

Proposed Perris Hill Park Pickleball and Tennis Center Improvement Program

For Budget Year 24/25 and FY 24/25 Grant Programs

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Introduction

The Perris Hill Pickleball community is growing, that growth has accelerated exponentially since the park cleanup commenced May 15, 2023. We have also noticed an increase in the number of tennis players at the Tennis Center, as well as families with children returning to the park. At the current rate of growth we anticipate the pickleball courts will exceed capacity on weekends and holidays during the next fiscal year. To encourage and accommodate this growth we are proposing this “Perris Hill Park Pickleball and Tennis Center Improvement Program”. It is important to note that the City of San Bernardino and Perris Hill Park are an important part of California’s and the nation’s racquet sports history. See the article in Inland Empire Community News [*San Bernardino was among nation’s “highest tennis courts” when Kramer, Jones thrived*](#) by Harvey Kahn 1/25/17 and article from The Sun Telegram [*Jack Kramer: Father figure of tennis*](#) by Gordon Coy 2/13/77, for a small part of that rich and colorful history that has affected so many lives in the Inland Empire and beyond. For more history of Perris Hill Park see <https://HistoryOfPerrisHillPark.com>

We can attest that all of the facilities at the park were underutilized before the cleanup. Prior to the cleanup we were fighting the image that the park was unsafe and unclean. That stigma will take time to overcome. More importantly it will take average citizens and families returning to utilize all of the park’s facilities which will in turn create an atmosphere of safety in numbers.

Highland Avenue is the front door of the park with an average daily traffic count of about 20,000 vehicles. Activity on the Pickleball and Tennis Center courts, as well as the Swim Center, is readily visible from Highland Avenue and is the best advertisement for the health of the park. Maintaining that front door in pristine condition is a best business practice. We encourage maintenance of the Highland Avenue frontage as a top priority of the park.

To achieve our goal of activating the Pickleball and Tennis Center and thereby energizing use of all facilities at the park it is critical that restroom facilities on a controlled

basis are available. We recognize that this poses operational and liability challenges for the City that we do not intend to minimize. However, we believe there may be creative solutions available due to advances in technology and design that we can explore with the City that will mitigate those challenges.

It is our sincere hope and goal that “ballpark” budget estimates can be attached to each task and included in next year's budget. We can help with some volunteer assistance. It is our belief that grant opportunities may exist at the State, Federal, and private foundation levels for various tasks constituting the whole improvement plan as the proposed improvements serve a very diverse low and moderate income population with few other open space and recreational opportunities. Funding and Grant categories include: Public Safety, Parks & Recreation, Street Improvements, Urban Trails and Public Health.

Map Key & Improvement Program

1 The existing Pro Shop at the Pickleball and Tennis Center has not been used for Pro Shop purposes for at least 25 years. It has extensive termite damage. It has been burglarized a number of times over the years. It is in need of major repairs including electrical and exterior painting, the roof is nearing the end of its life at 20 years old, and the A/C unit has been vandalized. Proposal: Demo existing Pro Shop. Resurface to match adjacent court surfaces. Construct an open sided shade structure 36” long x 18’ wide. Structure roof designed for total shade but still allows rain through. Consider cantilevering roof farther to East side to provide shade from early morning sun. Install benches facing East and West courts. Leave ample room for players to set up lawn chairs. (Place to hang bags?) Visibility through the open sided structure will improve security and reduce seclusion that contributes to it being used for restroom and sleeping purposes. The ability for rain to enter through the roof will reduce the use of the shade structure for sleeping purposes during inclement weather. Install a minimum of two public park grade trash receptacles bolted to court. One at the end of short dividing fence immediately North of the main entrance and one at South end of proposed shade structure. Install a night time security light directed at the shade structure on one of the existing poles near the shade structure.

2 Remove lantana and volunteer trees from main entrance. Replace with attractive low maintenance landscaping to define main entrance. Provide drip irrigation if necessary. Remove dirt to 2 ½” below court level. Use removed dirt to fill low spots in grass area and ground squirrel holes. The buildup of dirt and small rocks from ground squirrels and the dense vegetation has caused dirt to spill over on courts 3 & 4 causing excessive wear and tear and making them the courts of last resort.

3 Replace existing, old ragged windscreens with new windscreens to create an attractive window on Highland Ave. Reuse existing as appropriate. As an alternative, as a test project install dark green chain link fence slats on Court 1. Six feet high slats installed 18 inches from Court level to a height of 7 feet 8 inches should reduce wind load and provide adequate screening from moving vehicles on Highland Ave during the day and their headlights at night. Screening on the South side of the courts is a lower priority than the “window” on Highland Ave. It is important to note that cars coming and going on 21st Street are a distraction to players on the Courts and at night cars parking or leaving have their headlights pointed directly at players immediately to the North. Windscreens or fence slats should be placed on an every 4 month schedule to be power washed to maintain their appearance and longevity.

4 Cut down dirt level 2 ½” along entire perimeter of courts 1 thru 7. This is important to allow courts to be blown and washed off without creating a dam along the bottom fence line. Use removed dirt to fill low spots in grass area and ground squirrel holes. Clean and patch concrete gutters on north side of courts 2 through 5.

5 Convert tennis court 3 just West of the new shade structure to 4 pickleball courts. Tennis courts will be East of new shade structure and pickleball courts West of new shade structure. This will accommodate the growth we expect to occur in fiscal year 2024/2025.

6 Resurface Tennis Courts 4, 5, 6 & 7. It’s been approximately 20 years since the Tennis Courts were resurfaced. They are in very poor condition with the original medium slow texture completely worn off in many spots. This should be done in

conjunction with No. 5 converting court 3 to Pickleball Courts and resurfacing the area under the old pro shop for economy of scale.

7 Add sidewalk just South of Court No. 1 to provide continuous sidewalk from parking adjacent to Roosevelt Bowl to the parking area West of the Swim Center. Note: There are existing curb cuts at the South side of the sidewalk at tennis court 6 and at the West end of the sidewalk at the parking lot West of the Swim Center. Assuming existing curb cuts and slopes meet current ADA requirements all facilities along the sidewalk will have continuous ADA access. This will also render unnecessary wheelchairs and strollers having to open the gate on Court 1, cut through the court, and then open a second gate to exit to the sidewalk.

Option 1: Connect existing sidewalks by adding a sidewalk to the south of court 1 along the natural footpath worn by pedestrians in the grass. Lineal distance approx. 88'4". This is the preferred alignment.

Option 2: Add connecting sidewalk along the south side of court 1 abutted to the court slab. Lineal distance approx. 65'6". Distance between court slab and existing light pole is enough for a 4' sidewalk. Most foot traffic will likely "shortcut" following the existing footpath through the grass. Some regrading will need to be done at the east end for drainage. Some sprinkler rerouting may be necessary.

8 Change existing decorative lighting along 21st street to significantly higher lumen output LED fixtures. Raising the height of the luminaires is highly desirable both to increase the light spread and to reduce the potential for vandalism. This will increase safety through this entire area but equally important it will greatly increase the perception of safety for the many art and cultural events held in this area and for patrons of the Bowl, Swim Center, Pickleball and Tennis Center, Children's Playground, main picnic area and for spillover parking from ball games at Fiscallini Field.

NOTE: The existing 13 streetlights along 21st Street appear to have suffered major damage from metal theft, vandalism, and deferred maintenance. The street light system requires further study. See the 21st Street Lighting Upgrade Project Report for details.

9 Install wireless CCTV system at key points to be determined, to deter nighttime vandalism and theft. Consider installing at the three entrances to the park's parking areas license plate reader cameras that can read license plates day and night. PD grant money may be available for this.

10 Due to the very high crown of 21st Street it is very difficult to properly align a vehicle so it ends up in a delineated space. Suggest marking existing parking space lines at the top of the curb to allow parkers to park in demarked spaces. Restripe parking area West of the Swim Center. Parkwood to power wash lines only. Volunteers and/or work sentence program personnel to restripe lines at no cost to City. Traffic paint to be donated. Red curbs could also be repainted after ground squirrels and gophers are eliminated and dirt removal completed. Handicapped space in front of old library does not meet current code, need indicia template, blue lines, and signs (best done by City). Consider removing existing sign at old library and adding some to serve the Bowl (path of travel?). Repaint yellow curbs and speed bumps.

Ground Squirrel and Gopher Control

11 Gopher and ground squirrel control at Perris Hill Park is challenging due to the "wildlands" of Perris Hill. However, it is very necessary due to the damage they cause by the removal of dirt and base material under sidewalks, tennis and pickleball court slabs, and building footings.

Ground squirrels leave open entrances and exit holes, some large enough for an adult foot to enter, most large enough for a child's foot to enter. The potential liability is significant. Ground squirrels carry a number of diseases, including bubonic plague. Bubonic Plague is particularly worrisome as it is easily transmitted to humans by the ground squirrel's fleas.

Both ground squirrels and gophers destroy large areas of lawn which greatly detracts from the public's perception of the maintenance level of the Park. Effective and aggressive control of the ground squirrels and gopher population in the Park is essential to protect the investment in Park facilities, reduce potential liability and vastly improve the public's perception of the park as a safe, clean, well maintained place to spend their leisure time.

Work Sentence Program

Consider reinstating the weekday and/or weekend work sentence program. With proper supervision this program could make a major difference for parks throughout the City. Note: There are many more work sentence persons available on weekends than weekdays. The weekend program could be supervised by volunteers vetted by the City or by a City employee whose work week includes the weekend with a weekend pay differential. Other possibilities for supervision include: retired City/County/School District employees, retired public safety persons, qualified church or non-profit personnel. Note: The Sheriff will select a “trustee” to take roll and deal with problems.

The Work Sentence Program could perform the following tasks described above:

- Part of Task 1: demo of the Pro Shop
- Task 2: landscaping & dirt removal
- Task 3: replace windscreens
- Task 4: remove dirt around courts and fix gutters, could perform minor concrete repairs
- Part of Task 7: excavate the sidewalk area and prepare for forming
- Task 10: restripe parking area (and possibly paint red/blue curbs, yellow speed bumps, and curb markings) at indicated locations.

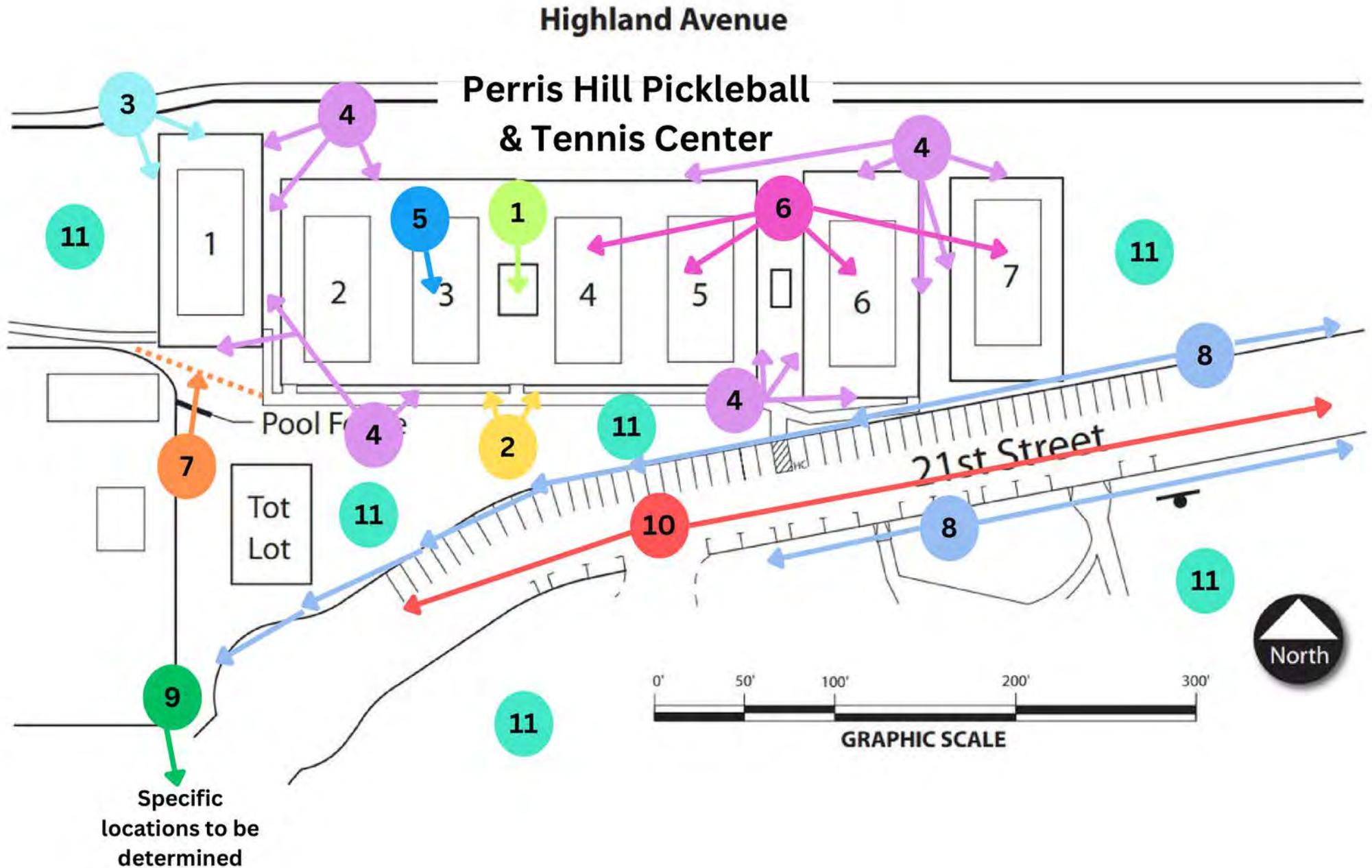
Other areas where the Work Sentence Program could be utilized:

- Regrade the area near the metal fence at the east and very northeast end of the Swim Center where there is ground contact with the metal fence causing premature rusting of the fence.
- Repaint with close supervision and minimum training the plumbing components, backflows, electrical cabinets, gates, etc. starting with the Highland Avenue frontage and extending throughout the park.
- Regrade and manicure the main picnic area, west park picnic area, and all around the adjacent restrooms. Consider adding DG (decomposed granite) in appropriate areas where it can be contained.
- Clean up the area at the northwest end of the 21st Street cul-de-sac where there is a continuous drainage issue. A permanent solution may involve reconstruction of

the gutter and continuing it to an area just south of the Swim Center at a grade that will drain the stagnant water that collects at the end of the cul-de-sac as a mosquito breeding area. Some sprinkler adjustments may be necessary to prevent water accumulation at the north end of the cul-de-sac.

- Rake out and manicure all landscaped areas throughout the park. Assist with reseeding grass areas in the Spring.
- When listed deferred maintenance tasks are completed, rotate to other City parks as necessary.

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1 Pro Shop / Shade Structure



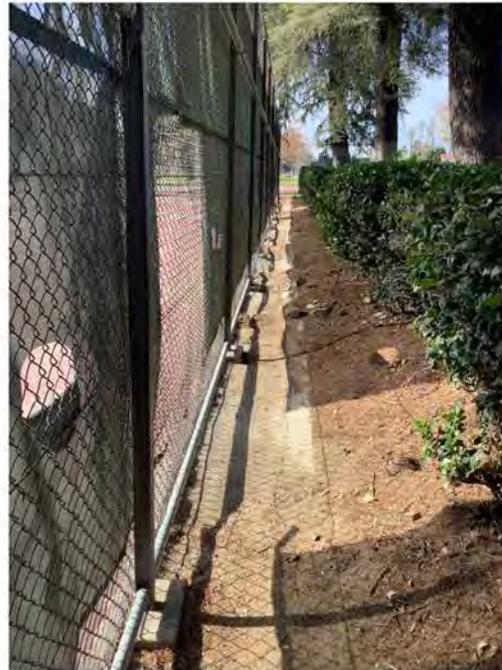
2 Remove Lantana



3 Replace Windscreens on Court 1



4 Cut Down Dirt Level on Courts 1-7



5 Convert Court 3 to Pickleball Court



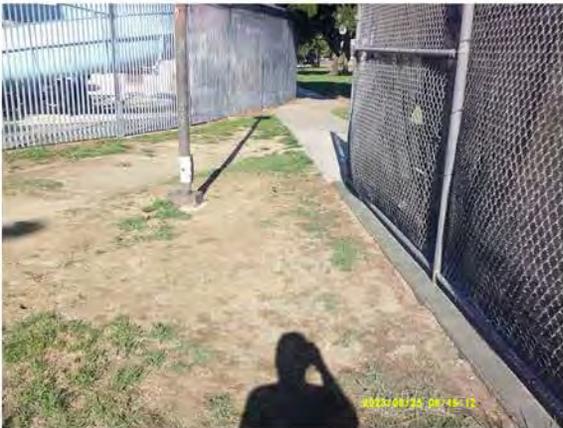
6

Resurface Tennis Courts 4, 5, 6, 7



7

Add Sidewalk on South Court 1



8

Change Lighting Along 21st Street



8 Change Lighting Along 21st Street



9 Install CCTV System



10

Restripe West Swim Center Parking Lot & 21st Street Top Of Curb Marks





Potential Work Sentence Crew Projects



Potential Work Sentence Crew Projects

