



# PICKLEBALL OPTIONS ANALYSIS

## PREFERRED SITE MEMO

DECEMBER 10, 2025



**City of  
Courtenay**

The City of Courtenay respectfully acknowledges that the lands to which this Pickleball Options Analysis applies is on the Unceded Traditional Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.

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## 1.0 Introduction

The City of Courtenay is seeking a location to build four to six new pickleball courts and has undertaken work to determine the best locations for these within existing City parks. Lanarc is supporting the process, and began by compiling a 'Background Review' memo which outlined best practices and guidelines to inform potential court locations. Based on those findings, a desktop review of park spaces within the City to determine suitability for pickleball courts was undertaken which resulted in an initial 'long list' and subsequent 'short lists' of candidate locations.

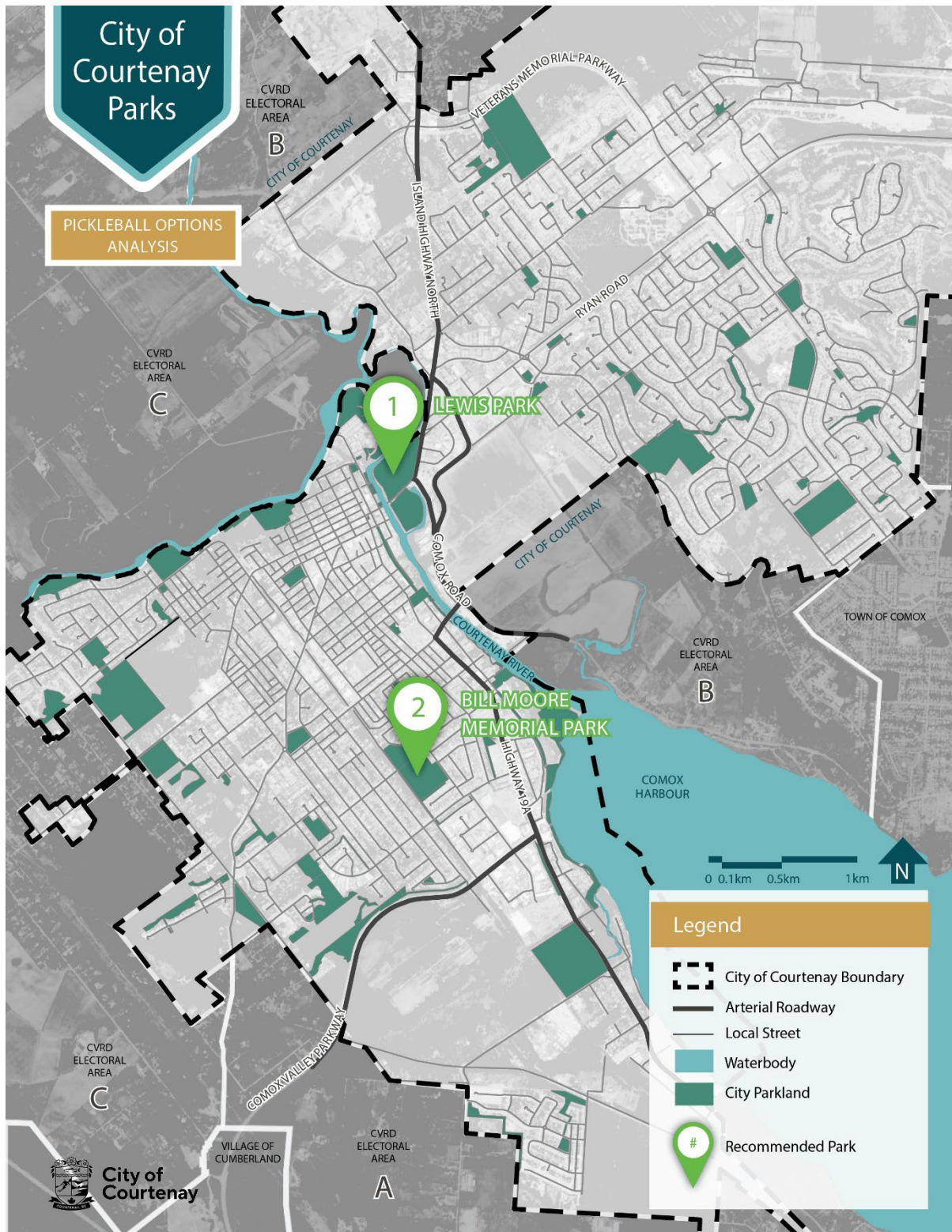
The following memo summarizes the two most promising City of Courtenay parks taken from the candidate lists. They are rated in terms of their suitability, with a preferred park listed alongside a secondary option. An in-depth analysis of the preferred park is included, as well as a shorter summary of considerations for the secondary option. For each, pros and cons, as well as potential court locations within the park, are summarized. The criteria used to determine these park recommendations included park character, space availability, parking availability, general accessibility, location within the city, and park orientation. One critical item that was studied was distance to residential properties due to sound impacts. This is an important consideration as sound conflicts are often the highest issue arising from municipal pickleball courts being located near residential properties. The analysis highlights this consideration for each park, with the preferred park having a greater distance from residential uses.

This options analysis work is being undertaken in parallel with a *Pickleball Needs Assessment* (Appendix A). The *Needs Assessment* has examined overall pickleball demand and usage in the Comox Valley and confirmed that the near-term provision of four to six new courts is required in the City.

For the two preferred parks, a preliminary schematic design was also undertaken to inform high-level costing as an additional means of comparing the two sites. This information is provided in Appendix B.

### 1.1 Park Locations Overview

*Map 1* is an overview of the recommended parks for pickleball court development. The number assigned to the two parks corresponds with their suitability for pickleball court development, with number one being the most suitable (preferred site) and two being the secondary option.



Map 1 - Park Locations Overview

## 2.0 Preferred Option - Lewis Park

Lewis Park is one of Courtenay's premier parks, located centrally within the City. It contains a wide range of services including several current recreational and sporting amenities. With its complementary activities, distance from residential uses, and suitable spatial extents, Lewis Park has been chosen as the preferred location for future pickleball courts.

### 2.1 Overall Suitability

The City and consultant team analysed Lewis Park based on desktop research, site visits, and discussions with key interest holders. The following pros and cons outline the high-level considerations for the park to host pickleball courts.

#### Pros:

- Central location within the city
- Large distance from any residential properties (exceeds the setback requirements between proposed pickleball courts and private residences by 35 meters)
- Suitable park character (other sport/recreational uses present)
- Existing supporting amenities (e.g. access to Lewis Centre / washrooms)
- Multiple pockets of unprogrammed space
- Public parking available, often available during weekday daytime hours
- Proximity to transit and multi-mobility connections

#### Cons:

- Suitable court locations are close to the existing softball diamonds, potentially leading to noise pollution issues for softball players and foul ball safety concerns
- Parking availability may be limited during peak hours, especially during summer months or on weekends
- Proximity to the Courtenay River means a greater risk of flooding is possible
- Due to required permitting, there will be delay to the project construction timelines.

### 2.2 Recommended Court Locations

*Figure 1* shows the proposed locations for the new courts within the park, sited between the existing tennis courts and the Tsolum Building. This location is situated next to a public parking lot and pathway making it accessible, and with the location's proximity to the existing tennis courts also creates a "hub" for racket sports. Courts in this location would not exactly suit an ideal north-south court orientation, however they would be close and match current orientation of the tennis courts.

The horseshoe throwing pits are in this location, and initially the team looked at adding a limited number of courts between the parking lot and existing pits, however they would be tight to the Tsolum Building (1a). After consultation with the Comox Valley Horseshoe Club, consideration

could be made to remove or relocate the horseshoe throwing pits to make way for more pickleball courts (1b). If the horseshoe throwing pits are removed, the combination of space from 1a and 1b could be utilized for a comfortable six court setup (1c). This number of courts would match the capacity determined through the pickleball needs assessment, and allow for perimeter circulation, seating, and access pathways.

### **2.3 Residential Proximity**

Noise considerations are often cited as one of the biggest factors preventing pickleball facilities from being incorporated into outdoor settings. Especially when noise is during morning or evening times, proximity to residential uses can lead to perceived conflicts. Based on an acoustic study by the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) and Pickleball BC, distances between a six court hub and residential properties should exceed 85-105m. The proposed court locations in Lewis Park exceed this requirement (distance is 120m+).

### **2.4 Park Access**

Lewis Park is centrally located within the City, offering convenient access for the majority of residents. It benefits from existing parking both within the park itself and in nearby Simms Park, as well as along adjacent streets (see Section 2.5 Parking Demand for further information). Lewis Park is also well-connected by transit and alternative mobility options. The surrounding network of sidewalks and cycle lanes, along with its proximity to the 6th Street Active Transportation Bridge, enhances non-car-based access to the courts and supports a more sustainable approach to park connectivity.

### **2.5 Parking Demand**

Lewis Park contains existing parking stalls, both in the Southern half of the park as well as in the Lewis Centre parking lot. These stalls are shared by users of the current park facilities, along with recreation centre users and those accessing the Courtenay & District Memorial Outdoor Pool. During peak periods—such as summer months, special events, or tournament play at the ball diamonds—this parking capacity often proves insufficient to meet demand and spillover occurs into the nearby Simms Park parking lot; onto adjacent streets (e.g. Comox Road & Puntledge Road); and the informal, unpaved lot currently accessed off Comox Road.

The addition of traffic generated by the pickleball courts is anticipated to strain parking availability during peak times. A recent study of a six-court pickleball facility in the District of North Vancouver (DNV) estimated a peak parking demand of 30 vehicles (5 per court). Different traffic patterns and population levels in the DNV, however, mean this cannot be used as a direct comparison. The study also did not note mobility shifts for users potentially arriving by transit or bike which Lewis Park's central location is likely to encourage. For this reason further analysis of parking demand may be required to estimate true parking needs for pickleball at Lewis Park.

## 2.6 Floodplain & Archaeology Considerations

With its proximity to the Courtenay River, Lewis Park will have complexities related to potential flood events as well as archaeological considerations. The proposed site lies within the 30-metre riparian zone of the Courtenay River and is subject to the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation. Pickleball courts are considered a compatible recreational use in flood-prone areas due to their low risk to critical infrastructure. While there is potential for damage from floodwaters, the associated maintenance and repair costs would be significantly lower than for buildings. Although construction of the courts would not be required to meet the Flood Construction Level (FCL), public safety measures—such as a system for closing the courts during flooding events—should be incorporated. Additionally, an Archaeological Overview Assessment (AOA) conducted in 2023 indicates a low potential for intact archaeological remains at the site; however, permitting will still be required prior to development. The site will require Heritage Conservation Act (HCA) permitting and a Cultural Heritage Investigation Permit (CHIP).

## 2.7 Permitting Considerations

The site is located within the river's 30-metre riparian zone and is classified as an Environmentally Sensitive Area. A Riparian Area Assessment (RAA) conducted by a Qualified Environmental Professional will be needed to determine whether a notification or approval for changes in and about a stream will be required. The City's 'DPA-4: Environmental Protection' designation also applies to such areas, though typically exemptions are granted for public infrastructure projects, including improvements to existing public structures, facilities, and open spaces. Further clarification should be sought to determine whether an Environmental Development Permit (EDP) is required for the proposed courts.

Although the 2023 Archaeological Overview Assessment (AOA) indicated a low likelihood of archaeological finds, construction of the courts would still require a Heritage Conservation Act (HCA) permit. The permitting process will take up to a year and may affect the overall project timeline. Additionally, a K'ómoks First Nation (KFN) Cultural Heritage Investigation Permit (CHIP) would be required, as the site falls within an area of cultural interest. This permit is applicable if the project involves ground disturbance through activities such as digging, filling, staking, leveling, or excavation.

## 2.8 Other Considerations

The existing horseshoe pits would need relocation, and further engagement with the Comox Valley Horseshoe Club is recommended. The courts' proximity to existing recreational amenities within Lewis Park would further establish the area as a regional hub for recreation. Feedback from the Comox Valley Pickleball Association (CVPA) confirmed that the proposed location offers several positive attributes, including nearby washrooms, seating areas, and supporting infrastructure. The CVPA also recommended maintaining adjacent storage and suggested including an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to enhance safety and accessibility.

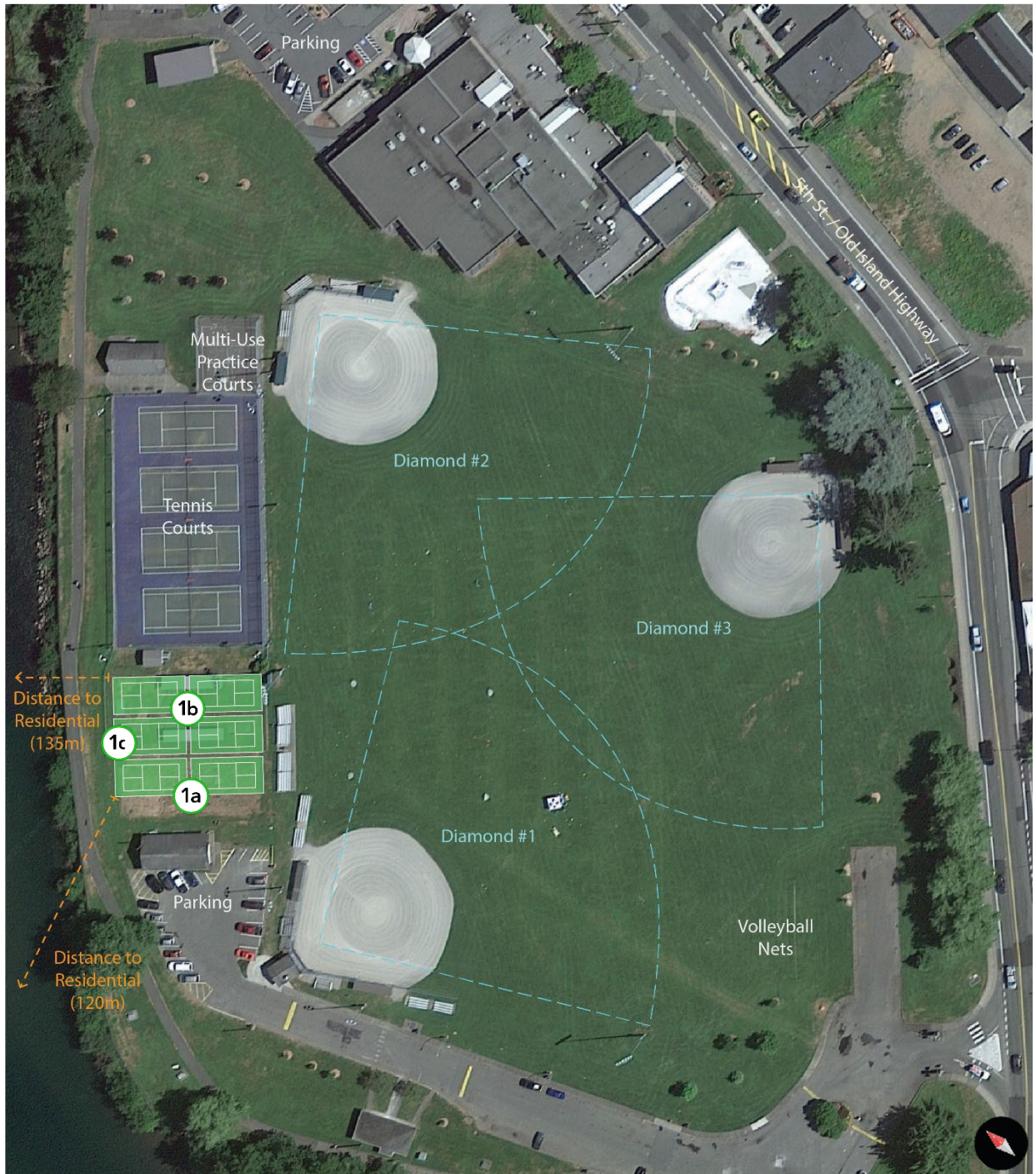


Figure 1 - Lewis Park Recommended Pickleball Court Locations

### 3.0 Secondary Option - Bill Moore Memorial Park

Bill Moore Memorial Park is a well used park within the City containing existing parking, sporting facilities, and supporting amenities. It has space for potential pickleball courts, however proposed locations would require extensive groundwork upgrades. Distances to residential properties are also shorter than best practice guidelines suggest. For these reasons it was seen as a suitable park, however the level of compromise meant it is considered a secondary option.

#### 3.1 Overall Suitability

The team analysed Bill Moore Memorial Park through desktop research, a site visit, and interest holder conversations.

##### Pros:

- Suitable park character (other sport/recreational amenities present)
- Existing supporting amenities (e.g., field house, washroom building)
- Multiple pockets of unprogrammed space
- Large amount of public parking available, including additional spill-out parking on surrounding streets for peak periods

##### Cons:

- Grading is a concern, including at the recommended court locations
- Relatively small distance buffer to residential properties (falls short of the setback requirements between proposed pickleball courts and private residences by 35m)
- Recommended court location directly borders the existing lawn bowling green likely leading to noise pollution issues for lawn bowlers
- Recommended court location is close to the existing baseball diamonds potentially leading to noise pollution issues for baseball players and foul ball safety concerns

#### 3.2 Recommended Court Locations

*Figure 2* shows the proposed locations for the new courts within the park, sited beside the lawn bowling green. This location is situated in an unprogrammed green space, as far away from residential properties within the park as possible. It has direct access to the adjacent lawn bowling parking area making it quite accessible, though the sloped nature of this space would mean that a ramp or stairs would be required for direct access to upper parking zones. The sloping nature of this area also means that the grade of the site would need to be cut and levelled, using retaining walls to hold the edges of the courts. The recommended approach for court construction would be to match the court level to the low (lawn bowling lot) side, which is where the courts would be accessed from. Courts in this location would be just off axis from an ideal north-south court orientation.

### **3.3 Residential Proximity**

The acoustic study by the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) and Pickleball BC states that for a six court setup to meet typical noise levels for a park setting, distances between a six-court hub and residential properties should exceed 85m (over soft ground) to 105m (over hard ground). There are no locations within Bill Moore Memorial Park that meet or exceed these requirements, and the proposed location falls short (only 50m over soft ground to the nearest property). Consideration for noise mitigation measures (such as a constructed berm using excavated materials from court construction) would likely be necessary to alleviate noise issues.

### **3.4 Park Access**

Bill Moore Memorial Park is located within a residential neighbourhood within West Courtenay. The Park is well connected to transit and cycling routes, including established bike lanes along Fitzgerald Avenue. Many users of the surrounding neighbourhood access the park via its numerous walking connections, and visitors from further distances can rely on the existing parking lot.

### **3.5 Parking Demand**

Bill Moore Memorial Park has an existing parking lot in a centrally located position, as well as stalls in front of the Lawn Bowling Club. The total parking has good availability during daytime and non-peak hours, however during tournament play at the ball diamonds or other peak periods may suffer from lack of supply. During these periods spill out parking is available along neighbouring streets (Kilpatrick Avenue & Dogwood Drive).

Using the study referenced in Section 2.5, an addition of 30 vehicles during peak periods for the six-court pickleball facility is likely to exceed the number of parking stalls currently present. However, the additional parking available on the surrounding streets is likely sufficient to absorb this number of vehicles. Unlike Lewis Park, mobility shifts for users potentially arriving by transit or bike is assumed to be lower. Further analysis of parking demand would be required to estimate true parking needs for pickleball at Bill Moore Memorial Park.

### **3.6 Other Considerations**

Alternate locations for the courts within Bill Moore Memorial Park were also considered, including the area to the East of the Lawn Bowling Club. That location was determined to be too close to neighbouring residential properties (under 20m). Locating the courts on the site of the existing parking was also studied, however extensive surface upgrades would still be required as well as accounting for reductions in the number of parking stalls. The area to the West of the playground was determined to be too close to residential properties, and an area where future play upgrades were likely to occur.



Figure 2 – Bill Moore Memorial Park Recommended Pickleball Court Location

## 4.0 Cost Comparisons

One of the key factors in the decision of which park to recommend was the relative cost of court construction for each specific site. The points below summarize high-level cost considerations for each park. Refer to the Class D cost estimates accompanying the Schematic Designs for further costing details. To account for unknowns at this early stage of design (such as unexpected subgrade conditions, etc.), the cost estimates have a contingency applied.

### 4.1 Lewis Park

The cost for the court locations themselves would be relatively straightforward, including paving, limited groundworks, and demolition costs of the horseshoe throwing pits. A protective net or fencing to limit the courts' exposure to foul balls from the adjacent softball field may also be required. Additional costs for these court locations may include court lighting for night games (if desired to match the dedicated tennis courts which currently allow for nighttime lighting).

An archeological and geotechnical report will also be necessary for these court locations, and unknown additional costs may be required for geotechnical soil remediation or to meet archaeological requirements (in addition to permitting costs). Costs related to Riparian Area Assessment (RAA) conducted by a Qualified Environmental Professional and an Environmental Development Permit (EDP) may be required. Potential flooding is also a cost risk, as future upkeep/replacement may be required due to a flood event.

### 4.2 Bill Moore Memorial Park

The relative cost for this court location would be higher than Lewis Park due the implications of constructing courts on a currently sloped site. To achieve a level surface for the courts, the neighbouring slope would need to be cut into, with a retaining wall holding the slope against the Western, Southern, and Eastern sides of the court. Higher design costs would be incurred to address the complexities associated with wall/slope construction. A geotechnical report would also be necessary for this court location. Beyond the construction of the courts themselves, additional costs may include court lighting for night games (if desired). Protective netting is likely not required due to larger distance to baseball diamonds.

## 5.0 Evaluation

The decision to recommend Lewis Park was based on the site analysis outlined in the report. The table below summarizes these factors, with each rated to highlight how the various aspects for each park compare to one another.

### Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Item	Criteria	Lewis	Bill Moore	Comments
		Rating (Green = Good; Orange = Medium; Red = Low)		
<b>Suitable Court Locations</b>	Available space for a suitable location.			Both parks have available space, however Bill Moore would require earthworks and proximity challenges to other uses also exist.
<b>Residential Proximity</b>	Distance to residential uses meets or exceeds guidelines			Lewis Park meets all setbacks requirements to residential uses (exceeds by 35m). Bill Moore does not meet setback requirements (short by 35m); noise issues will be a concern.
<b>Supporting Facilities</b>	Presence of washrooms or other amenities			Both parks have supporting facilities such as washrooms as well as other recreational amenities.
<b>Mobility Connections</b>	Connections to transit and bike routes			Both parks are well connected to local bike and transit routes.
<b>Parking</b>	Parking availability, including during peak periods			Parking availability will be a challenge for both parks, however Bill Moore benefits from potential spillover spaces on surrounding residential streets.
<b>Permitting</b>	Complexity, including riparian, archaeological, or building permit requirements.			Lewis Park will require environmental and archaeological permits due to the proximity to the Courtenay River. Bill Moore will require a Building Permit for retaining structures.
<b>Cost</b>	Relative construction costs for each site.			Added costs for Lewis Park will relate to permitting requirements. Earthworks and retaining structures will increase costs at Bill Moore Park.
	<b>Preferred Site</b>	✓		

Based on the evaluation matrix, both sites performed well overall with compromises in some categories. One significant con for Bill Moore Park is the limited distances to neighbouring residential uses which presents the risk for sound conflicts to be present.

## 6.0 Court Location Photos

A site visit was conducted on July 9, 2025 to assess the parks described in this memo and assess the feasibility of the approaches shown in the schematic design drawings (Appendix B).

### Lewis Park

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### Bill Moore Memorial Park

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## 7.0 Conclusion

Based on the analysis in this memo, Lewis Park is recommended as the preferred location for future pickleball courts. To illustrate in further detail how these courts may be designed, the team has produced a concept schematic design set of drawings for the park (Appendix B). This includes a layout plan for the chosen location, noting courts, access, fencing, and other considerations. Concept-level landscape details are included for key hardscape and softscape elements. A Class D cost estimate has also been prepared. At this time, geotechnical and/or archaeological investigations, as well as necessary permitting, are noted for future investigation.

Should further consideration be given to the secondary option at Bill Moore Memorial Park, or future pickleball court capacity beyond six courts be required, a schematic design and cost estimate has also been prepared for that park.

## 7.1 Next Steps

The next steps anticipated are:

- City to confirm preferred location.
- Project Team to review preferred location with local interest-holder groups (e.g. Comox Valley Pickleball Association).
- Project Team to consult with the Comox Valley Horseshoe Club regarding the removal/relocation of the horseshoe pitches. City to propose alternate location for horseshoe pitches if required.
- Notify the public through project site signage, a project website, and social media posts.
- Project Team to progress Detailed Design drawings for the preferred location.

To facilitate immediate pickleball facilities while site investigations, design, and construction at the preferred location are pursued, consideration could be given to designating the multi-use practice courts at Lewis Park (North of the existing tennis courts) as dedicated pickleball courts until the new courts are constructed.



**City of  
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