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### **Solvang's Pickleball Courts Nearing Completion**

*Community asked for one last push with \$10K donation goal within reach*

Construction of two new pickleball courts at Solvang's Hans Christian Andersen Park are nearing completion. The eagerly anticipated courts—which will be the first in the Santa Ynez Valley—should be ready for use by late-April, weather permitting.

After many community requests for pickleball courts, the City of Solvang was able to move forward with a court construction project this past fall, after devising a creative approach to utilize City forces and some community donations.

City staff completed project design and performed many construction tasks in house, such as building the retaining wall, to bring project costs down.

“We heard the community ask for pickleball courts, which seemed challenging from a cost perspective, but staff stepped-up,” said City Manager Xenia Bradford. “Public Works staff has done a tremendous job taking the time from their work-day to make this happen for the community.”

In addition to staff support, the City diverted \$20,000 in funding from other purposes to the project and asked the community to raise \$10,000. Since beginning to raise funds in November 2020, the community has now donated \$8,355, leaving the effort just \$1,645 away from achieving the initial goal.

“The donations have been great so far and a lot of people have stepped up, especially the city,” said David Gay, a Solvang resident and local pickleball enthusiast. “To do the job right, though, a little more is needed. Most courts are surrounded with landscaping. Right now, our courts are surrounded by dirt and mud, and as we saw with the recent storms, that doesn't work well.”

To finish the project, Sagebrush Painting, owned by Rick Bernhardt, has offered an in-kind donation of time and resources to seal the control joints in the concrete and paint the courts. City staff will then install the nets, making the courts ready for use. Additional court enhancements, such as fencing between the courts, will be added in future years.

“With community support and staff dedication, we were able to reduce the cash out of pocket impact and deliver this project,” said Nathan Giacinto, Wastewater Plant Supervisor.

Jenny McClurg, Senior Recreation Coordinator, continued, “It is very rewarding to bring these courts to Solvang. It helps when you have a community behind you and staff willing to jump in and go above and beyond.”

To donate, please send a completed donation form along with payment to: 1644 Oak Street, Solvang, CA 93463.