

Why pave paradise?

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I think city council has been very short-sighted in deciding to put 16 pickleball courts in Bonnerworth Park.

Like the Joni Mitchell song says, “They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.” Maybe Bonnerworth doesn’t look like paradise right now, but it could.

Why not keep the baseball diamonds and skateboard areas, plant more trees, put in gardens and benches that everyone can enjoy instead of taking away much needed climate enhancing green space in town?

Yes, there are other parks nearby, but we really need to preserve the greenspaces we have in the residential areas.

It’s well known that pickleball courts are noisy and competitions will also bring spectators, so why put 16 all in one place? If people say they want them for healthy exercise and enjoyment, then why not put two or three courts in different areas of the city so neighbours aren’t impacted by the noise?

If the pickleball association wants 16 courts together so they can hold competitions, etc., then put them outside residential areas, maybe on or near Harper Road, for example. The casino and hotel there would also benefit.

Another option is having some indoor courts that could be used year round. How many people are going to want to play pickleball outside in the increasing heat of our summer afternoons? Why use green space for courts that can’t even be used in the winter months?

It seems that plans for Bonnerworth were already established and decided on before neighbours were well informed.

Rather than create animosity between the neighbours and the pickleball community, council should at least take time to consider a compromise before calling in the bulldozers.

Recreation facilities are important, but \$4.4 million would be better spent addressing homelessness and the deaths caused by the opioid epidemic in our city.

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