

2021 August Racquet Survey Comments

The Comments from the 179 Surveys are Grouped in General Categories Below

**The submitted comments have not been edited but have been separated into different categories. The light grey text indicates that part of the comment shows up in another category as well.

Support for building the facility

- I do hope that an indoor 12 month per year facility is built and becomes reality. I also accept that prices may be higher than current rates. I would not spend that much money for a membership and fees though to play tennis. It would be cheaper to drive to Winnipeg for the amount of tennis I play.
- If you build it, they will come!
- Thunder Bay is in need of more indoor sport facilities considering our long winters!!!!
- Every city needs an indoor tennis option. It is important for retaining professional employees in a northern remote city. It's not just about tennis. It's about city amenities and things to do other than hunting and fishing. Winters are long on Thunder Bay with not many options for racquet sports.
- As an original Board Member and Treasurer when the club began to pursue this, I feel strongly that since we have financial backing from the city as well as other sources, we should proceed with these courts as not doing so would guarantee no future backing from the city again or in the near future. Now is the time to proceed and complete this project.
- A bubble facility with ~6 covered courts at the current Chapples facility would seem to be the most cost effective solution for a senior player like myself to be able to play tennis in the winter
- This survey is not well worded and seems to be designed to elicit answers for a specific agenda. If the goal of the Thunder Bay Tennis Club is to grow and nurture the sport in the city, then it seems clear that year round accessibility is the pathway to that goal. Perhaps the membership should be polled about that aspect and if the majority accepts that goal, then further questions can be asked on how to achieve the goal.
- This is a very important endeavor for Thunder Bay.
- We just need indoor courts. However it's done is irrelevant.
- Hope it goes through. It would be a shame to not have an indoor tennis facility in town
- I support an indoor facility but do not play in the winter. I believe the membership is too small for 6 courts so not financially feasible. I am also very opposed to covering up existing courts. Would only be in favour of the North side option.
- Our youth do not have the opportunities that all other players in our province have. How can we compete if they can play 12 months a year?
- Would love the opportunity for indoor tennis
- I gave generic answers, I would pay more/less depending on the facility
- With TBay having such harsh winters, having indoor sports options is invaluable. It is especially valuable to our growing aging population to which racquet sports are an

accessible physical activity. This of course increases a person's moral both mind, body and spirit. I have lived in many cities in Canada and it astounds me that of all places, a city that has at least 6 months of winter, does not have an indoor facility for racquet sports for its community. It's about time Tbay get with the program. I can only see tennis and pickle ball grow in popularity with this option available, especially with the large population of seniors on the rise.

- If I did want to play in the winter I may as well pay as a walk-in Or will they be non-existent under these new mandates .
- 950.00 for four months You may get your wish this will be a private club and only the well off will be able to afford to play here . The bubble was 10 bucks per hr yes we do not have that option any more but has inflation happened that quick and what percent . You want more players to join the club but that will not happen with these rates.
- Price is not an issue. We would skip memberships for other facilities and pay for the winter/summer tennis memberships. We are only tennis players and want tennis all year round.

Not interested in winter tennis / Competing winter sports / Snowbirds

- I own a place in Florida and do not plan to spend my winters in Thunder Bay so unfortunately I will not be contributing to the indoor facilities.
- My family and I are engaged in winter sports such as hockey and skiing. We wouldn't buy a winter membership or be able to commit to any programming. I selected "less than one time per week only Because I had to select something. But reality is we wouldn't play weekly, monthly if at all.
- There are many snowbirds who will not be here for 5 or 6 months. It is not clear what options they have. Taking out a membership for 2 months does not seem reasonable. I assume there is also a pay as you play option.? Also is there a combined membership that includes summer?
- I do not play winter tennis
- While I would LOVE to play indoor tennis; however, the proposed costs are not affordable for our family of five at this time. We also have many other winter activities that we focus on, so couldn't commit to tennis. This may change as our kids grow, and I could see us considering a membership in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts! Thanks!!
- We expect to be south during the winter for the next 10+ years but wanted to provide some input
- Again unsure of winter play as I would like to travel south, if available.
- I am an avid summer tennis player in TBay. If I wasn't spending my winters in Florida, I would most definitely take advantage of an indoor facility for both tennis and pickle ball including all programs offered.

Opposition to covering existing courts / Bubbles

- My entire family is opposed to covering existing courts as we do not agree with indoor tennis negatively impacting our well established outdoor open-air summer experience that is in very high demand."

- I'm assuming that by not asking if members would be willing to sacrifice existing outdoor courts by bubbling over them for this project that this idea is no longer being proposed. It would be irresponsible and misleading to send this survey out to garner support without mentioning this key fact. It is a deal-breaker for many.
- I don't vote for the option to cover existing courts in order to have indoor tennis. I opt for building new indoor courts.
- While Our family supports indoor tennis for this community we DO NOT support covering existing courts and including an additional user group while not increasing the size of the facility! The city of Thunder Bay should never have put us in a position like this. Their support should be to build additional courts on the north side of our facility and grow the facility with an additional user group for the entire community.
- We also would like to see NEW courts built that are covered. We have significant concerns about a bubble as this community witnessed the collapse of the soccer Plex that sat in a mess for two years. If that were to happen in thunder bay nobody would be playing outdoor tennis or indoor tennis. We also have concerns about the tennis community running year-round tennis- a bubble is a major liability and the city of Thunder Bay must be involved in maintaining this. We would support an operation model that includes the city and not just part-time staff. Winter maintenance is crucial. Additionally we DO NOT want to play tennis in a bubble in the summer. We have also heard that the mid Canada would not be able to be hosted if you left a 6 court bubble up permanently. We don't support this. We know when the college was open there was less than 150 members. I would prefer to start small(4 courts) and grow capacity to expand in years to come if we need to. AGAIN, we do not support covering existing courts.
- I do not support covering up the tennis courts at the current TBCTC in Chapples. I would fully support an indoor facility built at another location.
- I support an indoor facility but do not play in the winter. I believe the membership is too small for 6 courts so not financially feasible. I am also very opposed to covering up existing courts. Would only be in favour of the North side option.
- I think a bubble is awful if there is any other option; they're loud, ugly, and the money is wasted bc it will have to come down in X years. So I'd support 2-3 courts in the soccer complex, or 1-2 courts in the old Sears building (for eg). (I am amazed that we haven't tried to get the Sears building beside Marshalls -- since the club would be an anchor tenant and should get it for very little money.) The idea of covering over 6 courts with a bubble is, imo, absurd; you don't have the membership, the price to run it is way too high, and it compromises future outdoor tennis at the facility. Why take a step forward and backward at the same time? Is that really 'progress'? I urge the Board to find a solution that preserves outdoor courts; that keeps the costs truly accessible (which another \$900 is not to most people); and establishes a facility that lasts long into the future. Thanks for all your hard work, though, bc I know this kind of thing is difficult. You won't please everyone. But the Q is: will there truly, realistically, be enough players that pay that money and justify the expenses?

Other racquet sport facility

- Love to have squash as well
- Not in favor of indoor pickle ball. They have been incompatible in other winter indoor locations I've participated in. Too noisy for tennis player and traditionally pickle ball players do not want to pay the same fees as tennis players.

Location

I live in Port Arthur. If the indoor facility were closer to my house, I would be able to play outside of prime time hours more easily.

Rates:

Snowbirds

- Also, for the "snowbirds", maybe an option for partial memberships? People may not show interest in commitments as shown, but are still be interested in, and be fully supportive of an indoor facility. Just a few thoughts.
- "I understand that commitment is required before starting any construction project so for the purpose of this survey the following may be helpful information. Presently many club members such as myself travel south for part of the winter. Requiring a full winter membership may deter many people from purchasing a winter membership. Perhaps there should be an option available such as monthly or a partial membership for snowbirds who would still be interested in playing indoors but are not willing to commit to a full winter's membership. Thank You"
- What about monthly fees for those not planning on being here all winter.

Non-member rates

- Are there non member hourly rates.

Other models

- If we played indoor tennis, it would be pay as you go if that was an option. I have no idea how many times a year that would be.
- Higher court fees with lower membership costs giving better booking privileges might be a consideration. I may play once in a blue moon, but never enough to justify a membership.
- An option for a daily use category should be considered. Maybe a 5 use punch card for guests as an example.
- "My preference will be a punch card option (pay as you go), no membership required with multiple plays to allow me to play as I wish.
- I would love an option for the serious player that includes a ONE-TIME increased membership fee (even up to \$1,000) for winter tennis and NO court fees... I feel that the way it's set up with court fees will mean I have to be much more selective about playing with lower level players, such as friends/new members, my partner, juniors, etc...
- "Is there a possibility of paying your membership fees over the course of the year (indoor + outdoor) and not as one lump sum?"

General rates comments/questions

- Costs are too cheap
- As we would have a family membership and predominantly play together, the court fees will really add up, and I worry about the feasibility of playing.
- Question: if you were to run a men's and women's league (for example), would you have to pay a court fee each time you attended that programming as well?"
- I would prefer a membership fee that included court fees so I only have to pay a one time fee. If there were times available to play before 9am during the weekends I would most likely take advantage of that as well.
- "I feel the \$100 less senior membership is excessive. I feel 10% would be sufficient.
- Curious on why fee's are necessary, for prime & non time time, is it purely to boost revenue instead of making a membership more expensive up front?
- I would like to know why the membership is strictly for winter tennis, I would think (and maybe it's just not included in this survey) that the membership would have an option for the year as I would still be playing in the summer. I would like to know what my total cost for the year is, and would I have the option of punch cards...as you can't always play or have access to the courts. Sometimes they are monopolized and you can't get the times you would like. Are the court fees before I play, or as I play. Are the court fees on a per use basis? Not an intend use basis.
- "Way to expensive to play in the winter .
- I wish to see monthly memberships and punch cards similar to Canada Games Complex.
- The court fee can be increased to 15\$ from 12\$. I believe it's nominal, considering the fact that many members prefer to play doubles rather than Singles.
- "Are the court fees per person or per court? (Split by all users on the court)
- I believe it is crucial to set the membership fees much closer to summer fees but to get the commitment in advance from the members (town hall) in order to secure enough memberships for affordable rates
- If I did want to play in the winter I may as well pay as a walk-in Or will they be non existent under these new mandates . 950.00 for four months You may get your wish this will be a private club and only the well off will be able to afford to play here . The bubble was 10 bucks per hr yes we do not have that option any more but has inflation happened that quick and what percent . You want more players to join the club but that will not happen with these rates.

About the survey itself

- "Why Is there no consideration to the potential membership commitments and therefore revenue generation from playing doubles? It appears to me that especially with the older members, the greater court usage numbers are derived from doubles tennis.
- This survey is not well worded and seems to be designed to elicit answers for a specific agenda. If the goal of the Thunder Bay Tennis Club is to grow and nurture the sport in the city, then it seems clear that year round accessibility is the pathway to that goal. Perhaps the membership should be polled about that aspect and if the majority accepts that goal, then further questions can be asked on how to achieve the goal.

- Why was this survey not formatted to be printer friendly ???! - quite amateurish! [Shout created this online survey. No hard copies were collected.
- Allowing only one member of household to respond to survey is a significant mistake. If you are naive enough to think that any spouse or adult aged member of same household is going to give the same responses as the other spouse you are sorely mistaken in my humble opinion. [The family membership is intended to capture family membership pricing. Family surveys included 33 adult partners and 63 children.]

Suggestions/Questions to TBCTC

- Please engage membership consultation before deciding on the best option for indoor tennis in Thunder Bay to ensure success of the project."
- Would teaching pros need to have a membership since we bring in players that pay for a membership and court fees?
- I would need more information on days and times to decide if I would participate in more activities detailed in question 11.
- The club should consider having the courts open earlier in the morning. This writer does not see a reason why courts cannot be open as early as 6am. Even 7am would make sense.
- This is the 3rd survey I have filled out. What was done with information from previous surveys.
- At this point we are away for 6 months in the winter. All of the questions pertain to winter months. However I suspect many members may wish to pursue indoor tennis during rainy days and or the cooler months of the year such as April and October. That said I am assuming in this survey winter months are November til end of March. I wonder if answers would change if the facility was available 12 months per year. Just a thought ...
- I'd like to have access to courts 1-2 times a week in the Winter (that option wasn't given). I'd need a sliding scale downwards for a membership that would essentially subsidize other more active players.
- Why do you keep referring to winter tennis, can't people play indoors during fall and spring months and also during summer when the temperature is too hot outside, and if so, what would the annual membership fee cost.

Comments regarding the harmony of the executive

- With respect to the indoor racquet and moving forward it must be done harmoniously otherwise it will be difficult to commit my money and my time.
- My financial commitment to the indoor project is dependent on the end to acrimony and dysfunction at the executive level of the club.
- What is deadline for any funding to expire, if no deadline let membership know. If receive any money from school excursions of students, tournaments, etc will you use it to drop the membership and/or daily fees only? Might want to let membership know how going to do that. Assuming the city has been asked for a yearly contribution to lower yearly membership/ daily fees and/or maintenance fees. (Think Stratford Ontario is receiving 12 to 14 thousand a year to help with their new collapsible tennis dome & courts) Might

want to use Sudburys winter costs to run thier winter facility to get some direction on fees to charge. If city is not contributing anything yearly let membership know.

- "We do not know what happened to the Tennis Centre. In the past years, it was a place to unwind, exercise and have fun. In our humble opinion, ""the Executive"" should be behind the scenes and only help those that work at the Tennis Centre and possibly raise funds for the Tennis Centre. We don't understand why good people would feel the need to leave. For those on ""the Executive"" that didn't want the new bubble, did any of those people play on a regular basis at the College bubble? We were there at least five times a week in the winter. So now what happens to the funding? Wasn't there 2 million plus in funding? Will we lose it if something doesn't get built soon? That would truly be a disappointment. We want facts. Why is the facebook tbtcc page being moderated now? For those who did not know about the 2 additional courts, moving the clubhouse etc... the following email was sent out a year ago in August 2020.

Dear Pickleball Players of Thunder Bay,

We hope that you are all in good health and having been finding time to enjoy the summer weather outdoors playing pickleball. We are writing to let you know about plans for the proposed Indoor Racquet Sports Facility in Thunder Bay to accommodate tennis, pickleball and potentially other racquet sports. Members of the Thunder Bay Pickleball Association have joined with the Thunder Bay Community Tennis Centre to be part of the Indoor Racquet Sport Facility Committee. This committee has been working hard to further our dream of building a safe and large indoor racquet sports facility that is vital to sustaining the growth and enjoyment of both sports in this community for years to come. You may recall that in October 2019, City Council allotted \$1.5 million towards construction of the indoor facility. This funding was contingent upon the following:

- a Letter of Understanding be in place between the City of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Community Tennis Centre outlining ownership and land use agreement for the project
- an independent engineering firm be hired to confirm construction costs for the facility
- the original 2018 Business Plan and Feasibility Study be updated outlining project costs for a six-tennis court facility (including up to 8 lined pickleball courts).

These requirements have been met, with the Letter of Understanding expected to be presented to City Council for their approval later this summer.

In addition, the Indoor Racquet Sport Facility Committee, submitted two grant applications to fund the indoor project; a \$1million request of FEDNOR that was not accepted, and a \$1million request from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, which is currently undergoing Phase 2 review.

With the loss of the FEDNOR application, the Indoor Committee needed to reduce the initial overall project costs for 6 new courts to be built. The project has been modified to a 2-new court build to be added on to the existing courts 2-8, one new court at either

end. These 6 courts located on the south side of the Tennis Centre facility will become the covered facility. The projected total cost of the project is now \$3.05 million. Throughout the planning process, plans for the Indoor Racquet Sport Facility usage have and will continue to include both pickleball and tennis. Business plans submitted to the city and grant applications to help fund project costs have provided potential revenue data based on both pickleball and tennis memberships. One essential component of the plan includes our community's desire to host pickleball and tennis tournaments and other larger events that encourage the growth of both sports in the region. The Indoor Committee is now preparing a fundraising plan in support of the project. Overall, the goal is to raise \$600,000 from both tennis and pickleball participants to show our community's support of this facility. By late August, we aim to give more detailed information about the fundraising plan. In the meantime, we hope our current and future pickleball players and fans will consider how we can contribute to making this indoor facility a reality.

The Thunder Bay Pickleball Association and the Indoor Racquet Sports Facility Committee appreciate your anticipated support as we all continue to work enthusiastically to lead the growth of pickleball for our community.

Thank you.
... Thunder Bay Pickleball Association"