



# HEALTHY LOMPOC

*Partnering to build a healthier community*

April 29, 2022

Subject: Lompoc Pickleball Club's quest for permanent courts at Ryon Park

To Whom It May Concern,

It is the Healthy Lompoc Coalition's pleasure to write a letter in support of the Lompoc Pickleball Club in their quest for permanent courts at Ryon Park. The Lompoc Pickleball Club strives to provide a healthier future for our community by advocating for permanent pickleball courts, which will increase access and opportunity for all to experience the fastest growing sport in the country.

The Healthy Lompoc Coalition is a multidisciplinary coalition comprised of key stakeholders in the community. The coalition was formed by the Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization (LVCHO) in 2006 in response to the rising rates of obesity and preventable health problems in our community. The Healthy Lompoc Coalition's mission is to advocate and support programs and policies that ensure a local environment which promotes and supports healthy living. Often the Coalition's work centers around food access, nutrition education, active transportation and increased physical activity opportunities.

The LVCHO and Healthy Lompoc Coalition have collaborated on local access improvements to community facilities by partnering with the City in many ways over the years. For example, the LVCHO and City partnered on the State of California CalTrans funded Safe Routes to School initiative in 2012- 2016 and a California Office of Traffic Safety grant in 2017. Additionally, the LVCHO has championed the facilitation of the Lompoc Community Track and Field capital campaign effort that revitalized the Lompoc Unified School District's track and field facility. Most recently the LVCHO and Healthy Lompoc Coalition have written a letter in support for the Pioneer Park improvements and are currently working with the City of Lompoc to apply for the cycle 6 CalTrans Active Transportation Program grant.

The Lompoc Pickleball Club presented to the Healthy Lompoc Coalition on Thursday, April 28, 2022 to educate coalition members on the benefits of playing pickleball, the rise in popularity and the joy they have received from playing locally. A 2018 Western State Colorado University study of 15 middle-aged and older adults found that regular pickleball playing — in this case three times a week for one hour for six weeks — resulted in improved blood pressure and cardiorespiratory fitness. The researchers published the findings in the International Journal of Research in Exercise Physiology, and said the game's "moderate exercise intensity," combined with its "fun factor," supports it "as an ideal alternative form of physical activity" for this age group. It was highlighted numerous times that pickleball can be played at any age. The December 7th issue of Psychology Today states that Pickleball provides physical exercise, mental exercise, as well as a mental health boost for all ages and abilities.

[www.healthylompoc.org](http://www.healthylompoc.org)

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As you know, Lompoc is a low-income, rural community located in the middle of Santa Barbara County. The 2020 Census data reported a growth in the local Hispanic community which now makes up 58% of the City of Lompoc's population demographic. Lompoc's median household income is \$57,071, far below the statewide median household income of \$78,672 and persons living in poverty are 50 percent higher than the state average (17.6% - Lompoc). Given Lompoc's demographics, there is a great demand for improved parks and sports facilities to serve disadvantaged, at-risk youth and other members of the community. The addition of pickleball courts at Ryon Park would not only provide a healthy activity to local citizens, but would also act as an economic benefit to the community bringing in tours and improving conditions at Ryon Park.

We are excited to support this vibrant project in our community. Our Coalition believes that providing enhanced access to physical activity opportunities can have a significant and positive change in our community. We strive to promote and expand local investments in changing the built environment to create healthier opportunities for the entire Lompoc community.

Sincerely,

The Healthy Lompoc Coalition