

**SUBJECT: CONVERSION OF INLINE SKATING RINK TO PICKLEBALL
COURTS 2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

DATE: APRIL 15, 2025

**PRESENTED BY: ADAM BLACKMORE, PROS DIRECTOR
BRYON WEBER, PROS PROJECT MANAGER
DIANA LANGLEY, CITY MANAGER**

SUMMARY:

At the March 18, 2025, Regular Meeting, City Council requested a future agenda item for a staff presentation and discussion related to the conversion of the inline skating rink to outdoor pickleball courts. This project was included as part of the 2025-2026 budget & 6-year Capital Improvement Plan approval process. Staff will present the history and status of the conversion project as proposed.

BACKGROUND:

History of the Inline Rink

The inline skating rink construction was completed in 2003 in response to the inline skating and hockey craze of the 1990s. The rink has not been programmed by the city for inline hockey for more than a decade due to a decline in leagues and lack of community participation in inline hockey program offerings. The current Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan, which was developed in partnership with the community and adopted by City Council in 2012, identified the underutilized inline skating rink as a prime opportunity for repurposing. In 2019, in response to growing community interest, the city added pickleball lines and provided moveable nets at the inline rink to support drop-in pickleball play. Over the past five years, a demographically diverse group of players have used the rink informally for outdoor pickleball, demonstrating a sustained interest in this activity.

Project Development and Approval

The City Council's February 2024 Work Plan identified outdoor recreation amenities, including pickleball, as a medium priority. On August 20, 2024, following community input at RAB meetings and public comments received at the Recreation & Senior Center, indicating strong support for dedicated outdoor pickleball courts, a memo was submitted by the RAB to the City Council recommending the proposed project to convert the existing inline skating rink to dedicated pickleball courts. In November 2024, the City Council approved funding for the project as part of the 2025 Capital Improvement Program.

Location Considerations and Design Benefits

The inline skating rink was specifically selected after careful evaluation of potential sites throughout the city. The selected location provides a significant buffer, with the closest homes over 400 feet away. Staff have heard the concerns voiced by residents about pickleball noise and is consulting with an acoustic engineer to determine whether additional noise mediation is recommended. Repurposing the existing rink surface provides substantial cost savings estimated at more than \$250,000 compared to new construction, while efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure including nearby parking, restrooms, and recreation center facilities.

Current Pickleball Facilities

Currently, there are no dedicated public pickleball courts offered by the city. In 2019, the inline skating rink was striped to accommodate five courts. In 2014/2105, three temporary courts were striped on the basketball gym floor at the Recreation & Senior Center, with use allowed during scheduled hours.

Current Project Proposal

The current project proposal involves decommissioning the rink from inline skating/hockey play, add colored surfacing and striping for five courts, install perimeter fencing for each court, and provide benches and shade amenities, as the budget allows.

ANALYSIS:

In February 2025, the city posted a project update to note the upcoming conversion of the inline skating rink to pickleball courts. The City Council and staff immediately received, and continue to receive, feedback from the public both in favor and against the project. Those opposed to the project primarily note noise concerns and the loss of the inline skating rink as a multipurpose venue. Those in favor of the project express support for dedicated outdoor pickleball courts.

There are many options as to how to proceed forward with the project, including:

- Proceed with the project as recommended, finalize the scope of work, and advertise a request for proposal/bidding opportunity later in 2025.
- Eliminate the project from this year's Capital Improvement Plan and continue status quo in maintaining the inline skating rink for multiple uses.
- Re-design the project scope to reduce the number of dedicated pickleball courts and maintain portions of the rink for hockey and/or multi-use functions with clearly defined space/surfacing for each activity.

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- Delay the project until after completion of upcoming PROS Long Range Plan and allow new public input to inform decision making related to pickleball facilities in Louisville.
- Evaluate partnership opportunities with adjoining agencies and/or private pickleball facility providers to allow public use by Louisville residents.
- Evaluate other locations within the city for the construction of new pickleball facilities, recognizing that the cost for new facilities will be significantly higher than the amount budgeted for this project.

While staff identified a few options, Council or the public may have additional options to consider. Staff is requesting direction so that resources are utilized efficiently and effectively.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project currently has \$200,000 appropriated in the 2025-2026 budget. The finalized scope of work and public bidding process is yet to be completed.

SCHEDULE:

Pending City Council or City Manager direction staff intend to move forward with the finalizing of a scope of work that would be included in a competitive bidding process sometime in 2025. The construction and/or approval schedule for the project will be components of that process.

PROGRAM/SUB-PROGRAM IMPACT:

The recommended project supports goals from the Parks & Recreation Divisions, including:

- 1) Parks: Providing well-maintained parks and landscaped areas that are easy to walk to and enjoyable to visit or see; sports facilities that are fully used and properly maintained; and a suitable final resting place that meets community needs.
- 2) Recreation: Promoting the physical, mental and social well-being of residents and visitors through a broad range of high quality, reasonably priced recreation and leisure activities for people of all ages, interests and ability levels.

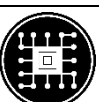
RECOMMENDATION:

This is a Staff presentation seeking direction and discussion related to the next steps of the project.

ATTACHMENT:

- 1) Staff presentation

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☒	 Financial Stewardship & Asset Management	☐	 Reliable Core Services
☐	 Vibrant Economic Climate	☒	 Quality Programs & Amenities
☒	 Engaged Community	☐	 Healthy Workforce
☐	 Supportive Technology	☐	 Collaborative Regional Partner

Conversion of the Inline Skating Rink to Pickleball Courts

City Council Presentation
April 15th, 2025

Parks, Recreation & Open Space
Department (PROS)

Adam Blackmore, PROS Director
Bryon Weber, PROS Project Manager
Diana Langley, City Manager



Background

- **The idea of offering dedicated pickleball amenities in Louisville has been discussed for nearly 15 years, including a notation in the 2012 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan**
 - *2.2.c "Establish a process for identifying facilities that may be re-purposed so that emerging needs can be addressed without having to acquire new land. (For example, the existing in-line hockey rink might be one facility whose need and purpose has declined, and its site might be better utilized for other needs. There may even be new purposes for which the existing post-tension concrete slab is useful, such as a multi-use sport court or an additional tennis court. If the need is there, the rink could become a Championship court for tennis tournaments held on the adjacent courts. Or the rink could be turned into Quick-Start Tennis courts, or Pickleball."*
- **Recreation Amenities including: Tennis/Pickleball Courts and Multiuse Fields was an adopted "Medium Priority" topic on the 2024 City Council Work Plan**
- **Dedicated pickleball facilities have been a frequent request to Staff, City Councils, and the Recreation Advisory Board (RAB)**



Background Cont.

- Proposed project was recommended by RAB as a high priority via a submitted CIP memo to City Council dated 8/20/24
- City's approved 2025-2026 budget includes up to \$200,000 for conversion of the existing inline hockey rink to dedicated pickleball courts
- Proposed project in its current form was included in 2024 public meeting packets for RAB, Finance Committee and multiple City Council meetings as well as the February 2025 RAB meeting where the 5-court design option was recommended

Pickleball Courts in Louisville

- Currently there are no dedicated public pickleball courts offered by the City of Louisville
- Temporary Outdoor Courts
 - Located on the inline hockey rink
 - Striping for 5 courts added 2019
 - Drop-in use within park or scheduled hours
- Temporary Indoor Courts
 - Located on the Recreation & Senior Center basketball gym floor
 - Striping for 3 courts created 2014/15
 - Lessons, tournaments & drop-in play during scheduled hours

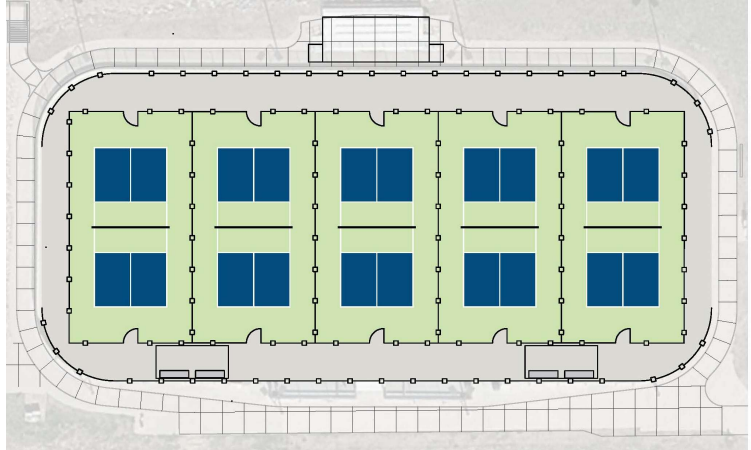


Current Proposal (Reviewed by RAB February 2025)

- Decommission rink from inline hockey play
- Add colored surfacing & striping for 5 courts
- Install perimeter fencing for each court
- Provide benches & shade amenities, if budget allows

Next steps:

- 1) Complete noise study to finalize scope (in progress)
- 2) Finalize scope of work and conduct bidding for construction costs

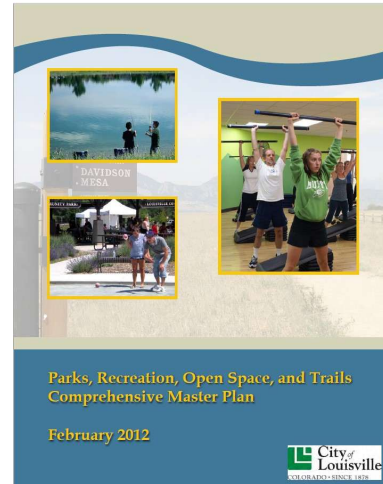


Site Planning

- Cost efficiencies of utilizing the existing post-tension concrete slab, nearby parking, restrooms, etc.
 - New construction could cost 2.5-3.5x times more, depending on inclusion of restrooms or additional site features
 - Proposed project includes rink/fence maintenance and repair as the current infrastructure is coming to the end of its lifecycle. If proposed project is cancelled staff would plan to resubmit capital improvement request or reallocation of funds request for necessary repairs and reinvestment in the rink
- Due to noise impacts, outdoor courts are trending to a standard distance from private residences (minimum 300' used for analysis)
 - Most City owned parks & properties are within 300' of existing homes
 - The proposed conversion location is an exception, offering distances at minimum of 400+'

Rink Conversion - Pros

- Repurposing of 'low scoring' amenity in the 2012 PROST Master Plan (Level of Service Analysis & Resident Survey)
- Rink site offers among the largest physical distances to homes for noise buffering
- Offers shortest completion timeframe to meet user demand
- Offers most cost-effective method for construction of dedicated pickleball infrastructure as requested by community



Rink Conversion - Cons

Community concerns have been received by Staff, RAB and City Council regarding conversion of the rink:

- Belief that detrimental noise impacts are inevitable
- Desire to retain the concrete space's multi-use functionality for purposes other than inline hockey. Examples mentioned, observed or received thus far include: recreational roller skating, skateboarding, bike riding, ball throwing and off-leash dog exercise
- Decommission inline hockey capabilities of the site

Next Steps

Staff request direction on how to move forward, such as:

- Proceed with the project as recommended and finalize scope of work and advertise a request for proposal/bidding opportunity later in 2025
 - Evaluate alternative sites for stick & puck training throughout current park system
- Eliminate the project from this year's Capital Improvement Plan (no modifications to the rink) and work on future request for rink maintenance improvements
- Re-design project scope to reduce the number of dedicated pickleball courts and maintain portions of the rink for hockey and/or multi-use functions with clearly defined space/surfacing for each activity
- Delay project until after completion of upcoming PROS Long Range Plan and allow new public input process to inform decision making related to pickleball & inline skating infrastructure in Louisville
- Eliminate project and consider future development opportunities for new court construction at alternative locations during location specific planning efforts
- Other?