

RECREATION & PARKS COMMISSION 3/04/2026 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, and Commissioners, Recreation Department Director,

I am writing to encourage support for adaptive pickleball programming alongside a balanced court reservation model that protects access while generating sustainable revenue.

Why Adaptive Pickleball Matters

Adaptive pickleball provides meaningful recreational access for individuals with physical disabilities, including wheelchair athletes. The benefits extend beyond physical fitness to confidence, social connection, and community integration. When cities intentionally support adaptive programming, they demonstrate that public spaces are truly for everyone. There currently is a very active adaptive community renting courts at Ocean View Park, in Albany.

A Balanced Court Model: Open Play + Reservations

A hybrid model—similar to the City of El Cerrito’s approach—can successfully combine:

- Designated free open play hours to preserve community access
- Court reservations for personal play with friends, clinics, leagues, and events to generate revenue

This structure ensures equitable access while providing predictable income to support maintenance, equipment, and potential programming.

Structured programming often increases overall participation, bringing new players into the community who also utilize open play hours.

By combining inclusive adaptive programming with thoughtful court reservation policies, the city can strengthen community engagement while responsibly stewarding public resources.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership.

Sincerely,

Renee Hoyer-Nielsen

Adaptive Advocate

Richmond Resident

Dear council members,

I am a Richmond resident who uses the BTA pickleball courts 3-4 times a week. I am 64 years old and I find it is critical to my healthy aging to keep up my physical activity and connections with community. I LOVE to play Picklball and that’s what keeps me motivated to do physical exercise rather than going to a gym. And I get sunshine and fresh air. So I am writing again to beg for the following:

*City of Richmond service or allow EBPA to service the cracks on the courts so they don’t fall into further disrepair

*City of Richmond implements or allows EBPA to implement the 2024 ECIA grant EBPA was awarded for lights

*Allow the permanent nets to be placed permanently on the Courts as opposed to utilizing temp nets

Thank you for your kind attention to this important matter once again.

Sincerely,

Leigh Gronet

163 Lakeshore Court, Richmond, CA 94804

Dear Members of the Richmond City Council,

I am writing to advocate for increased support and specific infrastructure improvements for pickleball facilities within our community.

Pickleball has become a vital part of Richmond's recreational landscape, and further investment in our courts would provide significant benefits to the community. Specifically, I would like to request that the council consider the following improvements:

- Repairing Court Cracks: Maintaining a smooth playing surface is essential for player safety and preventing injuries.
- Adding Lights: Installing lighting would extend the usable hours of the courts, allowing working residents and students to utilize the facilities during the evenings.
- Permanent Nets: Replacing temporary equipment with permanent nets would improve the quality of play and reduce the daily maintenance required by both staff and players.

Enhancing these facilities will foster a more active, connected, and healthy community by making the sport more accessible to residents of all ages.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to improving Richmond's public spaces.

Best regards,

Muliady Hartono

Dear Sirs/Madams,

Please consider repairing the Pickleball courts at BTA. These courts are used by many individuals of all ages. Please also consider allowing us to set up more stand-alone nets, instead of the portable nets that are now used on a DAILY BASIS. This sport, as you must be aware, is the fastest growing sport in the world, and especially in the Bay Area. To be quite honest, the Castro courts in El Cerrito and the Ocean View courts in Albany have put those two cities on the map!

As a long-time Richmond resident, I would like to see BTA experiencing the same goodwill as those two cities. But the cracks in the courts and the portable nets keep away many players. The City would benefit! It is also a fantastic way for people to meet socially and organically. Please consider allowing us to put up more stand-alone nets and to repair the cracks that appear already on these wonderful Richmond courts.

Regards,
Lorraine Sommers
Marina Bay Resident

Dear Parks and Recreation Commission—

I'd like to speak out in support of pickleball at the Booker T. Anderson Park. I play there about 2 days each week, often with close to 2-3 dozen other pickleballers, representing a wide range of ages from teen to 70s and older, and a broad range of socio-economic situations from just trying to get through public and secondary school, through those in the heart of their working careers, to well-off-retired and tight-budget-retired. Pickleball is highly affordable and readily accessible any with a modicum of athletic potential: if you can shake hands, I can show you how to properly hold a paddle.

I have several requests of the Commission:

- * Highest on my personal list: Allow the permanent nets to be placed permanently on the Courts as opposed to utilizing temp nets. These permanent nets are already owned and the holes to set them up in are already in place. It is a waste to keep these locked in a storage container just to accommodate the VERY occasional tennis players who show up; and when tennis players do show up it results in usually 2 people displacing 16 pickleballers (the one tennis court covers 4 pickleball courts with 4 players each, normally).
- * Instruct the City of Richmond to service, or allow EBPA to service, the cracks on the courts so the courts don't fall into further disrepair.
- * Instruct the City of Richmond to implement, or allow EBPA to implement, the 2024 ECIA grant that EBPA was awarded to install lights for evening play.
- * Perhaps encourage adult and youth leagues at BTA.

Any support you can provide will be much appreciated.

--Jim French

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am a 20+ year resident of Richmond and very proud of the progress our city has made in recent years. Although I am now retired, I remain very active in the community as an avid pickleball player. I play at the Booker T. Anderson Park pickleball courts at least five times per week.

I am writing to express my concern regarding the current condition of the courts. Several of them have developed large cracks — even holes — that significantly affect playability and create potential safety hazards. At times, the playing surface is nearly unplayable, which is discouraging given how frequently the courts are used.

Additionally, it is frustrating that players must set up temporary nets each day when permanent nets are available. Installing permanent nets would greatly improve the experience for the many residents who regularly use the courts.

Over the several years I have been playing at Booker T. Anderson Park, I have yet to see anyone using the courts for tennis. In contrast, I have seen hundreds of residents enthusiastically participating in pickleball. The demand is clearly strong, and the facility would benefit from maintenance and adjustments that reflect its primary use.

I respectfully request that the City Council prioritize repairing the damaged court surfaces and installing permanent nets to better serve the community. At the very least, if City resources are limited, I ask that the Council allow EBPA to repair the cracks using funds generously donated by members of the community. This would provide a practical and timely solution while demonstrating a collaborative partnership between the City and its residents.

Pickleball has become an important recreational and social activity for many Richmond residents, and maintaining these courts would support the health, safety, and well-being of our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your continued efforts to improve our city and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Thomas Neu
4052 Coleman Cir
Richmond, CA 94806
510-685-1951
2beneu@gmail.com

RE: Parks & Rec Commission meeting, 3/04/26 1pm, Item 9: Pickleball Presentation.

Please help East Bay residents improve the Booker T Anderson Park's pickleball courts because:

Pickleball promotes physical activity, helping to combat obesity and related health issues.
Pickleball Encourages social interaction, fostering friendships and community bonds.
Pickleball provides an inclusive environment for all ages and skill levels to participate.
Pickleball enhances mental well-being through stress relief and enjoyment.
Pickleball supports local economies by attracting players and events to the community.
Pickleball builds teamwork and cooperation skills among participants.

Thank you.

--

Cheers,
Palma

My sincere apologies for any duplicate messages, but I wanted to correct the typo in one of the email addresses.

On Tue, Mar 3, 2026 at 9:49 PM Nikki Raeburn <raeburn22@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear esteemed members of the Parks & Recreation Commission:

As a resident and homeowner who has happily lived in Richmond for over five years, I write to kindly ask that you provide additional support and service to the Booker T. Anderson (BTA) pickleball courts. More specifically, as a member of the East Bay Pickleball Association (EBPA), I urge you to adopt the following action items:

- City of Richmond to service (or allow EBPA to service) the **cracks on the pickleball courts** so they don't fall into further disrepair
- City of Richmond to implement (or allow EBPA to implement) the 2024 ECIA grant that EBPA was awarded for **court lights**
- Allow the **permanent nets** to be placed permanently on the courts as opposed to utilizing temporary nets
- Support the establishment of an **adult and youth league** at BTA and a system for **reserving courts**

There are abundant reasons to support the BTA courts. To focus on just a few, pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the United States. It provides an excellent and easily accessible form of exercise, but equally important, it also serves a very important community-building purpose. As our country faces such troubling times with increasingly hostile and entrenched divisions, it is truly heartwarming and inspiring to see such a diverse group of people--many of whom are initially complete strangers to each other--come together for friendly competition. This wonderful diversity spans across race, ethnicity, class/socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, body size, and age.

Pickleball courts provide a much needed safe space for everyone to exercise, meet others, and be themselves while experiencing a much needed sense of community. Individuals who at first likely don't know each other quickly establish a sense of camaraderie and team work. At every pickleball court I've ever been to, I always hear laughter and cheers of support even from opposing sides. Many of the people who keep coming back, which is a greater and greater percentage, eventually become friendly acquaintances or even real friends on and off the court.

Because of the rules of paddle rotation for establishing who gets to play next and the self-selected division of courts by ability level (beginning, intermediate, and advanced), it is likewise a welcome relief to be able to come to the courts alone and quickly get paired up with others for a game. There are very few sports that can be taken up so easily by simply showing up, without having to find friends to join you. Moreover, with permanent nets, pickleball courts can provide a reliable, easy, and entirely free opportunity to participate in a sport. And for newcomers, the game can be quickly learned. Most people don't stay "newbies" for long, though, since so many people describe pickleball as addictively fun.

Indeed, I know I'm not alone in feeling that way (and in experiencing withdrawal symptoms if I don't get my pickleball fix), since every time I play I hear other folks say that they also truly look forward to playing every week--or even multiple times a week. From my own personal experience, I've never before had a form of exercise that I actually want to do regularly and very frequently. It's so refreshing to have that internal sense of motivation and excitement, as opposed to my previous pre-pickleball years of forcing myself to exercise in various ways that I didn't really enjoy just to stay healthy.

In sum, I hope you will do all that you can to support and maintain the Booker T. Anderson pickleball courts. Thank you in advance for that and for your continuing service on the Commission, which provides the many residents of Richmond with beautiful parks and enjoyable recreational opportunities. And if you haven't yet given the sport of pickleball a try, I hope you'll do so soon. The East Bay Pickleball Association can easily connect you to beginner lessons where loaner paddles and balls are provided. (Might I suggest that you Commissioners organize a fun team-building exercise by taking a lesson together?) I guarantee you'll have a blast!

Yours in gratitude,
Nikki Raeburn

Hello,

My name is Dana Santos, and I am sending this email in support of improvements at BTA Pickleball courts. I am a dedicated Pickleball player, and I love playing at BTA. The people are great, and the mix of players from all ages and walks of life is energizing. The park is a great location for the community to gather, socialize and exercise, but the courts could use a little love. The nets are rough, and while I appreciate that there are many funding needs, I believe funding pickleball improvements at BTA would serve neighbors, the community, and pickleball players alike.

Thank you for your time.

Dana Santos

I am writing to implore you to return Booker T Anderson to all-pickleball (6 courts).

The addition of the courts at BTA has been a tremendous improvement to the pickleball scene in the area. As an El Cerrito resident, I can say we appreciated the fact that the existence of these courts, attracting many Richmond residents, contributes to decreasing the congestion at the courts in El Cerrito.

We need more courts throughout the region, and BTA was doing its part by providing 6 permanent courts when they were first converted. The loss of 2 tennis courts at BTA is unfortunate, but there are so many other tennis options in Richmond that it seems equitable that BTA be allowed to have 6 permanent courts.

Removing 2 tennis courts from the Richmond tennis court inventory of 22 courts means that there would be 1 court for every 5,283 Richmond residents. Compare this to having only 6 pickleball courts --which comes to 1 court per 19,408 residents. Add to this the fact that many residents who are able to play pickleball are UNABLE to play tennis. It is a gross imbalance of recreational options.

I know the argument is that portable nets can be set up at BTA in order to have 6 courts again, but that means someone must arrive at the beginning of the session, know the combination to the storage box, carry them from the storage box, set them up, attend the full session and then disassemble and return them to the storage box. As a reminder, the storage box originally installed and holding the 6 original nets was stolen entirely after just a few weeks of usage -- a large financial loss to the group. Having portable nets on site was a risky proposition. The nets weigh 20-30 pounds, and many of us are seniors who cannot (or are not supposed to) lift that much weight. There are about 20 pieces to assemble in a portable net, so there is a learning curve involved. Kids are not able to do this. This is why using portable nets is not a feasible long-term solution.

Please look at the big picture. The decision to allow 6 permanent courts at BTA benefits far more people than the few tennis players who now would have to travel just a little further to play tennis.

Thank you for looking into this matter.

Cathy Taruskin

USA Pickleball Ambassador

El Cerrito, Albany, Berkeley

Dear Sir,

I'm writing in support of the restructuring of the pickleball courts at BTA.

I played tennis all my life since junior high until, because of back problems. I can't run anymore. Pickleball has been my savior. I'm a Berkeley resident, but Berkeley doesn't have welcoming open pickleball community courts so I started my pickleball journey at Bushrod Park in Oakland continuing to Castro Park in ElCerrito. I started playing at BTA when the courts at Castro became almost unplayable because of massive cracks.

ElCerrito revitalized their courts and is now a thriving location for pickleball so now Oakland and ElCerrito have excellent courts.

Bushrod Park does not have permanent nets so isn't as inviting as is Castro. BTA has the opportunity to mimic Castro and provide Richmond with a beautiful pickleball environment and, in so doing, enhance Richmond's recreational opportunities.

Pickleball is a much better possible social experience than tennis ever was. Anyone can play at a beginning level from day one and rapidly progress through the always encouraging support of other players. The natural friendships that develop stem from the Open Play system that pickleball provides. Constant changing of partners is a guarantee of a rapidly increasing social network and a far less competitive framework than tennis. My friendships have evolved from about 10 tennis players to at least 50 pickleball ones and is ever growing.

Please support the revitalization of the BTA pickleball courts!

Bill Leslie

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Marcus Foo, one of the co-organizers of the San Francisco Gay Pickleball group.

Our group organizes a monthly pickleball social for gay men & allies in the East Bay area and have been utilizing the Booker T. Anderson courts to build community & stay active since early 2025.

I am writing in solidarity with the East Bay Pickleball Association (EBPA) to request support from the City of Richmond.

This is in reference to Parks & Rec Commission Meeting- Item 9: Pickleball Presentation.

In particular, we would like attention to be drawn to the following topics:

- Proper & Regular maintenance of pickleball facilities
- Allowing EBPA to implement the 2024 ECIA grant EBPA was awarded for lights
- Increasing court accessibility through organized scheduling

While we are proud to play at BTA courts in Richmond, our experience could be further improved by emulating advancements seen in courts at adjacent cities:

- Castro Park courts, El Cerrito: Fenced, well maintained courts with online court reservation system

- Bushrod Park courts, Oakland: Upgraded court line visibility with online court reservation system

Best,

Marcus Foo

Gold Afternoon,

I will be coming with a couple residents from Humphrey Playlot. We would like to just make a general public comment, not be agendized.

We will all stand together and it won't take more than the 2 minutes that we are allotted.

Tashiana Johnson- Fierce Advocates

Arnold Dimas- Humphrey Playlot

Cynthia Roman- Humphrey Playlot

Tashii Johnson Fierce Advocates- Richmond PAO- Lead Project Organizer



WEST CONTRA COSTA PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND

February 26, 2026

Dear Parks & Rec Commission:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support on behalf of the East Bay Pickleball Association. Over the past several years, EBPA has gone above and beyond to engage our youth in the ever-growing sport of Pickleball. The response with kids and schools has been overwhelmingly positive.

Over the past few years, East Bay Pickleball Association has run a Pickleball enrichment program for Richmond youth in partnership with the West Contra Costa Unified School District, as well as Camp Achieve and Freedom School summer camp programs. EBPA served hundreds of students during their after-school programs and over hundreds more during the summer at different Richmond neighborhoods (Parchester Village, Iron Triangle, North Richmond, and South Richmond).

Children who participated ranged in age from about 8 years old to about 16 years old. EBPA has provided dozens of volunteers and paid instructors from the East Bay. Through these programs, it was clear that the "Pickler" community is dedicated to sharing its love of the game with Richmond youth.

Kids and program sites were highly enthusiastic about the program. Much of the focus was on developing the younger children's hand/eye coordination. Older kids who were able to pick up full game rules played full-court games. The program has been a huge success and provides a real opportunity to engage our youth in physical activity across the community.

One impediment to the program's growth is a lack of well-appointed pickleball courts for kids to play on, particularly at night. While the EBPA was awarded an ECIA to install lighting, that award has yet to be implemented. We stand in support of the EBPA presentation to the Parks & Rec Commission Meeting on 3/4/26 (Item 9: Pickleball Presentation). Our youth who are eager to get playing!

Sincerely,

Robert Bunce
Executive Director

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Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 3 - 4 - 2006



- OPEN FORUM
- AGENDA ITEM #: _____

If you are interested in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly):

Conde Hinder

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

Richmond

Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 3/4/2022



OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #: _____

If you are interested in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly):

~~TASHII~~ TASHII, Arnold Dimas, Cynthia Remon

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

Fierce Advocates & Humphrey
Playlot

Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 3-4-26



OPEN FORUM

If you are interest in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

AGENDA ITEM #: 9
Richmond

NAME (print clearly):

Elena Van Loos

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 3/4/26



OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #: _____

If you are interested in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly):

Cheryl Hoover

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

Richmond

Recreation & Parks Commission
Speaker Request Form

Date: _____



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OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #:

119

NAME (print clearly):

L. P. Fry

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

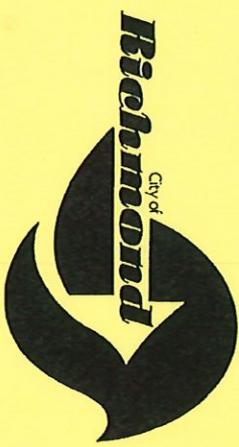
Richmond

(4)

Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 3/4/2021



OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #:

9

If you are interested in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly):

Michael Strait

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

Unincorporated CC County
(Tava Hills)

Recreation & Parks Commission
Speaker Request Form

Date: _____



OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #: _____

If you are interested in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly):

MARY HILL

CITY OF RESIDENCE:

RICHMOND

Recreation & Parks Commission

Speaker Request Form

Date: 03/04/2026



OPEN FORUM

AGENDA ITEM #:

#9

If you are interest in speaking at this meeting, please check the appropriate box, print your name and the city where you live, and present this form to the secretary prior to the item being announced.

NAME (print clearly): Ernesto Ye Lwo

CITY OF RESIDENCE: Richmond
