

# Agenda Report

**TO:** City Council

**DATE:** November 13, 2006

**FROM:** Cynthia J. Kurtz, City Manager

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CITY TENNIS PROGRAM**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This report is for information only.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City has offered a public tennis program on City courts for decades, in response to the demand from Pasadena residents for a comprehensive tennis program open to all interested players without membership requirements. The purpose of this program is to encourage local residents to participate in tennis as a lifelong, positive recreational activity that can be enjoyed by individuals, groups and families.

The City's tennis program offers opportunities to learn, improve and practice tennis skills, from beginner through advanced levels, by offering a wide range of classes, clinics and lessons. Those seeking a more competitive level of play can also participate in two USTA-endorsed tennis tournaments offered annually as part of the City tennis program. Currently, the City's tennis program appears to be the only such organized tennis in Pasadena open to all players without requiring membership in a private club, school or other organization.

Prior to the early 1990's, the City tennis instructional program and annual tournaments were conducted by City staff. At that time a review of the costs, effectiveness and efficiency of City-provided "special interest sports" revealed that such activities were very costly to the City. The study further determined that sports activities had great potential to recover all or most costs through fees, and could potentially be delivered in City parks by experienced providers of quality sports programs. Accordingly, in the early 1990's the City opted to contract with experienced providers to conduct adult softball leagues, adult basketball leagues, and tennis (including instruction and tournaments). A competitive bid process was utilized to select contractors for each identified sport, with the City generally entering into one-year contracts with up to four annual renewals based on satisfactory performance. Each contractor collects fees and is required to remit a designated percentage of revenue, a fixed fee per team or player, to the City. Contractors are responsible for program outreach,

advertisement, registration, enrollment, management, hire their own personnel, schedule activities and events, and provide insurance, all pursuant to City requirements. At present, the City contracts with various organizations to conduct specialized sports programs at City fields, courts, gyms and recreation centers, including Major League Softball, Charter Oaks Gymnastics, Donna Gale Dance, Young Olympians Self Defense, Fast Action Basketball and iTennis.

### **Tennis Services**

Previous City tennis contractors between the early 1990's through 2002 included Palmer Tennis Academy, Rusty Miller Tennis Academy, and Pasadena Tennis Association. Only one contractor is selected at any time to conduct the City tennis program; other paid instruction is not permitted on City courts. The bid process for tennis was last conducted in 2002, for services starting in Fiscal Year 2003. At that time the City released a bid opportunity that received a total of three bids: Rusty Miller Tennis Academy, Pasadena Tennis Association, and iTennis. The three bidders were interviewed by a panel in May 2002. Bidders were rated on such criteria as financial capacity to operate the program in compliance with the contract terms and conditions, available resources to conduct the program, staffing and personnel, experience and technical competence, start up and transition plan, compliance with applicable ordinances, and local business preference. iTennis was selected by the panel as the most qualified local applicant. The current year, FY2007, is the final renewal year for iTennis under the current contract, so the tennis contract will go out for bid in early 2007 for program and tournament operations effective July 1, 2007.

Since becoming the City tennis contractor in FY2003, iTennis, has steadily developed the most comprehensive City tennis program at least since 1990. iTennis offers what USTA describes as a pathway of linked tennis opportunities with a "try, learn, play and compete" range of activity serving all ages and ability levels. The junior tennis program includes individual, group and team opportunities during after school hours (weekdays from about 4pm to 6:30pm), accommodating beginners through advanced competitive players. Team tennis opportunities are particularly attractive to youths and young adults seeking a team sports experience in what many may have viewed as an individual sport. Some participants in group tennis classes seek to improve their skills and advance their level of play, so they pursue semi-private or private lessons with iTennis.

Participation levels and revenue to the City from iTennis have grown significantly, and over the most recent 12-month period iTennis paid the City \$34,920. Revenue is paid, as with other City sports contractors, on a formula based on the type of activity – for example, 15% of tennis clinic revenue, 10% of summer tennis day camp revenue, and \$5 per person for each entry in the two annual tennis tournaments. The contract also requires iTennis to provide a free six-

week summer tennis program (four days per week for two hours per day) at Washington Park, and a total of 20 scholarships over the year (five per season) for youth and young adults who would otherwise be economically unable to participate in the City tennis program. A 40% discount is offered to PUSD youth. At least 51% of enrollees in the iTennis program must be Pasadena residents. iTennis met this requirement for the reporting period ended June 30, 2006.

### **How much time on City tennis courts is reserved for use by iTennis?**

The current City tennis contractor, iTennis, submits requests for permits to use City courts twice each year, for the Summer/Fall season and the Winter/Spring season. City courts are available at a total of seven parks citywide, offering a total of 15 lighted tennis courts. Most parks have either one court (Allendale and Brenner) or two courts (Eaton Blanche, Grant, Hamilton and Washington); only Brookside Park has five courts. While iTennis offers limited tennis activities on a scheduled basis at courts throughout the City, the primary base for delivery of the City tennis program is the Brookside courts. With five courts at this location, use of three courts by iTennis leaves two courts available for walk-on public play, similar to other City court locations.

Since October 25, 2004, iTennis has been permitted to use up to three of the five Brookside courts for lessons and classes. During the school year (September to June) after school weekday hours (3:30 to 6pm), and summer weekdays (10am to 4pm) *only*, iTennis is also permitted to use a fourth court at Brookside to accommodate the large number of children and youth participating during those hours, with a wide range of skill levels. This schedule was reviewed and discussed by the Recreation and Parks Commission in 2004 and determined appropriate to balance the public demand for walk-on court access with the public demand for an organized tennis program. No additional allocation of courts or court time to the City tennis program is planned at this time.

### **What additional permits have been issued to iTennis for use of City courts?**

Twice each year iTennis conducts the two City-sponsored USTA-endorsed tennis tournaments: a youth tournament in October and an adult tournament in February. During the two weekends when these tournaments are conducted and particularly in the early rounds when participants number several hundred, iTennis is permitted to use all five Brookside courts and the City works with PUSD, CalTech, PCC and other organizations to secure sufficient courts to accommodate the early rounds of tournament play. The youth tournament is particularly important for young players seeking competitive experience and

exposure for consideration in other regional, state and national tennis opportunities.

Twice each year iTennis conducts an open tennis clinic, available at no cost to all interested persons. For up to three hours on two weekend days per year, iTennis is permitted to use all five Brookside courts, to accommodate the volume of attendees (often numbering up to 100) for this free, open clinic opportunity.

Residents seeking iTennis classes or lessons may request such activities, on a scheduled basis, at a park convenient to them. Accordingly, based on such requests, iTennis may be issued a permit for one court to conduct, for example, an intermediate adult class at Hamilton Park on Tuesday evenings from 7pm to 9pm for eight weeks. That schedule is then posted at the applicable court, advising local residents and players of availability.

### **Is the increased demand for tennis a local phenomenon?**

The recent growth in local tennis play is consistent with a national trend. According to a 2005 report by USTA and TIA (Tennis Industry Association), "tennis is at its highest participation level in 13 years". USTA further reports that "nearly 70% of tennis is played on public courts" which means the growth in tennis popularity has significantly increased the demand for public court time, both for tennis programs and independent tennis play. In Pasadena, additional conditions have impacted demand for tennis programs and for court time at City parks during this period, such as the closure of the Palmer Tennis Academy facility and the decline in condition and availability of other non-City public courts, primarily at local public schools. Demand for public tennis courts during weekend hours and, for lighted courts, during weekday evenings, has grown while supply has diminished.

### **What is the City doing to increase the supply of tennis courts available for public play?**

The City is currently collaborating with other organizations with public tennis courts to expand the supply of public courts during peak weekend and, where lighted courts are available, evening hours, as follows.

- As of November 4, 2006, PUSD re-opened six of their 10 courts at Pasadena High School tennis courts for public use on weekends from 7:00 am to dusk. After an initial evaluation period, additional court time may be made available.
- The joint City-PUSD MOU to repair the Muir High School Tennis courts targets returning 10 currently closed courts to use in early 2007. The City's Public Works Department is currently securing bids for completion of the repairs and resurfacing necessary to return these courts to working order. Once the work is completed, PUSD and Muir High School will open these

courts for public use during non-school hours, beginning with weekend availability, and the City's tennis contractor will offer a Muir tennis team program opportunity. After an initial monitoring and evaluating period, PUSD may expand the availability of the Muir tennis courts but at present has not committed to serve as a location for the City's ongoing tennis instructional programs.

- As requested at the joint meeting of the City Council Public Safety Committee and the PUSD School Board Capital and Facilities Committee meeting held July 10, 2006, City and PUSD staff conducted a site review of tennis courts at six school locations: Blair High (five courts), Marshall Fundamental (five courts), McKinley Elementary (four courts), Pasadena High (ten courts), Washington Middle (three courts) and Wilson Middle (five courts). The purpose of the review was to identify the number of courts, playing surfaces and conditions, potential for public access (including parking and fencing separate from other school facilities) and related items. This report will return on December 4, 2006 to the next joint meeting of the two Committees for consideration and recommendation to the City Council and School Board for action, as appropriate.

### **What are the rules for use of the City tennis courts for walk-on, open play?**

A copy of the "City of Pasadena Tennis Court Rules" is attached, and this information is posted at City courts. These rules follow most standard tennis etiquette and guidelines suggested for use of public courts. When others are waiting for a court, players are limited to one set (if tied, the set must end with a one game tie breaker) or may rally for 30 minutes, after which the court must be given to the waiting players. Players must remain in person at the desired court, and a court cannot be held by one person.

### **What steps have been taken to address complaints about tennis players occupying courts for consecutive hours and about City junior tennis participants interrupting activity on other courts?**

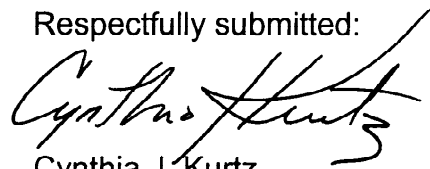
City recreation staff have conduct spot checks to confirm compliance with rules for court use at various sites, dates and times of day. Park Security staff also monitor the various tennis court locations and address any concerns about alleged rule violations with those using or waiting for City courts, particularly during weekend hours.

Prior complaints about children and youth allegedly disrupting other players while accessing courts used by the iTennis program at Brookside have been resolved through implementation by iTennis of a revised the system for check-in and program entry. Improved signage and enforcement of basic tennis etiquette and rules have resolved complaints about trash left on courts and delays in vacating courts after completion of scheduled program activities.

## Next Steps for the City Tennis Program

The City tennis contract is scheduled to go out to bid in early 2007, with the new contract to take effect July 1, 2007. During the competitive selection process, staff will be placing greater emphasis on: setting capacity limits for the City tennis program, particularly during peak weekend and evening hours; fee schedules, discounts and scholarship opportunities; weekly on-site posting by court of the scheduled use each day by the City's tennis program; priority for Pasadena residents and youth attending PUSD schools; recruitment and outreach in local neighborhoods and public schools; a mix of activities that prioritizes group over individual tennis sessions; and, expanded linkage with local public schools that have tennis courts, including supporting school tennis programs. The purpose is to promote tennis as a positive recreational activity and facilitate both an organized public tennis instructional program and open, walk-on public court opportunities during peak evening and weekend hours.

Respectfully submitted:



Cynthia J. Kurtz  
City Manager

Prepared and Approved by:



Patricia A. Lane, Director  
Human Services and Recreation Department

**ATTACHMENT**



# CITY OF PASADENA Tennis Court Rules

**COURT HOURS: 6:00 AM - 10:00 PM**

- 1) THE ETHICS OF TENNIS AND SPORTSMANSHIP SHALL PREVAIL**
- 2) TENNIS SHOES (RUBBER SOLES AND HEELS) MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES**
- 3) NO FOOD OR DRINK ON THE COURT ( BOTTLED WATER IS ALLOWED)**
- 4) WHEN OTHERS ARE WAITING FOR THE COURT:**
  - ONLY ONE SET MAY BE PLAYED, OR PLAYERS MAY RALLY FOR 30 MINUTES
  - SETS ENDING IN 6 ALL SHALL BE DETERMINED BY ONE ADDITIONAL GAME OF A TIE BREAKER
  - THE COURT MUST BE GIVEN UP AT THE END OF THE SET IN PROGRESS, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE SET IS A DOUBLES OR SINGLES SET
  - WARM UP PERIOD FOR MATCHES SHALL NOT EXCEED 5 MINUTES
  - WAITING PLAYERS MUST REMAIN IN PERSON AT COURT DESIRED
  - COURTS MAY NOT BE HELD BY ONE PERSON
- 5) LIMIT THREE (3) BALLS PER PLAYER ( CITY PROGRAM INSTRUCTION AND SPECIAL EVENTS ARE EXEMPT)**
- 6) THE HUMAN SERVICES AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT MAY, FROM TIME TO TIME, GRANT PERMITS RESERVING THE COURTS FOR SPECIAL GROUPS, SPECIAL EVENTS, AND PROFESSIONALS TEACHING FOR A LIMITED TIME. COURTS MUST BE RELINQUISHED TO PERMIT HOLDERS FOR OF TIME DESIGNATED ON PERMIT.**
  - SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROFESSIONAL TEACHING IS AUTHORIZED TO PERMIT HOLDER FOR LENGTH OF TIME AND DAY DESIGNATED ON PERMIT.
  - TENNIS INSTRUCTION WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION FROM THE CITY WILL BE CITED UNDER PASADENA MUNICIPAL CODE (P.M.C.) 3.24.030 AND 3.24.110
- 7) THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR LIGHTS. INDIVIDUAL COURT LIGHT SWITCHES ARE LOCATED ON THE FENCE ADJACENT TO LIGHTED COURTS**
- 8) NO BICYCLE RIDING, ROLLER SKATING, ROLLER BLADING, OR SKATEBOARDING ON COURTS AT ANYTIME PER P.M.C. 3.24.030 AND P.M.C. 3.24.190.**

**FOR RESERVATIONS OF PARK FACILITIES OR PARK PROGRAMS:**

- HUMAN SERVICES AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT      **CALL: (626) 744-7195**
- TENNIS LESSONS AND ANNUAL TOURNAMENT INFO      **CALL: (626) 744-8516**

**FOR PARK MAINTENANCE GENERAL INFORMATION**

- PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION      **CALL: (626) 744-4321**

**ENFORCEMENT OF THESE RULES AND REGULATIONS PROVIDE FOR FINES NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT TO EXCEED ONE YEAR  
P.M.C. 3.24.030 AND P.M.C. 3.24.190**