



# MEMORANDUM

Phone: 452-7665  
Date: July 3, 2012  
To: East Bellevue Community Council  
From: John Soriano, Tennis Center Manager  
Subject: Cascade Middle School Tennis League

Bellevue Parks & Community Services has enjoyed working with the Cascade Middle Schools Tennis League for the past 5 years, and supports its mission of introducing young people to the sport of tennis. The Robinswood Tennis Center has been the host site for the League's Eastside jamboree matches for 4 years. The Center operates as a full-cost recovery program, and provides reserved courts for public use at the facility, as well as instructional programs, and youth and adult teams and leagues.

We were not able to accommodate the Cascade Middle Schools Tennis League at the Robinswood Tennis Center this year due to a number of factors including the number of participants registered in the Center's own afterschool youth tennis programs during the times requested by the League. The Center's spring session had over 300 participants in the youth afterschool program. Waiting lists for classes ranged from 10-16 participants per class.

Robinswood Tennis Center operates close to maximum capacity (98%) nine months out of the year. Between 3:30-6pm, it typically operates at 100% capacity with in-house youth tennis programs and open public court bookings. The Center is one of two indoor tennis public facilities in the region, and accommodates as many organization and group rental requests as possible while balancing its own program needs and public open court bookings. Rental usage and public open court reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis. Rental procedures and policies apply to all rental users in order to provide opportunities for use.

The Cascade Middle Schools Tennis League has also used the City's non-reserved outdoor tennis courts for practices. With the exception of the Robinswood Tennis Center, the City's outdoor courts are available to the public at no fee on a first-come, first-served basis. The Center did reserve time on two outdoor tennis courts at the request of the League as a customer service gesture for two years. Unfortunately, each year we received a number of verbal and written complaints regarding this exception from neighborhood residents who regularly used the courts. After a series of meetings with the concerned residents, we decided to discontinue this exception to our practice of not reserving outdoor tennis courts. The League has been utilizing the outdoor courts for their school practices with that understanding for the past two years. We have not received requests at this time from other schools to reserve our outdoor courts.

The challenge for Robinswood Tennis Center is always about managing the demand for indoor court time, and balancing the different interests of the Center's users while operating as a full-cost recovery facility. We will be talking with the Cascade Middle Schools Tennis League about continued future tennis court usage at Robinswood Tennis Center, as well as possibilities for other alternatives. For example, Bellevue School District has five middle schools with a total of 16 outdoor courts. A partnership with the League and BSD could possibly expand the league and allow for use of the middle school courts for league practice and play. This would be a win-win if the goal is to be able to introduce more youth to the great sport of tennis and securing additional resources for play.

Please let me know if you have further questions.

cc: Shelley Brittingham, Assistant Director

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**From:** Jim Wiesen <JWiesen@jds.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 01, 2012 1:00 PM  
**To:** EBCC  
**Cc:** michellemurphy@bellevuewa.gov  
**Subject:** East Bellevue Community Council Communication

## Youth Tennis Opportunities Denied

My name is Jim Wiesen, the Athletic Director at the Jewish Day School in Bellevue. I do have a concern with the lack of availability of tennis courts for our youth to play on in Bellevue. I was planning on being at the meeting this evening, but unfortunately I have a prior commitment.

For over 5 years the Cascade Middle School League has rented time at Robinswood Tennis Center for the purpose of introducing boys and girls ages 11-14 to the wonderful sport of tennis. Our court time requests have changed based on available court time and size of the league and teams. Some years we reserved practice time and other years we played only matches at Robinswood Tennis Center. We have always been flexible as to the space offered.

This season we asked for 2 two hour blocks to play our matches. Our request was denied. We then asked if we could reserve the outdoor courts across the street from our school for one hour a week – again our request went unmet. The person who we have talked to about this in the past and who has helped us out quite effectively, Jon Soriano, has told me the indoor courts are unavailable and that Bellevue does not rent to outside groups for outdoor courts. I had thought Bellevue rented to camps for their summer program in the past but guess that practice has stopped.

We are now playing our home matches in Kirkland. As a Bellevue school with a strong history of introducing and furthering tennis and recreation, I feel this is wrong. We have a court directly across the street from us that cannot be guaranteed to us for one hour a week. Our indoor option has been denied as of this season. As an athletic director who schedules for many sports, I would like to know what has changed in the past year that no space can be allotted to our youth players – players who will be the foundation of the sport in the years to come. Does Bellevue want to be a community that fosters this healthy activity for our children? It is my opinion that Bellevue youth should be encouraged in many types of activity. It is also my opinion that the City of Bellevue Department of Recreation is not meeting the needs of Bellevue youth in the sport of tennis. I would be most interested to know if there is a plan for improvement in this area.

Thank You  
Jim Wiesen  
Jewish Day School  
425-460-0273