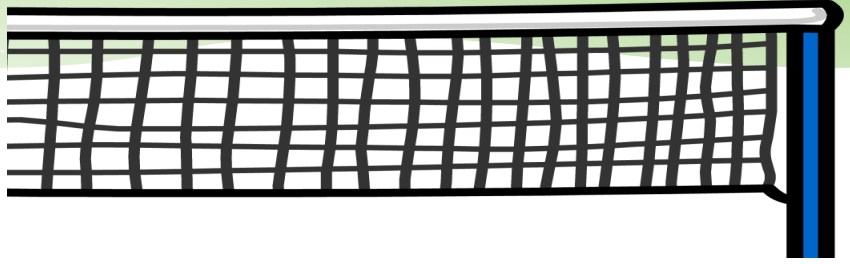


# New Pickleball Center for Jackson County



## Project Description

[Jackson County Parks](#) and the [Jackson Area Pickleball Association](#) (JAPA) are working to develop a new, modern 8-court Pickleball Center in the Sparks Foundation Park near the Cascades. The project cost is an estimated \$450,000, and fundraising is underway to make it a reality. The timetable for this project is fairly aggressive, with fundraising preferably completed by July 1, 2021; followed by design and construction. Project completion is targeted for June 2022.

## What Is Pickleball?

Pickleball is the country's fastest growing sport. It is a fun and easy-to-learn game played on a smaller version of a tennis court. Pickleball is played with a perforated plastic ball similar to a whiffle ball and paddles rather than rackets. [Click here for a brief introduction to pickleball.](#)

## Growth of Pickleball

According to the [USA Pickleball Association](#), the sport is growing by 10%+ annually. Much of this impressive growth can be attributed to Baby Boomers seeking a less physically demanding but still active and competitive sport. Additionally, the group-play aspects of pickleball (often played as doubles) adds to the social interaction appreciated by this age group. The sport is rapidly growing with other age groups as well.

Pickleball is easy to teach, and its low costs make it attractive for public recreation programs. Schools are also incorporating it into their physical education programs, including those in Jackson County. Adults and young people are attracted to the social aspects of its group-play. [Click here for a description of the health benefits of playing pickleball.](#)

## Proposed Pickleball Center

A feasibility study and resulting decision by the Jackson County Parks Board selected a site in [Sparks Foundation Park](#), near the Cascades, for the Center. It contemplates 8 courts with potential for expansion to 10 courts. Other complementary amenities have been identified.



Sparks County Park is Jackson County's largest and most centralized park with the closest proximity to the majority of Jackson County's population. Sparks County Park has the greatest capacity to support the additional traffic, noise, and light from this type of development without negatively impacting residential neighborhoods. Sparks County Park also has the available land and certain support infrastructure in place that could make it easier to get the early phases of this project constructed.

## Pickleball in Jackson

The Jackson Area Pickleball Association (JAPA) was formed in 2018 as local interest in the sport grew. The association has nearly 125 dues-paying members and a membership that grows annually. JAPA promotes the sport, offers instruction, and provides for organized group play. The group is also involved in the Jackson community with organized volunteer support of the Jackson Friendly Home and Bright Walls Festival. JAPA membership is open to anyone.

Currently, pickleball is being played on four modified tennis courts at Ella Sharp Park. The courts are old and in need of repair, yet some 20-25 players attend group-play sessions daily when weather permits. This size group is the maximum these four courts can be expected to accommodate. The sport has the potential to grow significantly with more and better courts that would be offered at the new Center.

## Value of a Pickleball Center

Jackson stands to benefit from this new Pickleball Center recreationally, socially and economically. The Center will offer expanded outdoor play opportunities for county residents over 8 months of the year. Growth in the JAPA organization will be expected with positive participant interaction and increased volunteerism. Organized tournaments will promote tourism over multi-day periods, providing economic benefits to Jackson.

## The Fundraising Campaign

The estimated cost of this project is \$450,000, and like other recent County Parks projects, cost-sharing is a model that will move this Center to a reality. The Jackson Area Pickleball Association is looking to help secure funding of \$225,000 from generous benefactors, including foundations, businesses, service organizations, JAPA members and other individuals to meet half of the cost of Center.



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The timeline for the project is challenging to meet the County's plans for the Center in 2022. The fundraising campaign is set for the first half of 2021 and is intended to secure donations, sponsorships and pledges toward the \$225,000 goal. Donations will qualify as charitable contributions under 501c3 IRS tax rules.

JAPA Board members and volunteers serving on the fundraising committee include: Kathy Lincoln (President), Al Hooper, Karen Worthy, Bruce Deverman, Dave Mahon, and Dan Bishop.

Jackson County Parks members serving on the fundraising committee include: Mike Way (Chairman).

Sponsors and donors will receive recognition for their contributions to this project.

### FOUNDATIONAL DONOR LEVELS:

**Patron** \$20,000+    **Partner** \$10,000 - \$20,000    **Champion** \$5,000 - \$10,000

Supporters:

**Platinum** \$2,500 - \$5,000    **Gold** \$1,000 - \$2,500    **Silver** \$500 - \$1,000

Supporting Friends - Up to \$500

#### For More Information, Contact:

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♥ PickleBall

