

PLAY

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pickleball courts in the summer, or no later than fall. That's a high priority for me, the city administrator (Shawn Sandlin) and there's a lot of public interest in pickleball."

The announcement comes approximately seven months after a group of concerned citizens addressed the Berea City Council, asking city leaders to look into the possibility of installing courts.

At the time, the group's spokesperson, Judith Weckman, told officials pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the United States. She added that it's a sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, it promotes a sense of community, fitness, but that it's also an activity that can bolster the city's tourism appeal.

"Such a project could create a healthier, happier community as well as contribute to Berea's economic development," Weckman told the council in October. "Our hope is for a collaboration among the city, college, local businesses and other organizations aimed at raising money to build these courts."

Berea Tourism proposes to chip in \$137,000 for the project in its 2026 budget. It's Tourism's latest move to contribute to facilities that can be enjoyed by both visitors and local citizens. The commission has already committed funds to



A spot in the Berea Park Annex, located next to the Berea College soccer fields, has been selected for six pickleball courts.

enhancing other public facilities, such as shared use trails.

Fraley said he believes the development of Berea's outdoor recreation/adventure resources is the way to go, given the heightened interest in outdoor activities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I think our recent emphasis on outdoor recreation has created greater opportunities to invest tourism funds in that way," Fraley said. "I think the desire for outdoor recreation was boosted during the pandemic, and

that has continued to today. I'm hopeful that's a direction we'll continue to move in. We can still value our culture as an arts and crafts community, but also to diversify our tourism efforts in other ways, primarily in outdoor recreation activities."

Officials have also stated that outdoor recreation facilities, such as parks and trails, are crucial to attracting young professionals and families who are looking for a place to live and work. They are also seen as very desirable by corporate site selec-

tors looking for communities that can attract and retain prospective workers.

Fraley noted that the city and Berea College have been working together to find sites for pickleball courts, including a concrete slab at the site of the former forestry building on Big Hill Road. That site and others are still in play for future courts, but the city saw an immediate opportunity to build in the Berea park expansion, near the skate park,

he said.

Because the courts will be funded with the city's General Fund and Tourism Commission dollars, there won't be the complication of seeking grants. Because of that, it's possible the courts will be ready relatively soon, according to Fraley.

"I think it's very feasible that we could have pickleball courts constructed and ready to use by fall," Fraley said.

Public Notice

Pursuant to KRS 178.070, the proposed discontinuance of County Road maintenance for a portion of Courage Road, which has no public purpose, will be heard at a public hearing on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 9:00 AM in the Berea Council Chambers (304 Chestnut Street, Berea, KY).

View full posting at www.madisoncountky.gov/public-notices, or in person at 135 W. Irvine St., Richmond, KY by calling 859-624-4700.

Cooperative Online Reverse Salt Auction Notice To Bidders

The City of Berea, KY and the Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) will be accepting unpriced technical proposals until 2:00PM ET on May 9, 2025 for a road salt reverse auction hosted by eBridge and scheduled for 11:00AM ET on May 20, 2025. Bidders may access the bid package by contacting eBridge at (502) 491-1980 and electronically downloading it through the following link: https://applications.ebridgeprocurement.com/BidPackage/?ev=Berea-KLC\Salt_Auction



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