



What is Happening to the Tennis Courts at Wright Street Park?

If you have been by the tennis courts in the Wright Street Park recently, you have noticed some changes. The fences surrounding the courts have been removed. The City is seeking bids from contractors to remove the asphalt surface, and we anticipate that work will be done this fall. Once the asphalt is removed, topsoil and grass seed will be placed where the courts used to be.

Why are the Tennis Courts Being Removed?

Over the years, the City had completed routine maintenance of the court surfaces, with crack filling, surface repairs and painting. The base material of the tennis courts is asphalt, the same material that is used on paved street surfaces. Unfortunately, asphalt does not last forever – whether it is on City streets or in a park. Changes in weather in Michigan – especially freezing and thawing of snow and ice in the winter – are hard on asphalt.

In 2014, the City investigated replacing the tennis courts with new asphalt and found that the cost would be more than \$50,000. In 2015, the City sent out a parks and recreation survey as part of updating the Recreation Master Plan. The survey showed that few survey respondents used the courts. This has been confirmed by observation over the last several years.

With the adoption of the new fiscal year budget on July 1st, the City Council is turning attention to addressing the deteriorating tennis courts.

Will Anything be Put in Place of the Tennis Courts?

That is where you come in! Along with budgeting for the necessary removal of the tennis courts, the City Council has budgeted to develop plans for updates to Wright Street and Carl Fast Parks. Over the next few months, we will be looking for community input on new features in the parks. We hope that removing the courts now will give a nice “clean slate” to be able to visualize some fresh ideas for how this area of the park could be used. Maybe for playing surfaces for a new sport, or a passive picnicking area, or some other great idea that you will come up with.

Keep an eye on our website, Facebook page, email news updates, and local press for announcements of opportunities for you to offer your ideas.

And if you have other questions or comments, contact City staff anytime at (517) 849-2104.