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September 9, 2025

Members of Delta Council:

This letter is meant to inform you as to the effects of the fee schedule adopted by Council in 2024 which came into effect in 2025 on the Delta Pickleball Association (DPA) and pickleball in Delta.

The result of the City's fee structure would result in DPA having to pay approximately \$110,000 annually for the use of courts it previously paid nothing for. Since our annual budget for this year was \$18,350 for the whole year, these numbers are huge increases would result in us increasing our budget by more than 600% to cover this.

This letter provides information and summarizes DPA's discussions that we have had with City staff in relation to the topic of fees for our club. Our hope is that we are provided some time between now and the end of the year to continue discussions with City staff in order to determine a fair and equitable fee structure that meets the needs and intents of both Park and DPA.

1. What is the Delta Pickleball Association?

Starting in 2017 with 8 members, DPA has grown to more than 900 members today. A non-profit organization run by a small but dedicated group of volunteers, the DPA strives to make pickleball more accessible to both members and the public through its advocacy efforts, education, maintenance of the courts and court facilities and oversight. We have a strong belief in the effectiveness of pickleball in providing better physical health, stronger mental health and acuity, and accessibility to vital social networks and groups.

For years, DPA has provided lessons and mentoring for its members as well as new member orientation as to how to access our programs. These programs help the community to get started with pickleball. We work with Chalmers Elementary to provide lessons each year to four classes of students and are looking to work with South Delta Secondary this coming season to introduce a new generation of older players to pickleball.

DPA also provides an organized framework for its members to play regular pickleball through a comprehensive schedule that allows for play at all levels. This has been important to allow novices to enter the game by providing game play that meets their needs. This past year we also ran our third annual Dash 'N Smash sanctioned tournament and through these efforts collected a significant amount of food donations and about \$500 in monetary donations. We also held our inaugural Dream Maker Round Robin fun tournament which raised \$1,260 for the Delta Community Animal Shelter.

We have organized programs to monitor and maintain the pickleball court facilities in Delta. As a result of our efforts and our collaboration with Delta Parks, our facilities are amongst the best maintained in the Province. As a result of our presence as a club, we serve as a watch dog to ensure that facilities are as free as possible from vandalism and abuse. We also provide help to the public who come to the courts and are unable to set up nets on temporary courts.

Our organized play provides physical, mental and social benefits to our members. This is a very important fact as pickleball offers our members (and any Delta residents that choose to join us) a daily opportunity to get out of the house and exercise their bodies and brains. There are very few

sports where such a high proportion of players engage in multiple hours of exercise, several times per week throughout the whole year.

Our members contribute to the economy in Delta with purchases of equipment and clothing. Our members are also significant contributors to bars and restaurants because of them wanting to continue socializing away from the pickleball courts.

Pickleball facilities are amongst the **highest used in Delta, providing the most benefits** sought by Parks and Recreation for Deltans year-round. Pickleball facilities are also amongst the most cost-efficient facilities to build and run, particularly given their small land requirement and relatively low costs of maintenance.

## 2. Delta Parks Proposal

In 2025, DPA was granted permits for 21,667 court hours of pickleball which were offered at no charge. Delta Parks has subsequently proposed a \$5 per court hour as a fee. This would result in DPA being charged **\$110,000** for the courts that we were permitted for this year. That is **\$110,000** in additional costs to the club and our membership. Our operating budget for 2025 was **\$18,350**. Delta's proposal is a **+600% increase** over our total budget.

How does this level of fees impact our members? Today they pay \$35 to DPA for organization, support for programs, and equipment to maintain courts (blowers, squeegees, rollers, etc). Under the current proposal, DPA members would have to **pay an additional \$120 per person per year** which represents a fee increase for members (Delta citizens) of **more than 350%** from their fees this past year (the table below summarizes some of the impacts).

	Members	Increase per member	Fees/member not including additional fees	% increase per member
Proposed	898	+\$122.50	\$157.50	+350%
Scenario 1	800	+137.50	\$172.50	+393%
Scenario 2	700	+157.14	\$192.14	+449%
Scenario 3	500	+220.00	\$255.00	+629%

\*Delta Pickleball Association members also pay \$17.50 per year cumulatively to Pickleball BC and Pickleball Canada

## 3. Benchmarks and Comparables

In order to determine what is reasonable or even how to respond to a request for us to pay fees, I needed some benchmarks or comparables. I was looking for like organizations, other groups with similar geographic footprints to ours (read: not soccer or baseball due to their need for large pieces of land), similar needs for servicing and maintenance (re: not ice rinks or hockey due to the significant investment and ongoing cost of operations for ice rinks).

### **Organizations within Delta**

With this in mind I began reaching out to organizations that I thought were good comparables to find out their relationship with the City. I came up with three different organizations that answered my calls for information.

The first group is the **Ladner Tennis Club**. LTC operates out of Hawthorne Park in Ladner. They have priority access to four updated courts. All these courts are lighted. They also have full and complete access to a clubhouse on site. For this, they currently pay less than \$5,000 per year. Remember that the size of a four-court tennis facility is roughly approximate to all of Cromie (including the outside tennis court) and Chalmers. Their agreement is in place until 2029.

The second group is **Tsawwassen Lawn Bowling**. While it is a different sport, the physical footprint is similar to pickleball. They have a “green” instead of courts but similar size. TLB pays about \$5,400 in lease costs/year. They also have a brand-new clubhouse attached to the “green” that they have full access to for months of the year and less access through the winter months. They have a 10-year agreement that started in 2023.

The third group is **Sunshine Hills Tennis Club**. SHTC operates out of a facility behind Sunshine Hills Elementary on Carncross Crescent in North Delta. They have priority access to 6 of 10 updated tennis courts. The other four courts are accessible with a priority to the public. Some of these courts are lighted but I am not sure of which ones. Again, from a land equivalency perspective that is approximately the size of the land occupied by all our permanent courts in Tsawwassen, Ladner and North Delta. They have full and complete access to a clubhouse on site with an agreement that started in 2024. For all of this they pay approximately \$5,400 per year.

**Outside of Delta**

One of the things that has been raised by City staff are the benchmarks for fees within other cities. The assertion is that what is being proposed is in line with fee schedules and will generate revenue for Delta. It is not clear how the benchmarks were established by the City other than by a survey of fee schedules for other cities. This methodology is sound for establishing what fees are in the different cities and can be used to produce averages. What is not clear is the fee schedule’s impact on revenue and the relative amounts that user groups like ours actually contribute. As well, it is important to understand the potential negative impact on community programs on volunteer organizations like Delta Pickleball and Delta citizens.

To determine some of these answers I did a limited survey of Pickleball clubs within cities surrounding Delta. I will admit that there is no apples-to-apples comparison. The table below summarizes my findings. The column “Takes Permits” will be answered “yes” for clubs like Delta Pickleball that have all their sessions permit-ted. The answer will be “no” for clubs that do not take permits but post schedules and work with any public groups that come (open play). The answer will be “some” for clubs that take out permits for some of their sessions but not most of them.

<b>Club</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Takes Permits</b>	<b>Total Fees Charged</b>
Richmond	820	No	\$0
White Rock	635	Some	\$0
Surrey	600	Yes	\$12,000
Douglas Park (Langley)	235	No	\$0
Delta (proposed fees)	930	Yes	\$110,000

I have not comprehensively studied each pickleball club in the Greater Vancouver area. I am sure there will be differences in how they are treated within their respective cities. Regardless, with what

has been proposed by City staff and what we have researched, Delta Pickleball is a significant outlier with the organizations studied.

#### **4. Impact of Fee Proposal**

There is no doubt of what the impact of a fee increase of this magnitude would have. Players would be unable (many of our members are on fixed incomes) or unwilling to pay an increase of this magnitude. It is easy for most to understand this impact as most would not tolerate this type of cost increase in any aspect of their lives. It seems unreasonable.

The fee proposal would also result in membership in DPA and the participation rate in sport to decrease significantly. It would not be surprising if more than 50% of our membership would choose not to pay this level of fees. That would be very unfortunate and counter to the mandate of Delta's Parks and Recreation of ***"Promoting Healthy Lifestyles by actively encouraging participation in recreational activities and sports to foster healthy lifestyles among residents."***

#### **5. DPA Response**

Besides doing all the research and seeking comparables for this level of fees, DPA put together a presentation that summarized most of the information above (this presentation is available and has been provided to City staff for inclusion with this letter). We then sought to continue to have discussions with City staff to explain our position. While the discussions with staff have always been respectful and cordial, on this matter we have not found common ground yet.

The motivation for these fee increases seems to be a goal of increasing the contribution of fees towards the support of the Parks and Recreation budget. While as a taxpayer I am supportive of fiscal responsibility, I am also supportive of health and am left wondering how a conflict between higher fees and reduced support for health will be adjudicated?

Organizations that are like us within Delta pay less than \$7,000 plus fees to operate their own buildings. DPA has no buildings, clubhouse or owned facilities yet we are being asked to pay \$110,000 based on our 2025 usage. Other clubs in adjacent Cities in the Greater Vancouver area (like Richmond, Surrey, Langley City and White Rock) pay nothing for any permits they hold with the highest amount of fees paid being less than \$12,000 per year in Surrey. This leads DPA leadership to the conclusion that the fees proposed are exorbitantly high as is the increase.

#### **Next Steps**

We have been actively discussing these matters with City staff for many months. Some of the information has been difficult for us to collect but lately we have been able to acquire much more. The proposed fee structure for pickleball seems like an outlier for sports like ours and much higher than other clubs in adjacent Cities are being asked to pay.

The result of what is being requested will be a significant step back for our club and Delta residents. The Delta Pickleball Association wants to continue support for the growth of pickleball in Delta and in turn the physical, mental and social health of Delta residents.

More importantly, while likely inadvertently, this fee structure will discourage growth and participation in the sport by removing DPA's ability to continue to offer organized programs that

people have enjoyed participating in for years. If Delta is intent on continuing with this level of fees for pickleball, accessibility and participation in the sport will be significantly harmed and set back many years. If it is acceptable that Delta residents lose these opportunities for health and well being then the current approach is appropriate.

We are happy to continue to work with City staff to find a solution that better ***encourages participation in recreational activities and sports (pickleball) to foster healthy lifestyles among residents***. Our belief is that we can work towards a solution before the new year. In the meantime, I have also attached a copy of a presentation that was discussed with City staff.

Sincerely on behalf of the Delta Pickleball Association

Landon Kitagawa

Landon Kitagawa  
President



# Fees Discussion with Delta

Delta Pickleball Association

August 2025



# What is pickleball?

- Fastest growing sport in North America
  - Almost 20 million players in the United States in 2024
  - More than 1.5 million Canadians playing as of January, 2025
  - Almost 18,500 courts added in the US in 2024
- Racquet sports (including pickleball) increase longevity by 7-10 years.\*



# Why the attraction?

- Low barriers to entry
  - Inexpensive – paddles as cheap as \$50
  - Low impact – allows for less healthy people to start playing
  - Simple rules
  - Easy to learn – many players can be playing games within 30 minutes
- Family friendly
- Attractive to all ages
- Physical fitness benefits
  - Cardiovascular and strength workout
  - Increased balance and coordination
  - Burns calories

*You can see progress so much quicker than in tennis. The “fun factor” just is immediately there....you can’t take the competitive out of us”*

*Steffi Graf (former world #1 tennis player  
107 WTA titles including 22 majors)*



## Why the attraction? (continued)


- Mental and Cognitive benefits
  - Stress reduction
  - Improved focus and reflexes
  - Mood boost
- Social benefits
  - Short games create opportunities to socialize
  - Players of all ages and backgrounds can come together to play
  - Pickleball players socialize at and away from the courts
- Economic benefits
  - Pickleball players support retailers (sports equipment, shoes, clothing)
  - Pickleball players support restaurants and bars

*Pickleball isn't just good for your body—it's medicine for your mind and soul.*

*Annie Rough, DPA member*

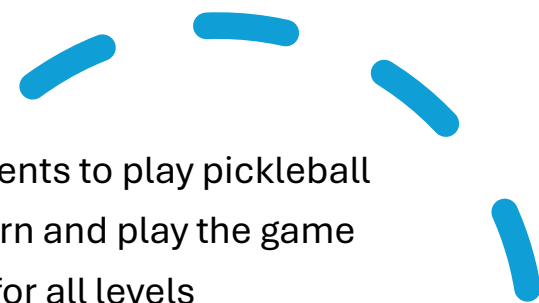


# Delta Pickleball Association

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- Established in 2017 with 8 members
  - More than 900 members in 2025
  - Non-profit organization
  - Volunteer association run by a small executive group.
  - Our work provides a base and framework for a network of pickleball players in Delta that exceeds 3,000 players (not including their families)

*What I get the most out of pickleball is the socializing, the friendliness and the exercise. Now I have a core group of friends that are my go-to friends to socialize with. Pickleball has become the mainstay on my social calendar.*

*Don Rossander - 86 year old DPA member*



# What does DPA do for Deltans?

- Provide organized play to allow Delta residents to play pickleball
- Provides an “entry point” for Deltans to learn and play the game
- Provides lessons and mentoring sessions for all levels
- Community engagement
  - Donations to charity
  - Lessons for elementary kids
  - Connection with high schools – South Delta Secondary
- Reduce complaints to Delta regarding pickleball by educating and informing players about etiquette
- Maintain courts – work with parks to keep facilities pristine
- Act as a watchdog to ensure facilities are protected and cared for

*The DPA has shown a commitment to help grow the game in the Chalmers community with their volunteer time and their used paddle donations to the school. We hope to continue this partnership for years to come!*

*Greg Ng, Chalmers Elementary School teacher/librarian*

# Why is Pickleball and DPA important to Delta?



Fitness Benefits – physical fitness and health for all citizens especially those above 40 years old



Mental Health Benefits – socializing, networks and relationships



Economic Benefits

Retailers of equipment, shoes and clothing retailers, bars and restaurants. Reduce pressure on Delta Hospital



Lowest entry cost of any sport

Smaller land requirement than all field sports and most other sports



Return on Investment

Pickleball facilities are the best used facilities in Delta therefore recognizing all of the benefits above for more citizens.



# Pickleball thoughts

- I often hear players on other courts laughing and hooting it up. That tells me the enjoyment is there. And many times, we'll have a good extended rally and everyone just goes, 'wow'. Pure joy."

Erik Zukowsky, DPA Founding member

- The thing I love most about the game was...it was a game not only for all ages, but men and women can play together or against each other quite equally. And it has created a social life for many, many people, including me.

Michael Harbott, DPA member 90 years young

- There are many older people whose lives are focused around sitting on the couch and watching TV in isolation. I have seen many of these people find purpose, friends, and health through pickleball.

Don Tuck, DPA member



# Case Studies – Ladner Tennis Club

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**Dedicated use of Hawthorne courts  
during allocated times**



**Dedicated club house for which  
they pay**

\$3,220 per year club house rental  
\$1,600 maintenance contribution



**Agreement until 2029**



# Case Studies – Sunshine Hills Tennis Club

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**Dedicated use of Sunshine Hills Park courts during allocated times**

\$5,400 lease costs/year



**Dedicated clubhouse at Carncross Crescent**



**Agreement started in 2024**

# Case Studies – Tsawwassen Lawn Bowling



**Dedicated use of Lawn Bowling Green**



**Dedicated clubhouse at Winskill**

\$5,400 lease costs/year



**10 year agreement started in 2023**

# Your fee proposal

\$5 per court per hour of play

2025 usage – 21,667 hours/year

Fee proposal for DPA – approximately  
\$110,000 /year

DPA current operating budget per year is  
\$18,350

Delta's fee request is an increase of +600%  
over our total existing budget

# Membership cost scenarios

	Members	Inc./member	Fees/member Not including PB- BC and PB Canada fees	% inc/member
Current	898	+ \$122.50	\$157.50	+ 350%
Scenario 1	800	+ \$137.50	\$172.50	+ 393%
Scenario 2	700	+ \$157.14	\$192.14	+ 449%
Scenario 3	500	+ \$220.00	\$255.00	+ 629 %

*\* Additional costs for Pickleball BC and Canada - \$17.50/year*

# Summary

- Pickleball
  - Is growing significantly in North America as well as Delta
  - Contributes to the physical and mental well being of Deltans
  - Is the most efficient and effective use of Parks and Recreation capital and operating to reach the most citizens – smallest footprint with highest use
- DPA
  - Is a non-profit society
  - Contributes to the community through charitable work and volunteer work with schools and other groups
  - Helps the city by ensuring that facilities are looked after and taken care of
  - Works to educate and inform the public on etiquette – manages conflict
  - Facilitates health and well being amongst a large population of Deltans

End