

Midway City Council
19 September 2023
Work Meeting

Pickleball and Sports Courts /
Regulations

Memo



Date: September 19, 2023
To: Midway City Council
From: Michael Henke
Re: Pickleball, Tennis, and Sports Court Discussion

The purpose of this item is to discuss sport courts and the impact they have on surrounding properties. Tennis courts and sports courts have been around for decades, and the City has not adopted regulations on these types of facilities. Unless electricity is included, such as for lighting, a building permit is not required, and setbacks do not apply since a court is not defined as a structure. Recently with the growth in population and the growth in the popularity of pickleball, the frequency of sport court construction has increased in Midway and new concerns have risen regarding the sports and the facilities that are needed to play them. Issues such as noise, lighting, and setbacks have been expressed regarding these sports and facilities.

Two Midway parks include tennis courts, and sometimes those tennis courts are used to play pickleball. There are many private courts that have been built in Midway which include the following:

- Tennis courts - 22
- Pickleball courts - 15
- Sports courts – 13

The popularity of pickleball has grown, and along with it the number of pickleball courts, for several reasons which include the following:

- It is fun and provides a physical healthy activity.
- It appeals to all age levels and genders

- It is a sporting activity that families can participate in together with very minimal cost.
- It has been the sport of choice for the age demographic of 50 and older with many players over 65. For this age group it is considered a “LOW IMPACT” activity and thus is easier on your body.
- It is designed and ideal for players of all skill levels, beginners can easily learn the basics of the game and start playing games allowing them to advance to play more seasoned players.
- It inherently has a huge social aspect to it. Unlike other participation sports, pickleball is unique because players gather at the same time and therefore have many different players based on skill level. You can just show up and start playing with other players.
- Because of the social aspect for active seniors this has become the new place for active seniors to gather in a social setting promoting social interaction and building new friendships.
- The social component of pickleball is a major reason why communities are building pickle-ball complexes throughout Utah and the country, not individual courts in a public venue.

Staff would like to receive direction from the City Council regarding this issue. If the Council feels it is necessary to create an ordinance, then we would like to know what items to include in the ordinance. We have reviewed other cities’ ordinances and items that have been included are greater setbacks, lighting restrictions or not allowing lighting, and noise studies and mitigation. Some cities have required courts to receive a conditional use permit as part of the approval process. We are ready to follow any direction the City Council would like us to take on this matter.

Please contact me for any questions.

Michael Henke, MPA, AICP

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