. Nearby Rainbow Park, less than 2 miles away, has dedicated tennis courts.

The Summit County Pickleball Association has volunteered to raise funds for converting these these tennis courts into six pickleball courts. This will greatly increase the utilization of Trent Park with dedicated, fixed pickleball lines and nets. Summit County pickleball players have more than demonstrated that we deserve parity with our fellow tennis neighbors.

# Letter to the editor: Silverthorne should have dedicated pickleball courts

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | September 13, 2020

**Bill Clark**  
Silverthorne

Converting Trent Park's seldom-used tennis courts to dedicated pickleball courts is simply a matter of fairness and equity in the use of public funds. Tennis players get their choice of courts at Rainbow Park or Trent Park, while pickleball players are allowed only at Trent Park, using temporary equipment. As Silverthorne updates its master recreation plan, the Summit County Pickleball Association has offered to shoulder most or all of the cost to rework Trent Park's tennis courts for dedicated pickleball. During the town's open houses on the matter, the best argument I've heard against the conversion to dedicated pickleball is that all public courts should be multiuse. If Trent Park's courts must be multiuse, no matter how little tennis usage they get, then the town of Silverthorne must also line and equip the Rainbow Park tennis courts for pickleball and schedule the two sports equally at both facilities. This alternative would not be ideal because players would still have to contend with distracting, overlapping court lines, with pickleball players continuing to play with temporary nets. It is only fair for both of Silverthorne's racquet court facilities to be multiuse, or, a better choice, for each sport to have a dedicated facility.

# Letter to the editor: We choose Summit County for its pickleball community

Opinion [FOLLOW OPINION](#) | September 16, 2020

**Betsy Kenniston and Claire Batista**  
Sylvania, Ohio

We are eight-year members of the Summit County Pickleball Club, spending only the month of February in Silverthorne since 2012. However, we are not property owners. In fact, we have never been to Summit County in the summer. Nonetheless, we can honestly state that without the pickleball opportunities available at the Silverthorne Recreation Center and later at the Breckenridge Recreation Center and Breckenridge Tennis Center, we would have bypassed Summit County for another mountain community with pickleball venues. During those eight years, we have met hundreds of other transients who also come to ski as well as play pickleball. So while we will likely never be playing on the Trent Park courts, we can honestly tell you that pickleball brings tourist revenue to your community and in more than just a minimal way. We hope you will consider this heavily in your decision to build dedicated outdoor pickleball courts in Summit County. Who knows? We've played tournaments all over the country and world. A Summit County pickleball tournament could be added to our future tournament lineup.