



News Release from the Emerald Valley Pickleball Foundation
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Emerald Valley Pickleball Foundation Receives \$50,000 Gift from Travel Lane County

Travel Lane County's new charitable arm will invest its first gift - \$50,000 - in a planned Regional Pickleball Complex at Lane Community College.

The donation is a great next step in the fundraising campaign for the new facility, and reflects the local tourism promoter's faith that tournaments at the 24-court facility will draw thousands of players and spectators who spend millions in the local economy. The Emerald Valley Pickleball Foundation aims to break ground on the public complex in May 2025 and finish construction by fall 2025. It will be the largest pickleball facility in the Pacific Northwest.

Lane County voters in 2022 approved a tax levy that will fund \$500,000 of the \$5 million complex, which will include 10 covered courts to provide all-weather play opportunities. The Foundation plans to finance the project with an equal blend of public and private funds. The charitable Pickleball Foundation is planning a variety of activities and events throughout 2024 as part of ongoing fundraising efforts.

Monday's \$50,000 gift makes the non-profit Travel Lane County Charitable Fund the first Founding Sponsor of the Regional Pickleball Complex. As such, it will be a permanent, named sponsor of one of the new courts. "We are thrilled to have Travel Lane County as a partner on this project. This project will provide a much-needed place for local players to play, and it will also be a destination for tourism and travel into the Eugene/Springfield area", said Eric Wold, board member of the Emerald Valley Pickleball Foundation.



Visualization of the planned pickleball complex at LCC.

Pickleball, the fastest growing sport in the United States, is a low-impact, medium-intensity game that blends elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. The sport has simple rules, is inexpensive and is uniquely inclusive: players can show up alone and rotate into games with a variety of partners. The local Emerald Valley Pickleball Club has grown from 45 founding members in 2015 to nearly 900 members today, with thousands of people regularly playing in the Eugene-Springfield metro area.

Interest in tournament play for all ages and abilities has also exploded, and the local pickleball Foundation expects that the local complex will host tournaments organized by multiple national amateur and professional organizations. A preliminary Event Impact Summary conducted by Travel Lane County estimated that a large regional tournament drawing 600 overnight attendees and 1,500 day attendees would generate about \$1.5 million in local lodging, restaurant and entertainment sales, with another \$1 million in indirect sales.

For more information or to donate to the campaign, visit evpickleballfoundation.com

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