

Pickleball coming to Walhalla park

Installation of three courts now underway

BY NORM CANNADA
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WALHALLA — Once Walhalla City Park re-opens after the COVID-19 crisis subsides, Walhalla residents can expect to find a new park attraction — pickleball courts.

Workers from Advanced Athletic Services are installing three pickleball courts where one of the two tennis courts was located at the city park next to the Walhalla pool. City administrator Brent Taylor and Walhalla recreation director John Galbreath said while the timeline for completion is dependent on the weather, the courts are expected to be ready later next month.

"They're moving along pretty fast," Galbreath said. "We've still got to put up a divider fence between the tennis court and the pickleball courts. Hopefully, within the next month, we'll have everything done."

Taylor said the \$36,000 for the pickleball courts is being paid for out of hospitality tax funds.

"It's a good game for those who don't want to play full tennis, because of all the running and pounding," Taylor said. "It's an abbreviated court.



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A worker patches cracks on the pickleball courts at the Walhalla City Park on Friday.

It's very popular among seniors, especially."

Galbreath said he was first approached about adding pickleball by local resident Charlotte McCoy a few years ago.

"That group of her friends that play started off asking for it," he said. "We've been trying to work it out for several years now and finally got it done."

The work is a continuation of efforts to improve Walhalla City Park. Earlier this year, Galbreath showed council photos of improvements made to some playground equipment.

"That's our goal — to make it more attractive to everybody," Galbreath said of work at the park. "I think it will change

the look of the park a lot. We've still got some work to do."

Councilman Josh Roberts, who chaired the recreation committee for his first two years on council, said he is glad the pickleball project is "moving forward."

"I am extremely excited about that, because that's been my project the whole two years of my tenure, or just about," Roberts said. "Those courts were just in such disarray, so dangerous looking. You couldn't really play much on there. I can't wait to, hopefully, work on

the rest of the park."

Roberts said he heard from "a handful of different people" during his first two years on council asking about pickleball courts.

"All those people that have asked about it — when I hear from them, I give them a smile because we've actually got it done," Roberts said. "It's going to help that neighborhood there. It's going to help the look of the town. It's a definite step in the right direction for us."

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