


#8

MEMORANDUM

 TO: Brian C. Blad, Mayor; Members of the City Council
FROM: Ian Johnson, Deputy City Attorney
RE: Forever Idaho Grant Application for Pickle Ball at Raymond Park
DATE: June 24, 2021

I have reviewed the above-referenced grant application and it meets with my approval for the Mayor's signature once so authorized by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.



CITY OF POCATELLO
Parks & Recreation Department
Agenda Item Executive Summary

Date: 7-15-21
To: Mayor Blad and Council Members
From: John Banks, Parks & Recreation Director
RE: Partnership Opportunities Program – Parks & Recreation Department

During the past 4-5 years, the Parks & Recreation Department has noticed a significant increase in popularity & interest throughout the community for the sport of Pickleball. The game of Pickleball is truly a phenomenon both locally and nationally. It is one of the fastest growing sports in North America, with USA Pickleball Association reporting 4.2 million players as of 2020, which represents an amazing increase of over 20% from the prior year. Pickleball combines elements of Tennis, Badminton, and Ping Pong. The game is played on a court the size of a Badminton court, utilizing a low net and with what looks like an oversized ping pong paddle and a wiffle ball. Pickleball is widely regarded as a fun way to improve physical fitness and meet new friends.

A group of local residents have recently formed a 501-c3 organization, the Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association (PVPA), in support of its mission of growing and supporting local Pickleball by providing safe, high quality places for community members to play Pickleball. PVPA, over 70 members strong, has proposed the conversion of two (2) of the four (4) lighted tennis courts at Raymond Park into six (6) dedicated Pickleball courts. The Parks & Recreation Department is supportive of the request, and feels it will provide great benefit to the City and community.

In an attempt to acquire resources needed for court improvements, Parks & Recreation Department staff and PVPA have begun to work together in applying for available grant funding. The Forever Idaho Grant Program, administered by the Idaho Community Foundation, is the first attempt by staff and PVPA to jointly apply for grant funding, to begin building the necessary resources.

Staff is requesting that Council Ratify the Parks & Recreation Department's Forever Idaho Grant Application which had a due date for submission of June 15, 2021, and if the grant is awarded, accept the grant and authorize the Mayor's signature on related documents.

The Forever Idaho Grant Program application did not allow for a specific requested grant amount. If awarded, grant funding amounts are determined by the grantee based on application merit, and there is no City match requirement for the grant.

Forever Idaho East

John Banks (City of Pocatello - Parks and Recreation Department)

Organization & Contact Information

Forever Idaho East Grant Cycle

Legal Name

City of Pocatello - Parks & Recreation Department

"Also Known As"

Name (Any common name the organization uses or is known by other than the legal name listed above.)

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 4169

City

Pocatello

State

ID

Zip Code

83205

Primary Contact for the Organization

Job Title

Parks & Recreation Director

Prefix

Mr.

First Name

John

Last Name

Phone Number

Email Address

Primary Contact for the Application, if different from above

Job Title

Prefix (Ms., Mrs., Mr.,
Dr., etc.)

First Name

Last Name

Phone number

Email Address

Organization Tax Status

The Idaho Community Foundation makes grants to 501(c)3 nonprofit public charities and governmental entities (including special taxing districts and public schools). If you are unsure of your tax status, please contact ICF (at 208-342-3535 or grants@idahocf.org) to determine your eligibility to receive grants.

Select your organization's tax status.

Please provide your Tax Identification

Number/Employer Identification:

In which U.S. state is your organization (or

your national umbrella organization)

incorporated?

Forever Idaho Grant Details

Forever Idaho East Grant Cycle

What is your organizations operating budget?

Select the primary county served by this project.

Select the Program Area you believe most closely matches your request.

Select the Area of Impact you believe most closely matches your request

ICF's Areas of Impact are Access to Services, Educational Opportunities, Health and Mental Health and Housing and Family Homelessness. If the work you are doing addresses one of these areas, please share more information with us.

The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department strives to provide enriching, well-maintained facilities, and a wide variety of recreational services and activities for use by the entire community to "Play Often and Live Better!". A quality Pickleball facility and the game of Pickleball inherently lend themselves to access to quality recreational services for improved mental and physical health, by providing for both social opportunities, interactions & friendships, as well as healthy physical activity. Pickleball players of all ages and ability levels benefit from immediate benefits of improved mental outlook and well-being, as well as feeling better physically & in regards to cardiovascular health. Pickleball combines elements of Tennis, Badminton, and Ping Pong. The game is played on a court the size of a Badminton court, utilizing a low net and with what looks like an oversized ping pong paddle and a wiffle ball. The manageable court size and extensive social aspect of playing Pickleball fulfills a sense of belonging and connecting with others. In a study conducted by Western Colorado University (2018), it was noted that regularly playing pickleball showed improved cardio and physical fitness in mid to older aged adults. Other research indicates the potential for positive mental health benefits with a decrease in depression. Playing Pickleball can be defined in many ways. It's FUN!, and many people consider Pickleball a social & physical fitness "lifestyle", and will travel over regions, states & nationwide to play. Pickleball also has a very short learning curve, as compared to other racquet/paddle sports, so it can be immediately enjoyed. There is far less physical impact on the body in Pickleball than many other sports, so it can be played & enjoyed by a wide range of ages and ability levels. In addition, Pickleball can be played both recreationally & competitively, and people really get to know each other while participating, with many lasting friendships being formed. The popularity of the game of Pickleball and the need for Pickleball facilities has never been greater, and continues to grow significantly each year, both locally & nationally.

Which of the following populations does your organization serve most often? Recognizing that these intersect, please check all that apply.

- ALICE Population (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) ▲
- Children
- Communities of color (Black, LatinX, Native populations, etc.)
- People experiencing a health or mental health crisis
- Seniors ▼

Tell us how your organization addresses diversity, equity and inclusion, including how your work will reach people in historically marginalized groups based on race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration/refugee status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability status, geography, age, other (please describe).

The sport of Pickleball is welcoming to all, wherever it is played & enjoyed! Pickleball inherently reflects diversity, equity and inclusion by being easy to learn in one-day, very inexpensive in regards to equipment to participate (paddle/ball), and can provide a lifetime of friendships for people of all walks of life. Pickleball players nationwide include a wide spectrum of ages & ability levels. From non-athletes playing a family & friends game or practicing, to competitive players of all levels. Everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability status, geography, or age & ability level can play some version of Pickleball. In friendly games, the rules and even the ball used can be adapted for any player. The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department is committed to assuring that all players are welcome, and should dedicated Pickleball courts be able to be accomplished, will include this information in our bi-yearly Recreation Activity & Facility Brochures, as well as on the City's website and via social media, so that all are aware of Pickleball court availability, the ease of participation, and invited to take part! The real challenge is finding a place to play. The City of Pocatello does not currently have dedicated Pickleball courts to offer the community. The Raymond Park lighted outdoor tennis courts (4) have been dual striped for Pickleball activity by the Parks & Recreation Department, however, the existing tennis nets are unfortunately not conducive to Pickleball use due to net height differences between the two sports. The Raymond Park courts themselves are also in various stages of dis-repair, with cracking and sub-standard surface conditions, and despite on-going maintenance & repair efforts, are in need of comprehensive refurbishment. Currently the only other feasible option is to play indoors at the Mountain View Event Center. However, the event center is not always available due to competing demands, and is also a fee-based facility, which can exclude some potential participants.

What is your organization aiming to accomplish?

The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department's mission is to serve all residents and surrounding community members by providing quality recreation services, as well as safe, well maintained recreational facilities; striving to enhance the quality of people's lives, provide the benefits of leisure and open space, and serve as a source of community pride. We feel that our Department's identifying slogan and associated logo of "Play Often, Live Better!" perfectly encapsulates our mission. We aim to accomplish the furthering of our mission for the community by developing a high quality Pickleball facility via conversion and development of two (2) of the existing four (4) lighted Raymond Park tennis courts into six (6) dedicated Pickleball courts. The Raymond Park courts are ideal for re-design and reconstruction due to the current disrepair of existing courts, and resulting difficulties in play. Another nice advantage of Raymond Park's locality is its inherent noise abatement qualities for surrounding residents. The playing surface is recessed well below the street level to the east, and is bordered on the west side by the Portneuf River, with park/greenspace acting as a buffer to the north & south. Having dedicated Pickleball courts at the Raymond Park location is also central to the community, and no other outdoor Pickleball facility exists in the area. The model of converting aged tennis courts to pickleball courts with resurfacing, painting of lines and adding of new nets & fencing has been successfully used across the country, and is a cost-effective way of meeting a quickly exploding community need for Pickleball. The game of Pickleball is truly a phenomenon. It is one of the fastest growing sports in North America, with USA Pickleball Association reporting 4.2 million players as of 2020, which represents an amazing increase of over 20% from the prior year. The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department aims to develop quality Pickleball facilities to help address the exploding growth of Pickleball popularity, and to provide a place for everyone to "Play Often and Live Better!". Building dedicated Pickleball Courts will provide a tremendous opportunity for both the Pocatello and Chubbuck communities, as well as welcome out of town & out of state visitors to our areas seeking the health, wellness & quality of life benefits of Pickleball.

What are your strategies for making this happen?

The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department is partnering with Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association in its mission of growing and supporting local Pickleball by providing a safe, high quality place for community members to play Pickleball. Together, Pocatello Parks & Recreation and Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association will be seeking and applying for grant funding as opportunities become available, as well as implementing fundraising efforts via community members and local businesses, and also working within City budget processes for potential project resource allocation consideration. In other words, we will be working together to pursue multiple strategies for resource accumulation to accomplish the Raymond Park Pickleball facility improvements.

Within this partnership for the shared goal of creating improved and dedicated Pickleball courts at Raymond Park, Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association also plans to develop a comprehensive presentation on the sport of Pickleball and its many benefits, which will be shared on a wide-spread basis in the community to assist with public awareness and fundraising. Pocatello Parks & Recreation and Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association also share in and help to bring forward the USA Pickleball Association's (USAPA - the official national governing body for pickleball in the United States) mission of promoting the development and growth of pickleball by supporting the growth of youth and adult programs, maintaining rules and equipment standards, developing clubs, leagues and educator programs, and increasing participant opportunities in non-sanctioned activities and sanctioned events. If sufficient resources are able to be accumulated for the Raymond Park Pickleball Courts project over time, the Pocatello Parks & Recreation will also follow USAPA's "Pickleball Courts: Construction & Maintenance Manual" (the leading reference guide for building & maintaining top quality pickleball courts), to ensure that potential grant funders and those who may wish to donate to the effort, are confident that their generosity is very much appreciated and will be judiciously utilized to construct a top quality facility that will provide outstanding health & wellness opportunities for many, many years.

What is your organization's capacity for doing this?

In the fall of 2020, several local Pickleball players requested a meeting with Pocatello Parks & Recreation staff and other City officials at the Raymond Park tennis courts to discuss the need for improved and dedicated Pickleball courts for the community. Aware of the rapidly growing popularity of Pickleball in the community, City staff agreed with the stated need, and suggested that the Pickleball players organize to create a non-profit/501-c3 Pickleball Association in order to better partner with the City in generating community interest, and for assistance in seeking & accumulating resources to accomplish improvements to the Raymond Park courts. The now formed Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association has submitted a potential court layout to Pocatello Parks & Recreation. City Staff is supportive of the Association's proposal for improvements to the Raymond Park Courts, and all parties are in concurrence with partnering and moving forward. The "Forever Idaho First Grant" is our first effort in attempting to acquire resources needed to bring the goal of refurbished and dedicated Pickleball courts to the community at Raymond Park in the City of Pocatello.

The Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association has also received over \$1,000 from individual donations towards this effort. Dedicated Assn. members (65+ local players, and growing) are also committed to continue seeking donations, as well as donate monetarily themselves. Pocatello Parks & Recreation and Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association also have plans to apply for future grant funding opportunities as they become available, including plans to apply for future IFFT Grant funding consideration. Parks & Recreation Dept. staff also plan to bring forward a request within City budget processes for potential project resource allocation consideration.

Should sufficient resources be able to be accumulated over time, the Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department has the capacity to prepare designs/plans and specifications for competitive quotes/bids from qualified entities to ensure quality construction, as well as the most competitive cost & value for project work, in respect of potential grant funder and/or individual/business donation generosity.

Pocatello Parks & Recreation will work together with Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association members for the benefit & enjoyment of the community through the great sport of Pickleball. We believe that community Pickleball growth & participation will expand substantially if dedicated Pickleball courts at Raymond Park can be brought to fruition due to players locally, regionally, and from all over the country will be able to find the courts online as a place to play, recreate, and meet new friends, making our community a Pickleball travel destination.

Please describe your organization's greatest need.

The popularity of Pickleball in the City of Pocatello and surrounding communities has grown tremendously the past several years. In an effort to meet the exploding demand for Pickleball court use, in 2017 the Parks & Recreation Dept. "dual stripped" the lighted Raymond Park outdoor tennis courts (4) for Pickleball activity, however, more courts are needed to meet use levels. The existing tennis nets are also unfortunately not conducive to Pickleball use due to net height differences between the two sports. In addition, despite on-going maintenance & repair efforts, the Raymond Park courts themselves are also in various stages of dis-repair, with cracking and sub-standard surface conditions, and are in need of comprehensive refurbishment.

The City of Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department's greatest need in regards to our "Forever Idaho First Grant" request for Raymond Park, is to be able to provide high quality, dedicated outdoor pickleball courts in the park system for community use & enjoyment, and to meet significantly increasing user demand. Meeting this need hinges on being able to acquire the financial resource needed for court developments & improvements. Due to a finite amount of fiscal resources available, and many competing needs for those resources at the City level, the Pocatello Parks & Recreation Department is seeking alternative methods to help fund dedicated Pickleball courts for the community. Cost estimate for project implementation is approx. \$47,200.00, as follows:

- Court Repair/Re-surfacing and Lining Costs: \$31,000
- Pickleball Permanent Post & Netting Systems (6 x \$1,450 installed): \$8,700
- Chain Link fencing for courts separatlons (approx. 220'): \$7,500
- Total Project Cost Estimate: \$47,200

While a dedicated 6-court Pickleball facility at Raymond Park in Pocatello cannot be compared to some of the much larger and more expansive Pickleball facilities around the nation, members of Pocatello Parks & Recreation's partner organization in this endeavor, Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association, are very confident that Pickleball players from around the region and from out of state will "travel" to play at quality facilities as part of an overall healthy and socially active lifestyle, based on personal experience. For example, approximately 2 hours west of Pocatello is the Pickleball Association of Twin Falls, which worked with the City of Twin Falls, Idaho to build dedicated pickleball courts at Pioneer Park and built six (6) dedicated pickleball courts at Pioneer Park. The Twin Falls Pickleball Assn. enjoys over 100 members, and 500+ Face book followers, and attracts players from all over the region and other states (Utah, Nevada, etc.) to visit, recreate and socialize with other Pickleball enthusiasts in a physically & mentally healthy lifestyle.

There is an evolving and increasing trend of Pickleball enthusiasts both locally and regionally, who plan their travels around various Pickleball tournaments, and visit available Pickleball facilities along the way to enjoy the courts, activity and new friendships. The Pocatello Parks & Recreation Dept. and Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association view the Pocatello community as a similar hub for Pickleball interest & enjoyment, if the need for dedicated Pickleball courts can be achieved.

How will your organization know if you are making progress?

The ultimate foreseeable goal and success metric is bringing to completion a high quality, dedicated Pickleball court facility to the Pocatello & surrounding communities at Raymond Park, in collaboration with the Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association. Progress will be measured throughout the process by: 1) realized Pickleball interest and play level increases in the community, via continued Pocatello Parks & Rec. and Pickleball Association outreach efforts; 2) the success of efforts to accumulate needed financial resources for development of the Raymond Park Pickleball courts (via grant funding, donations, potential City and other resources); and 3) successful design (per USAPA court standards) and ultimately bid solicitation of Pickleball Court facility at Raymond Park.

Successful grant application and other fundraising & resource accumulation efforts will greatly help Pocatello Parks & Recreation and the Portneuf Valley Pickleball Association emulate & enhance the robust development and evolution of Pickleball in the region for all of its physical & mental health and well-being benefits for participants, as has been the case in Twin Falls, Lava Hot Springs, and Burley, Idaho, as well as countless other areas nation-wide.