

From: MIOTTO

Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 11:34 AM

To: Clerks Richmondhill <clerks@richmondhill.ca>

Subject: Key Findings report on Parks and Recreation - Pickleball

Good morning,

I'm writing to you with reference to the "Key Findings report on Parks and Recreation", item 13.4.

My family and I have been residents of Richmond Hill since 1995. During this time, we have enjoyed and benefited from the Parks and Recreation facilities and programs provided by the city through participation in hockey, soccer, swimming and countless other programs.

However, I am finding that Richmond Hill is allowing itself to fall behind in its recognition of the fastest growing North American sport, Pickleball. Markham, Stouffville and Newmarket are all developing their pickleball facilities while it seems Richmond Hill is remaining stagnant. This sport has great appeal to the older population, providing important opportunities for physical health, social activity and a sense of community. Personally, since beginning to play pickleball two years ago, my health has improved, I have gained new friends and have volunteered at Rouge Woods' pickleball program. The sport's appeal is not only with the older population, participation among younger ages is growing quickly. The benefits and enjoyment of pickleball courts, indoor and outdoor, will benefit all age groups, as a sport for 55+, teens and adults. Demand for court space will not be declining, it will be growing exponentially!

I have participated in the weekday 55+ drop-ins and demand has been so great that, due to capacity limits, I have been turned away on more than one occasion. This is even when I arrived 15-30 minutes BEFORE the start time. Sessions that require pre-registration, ie Thursday evenings, are full by 7:05am, even though registration opens only at 7am! There is clearly greater demand for court space than the City of Richmond Hill is currently providing. Due to the lack of availability, I have now begun to play in Vaughan, Markham and Newmarket. The fact that Richmond Hill residents must look elsewhere should not be acceptable to the Richmond Hill council.

The plan to develop eight new courts by 2031 will clearly not suffice. I ask that you review these plans and commit to making Richmond Hill the city with the insight to build a great facility. This is the time to develop a pickleball facility which will be looked upon as the standard to which other cities will aspire.

Thank you for your consideration.

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