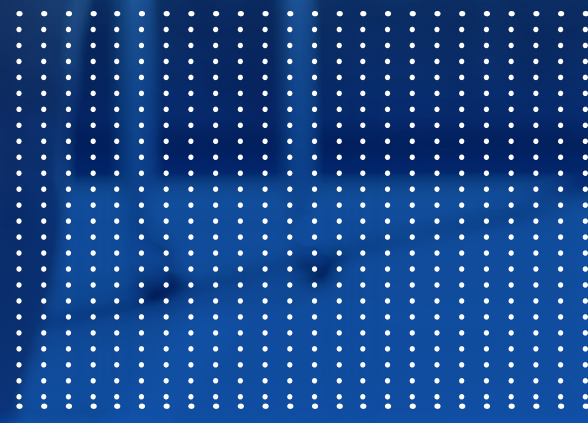




USTA COMMUNITY ADVOCACY HANDBOOK



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WHAT IS TENNIS ADVOCACY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

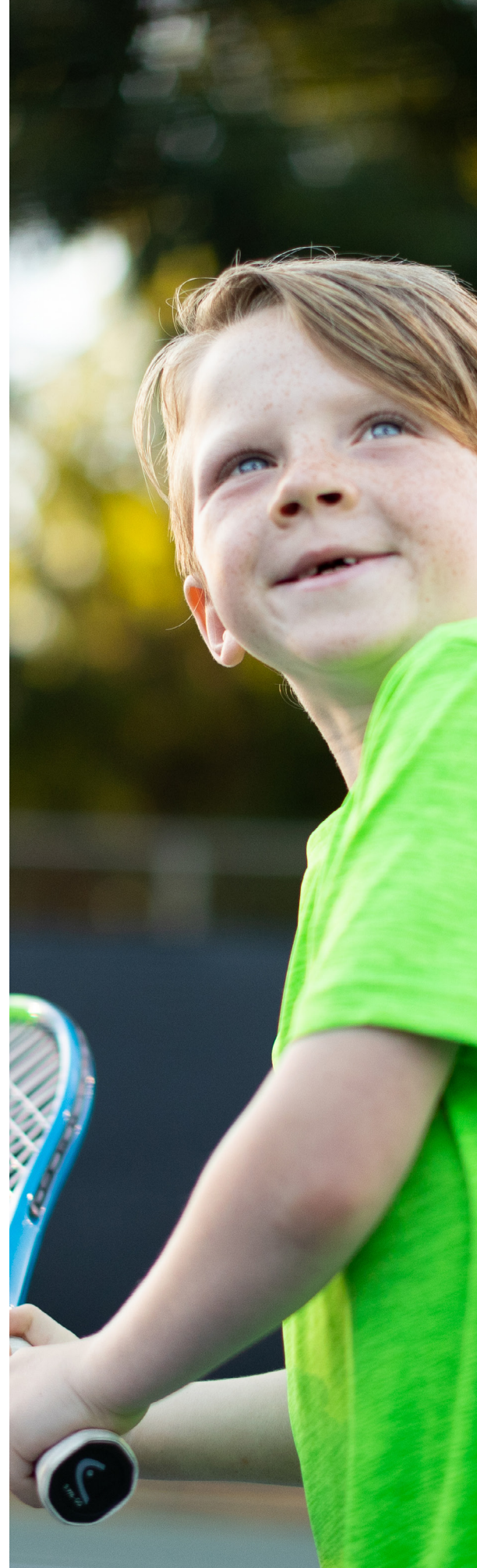
Advocacy for tennis involves taking our knowledge and passion for tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how tennis programs can benefit the community.

This handbook is one of several tools from the USTA and other industry organizations that can help you succeed in engaging with public- and private-sector decision-makers in support of tennis at the local level. This engagement will help to harness the public support and resources needed to expand the availability and quality of tennis facilities and programming like yours.

The sport of tennis can be an important part of improving communities, schools, the health of individuals and the quality of life for all. As members of the tennis family, we know how this sport can make a difference in people's lives. As advocates for tennis, our mission is to convince decision-makers in the public, private and non-profit sectors of this to gain their support.

ABOUT THE USTA

The United States Tennis Association (USTA) is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the United States and the leader for promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level, from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. A not-for-profit organization with more than 620,000 members, the USTA invests 100 percent of its proceeds into growing the game. It owns and operates the USTA National Campus at Lake Nona, in Orlando, Fla., and the US Open, one of the highest-attended annual sporting events in the world, held at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, N.Y.



THE CASE FOR TENNIS

Decision-makers in a community are presented with many athletic and non-athletic options in which to invest. As an advocate for tennis, you need to be able to convince others that tennis is an important option. You need to answer this basic question for them: Why tennis?

The answer should not focus solely on tennis as a game. Your message needs to convey how tennis facilities and programs can help solve public problems. Focus on how the sport can improve schools and the community, provide opportunities for youth, spur economic development and improve the quality of life for all residents.

In this section, you will find ideas, tips and assistance to help develop a tennis message that will convey the great role tennis plays in building a better community.

START WITH THE FACTS

You may be presenting to an audience with little or no tennis experience. Some people may have preconceived notions about the sport, such as tennis is hard to access, expensive to play and only found at country clubs.

Fact: More than 70 percent of all tennis is played inexpensively at public facilities.

Fact: Tennis has historically been a core program for public parks and recreation departments.

Fact: Tennis is a sport that can be learned at a young age and, unlike other sports, played for a lifetime, appealing across all age demographics.

Fact: Tennis is one of the few sports in which you can have three generations being active and playing together, making it attractive to families as well as facilities that seek to create recreational opportunities that appeal across the demographic spectrum.

BENEFITS OF TENNIS

For any tennis advocacy campaign, the general and wide-ranging benefits of the sport will be a central part of achieving your success. Here are a few benefits of the sport to stress in any presentation.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Tennis is ideal for long-term health benefits. It is the only sport where a person can be an active participant from age 3 to 103. The Cleveland Clinic has called tennis “an ideal sport for a healthy heart” and individuals participating only a few hours each week can significantly reduce their risk of heart disease.

Tennis also fights the inactivity pandemic that has gripped the United States across all age groups. The sport gets people moving and reduces obesity rates. Research shows that overweight and physically inactive children have lower IQs and do not perform as well academically compared to children who are physically fit.

SOCIAL HEALTH

The vast majority of organized tennis is played through leagues. Leagues are made up of teams of 15 to 20 players, and the majority of league matches are the doubles format.

Tennis creates a network of friends who socialize beyond the court; this is vital today as technology often isolates people. For children and students, tennis teaches important life lessons about working together and working as a team.

MENTAL HEALTH

Because tennis helps deal with physical, mental, social and emotional challenges, the sport is ideal for helping participants cope with stress. When playing tennis, challenges are ever-present, so individuals become problem-solvers on the fly. From alertness to tactical thinking, tennis helps keep the brain agile and young, and helps to relieve tension.

INCLUSIVE SPORT

Tennis is an inclusive sport. Advocating for tennis in your community can help increase participation in the sport from underserved populations. The USTA's Diversity & Inclusion strategy is designed to grow and promote our sport to the next generation—and future generations—of fans, players and volunteers. The USTA is removing barriers and creating opportunities wherever it can so that tennis becomes a true reflection of all of America.

Tennis is a game that can be adapted for any mental, physical or emotional disability. There are more than 200 active adaptive programs serving these athletes across the U.S. Tennis is used as therapy for post-traumatic stress, stroke survivors, patients with mental health issues and those on the autism spectrum. Athletes with cognitive disabilities learn and play the game, enjoying the social nature of clinics and tournaments. Volunteers and coaches working with adaptive programs find they benefit from the experience as much as the athletes.

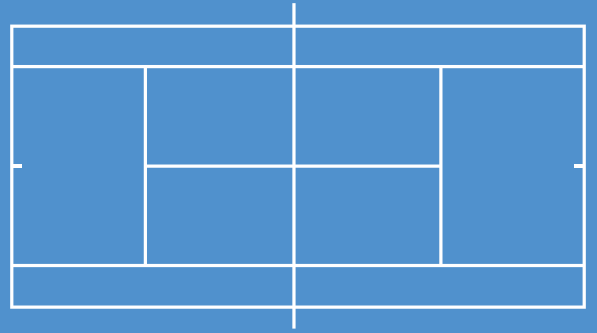
As part of the USTA's effort to reach "all of America," it has assembled targeted engagement guides to reach out to key demographic segments vital to the growth of tennis, such as millennials, wheelchair athletes, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and the LGBT community. You can access these engagement guides [here](#).

Financial disparity is consistently identified as a significant barrier that prevents multicultural players from getting into the sport. To help boost tennis participation among aspiring multicultural players, the USTA has created the Multicultural Grants Program, which offers grants to programs and individual players. To learn more about these grants, click [here](#).

The USTA is also committed to enhancing the diversity of the workplace through recruitment, hiring, retention, training and professional development of a diverse group of employees. It also strives to maintain and promote an inclusive culture in which individual differences are respected and valued as qualities that strengthen the working environment and contribute to promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level.

TOP 10 REASONS TO PLAY TENNIS

THE SPORT FOR A LIFETIME



YOUR BODY

GET FIT

Lose Weight, Burn Calories
An hour of singles play can burn 580–870 calories.

According to Oja, et al, Brit J Sports Med, 2016

LIVE LONGER

Playing just 3 hours per week will reduce your risk of heart disease 56%.

According to a 2016 Harvard University study

STRENGTHEN HEART, MUSCLES, AND BONES

Compared to other sports, tennis players have the lowest incidence of cardiovascular disease.

40-year study conducted by Johns Hopkins University

DEVELOP HAND-EYE COORDINATION

Playing tennis involved several skills that all contribute to good hand-eye coordination. You can improve your agility, balance, coordination, reaction time and more.



YOUR LIFE

ENJOY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Great for the whole family, no matter what your age. With minimal equipment needed and plenty of courts nearby, it's easy to bring a friend or find one on the courts.

DEVELOP TEAMWORK AND SPORTSMANSHIP

From doubles play to team and league play, tennis develops your ability to communicate and work together.

IMPROVE SOCIAL SKILLS

Tennis outperforms all other sports in developing positive personality characteristics.

According to a study by Dr. Jim Gavin at Concordia University



YOUR BRAIN

REDUCE STRESS

Tennis helps you deal with physical, mental, social, and emotional challenges, and increases your capacity to deal with stress.

INCREASE BRAIN POWER

From alertness to tactical thinking, tennis enhances the neural connections in your brain. Kids who play tennis regularly get better grades.

According to a 2013 USTA study

LEARN TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

Tennis is a sport that is based on evaluating angles, geometry and physics to get the best result, which translates into better problem-solving off the court.

In the late 1990s, several experts proposed that tennis, since it requires alertness and tactical thinking, may generate new connections between nerves in the brain and promote a lifetime of continuing brain development. This was supported in John Ratey's book "Spark." Ratey was quoted in USA Today as saying, "A heart-thumping game of tennis can keep the brain in top shape."

Tennis is FUN! Get started TODAY!

Let TENNIS add years to your life — and life to your years!
Go to USTA.com to find a place to play!



THE IDEAL SPORT FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

After-school programs that combine tennis and education support the core mission of schools by increasing students' attachment to school and improving their attendance, thereby helping improve academic performance.

Along with its obvious physical benefits, tennis also builds discipline, confidence and independent thinking. It teaches responsibility, respect and a strong work ethic.

GENERAL HEALTH

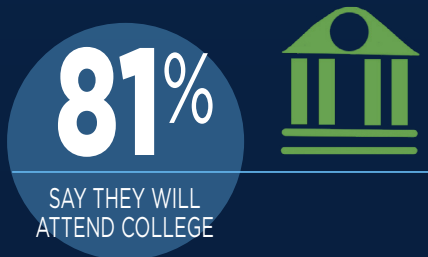
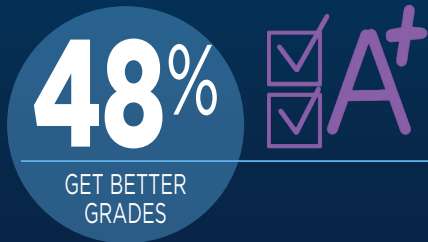
- Adolescents participating in tennis are 20 percent less likely to be overweight or at risk of being overweight.
- Adolescents are less likely to smoke and drink if they are participating in tennis.
- Regardless of socioeconomic levels, tennis participants are at a much lower risk of being suspended or expelled from school.

SCHOOL ACTIVITY

- Youth tennis participants are more likely to complete volunteer work or get involved in community affairs.
- Students who play tennis spend more hours doing homework than participants in other major sports.
- Tennis participants vastly outperform other sports and non-sport participants when asked if they identify themselves as "A" students.
- Whatever the socioeconomic level, students who participate in tennis are more likely to respond "yes" when asked if they are attending college.



YOUTH WHO PLAY TENNIS*



ARE HEALTHY AND **LESS PRONE** TO RISKY BEHAVIORS



TENNIS PARTICIPATION POSITIVELY INFLUENCES THE LIVES OF U.S. YOUTH ACROSS ALL SOCIOECONOMIC LEVELS.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

In marketing a project, it is crucial to convey the WIIFM (What's in it For Me?) message to the specific audience you are trying to convince. The listeners need to hear about all the benefits tennis can bring to their own particular entity.

Tennis is one of the primary offerings a Parks and Recreation department can develop that consistently drives social well-being and a beneficial return to the community. Whether the municipality manages a tennis site itself or contracts with a third-party vendor, there is an economic benefit to introducing a tennis facility to a public location.

Since the sport can be played throughout a person's life, an investment in attracting a new player will generate benefits for many years. The Return on Investment (ROI) of a properly programmed tennis facility can be outstanding both in terms of revenue generated and in the health and happiness of the patrons.

Some of the positive impacts of a tennis project are listed below. When addressing any party about your project, it's essential to explain how it directly benefits them, as well as highlighting benefits to others.

- Creates local jobs, both for the initial buildout of a facility and courts, and for ongoing employment for site management.
- Increases visibility for a potential funder or supporter.
- Provides ongoing revenue potential for a municipality (fees from operators or direct revenue).
- Boosts the local economy. Attracting state, regional and national tournaments impacts local hotels as well as food and retail establishments.
- Large tennis tournaments increase national exposure of the city as a tourist destination.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN TENNIS OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS?

The old model of one or two tennis courts and generally singles play has mostly disappeared. The majority of tennis today is played with teams and is heavily programmed.

Remember that 70 percent of tennis is played in public parks. While this may be surprising to most people, it builds the case that tennis is for everybody, and is not an exclusive country-club sport.

Over the last decade, there have been many important changes in the delivery of tennis in communities. Tennis complexes with multiple tennis courts are being built in one location, rather than having courts scattered around a community. The USTA's youth initiative—including Net Generation—is making it easier for kids to learn and play tennis. Blended lines, which mark out 36-foot and 60-foot tennis courts, are now standard on regulation 78-foot courts. Many communities have built permanent, standalone 36-foot and/or 60-foot courts, for use by children, beginning adults, adaptive athletes and seniors.

Importantly, communities are maximizing the benefits of their investment in tennis facilities by substantial, continuous programming. The old philosophy of leaving courts open or unscheduled for walk-on play is becoming less prevalent.

Tennis programs activate facilities and get families and people of all ages outside and active. Tournament play attracts visitors whose spending provides an economic boost to communities.

NET GENERATION

Net Generation is the USTA's commitment to helping parents, volunteers and community organizations (parks, after-school programs, Community Tennis Associations, National Junior Tennis and Learning programs, adaptive tennis opportunities and more) build youth tennis programs in their communities. The Net Generation initiative provides resources and guidance to make sure you have all of the tools to feel confident in helping kids stay active and involved in tennis.

Net Generation encourages youth to challenge themselves. It helps shape the game to individual players, so they can learn at their own speed. More importantly, it uses tennis as a pathway to personal development off the court. And for everyone involved, Net Generation creates a strong sense of community for life.

Net Generation community programs are aimed to introduce tennis to 5- to 18-year-olds of all ability levels. Programming is designed to be affordable, inclusive and focused on "learn, rally and play." The easy-to-follow curriculum was developed by the USTA with tools and lessons that will challenge players in a fun and social way.



DEVELOPING YOUR ADVOCACY PROJECT

Taking up the cause for tennis is not a small commitment. For instance, having tennis courts constructed in your local public park can involve wading through levels of bureaucracy and take years to complete. However, if you believe in tennis and in all the benefits it brings to your community, your efforts will be richly rewarded. Remember to ask for help. Having friends and allies will pay off in the long run.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY AN ISSUE OR PROJECT THAT RESONATES WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

- What does your community need most?
- Is there a need for youth activities?
- Do the public schools need support?
- Are there local health issues in your area?
- Is there access to public courts? Do old courts need to be refurbished?
- What do local decision-makers care about?
- Who will be impacted by your project? Children, families, individuals?

STEP 2: DEVELOP A CLEAR IDEA.

- What do you want and why do you want it?
- Know how you will define success. What is your desired outcome?
- How does your plan positively affect the local community?
- Make sure your mission is specific and targeted.

TIP: You should be able to explain your idea or project in a single sentence. If you cannot, the idea is not as clear as it needs to be.

STEP 3: DO YOUR RESEARCH.

Research the local policy priorities and be prepared to show how tennis-focused programming can benefit your community as a whole. Explore the website of your local city or county government, focusing on the following:

CITY:

- Government structure
- Past minutes of city council meetings
- City council and board meeting schedules and timelines
- Five-year recreational facilities construction plans

PARKS:

- Park master plans
- Current program offerings
- Board contact information
- Staff contact information
- Park budget information
- Proposed local bond referendums

SCHOOLS:

- Governing structure
- Past minutes of school board meetings
- School board meeting schedules and timelines
- Five-year school facilities construction plans
- Athletic facilities available for students at all levels
- Competitive/intramural sports and teams

CONSIDER WHETHER THE DECISION-MAKER OR DECISION-MAKING BODY HAS INFLUENCE OVER:

- Capital plans and funding
- Funding for operating expenses
- Local legislation
- Zoning regulations

STEP 4: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL OBSTACLES.

Being able to anticipate and solve issues or problems in advance will make carrying out your project easier in the future. Try to place yourself in the shoes of your potential opponents to understand their perspectives. Some things to consider are:

- Who will oppose your mission and goals, and why?
- What are potential obstacles to getting the response you want?
- What do opponents want?
- Is there a way for you to work with your opponents? Think outside the box to find common ground.



GAINING SUPPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT

How you propose your project to potential supporters and decision-makers is as important as the nature of your proposal. Gather facts and develop a narrative to convince others that your idea is worthy of their consideration. Communicating your goals clearly, concisely and effectively are essential to securing support.

Here are the key areas to consider as you formulate your presentation.

DEVELOP YOUR MESSAGE

- Clearly identify a specific proposal. The proposal may be a capital building project, such as new tennis courts or adding bathrooms, or a new program, like hosting a tournament for local league players.
- Calculate the cost of your project. The USTA and local governments have resources available to assist you in this determination.
- Know your weight. Be able to quote the number of people or voters supporting the project—through signed petitions, letters or individual lobbying efforts and having supporters attend meetings. The broader your base of support, the better your chances for success.
- Be prepared to offer fundraising assistance. An increase in fees may be necessary to pay for new programming. Help local officials apply for grants to offset some of the cost of your project. Offer to raise money locally to offset public funds; it shows the level of interest and support for the project. Public-private partnerships may be viewed favorably. More information can be found in the Funding Your Project section of this manual.

IDENTIFY YOUR ALLIES AND SUPPORTERS

- Form a committee of fellow advocates. Include a millennial or someone savvy about social media to help advance the cause.
- Look to your local tennis groups for support, such as Community Tennis Associations (CTAs), National Junior Tennis and Learning programs (NJTLs), Tennis Service Representatives (TSRs), area tennis clubs and facilities, tennis retailers, local sport/court-construction companies, tennis professionals and players.
- The geographic community that is impacted by your proposal will add important citizen support. Neighborhood groups, Advisory Councils, planning and zoning officials, and law enforcement groups should be cultivated for input.
- Find other organizations and non-profits that share or have similar interests. There is power in numbers. Such organizations include, but are not limited to:
 - Healthcare agencies and local hospitals, medical groups, physical therapy providers, recreational therapist
 - Youth-serving non-profits (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA) along with adult agencies, such as senior centers
 - Media outlets, including newspapers, local magazines, radio and TV stations, local news websites (i.e. Patch)
- Engage educational organizations, such as school board members, parent-teacher organizations, athletic booster clubs, tennis coaches and team players, local college presidents, trustees, athletic departments and Tennis On Campus players.
- Speak to local business leaders, politicians and influential community leaders about your project. Attend local Chamber of Commerce meetings. Talk with the local Convention & Visitors Bureau and/or local Sports Commission.
- Find out if any local leaders play tennis.
- Cultivate city/county managers, and Parks and Recreation staff and advisory boards. Such administrative staff and appointed officials can be key supporters in your efforts, assisting with research, data and other information that will help you succeed.

BUILD A COALITION

After identifying allies and supporters, work with them to achieve your goals. By joining with others who have similar priorities, you establish that tennis has broad community support. Building a coalition:

- Increases your appeal
- Creates networking and partnership opportunities between you, your organization and partner organizations
- Can provide cost effectiveness; you can share duties and resources
- Has a greater potential to attract media attention
- Offers greater access to expertise by calling on a range of organizations and individuals

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

You will present your project idea to a variety of audiences to gain support. While much of the information you present to each group will be the same, you'll need to tailor each presentation to the particular organization, such as to a community group, a league of tennis players, local business leaders or elected officials.

It is important to focus on the specific concerns of each audience, and how your project can help solve some of the problems facing the community. The goal is to sell your story, but more importantly, to highlight the key messaging points that contribute to building a better community. Think about communicating the overall big picture.

COMMUNITY GROUPS, TENNIS PLAYERS AND LOCAL BUSINESS LEADERS

- What are the economic, social and health benefits of your proposal to this audience?
- What are you asking these people to do to support your project? Are you looking for monetary contributions, or names to put on a petition?
- Find out if any attendees have personal relationships with elected officials. Ask them for advice and assistance in meeting with their contacts. Ask them for a personal introduction to decision-makers.

LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND STAFF

- Learn the names and responsibilities of the public officials and staff members you want to influence.
- Review the department or agency's strategic plan and budget to determine its goals.
- Understand the local pressures and pressure points.
- Learn the budget cycle.
- Get the calendar and schedule for meetings, planning sessions and public hearings.

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Learn the names of each elected official you seek to influence.
- Find out on which board/council committee each elected official serves.
- Identify the elected official representing the area that will be affected by your project.
- Review the board/council strategic plan and budget to determine its goals.
- Learn the budget cycle.
- Get the calendar and schedule for meetings, planning sessions and public hearings.
- Understand the local pressures and pressure points.

Learn about each officials' interests that relate to your message. Are they interested in economic development? Park enhancements? Children? Crime prevention?

DEVISE AN ACTION PLAN

Now that you have an understanding of your local government and how it works, you are ready to develop your action plan for success. You will be presenting your project to your elected officials in both private and public settings. It is important to understand local open public meetings law so you do not put your elected officials in awkward positions. Here are some basics to keep in mind as you move forward:

- In most cases, you only need a majority to win support for your project.
- Attend or watch public meetings to understand the dynamics of the board/council you seek to influence.
- Identify the board member/councilor who will act as your "sponsor" on the board/council to introduce motions.
- Meet separately with each of the board/council members, tailoring your message toward his/her areas of interest.

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS IN PRIVATE

Now that you have developed your message, identified potential supporters and researched potential costs, it is time to communicate your idea. It is important to be knowledgeable, direct and succinct. Do your research in advance so you are prepared to handle all eventualities. Here are some things to keep in mind as you reach out to elected officials.

TIPS BEFORE CONTACTING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL FOR A PRIVATE MEETING:

- Identify key supporting constituents and any other connections (family, friend, business, etc.).
- Contact the elected official's key local constituents/allies and ask them to attend a meeting with you. It is important to have a wide base of support for your project.
- Have a goal for a personal meeting time and date, with alternatives.
- Lock in meeting date and time.
- Develop a consistent communication plan: letters, phone calls and meetings.

EFFECTIVE WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

- Confine each communication to one focused topic.
- Include the most relevant basic facts.
- Have all key information in place. Don't assume they know the background.
- Stay positive, friendly and receptive. Always remember to say "Please" and "Thank You."
- Make communication stand out by being personal, thoughtful and passionate.
- Ask for a response.
- Be willing to do further research to find and report answers to any questions they ask.
- Keep a record of all communication with each decision-maker.
- Send a thank-you note after each meeting.
- If there is no response, wait two weeks and check back. Persistence pays off.

Keep your supporters and stakeholders informed about the ongoing advocacy efforts, so they will feel a sense of involvement. Small successes along the way will hold your group together and encourage future efforts.

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS IN PUBLIC MEETINGS:

Public meetings require different preparation and presentations. The following advice will help you be effective at a public hearing:

- Watch public meetings, and read published meeting minutes, before you sign up to speak at one. You will gain valuable information about procedures, time limits and what is or is not effective as a talking point. Every local public body is different and has its own dynamic.
- Assign someone to act as your spokesperson.
- Show support with a large, visible turnout. Everyone can wear the same color T-shirt, raise a tennis racquet, or have some other method of identification. If your project involves children, bring them.
- Prepare written comments for any public meeting at which you make a presentation. Give your written comments to the Clerk for the public record.
- Remember: Public forums are for presenting information. Most decisions are not made at public hearings.
- Follow your project to wherever it is referred. Many communities have a Parks and Recreation Citizen Advisory Board that may need to consider your proposal. Councils/Commissions have committees to hear more details about proposed projects. Any time your project appears on a committee agenda, there must be at least one representative of your group present to show support and answer questions.

KEEP MOMENTUM ALIVE

Ambitious projects requiring public funding take a long time to develop and gain support. Be prepared to promote and defend your ideas for the long haul. Be tenacious. It is not unusual for a project to take years to be funded and constructed. Pay attention to local political elections, as you may need to introduce your project to newly elected officials during that time.

Keep your stakeholders and supporters involved and informed as your project goes through the system and gains support. Public officials watch closely to see which ideas have real community commitment and which do not. Invite elected officials to tennis events. Attend public functions, such as the ribbon-cutting of a new building, to demonstrate community support and stay in front of your elected officials.



FUNDING YOUR PROJECT

Once a project is identified, an important next step is estimating the costs associated with your proposal.

Leaders and decision-makers need to know if you have a grasp on monetary estimates and ramifications both for the initial buildout of a site, and ongoing management and maintenance once the project is complete. If your proposal is for new programming, be prepared to discuss ways to fund your idea. Resources to determine the potential cost of your project are available through the USTA and your local government.

Local leaders will want to know what ideas you can bring to the table about raising needed funds. Public entities, such as a city council, county commission or school board, may be more receptive to funding a project if there are multiple private sources committed to the support of the project.

Below is a list of funding options you and your organization can explore in depth as your project moves along.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDS

- City or town budget
- County budget
- School district budget

Each local government funds parks and recreation projects differently. Research your local community to learn if tennis facilities and programs are funded by the city, town, county or school system. In many cases, the cost is shared.

Local governments begin working on their budgets in the spring, as the fiscal year begins July 1. Budget and planning discussions are open to the public and invite participation. You and your supporters can submit your project proposal at a budget hearing for local leaders to consider.

LOCAL BOND REFERENDUMS

Building parks and recreation capital projects is often funded through public bond referenda. Bonds that are voted for by the people are available at lower cost to municipalities, counties and schools. Bonds cannot fund programs, but they can fund facilities such as tennis courts.

If your local government is considering a bond for parks and recreation facilities, ask that tennis facilities be included in the package. You can also volunteer to work on the bond campaign, submit petitions in support of the bond, and get people out to vote for the bonds on election day.

GRANTS, DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

Grants

Grants are a vital way to create additional support for a project. Whether the grant is coming from a business or foundation, the initial support, especially from a well-known entity in the area, can supply the needed push to raise the remaining funds. Keep in mind that many grants may require the receiving organization to be a non-profit. Grant information can usually be found on the business or foundation website. It's important to understand whether the entity generally supports programs or capital campaigns to ensure the appropriate request is submitted. Working with a bank's endowments and foundations group is a good way to see which foundations will be willing to assist in your project or program.

Donations: Cash and In-kind

Corporations and businesses may be willing to make cash or in-kind donations to your project. For example, a fencing company may donate fencing materials or installation as an in-kind donation for a tennis court construction project. Or, a local tennis merchant may offer free tennis balls to support a new tennis program for at-risk youth.

Sponsorship

Corporations and businesses invest in community projects as sponsors. This may be in the form of a cash donation over several years to have their name on a facility (referred to as a Naming Rights Agreement), or a one-time donation where the business is sponsoring the event. Your local government may have policies and procedures regarding naming facilities. Research what these are before approaching a business about sponsoring facilities or programs.

USTA FACILITY SERVICES

The USTA Facility Services program is able to offer complimentary services to you and your project. Please complete the Facility Services Form, found [here](#), to inquire about our below offerings.

BUSINESS SERVICES

- USTA assistance and support with negotiations between government agencies and private developers
- Forecasting and financial recommendations that help determine project cost estimates.
- Identifying potential partners and funding sources
- Assistance with business plan preparation and review
- Providing recommendations for operations and staffing

TECHNICAL SERVICES

- Assessment of existing facility to address any problems with tennis courts, lights, etc.
- Preparation of existing facility rehabilitation or renovation plans
- Review of contract bids

- Review of construction documents to ensure all project details are clear, accurate and concise
- Recommendations for alternative or cost saving methods for construction, grading and drainage plans

INDIVIDUAL GIFTS

Your local tennis community may be willing to put their own money into the project. If your local Community Tennis Association is a 501(c)3, partnering with the organization is a way to obtain the charitable tax status for your project.

Your local parks department may also be able to assist in this endeavor. A capital campaign to the local tennis community is another way to raise funds for a project and show city/county officials that members of the community are supportive of the project.

FUNDRAISING PROJECTS AND TOURNAMENTS

Organize a local tournament to raise funds for your project. Participation fees can be used as “donations.” To keep your costs low, get local businesses to sponsor the event, donate food, cover court fees and provide prizes. Other fundraising events that may be successful are galas, 5K runs, casino nights, golf tournaments and car washes.

Engaging larger donors for a “matching grant” is a great way to encourage participation among other individuals who know their support is being matched. For facility projects, solicit donations for bricks, benches, landscaping or pavilions. The ideas are limitless. Those who donate can be memorialized by having their name on a brick, or on a plaque within the facility.

USTA FOUNDATION, NATIONAL, DISTRICT, SECTION, STATE AND LOCAL GRANTS

The USTA has grants available at many different levels for both facilities and programs. Visit <https://www.usta.com/en/home/organize/grants-and-assistance.html> for current information. Your USTA district, state and section may also have grants to support your project. In addition, many sections and states have their own charitable arm that may provide grants to help with funding a project or program. Explore all avenues of funding through the USTA.

ONGOING SUPPORT

The ongoing health of the project once it's completed is just as important as the initial funding efforts. Decision-makers and donors will want to ensure that a facility project can be successfully sustained once completed, ensuring the initial capital contributions were put to good use. The same is true for new programming initiatives.

Revenue streams such as pay to play, teams, memberships, coaching or lesson fees can help to support the ongoing operations while program grants can be used as a supplement to core programming. Sharing your pro forma income statement with potential donors and decision-makers is a great way to show how that income will be used to support your project.

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Media coverage is a powerful tool to build awareness for your tennis initiative. Whether print, online, broadcast or social media, you need to use the media to reach the largest audience possible to promote your goals and objectives. Media outreach can play an effective role in showcasing tennis as a lifetime sport for everyone and, more importantly, how tennis will be a positive force in your local area.

BEFORE YOU CONTACT THE MEDIA

Meet with your committee and allies to formulate the specific and focused initiative and story that you will present. You may want to review *The Case for Tennis* and *Developing Your Advocacy Project* to prepare you for contacts with and submissions to the media. The key is to go in with a story, not an idea.

For best results:

- Designate a media coordinator who will develop and implement a media strategy, and who will act as the bridge between the media and your organization. The media coordinator should approve any material that goes out to ensure a consistent message, including social media.
- Create a contact list of reporters, editors, bloggers and broadcasters, especially those who cover sports, health/fitness and community affairs, or those who have a connection to tennis (i.e. if they play in a local league). Include email and phone numbers, and if possible, the area each covers. Find out the preferred method of contact for each individual. Consider following key media members on social media.
- Be ready with details about the name of your initiative, names of your allies and funding sources, details on your action plan, the project's cost and current fundraising efforts, the initiative's local economic impact, and the "who, what, where, when and why" of your initiative. The "why" may be the most important—the story here must be a strong message about the physical, social and mental health benefits of this lifetime sport.
- Make note of your key messaging points, such as: tennis facilities can serve as a safe haven for kids after school; tennis can offer opportunities for youth; tennis provides a better quality of life for all and helps to improve schools and communities; tennis contributes to community and economic revitalization.

TIP: While good coverage can help your organization, you should be prepared if the coverage is not what you expected. Have a rebuttal messaging plan in place.



TIP: Consider creating an app specific to your initiative. An app can alert your donors and friends about upcoming events, fundraisers, or fundraising progress.

THE STORY PITCH

Communicate why the story, issue or event is important and relevant today. Include human interest stories. Reporters are interested in hearing about how tennis has made an impact on a particular person's life, and how they are looking to give back to the community. You can also give statistics on how tennis can change the community economically.

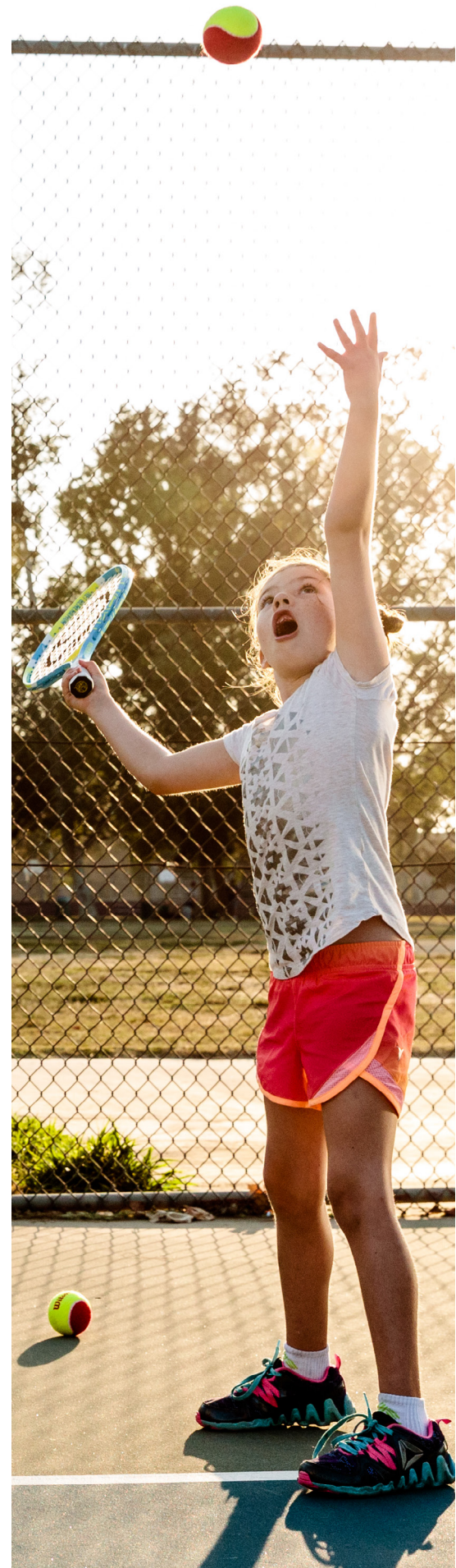
Connect with the media whenever you have news to share, such as: when announcing your tennis campaign or project; when a new supporter comes on board with your initiative; to report on fundraising progress; when you have achieved your goal or significant steps toward the goal; when there is a public ceremony about your project (i.e., the completion of a tennis court facility or new lighting in the public park).

Email is usually the preferred method of contact for members of the media, but whether by email or phone, be clear at the start of the conversation why you are contacting them. Be conscious of a reporter's time and whether they are on deadline. Be prepared to answer questions from the reporter. If you do not have the answer, tell them you will get back to them. Always call or email when you say you will, and send a thank-you.

If you haven't already sent press materials, releases and fact sheets, have them ready to be emailed directly after the conversation. Always keep a log of your calls.

TIP: Make sure you and your media coordinator's complete contact information (email, phone numbers, address if necessary) is on all press releases and material—and also in your email signature. Make it easy for the media to get in touch with you.

TIP: It generally is best to reach out to newspaper reporters and editors in the morning, as stories are generally written from mid-to-late afternoon. Sundays are often slow news days.



IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

To prepare for an interview, write down two or three message points you want to communicate. Keep things simple, communicating your action-plan story points. You may want to consider taking a partner or colleague with you to the interview, who can help remind you of topics or details.

During the interview, make sure to:

- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
- Use the other person's name in the conversation.
- Be patient and answer what you may think are obvious or awkward questions—a reporter may not know a lot about tennis.
- Talk slowly and clearly so you won't be misquoted. Few reporters can write as fast as you speak.
- Nothing is "off the record." Never say anything to or around a reporter that you don't want to see in print, online, on the radio or on television.

After the interview:

- Thank the reporter.
- Leave your printed materials and information with the interviewer.
- Write a note or email thanking the reporter for his or her time and their interest in your story.

ONLINE

If your story is printed in a newspaper, or appears on the radio or television, it will most likely be posted online on the publication's website, too, but make sure to double-check with the reporter or editor that that is the case.

Online-only publications and blogs that focus on community affairs, public policy or physical fitness



are good places to pitch your story. You can generally find email addresses for online reporters and bloggers on their websites or from their bylines.

If you have presented at a public meeting, or to a non-profit group, your story may also appear on their website. Find out from the organization if you can provide the information that will be posted, or have an opportunity to review the material before it is published.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an effective and low-cost way to publicize your organization, cause, event, or project. It is also a useful tool to drive traffic to your other digital platforms, such as your website, blog, membership-management system, Twitter, and Instagram.

Today, social media is essential for gaining attention and credibility among a broad audience. If organizations and causes do not have a presence on social media, they may go undiscovered, especially among younger demographics.

It is quick, easy, and free to set up social media accounts for your organization or project. The first step is gaining an understanding of the different platforms (also known as channels), the audiences they attract, and the type of content that works best for your needs.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Here is a quick overview of the major social media platforms:

- **Facebook** is the social channel with the most critical mass. Over 79 percent of internet users log in to Facebook, with an average of 1.15 billion daily users worldwide. It is by far the most popular social channel.

There are Facebook Pages & Facebook Groups. A “page” is like a newspaper or magazine in that it pushes out news; think of it as a one-way presentation. A “group” is like a book club in that it encourages conversation and dialogue with and between followers.

The Facebook algorithm rewards content that is engaging. This means the more dialogue your content produces, the more people your posts will reach, therefore making your campaign more effective. You can purchase ads to boost your range or target a specific audience. In Facebook posts, you can insert a live link to longer form content that is hosted on your website or in another location. Facebook also allows you to set up events and invite your followers to attend.

- **Twitter** has 336 million monthly users that tend to be younger and more highly educated than Facebook users. Twitter users also tend to be early adopters of emerging technology, thought leaders, and media types.

Twitter content is a very short form. Posts that include photos or videos tend to have higher engagement. Live links to content hosted elsewhere, such as a blog or website or article, can be inserted into Twitter posts, making it a great platform to drive traffic to longer content hosted on your website or articles written about your organization or project.

“Hashtags” are key words or phrases preceded by a hash symbol (#) used to index information on Twitter posts, making them more easily discoverable. Identifying key words and phrases for your organization and affiliated activities is important and can help create more reach and engagement for your posts. Hashtags originated on Twitter but have now been adopted for use on every social platform.

Tagging people and organizations in your posts is a great way to target people and groups with your messages and increase engagement. If a person or group is tagged in a post, they will be more likely to open it and share it with their followers. Social Media Classes Online put together an excellent infographic on hashtags and tagging posts at <https://socialmediaonlineclasses.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-social-media-tagging-infographic>.

- **Instagram** currently has 650 million daily users and attracts a younger demographic. It is focused on short-form visual content, including both still images and videos.
- Live links cannot be inserted into Instagram posts. You can, however, point followers to the link in your Instagram bio to drive them to your website or content. Hashtags are critical to Instagram posts and help followers search for and find content that is relevant to their interests.
- **YouTube** has more than 1.3 billion users and 30 million visitors a day and is the second-largest search engine behind Google. YouTube is great for video content, both in long form and short form.
- If your organization generates a lot of video content, you can create a personalized YouTube channel to host it. Links can also be generated for content on YouTube, allowing you to insert the link into emails, websites, and Facebook and Twitter posts.
- **LinkedIn** is a professional networking site with 367 million registered users that is primarily business-oriented. Users tend to be highly educated with higher household incomes, and seek to network and share information on specific topics with other professionals. You can host articles on your LinkedIn profile as well as join groups where you can post news about your organization, cause, or project.
- **Blogs and Vlogs:** A “blog” is a discussion or informational website, often written in an informal, conversational, diary-type style. A “vlog” is a blog in video form. Regularly posting to a blog or vlog will inform your key audience about your organization’s or project’s latest developments.

Creating a blog is easy. Two things are required: a blog host, which is a company that stores and delivers all of the blog content files, and blogging software, such as WordPress, Blogger, or Medium. Blog posts can be from a single author or from multiple authors.

Vlog entries often combine embedded video (or a link to video) with supporting text or images. Increasingly popular in recent years is live video broadcasting on social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

- **Survey Monkey** is not a social media channel but is a great tool for aggregating feedback and insights from constituents, which is helpful when building a case or demonstrating support. Survey Monkey is free, simple to use and can be integrated into both email and social media, increasing the odds of getting larger sample sizes.
- For more information on Social Media Platforms, check out the blog post at Sprout Social <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics/>.

HINTS & TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

- Choose a short, recognizable, consistent name for all your social channels. Less is more. Shorter is almost always better for account names, posts, videos, and hashtags.
- Ensure there is someone in your organization or on your board of directors with social media expertise. The social media landscape is in constant flux, so it is important to keep an eye on the latest trends in order to optimize your impact.
- Utilize your board members’ contacts and circles of influence. Most or all board members will have personal accounts through which they can invite contacts and share content.

- Create a “content calendar” for your social media. A content calendar is a way to plan and organize upcoming content to avoid scrambling to post something at the last minute. List dates and times of key events, campaigns and activities. Add newsletters, photographs, and other information that is useful and interesting to your followers. A content calendar makes it easier to collaborate with others, helps allocate resources effectively, and assists in determining content quality.
- Follow a 3-to-1 ratio—make three posts that provide helpful information or useful content for every one post that is an “ask,” such as a contribution or attendance at an event.
- Make your content mobile-friendly! Most people access email and social media on their cell phones.
- Make posts and information visually interesting and exciting, with a clear call to action. Engaging content will get shared more often and will reach more people.
- Keep information succinct. More images and fewer words works best on social media. You can link to your website or blog for longer content.
- Include your social channels on your website and business collateral, such as brochures, letterhead, business cards, and email signatures.
- Consider investing in social media. Most of the social channels have an advertising program for which a fee is charged based on usage. If you have an event or a fundraising campaign you’d like to boost, it may be worth allocating some funds toward advertising or promoting posts.
- Use hashtags and tagging posts to increase engagement and expand reach for your social media efforts. Remember to keep your words and phrases short, simple and consistent.

SOCIAL MEDIA: JUMP IN NOW!

Social media is constantly evolving. Don’t be intimidated or hesitant to participate because you don’t feel like an expert. You will gain important insights about your constituents as you build a relationship with them through your social initiatives. Jump in with a growth mindset and be amazed at the results.

PRESS RELEASES

In most cases, you and/or your media coordinator will be sending out press releases to the media. Journalists receive many press releases daily, so try to make your headline (and email subject line) as attention-grabbing as possible.

Here are some tips for writing a successful press release:

- The first paragraph communicates the most important information and the main idea—the who, what, where, when and why.
- The following paragraphs should discuss the details.
- Include quotes in the press release from people directly involved in the event or project, clearly identifying the speaker with properly spelled names and titles. Only include those who have

given approval to be quoted, and include their title and affiliation.

- Include your (and your media coordinator’s) complete contact information on all press releases.

POST-COVERAGE TIPS

Always write a thank-you note to journalists or reporters who believe and understand your story and covered it.

If inaccurate information happens to be included once a story has been placed, do not overreact. Contact the media person you were working with, calmly acknowledge the mistake and ask for a correction run. If the publication made the mistake, look at it as a chance to get additional coverage.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PARKS

Nearly 70 percent of all tennis is played on public park tennis courts. Parks and recreation groups are vital to the health and growth of tennis. Legends such as Billie Jean King and Arthur Ashe grew up playing on public courts, as did Serena and Venus Williams and many other U.S. standouts.

For many years, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has partnered with the USTA to promote local programming and play at parks around the country. The NRPA also has many state affiliates that have worked with USTA sections and other tennis organizations to help grow this sport. On the local level, tennis providers such as clubs, CTAs, NJTLs and adaptive tennis programs often tie into their community park and recreation departments to help get more people of all ages on the court.

ADVOCACY FOR PUBLIC PARK TENNIS

There are both direct and indirect ways for the tennis community to advance public park tennis.

First, understand the broader issues with which a park and recreation system deals. That will provide insight into how a tennis advocate can effectively partner with a park and recreation department to achieve the common goal of increased participation.

Second, understand how the park and recreation system works in your community. The issues addressed by park and recreation agencies are diverse and reflect the expressed needs and interests of the community. The operative term here is “expressed.” Because public policy and funding are involved, it is often the most well-organized and visible advocacy effort that



benefits most directly.

One of the most important things you can do for your cause is to visit your local park and recreation department. Ask to be walked through your city/county's Park Master Plan. This plan shows where parks are located, where parks are planned, and which facilities are given priority. You can identify where tennis courts are planned and see where space exists to build more. If you are not satisfied with the number of courts in your area, you can help change this with a grassroots advocacy plan. Don't be shy—ask questions of your park and recreation staff.

Another important factor is attending public Park and Recreation Commission meetings (if your city has one). Get to know the people on public boards and committees who may eventually deal with your tennis requests. You may find like-minded individuals in the audience at these meetings who can help with your advocacy goals.

As your tennis project plans coalesce, bring allies to these public meetings. Nothing helps influence local boards more than seeing other citizens there to support projects. Also attend meetings of related commissions and boards. For instance, if a tennis project involves the Wetlands Commission or the Zoning Board, be sure to attend those meetings. At the public meetings, take the opportunity to speak up, on the record. Often, media may be covering the meeting, and they may become interested in your advocacy plan.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

After-school programs are a key part of developing future tennis players and fans and also serve as an important resource for youth. After-school programs keep youngsters safe, providing a positive alternative to the streets or hanging out at home alone without parental supervision. After-school programs also have academic benefits, engaging children by offering a range of creative, hands-on learning and enrichment activities.

Tennis is an ideal sport to introduce and play in after-school programs. Successful programs use tennis as a hook to introduce young people not only to tennis, but also to effective life skills, critical thinking habits, and the positive virtues of determination, hard work and sportsmanship. There are resources available for after-school programs that incorporate tennis through [NetGeneration.com](https://www.netgeneration.com), including a full community curriculum for teaching large groups.

After-school programs often involve many activities, and tennis can be one of the many program offerings. Some after-school programs will run for a set period of time as an activity that every child in the program participates in. Often, funding for programs like that will come from an outside source, or the after-school program will pay a fee to the provider. Other programs will offer it as an add-on option, which families pay extra to have their children attend.

All after-school programs should have an outlet for the children who are interested to move into more tennis-specific programming at a club, NJTL, CTA or park. This should be communicated with students and parents to the extent possible and offer options that are affordable to the families in the program.



UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND VARSITY PROGRAMS

There are many reasons why students play college tennis—whether in a varsity tennis program or in a USTA Tennis On Campus program.

For many junior players coming out of high school, a tennis scholarship can provide an opportunity for a college education that may not have been possible otherwise. There are also many associated benefits that playing tennis can offer to college students—staying fit and healthy, making friends and social connections, having a chance to take a break from studies and more.

Tennis during a person’s college years also is an important bridge to continuing on in the sport through their 20s, 30s and beyond. That was one of the key reasons the USTA instituted the Tennis On Campus program more than 15 years ago. Tennis On Campus offers tennis players who do not play varsity tennis a structured opportunity to continue on in the sport.

The importance of college tennis facilities goes beyond the use by students during the school year. Courts at colleges also are used by community members, and often these same courts host tennis camps for youth during the summers.

One of the challenges facing collegiate tennis today, however, is that administrations are cutting varsity tennis programs—which usually means losing the tennis facilities, too. Often, by the time the varsity tennis coach, team members and the tennis community learn a program is in jeopardy, it is too late to implement strategies to save it.

Strategies to increase a tennis program’s relevance to the college or university should be developed with college coaches and communities before programs are jeopardized. The key is to advocate, educate and encourage coaches, athletic directors and college presidents to develop long-term, meaningful community outreach programs on their campuses. By linking the campus and the community together, it’s easier to build a constituency that helps protect and grow college tennis.

SAVING VARSITY PROGRAMS

The threats to varsity tennis programs are a localized issue, unique to each campus. If your local college or university program is threatened with cancellation, however, you have nationwide resources available to you to help bring the situation to a positive resolution.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HEAR THAT A PROGRAM IS IN JEOPARDY?

- Inform the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) of your situation as soon as possible. The ITA sanctions collegiate tournaments and sponsors eight national championships, using funding received from major corporate sponsors. The ITA office is also responsible for producing national and regional rankings for teams, singles and doubles for all classifications. Contact your USTA Section's collegiate coordinator.
- Communicate with your tennis and general alumni.
- Form a core group to serve as the brain trust to direct the campaign. It is likely that this core group will do the majority of the legwork.
- Communicate with your current team members and their parents.
- Reach out to influential members of your community.
- Reach out to your booster club members and to influential tennis alumni.
- Research the financial situation of your athletic department. Know the relationship of your team budget to the overall athletic department budget.
- Ask for and try to schedule meetings with your university administration (President, Board of Trustees/Regents, Athletic Department, etc.).
- Find contact information (name, mailing address, phone number, email address) for all decision-makers with relation to this issue and provide this to the ITA, your boosters, and members of the community.

EMPHASIZE THE VALUE OF COLLEGE TENNIS

- Attracts new students
- Showcases top student-athletes
- Enriches student life
- Builds relationships
- Generates revenue

WHAT THE INTERCOLLEGIATE TENNIS ASSOCIATION (ITA) CAN DO:

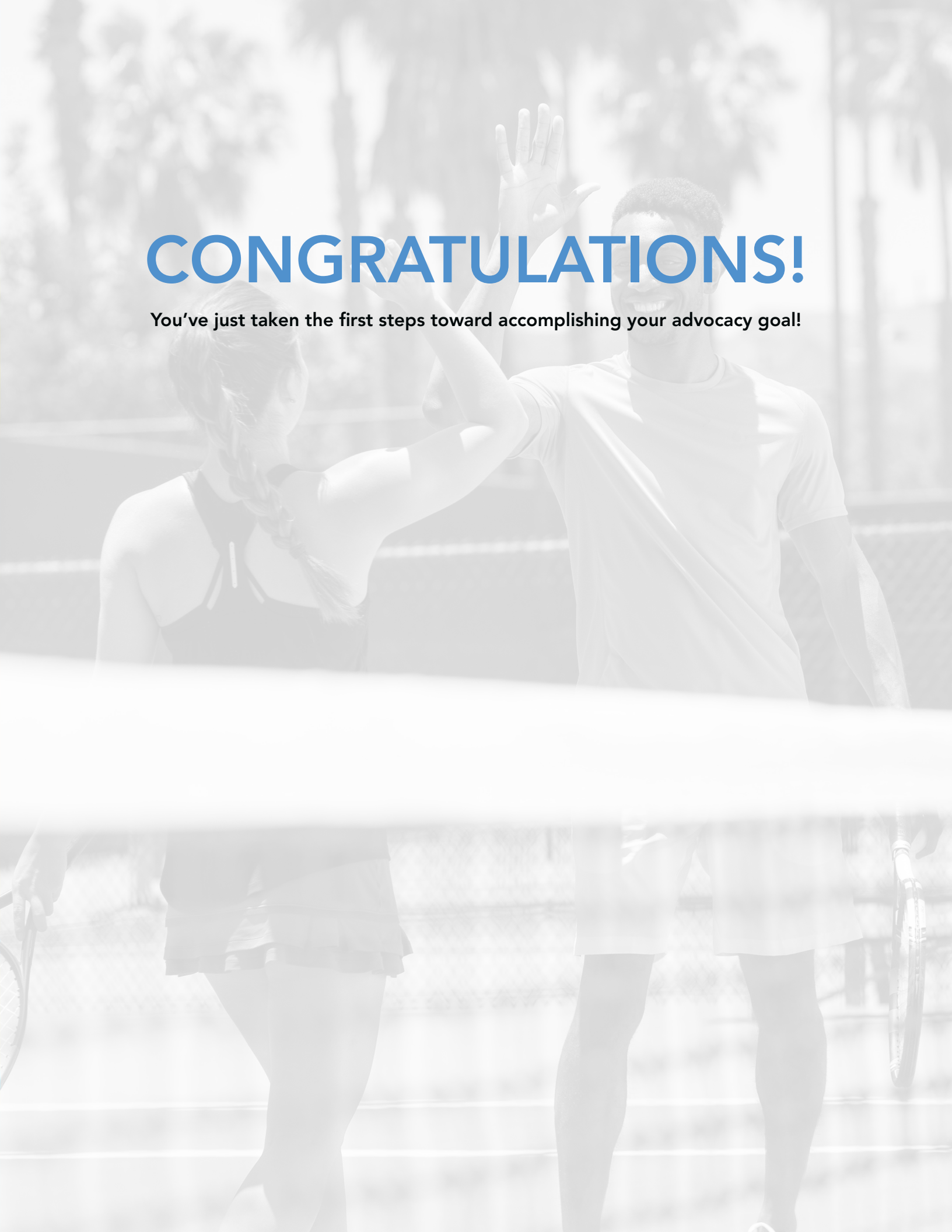
- The ITA will write a letter of support to the President, Board of Trustees/Regents and/or Athletic Department.
- The ITA will inform the College Tennis Advocacy Network—tennis advocates who are supporters of college tennis.
- The ITA may provide a representative(s) to attend key meetings.
- The ITA will help to identify influential people who might be able to help.
- The ITA will help to bring media attention to the situation.

WHAT THE USTA CAN DO:

- The USTA will write a letter of support to the President, Board of Trustees/Regents and/or Athletic Department.
- The USTA Section will assist with your local campaign.
- The USTA may provide a representative(s) to attend key meetings, whenever possible.
- The USTA will help to identify influential people who might help.
- The USTA may be able to provide some stop-gap, emergency funding.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've just taken the first steps toward accomplishing your advocacy goal!



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I. ADAPTIVE & WHEELCHAIR RESOURCES

Tennis can be adapted so that everyone can participate in the sport. People of any age, environment, condition or ability are invited to enjoy the game. In addition, the USTA is dedicated to providing top-flight programming and developmental opportunities to wheelchair athletes of all ages and backgrounds. The goal, above all else, is for the athletes to learn the sport of tennis and have fun.

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS TIPS

1. Become a Safe Play approved provider as it will give you access to curricula and equipment.
2. In order to have a program, you need tennis wheelchairs. One should either fundraise for this or liaise with other adaptive sports organizations in the area.
3. It is essential to have a good tennis teaching pro who has taken a course in wheelchair tennis in order to drive programming.

ADAPTIVE TENNIS TIPS

1. Use Zoom to stay in touch with veterans and adaptive athletes to teach online classes, and use email/text/membership to ensure they know the times and when it is a live program.
2. Use partnerships to create a buzz around the classes so they can communicate to their veterans about the resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Article: [Tennis, Everyone](#)

Webinar: [How to Start and Sustain Adaptive Tennis Programs in Your Community](#)

Webinar: [How to Start a Wheelchair Tennis Program](#)

Curricula: [Adaptive Tennis for Military Service Members and Veterans](#)

II. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

LARGE FACILITY BUSINESS PLAN

The following is an operations proposal for a large 30+ court tennis facility. This proposal will be in three parts. Part I will include assumptions for operations and the relationships between a university, tennis management team and the city. Part II will include an operation and staffing plans. Part III will include options on management structure between the university, city and tennis management team.

Part I: Assumptions

- The facility will include 24 outdoor hard courts and 12 indoor courts.
- The city will be responsible for all utilities, major capital and maintenance of the facility.
- Janitorial and court maintenance (windscreens, nets etc) will be managed by the management team.
- The university will provide \$25,000 to support facility operations in return for priority access for the varsity program in the afternoons for six to nine (6-9) courts with some limited access in the mornings for three (3) courts, and for select evening/day matches on the weekends.
- There is an interest for a group to provide facility management or tennis programs.
- The pro shop will be managed by a different vendor.
- Facility goals include:
 - Providing the men's and women's varsity tennis programs with practice courts and match courts.
 - Provide tennis programs for all ages and all levels of play.
 - ♦ Community programs for introductory players
 - ♦ Special needs
 - ♦ NJTL
 - Host tournaments and events.
 - ♦ Host local tournaments to meet the needs of the tennis community
 - ♦ Host high-profile economic impact events

Part II: Operations and Staffing Plan

Facility operations and staffing will be integral to achieving the goals outlined in the above assumptions. A facility of this size could eventually have gross revenues of \$2.5 to \$3 million dollars a year with an operations budget of over \$2 million. Below are some operational recommendations that will need to be considered:

- Administrative, maintenance operations and tennis staffing
 - To maximize the facility's use and community impact, the facility should be open and staffed for 14-18 hours a day and 98-126 hours a week. A minimum of two (2) front desk staff is recommended during operating hours. (Avg. - \$12 hr/\$122,304 to \$157,248)
 - Operations Manager: Oversee daily operations and coordinate activities, supervise desk, accounting and marketing staff. This position would be responsible for ensuring financial transactions are handled appropriately, courts are scheduled and blocked off for instructional programs, tournaments, social and league play and the varsity tennis programs. (The recommended salary range for this type of position is \$50-75,000.)
 - ♦ Additional support for administrative operations would include accounting and marketing support. (\$30,000-50,000 per position)

- Facilities Supervisor: Oversee and coordinate facility maintenance. This position will oversee and coordinate capital maintenance with the city, ensure daily facility needs are met from replacing lights and nets to maintaining equipment and minor repairs. (\$50,000-80,000)
 - ♦ Additional part-time maintenance staff will be needed for support due to the number of hours the facility is open.
- Tennis Director: This position will oversee tennis programs, tournaments, coordinate court use with the operations manager, develop budgets, coordinate capital maintenance, develop and implement vendor contracts, supervise the operations manager and facilities supervisor and hire teaching professionals. (\$120,000-170,000)
- Head Professional: Oversee tennis services and tournaments. This position will work with the tennis director to implement tennis programs, tournament and event management, oversee other teaching professionals and provide on-court tennis instruction. (\$75,000-\$125,000)
- Senior Tennis Professionals (1 or 2): Provide tennis instruction and event support. These positions will work with the tennis director and head professional to manage tennis programs, develop lesson plans and participant pathways, provide tournament and event management and support and on-court tennis instruction. (\$70,000-100,000)
- Staff Professional (4-8 professionals): Provide tennis instruction and event support. These positions will work with the head professional and senior tennis professionals to provide instruction on tennis programs, implement lesson plans and move students through a participation pathway, provide tournament and event support and on-court tennis instruction. (\$40,000-75,000)

The above staffing plan is for a facility of this size at program and operational maturity. A staffing growth plan is our recommendation and is further detailed in the attached operations budget.

- Pro Shop Operations and Management: The proposed arrangement for pro shop operations is for an outside contractor to provide these services. The success and services of a small specialty shop brings value beyond a financial impact. It serves as a convenience for the facility's regular customers. Therefore, it is important that the shop is successful. It is recommended that agreement with the shop operations and management group include the following:
 - Pro shop point of sales conducted by front desk staff.
 - Pro shop inventory management and product turn over be managed by the outside contractor
 - Agreement should initially be a percentage of gross sales in the 30% range.

Part III: Operations Structure

To ensure the success of this facility the operations structure and the roles of each of the partners must be clearly defined. Each partner's commitment to the facility will enhance the experience of the users. There are three models for operations that should be considered.

Model – Contractor-Managed

- Tennis Management/Contractor role: Tennis management would provide total operational management. They would provide all of the administrative and facilities staff listed above.
- University Role: The university would provide a lease payment for the varsity team's access.
- City Role: The city would cover utilities, major capital and court maintenance.
- Revenue splits: Tennis management would collect all facility revenues. A revenue split would be recommended between tennis management and the city.

This operational model puts the facility's day-to-day operations and tennis programs under a contractor. The contractor would be responsible for ensuring facility operations meet the standards of the university and city.

Resources

Spreadsheet: [Large Facility Sample Budget](#)

MEDIUM FACILITY BUSINESS PLAN

The following is an operations proposal for a university tennis facility. This proposal will be in three parts.

Part I will include assumptions for operations and the relationships between the university and the local CTA as well as NJTL. Part II will include an operation and staffing plan. Part III will include a management structure.

Part I: Assumptions

- The facility will include 20 outdoor hard courts when fully restored. (Financials built upon 10 current courts.)
- The university will be responsible for all utilities, major capital and maintenance of the facility.
- Janitorial and court maintenance will be the responsibility of the university.
- The university will have priority access for the varsity program in the afternoons for 6-9 courts with some limited access in the mornings for three (3) courts, and for select evening/day matches on the weekends.
- The pro shop could be managed by a different vendor.
- Facility goals include:
 - Providing the men's and women's varsity tennis programs with practice courts and match courts.
 - Provide tennis programs for all ages and all levels of play.
 - Community programs for introductory players
 - Special needs
 - NJTL
 - Host tournaments and events
 - Host local tournaments to meet the needs of the tennis community
 - Host high-profile economic impact events

Part II: Operations and Staffing Plan

Facility operations and staffing will be integral to achieving the goals outlined in the assumptions. A facility of this size could eventually have gross revenues of \$500,000 dollars a year with an operations budget of over \$350,000. Below are some operational recommendations that will need to be considered:

- Administrative, maintenance operations and tennis staffing to maximize the facility's use and community impact, the facility should be open and staffed for 14-18 hours a day and 98-126 hours a week. A minimum of two (2) front desk staff is recommended during operating hours.
- Operations Manager: Oversee daily operations and coordinate activities, supervise desk, accounting and marketing staff. This position would be responsible for ensuring financial transactions are handled appropriately, courts are scheduled and blocked off for instructional programs, tournaments, social and league play and the varsity tennis programs.
- Additional support for administrative operations would include accounting and marketing support.
- Additional part-time maintenance staff will be needed for support due to the number of hours the facility is open.

- Tennis Director: This position will oversee tennis programs, tournaments, coordinate court use with the operations manager, develop budgets, coordinate capital maintenance, develop and implement vendor contracts, supervise the operations manager and facilities supervisor and hire teaching professionals.
- Head Professional: Oversee tennis services and tournaments. This position will work with the tennis director to implement tennis programs, tournament and event management, oversee other teaching professionals and provide on-court tennis instruction.
- Senior Tennis Professionals (1 or 2): Provide tennis instruction and event support. These positions will work with the tennis director and head professional to manage tennis programs, develop lesson plans and participant pathways, provide tournament and event management and support and on-court tennis instruction.
- Staff Professional (4-8 professionals): Provide tennis instruction and event support. These positions will work with the head professional and senior tennis professionals to provide instruction on tennis programs, implement lesson plans and move students through a participation pathway, provide tournament and event support and on-court tennis instruction.
- The above staffing plan is for a facility of this size at program and operational maturity. A staffing growth plan is our recommendation and is further detailed in the attached operations budget.
- Pro Shop Operations and Management: The proposed arrangement for the pro shop operations is for an outside contractor to provide these services. The success and services of a small specialty shop bring value beyond a financial impact. It serves as a convenience for the facility's regular customers. Therefore, it is important that the shop is successful. It is recommended that agreement with the shop operations and management group include the following:
 - Pro shop point of sales conducted by front desk staff.
 - Pro shop inventory management and product turnover managed by the outside contractor.
 - Agreement should initially be a percentage of gross sales in the 15% range.

Part III: Operations Structure

To ensure the success of this facility, the operations structure and the roles of each of the partners must be clearly defined. Each partner's commitment to the facility will enhance the experience of the users. There are three models for operations that should be considered.

Model 1 – Managed

University role: The management company would provide day-to-day oversight of the facility. It would provide the following administrative and facilities staff: director of tennis, front desk staff, tennis staff and support staff. University staff would manage select college events. The management company would collect all rentals and user fees to offset their operations costs.

University staff will need to be involved in game day operations, athletic trainers, locker rooms, etc. It ensures the presentation of the facility meets the standards of the university. Additionally, the incremental cost of using university public works and facilities staff would be much lower than another organization coming in to provide that support.

A revenue split and monthly management fee could be discussed.

Opportunities:

- Utilizing college interns to save on staffing costs and begin a mentoring program.
- Developing a Professional Tennis Management Program (PTM) In conjunction with the USTA and USPTA.

Resources

Spreadsheet: [Medium Facility Sample Budget](#)

Revenue Sources

User Fees/Memberships

- It is important to line up your verbiage with the market you are establishing in a club or tennis facility. Municipalities use terminology like Player Pass, Daily User, Facility Fee and Resident. Oftentimes in the municipal world, the facility is paid for by tax dollars and open to the public. City officials shy away from membership as, most of the time, that infers a private business. The revenue generated in Player Pass fees should offset the fixed expenses and the staff that support the operation.
 - Player Pass monthly fee with an annual contract is common practice.
 - Facility Fee or Team Fee a non-discounted fee paid to participate on a league team.
 - Discounting a resident or adding a surcharge to non-residents is widely supported.
 - Memberships at these facilities (private clubs) are dues driven and dues supported.

Programming

- Programming is the most important revenue stream to a facility. Developing a full and comprehensive junior and adult program will keep your players at the facility for their tennis experience.
 - Developmental junior classes
 - ◆ Tiny Tennis, Futures, Challenger, HS Comp and Play
 - Advanced Juniors
 - ◆ Academy-style program levels designed by ability and playing prowess (UTR)
 - League Play and Teams
 - ◆ Facility needs to have a role in the organization and court bookings.
 - ◆ Organize the teams by season and length of season to balance courts.
 - Private and Group Instruction
 - ◆ The most expensive product but the best program for building relationships with players as well as individual development.
 - ◆ Know your market price and range.
 - Summer Camps
 - ◆ Largest revenue stream for most facilities. Ratios are high and staff expense is low, using senior staff to lead and interns and college students to support.
 - Schools and NJTL
 - ◆ Getting involved in schools and PE classes, local CTAs and local groups
 - + Discounted rates and high ratios.
 - + Serves as marketing as well as bringing programming to the consumer.

Tournaments

- Tournaments serve as a competitive way for play. Tournaments can serve a purpose as economic impact for a community, a way to showcase your facility and players and run during the shoulder hours of a facility.
 - National and Regional USTA Events
 - UTR local play
 - Local events
 - Revenue can range from minimal to thousands of dollars per weekend
 - College play and exhibitions

Pro Shop

- Pro shops are an amenity for your players. With the major presence of online retailers, keep inventory levels in check.
 - Stringing ROI is about 30%
 - Apparel ROI is under 30%
 - Racquets and Shoes ROI is about 50%
 - The amount of risk owning a shop is high. Make sure qualified staff is involved.

Other

- It is quite possible with the size of the facility, other uses will identify themselves.
 - Large outings can be held in indoor/covered courts.
 - Staging areas for triathlons, etc. in parking lots
 - Movie nights in the green spaces
 - Pro events
 - Rentals for team building and development
 - Futsal soccer
 - Small concerts
 - Tennis socials and happy hours
 - Birthday parties

III. COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY HUBS

The USTA has developed a plan to assist universities in activating their tennis venues locally while adding a new revenue stream to an athletic department. The purpose is to engage the community, faculty and staff by offering robust programming, lessons, tournaments and social leagues. By doing this, you have increased your fan base, philanthropic development and donor/sponsor relationships, and connected academics to athletics, media and revenue streams.

College and university tennis venues can be excellent assets to connect to the community and become sources of additional revenue while not impacting university priorities. Tennis is a connective tissue to faculty, staff, the student body and the community.

The USTA has the tools, resources and expertise to assist colleges with the creation of proven revenue-driving and community-engaging programming, membership and seasonal court time plans.

BENEFITS OF CREATING A COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY HUB



Increase Revenue



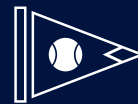
Increase Donor Base



Community Engagement Opportunities



Support College Coaches



Increase College Fan Base



Increase Court Occupancy

Resources

[Collegiate Venue Community Hub Playbook](#)

IV. COMMUNITY TENNIS ASSOCIATIONS (CTAs)

USTA Community Tennis Associations (CTAs) are not-for-profit, volunteer-based organizations supporting programs that grow the game of tennis. They are located in towns across the country and are great entry points if you're looking to get started in the game, to play more often or to give back to our lifetime sport.

First and foremost, CTAs work to coordinate and maintain tennis programs and services, guaranteeing that they are open and accessible to everyone. Those who run CTAs are tennis enthusiasts who act as advocates, program administrators, promoters or fundraisers – and sometimes, as all of these things at once.

The USTA has information dedicated towards the three stages of a CTA life cycle. To learn more, please see the following:

- [What is a CTA?](#)
- [Starting a CTA](#)
- [Growing a CTA](#)

Resources

Annual Report Sample: [Asheville Tennis Association](#)

V. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Diversity & Inclusion is integral to the USTA mission of promoting and developing the growth of tennis and has been a formal area of focus, with a team in place to lead our efforts, since 2004. And while we haven't always gotten it right, we are committed to striving for equity and leveling the playing field of opportunity for all.

Attracting, engaging and retaining a new generation of diverse tennis participants is a key to our future relevance as a sport and our ongoing success as a national governing body. At the USTA, we celebrate the open format – the idea that anyone from anywhere should be able to play and compete. That's the driving force behind our Diversity & Inclusion strategy, designed to grow and promote our sport to the next generation – and future generations – of fans, players and volunteers.

Resources

- [Diversity and Inclusion Overview](#)
- [Diversity and Inclusion Engagement Guides](#)

VI. USTA FACILITY SERVICES

Whether you're just starting out and dreaming of building a state-of-the-art, multi-court tennis facility, you're interested in 36' or 60' tennis courts, or simply need to repair cracked courts at the local park down the street, the USTA's Facility Services department is here to help.

Customers are appointed project consultants from the USTA national staff, and they deliver personalized support and service to help take your project from dream to reality.

CASE STUDIES

Janet Jopke Courts at Richard Shaw Park — Bay City, Mich.

Joe Ricard

Our journey began years ago; I was coaching high school tennis and running summer youth camps. There were two facilities in town: one dilapidated park with six courts (since demolished) and one semi-decent park with two okay courts and two cracked courts. A number of tennis parents made known their desire for new courts but not much happened. At about the same time, a neighboring elementary school was closed and the neighbors of that school became concerned about what would take its place. Lightbulb time! Let's get the tennis group with the neighborhood group to explore the possibilities. Long story short, the neighbors were all on board with trying to raise monies for a facility. A Board of Directors was formed (of which I am the president), a 501(c)(3) license was received, a CTA was formed, and we were on our way. Five years later, \$600,000 raised through donations, grants, foundations, and in-kind material/labor, the Janet Jopke Courts at Richard Shaw Park opened!

Challenges

1. It was, and continues to be, difficult to market and make the community aware of our facility. Local newspapers and radio stations, which were great providers of "public service announcements," have been replaced by social media, which has limited the amount of exposure we have been able to receive. One year after our opening, six years after the kickoff of fundraising, we continue to talk to service organizations, continue to send out press releases, and continue to make the community aware of our facility.
2. We figured in-kind labor would be possible for us to receive but I did not realize in-kind labor happens when the donor wants it to happen, not necessarily when the organization wants it to happen. We did not want to start until all the money was raised for our facility but a kind contractor was ready to start way before our budget was complete. On one hand, breaking ground before we had all of our financing was rather stressful; on the other hand, there was no turning back once the contractor started and that gave us the impetus to continue, even when finding funds was tough.
3. It is so important to have a board of directors with skills in a variety of areas, true stakeholders in the project, people who understand the value of the project. Take time to build a board which involves all sections of the community; do not be top heavy with any group but have members from every group. Board members need to be "heavy lifters," people willing to successfully tackle the task they volunteer for.

4. I like to say our facility is like a baby; the real work starts when the baby arrives, not in the months leading up to arrival. The opening of a facility brings programming, more fundraising, maintenance, marketing, coordination of schedules - the list is endless. Understanding the facility, though a public recreational space, is like a business; it takes constant oversight to operate. Be ready to have a person with the interest, time, and ability to run the "business."

Southlake Tennis Center — Southlake, Texas

Robin Jones

I wish I had known more about the master planning process and city approval process before embarking on this project. I had no idea how long the process would take for master planning and approvals. What I thought might take a year turned into three. I wish I had been better prepared for the long haul.

In recommending and interviewing tennis pros to run the tennis center, I wish we had required some type of capital investment to sustain the facility. Because we signed a contract with a tennis pro who was basically a one-man show, he was always on the tennis court teaching lessons, rather than in the pro shop managing the facility. In retrospect, the city should have provided more financial assistance in the beginning with the understanding that good facility management would grow the sport, rather than leaving someone out there on their own. It's important that the health of the facility comes first and municipalities know that an investment in sustaining operations is just as important as investment in the construction of the facility.

I wish I had known how politically-charged a project like this could become. At election time, the knives can come out, and politicians you thought were friends, can become adversaries. Always walk that fine line when it comes to local politics.

Paducah Tennis Association, Paducah, KY

Goals:

- Construct a bathroom facility near the Bob Noble Park Tennis Courts.
- Convert one (of six) 78-foot court to two 36-foot courts for youth tennis.

Initial "Ask":

- The Paducah Tennis Association (PTA) approached the City of Paducah in 2005 about providing seed money for building the bathrooms.

Local Partnerships:

- The PTA partnered with the City of Paducah and the Paducah Parks and Recreation Department.

Funding:

- In 2013, the city allocated \$50,000 for the project. The PTA created the "P is for Pavilion" fundraising campaign.
- PTA spearheaded a letter campaign and personal calls to individuals and businesses, netting \$60,000.
- A St. Mary High School tennis parent donated \$10,000, with the stipulation that the school team would have free use of the park courts in perpetuity.
- USTA National Facility Grant for \$20,000, with expert help from the USTA National technical staff on bathroom and youth court location.

Other Support/Donations:

- The city provided sewer, water and electrical infrastructure.
- A local company donated concrete for the pad for the bathroom pavilion.

Results:

- The bathroom was installed in May 2018.
- One regular-sized tennis court was converted to two youth courts.
- In addition, the city resurfaced the remaining five courts, plus erected new fencing. City funds are budgeted to pave more sidewalks and bleacher pads.
- *"We now have a bathroom pavilion, five beautiful 78-foot courts and two youth courts, painted in US Open blue and green, with new fencing, and some sidewalks."*

What Did We Learn?

Be tenacious and don't give up! This whole process took 13 years and lasted through five different mayoral administrations. The leadership of the PTA and creative partnerships with Paducah Parks and Recreation, schools, local businesses and citizens resulted in a tennis facility where everyone enjoys playing—and using the Pavilion.

Resources

- [USTA Facility Services](#)
- [Tennis Venue + Design Group eMagazine](#)

VII. HEALTH BENEFITS OF TENNIS

RESOURCES

- [Tennis Health Benefits](#)
- [The Game of Life](#)
- [The Best Sport for a Longer Life? Try Tennis](#)



VIII. HIGH SCHOOLS

School team tennis is an incredible opportunity for teenagers to compete in a great environment on a team with friends. Whether you are an experienced coach or organizing a team for the first time, the USTA can provide helpful resources and coaching tips to help you lead and develop a successful squad.

CHALLENGES FOR HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS

1. Challenge: Recruiting girls to play high school tennis when they have never played before. With a variety of cultures and beliefs in many communities, communicating with families about the importance of sport and exercise for young women is critical. There is also a lack of self-esteem present when they have not been exposed to the sport until they get to high school, which makes it even tougher. High school is such a critical age where kids want to feel accepted and they don't want to feel embarrassed or ashamed. Being a part of a team offers so many physical and mental health benefits.

Solution: *Working with the elementary, middle and high school PE teachers to get them free training and free equipment through Net Generation so they can expose the youth at a much younger age. Promote all the health benefits of tennis and how it socially-distances naturally. Look for opportunities for partnerships with companies like the American Heart Association or others that promote healthy lifestyles and can help spread the word on the health benefits of tennis.*

2. Challenge: One of the biggest challenges is attracting tennis to a high economically-disadvantaged group of kids with very little parent support for sport. Many low-income schools have trouble with kids having the money to buy court shoes and/or a racquet.

Solution: *Get a local NJTL program started and find a public facility that would accommodate this as well as work with vendors to give discounts to low-economic schools for shoes and racquets. Grant programs not only for equipment, but uniforms, are something that is asked for frequently.*

3. Challenge: Tennis can be a difficult sport to learn at the high school level if a beginner is only allowed to play with the yellow ball. Be open to using orange- and green-dot balls to get beginner high school tennis players started in the game. High school players, especially females, do not want to feel embarrassed in front of their peers and allowing them to have some success right away gives them incentive to keep wanting to play.

Solution: *Look for opportunities to promote the benefits of the low-pressure balls for high school players through social media. Grant programs could include some of the various balls for the coaches to train with, and more marketing efforts on the benefits of using the ball that allows you to have the most success and FUN. Offer programming for high school players like JTT or out-of-season play with green-dot balls in addition to the traditional yellow ball. With the USTA and USPTA working together, we need buy-in from the pros to use the ball that the high school player will keep coming back for more.*

RESOURCES

- [Boys Tennis Healthy Sports Index](#)
- [Girls Tennis Healthy Sports Index](#)
- [USTA Middle and High School Team Tennis](#)
- [Aspen Institute Project Play Report](#)

IX. JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS (JTT)

Why wait until high school to join a tennis team? USTA Junior Team Tennis brings together boys and girls, ages 6 to 18, to play singles, doubles and mixed doubles against other co-ed teams. With Junior Team Tennis, you'll learn about unity, sportsmanship and how to work together to achieve success. You'll also learn that success isn't just about winning; it's about how you play the game and respond to challenges.

BENEFITS OF JTT

Keeps Courts Busy

One of the biggest things that distinguishes JTT from other tennis programming is that it fosters competition and keeps your courts busy with an extra program. Many schools, park and recs, and CTAs have instructional programming. However, if you are looking to increase reservable court hours and potential revenue for court repairs and upkeep, JTT does just that.

Increase Existing Instructional Program Enrollment

In addition, when players compete, they feel the need to improve. If they win three matches and lose three matches, they will look to increase their instructional opportunities in the offseason. These would be your camps and clinics that currently utilize your courts. Rather than just attending a clinic to pass the time, they are attending to improve their performance in future competition.

Increases Exposure to Your Community

JTT also fosters others outside of your area to get a taste of what your area is all about. Several JTT leagues incorporate a travel component that allows teams from one town to play against a team from a neighboring town. Maybe someone from the next town over has never been to your local park or school. If you are a college, this is a great way for future students to see what your campus is all about.

Parental Involvement

Finally, JTT keeps parents involved. Many tennis programs are drop-and-go for parents. With JTT, parents can be involved with everything from scorekeeping, to player check-in, to snack lists.

CHALLENGES OF JTT

1. The single biggest “issue” with Junior Team Tennis is the way we (or the way we don’t) onboard new providers. It has really been left up to Sections, Districts, CTAs, etc to identify, recruit, train and retain good providers.

Solution: *Include the new JTT provider manual, as well as the future onboarding process, in ‘Serve Tennis’ (replacing TennisLink in 2021.)*

2. Over the years, what simply started as a registration platform and marketing tool, has turned into a clunky way for coordinators, coaches, parents and players having to find, register and engage with JTT programming.

Solution: *We are building out a new digital platform (‘Serve Tennis’) which will be very clean, user-friendly and intuitive. ‘Serve Tennis’ will be a platform that providers and customers will want to use, versus TennisLink is a platform that providers and customers have to use.*

3. A lot of JTT has turned into a low or no-cost way of playing team tennis in communities, but Junior Membership (for championship track) turns away some providers and customers, and then the TennisLink admin fee (\$4) per registration turns away even more, especially those running low or no-cost team tennis.

Solution: *Junior Membership is going away in 2021, and if you run no-cost (\$0) team tennis, there is no admin fee in ‘Serve Tennis’ (replacing TennisLink in 2021.)*

4. There are roughly 160 rules and regulations governing the JTT program. Some are general guidance and guidelines, some are related to grievances, but a majority of them dictate how the JTT (championship) program must be run. Although they are specific to the National Championship JTT track (18s/14s), some sections/districts have adopted many of the regulations to govern their local programs. Growing confusion of what is “local JTT” and what is “championship JTT” has made it harder to market/promote the program across the country.

Solution: *Other programming (Team Challenge, Team Tournament, and Round Robin) has been developed the past two years to enhance player experiences and keep them playing locally. JTT still has changes it will undergo in the next 12 months which will better localize and deregulate the program.*

X. NATIONAL JUNIOR TENNIS AND LEARNING (NJTL)

In 1969, the National Junior Tennis League was created as a way to gain and hold the attention of young people, with the hope of teaching them the importance of character, getting an education and becoming productive citizens.

Today, the now-named National Junior Tennis and Learning network features over 250 nonprofit youth development organizations that offer free or low-cost tennis and education programming to over 160,000 under-resourced youth each year.

NJTL is supported by the USTA Foundation, the national charitable organization of the USTA. The work done by its member chapters includes after-school tutoring that focuses on academic enrichment, a life-skills curriculum and, of course, tennis.

RESOURCES

- [How Tennis Influences Youth Development](#)
- [Why Tennis?](#)



XI. PUBLIC PARKS

The USTA, as your partner in play, provides tools and resources to help park and recreation departments develop and optimize their tennis programs. We have various services, programs, digital tools and educational opportunities to help you grow the game in public parks.

CASE STUDY

Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR)

Raleigh, N.C.

Goals:

- Get the Raleigh PRCR court repairs and maintenance back on schedule

Project Size:

- 108 courts at 23 locations

Location:

- Raleigh, N.C.

City Size:

- 450,000+

Lead Advocate Organization:

- Raleigh PRCR, local CTA

Length of Project:

- Five years

Budget:

- \$1,080,000

Funding Source:

- Raleigh PRCR, local CTA

Introduction:

- The city provided sewer, water and electrical infrastructure.
- A local company donated concrete for the pad for the bathroom pavilion.

Results:

- Raleigh, N.C. is the capital of North Carolina, the seat of Wake County and the second-largest city in North Carolina. Raleigh is known as the "City of Oaks," is home to North Carolina State University and is part of Research Triangle Park. The Raleigh PRCR Department has 10,000 acres of parkland, a greenway system of over 100 miles and a wide variety of cultural, recreation and sporting options.

History:

- Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department (PRCR) has 108 public outdoor hard tennis courts at 23 locations around the city of Raleigh, N.C. In order to keep them in good shape, both looking and playing well, each needs to be repaired and resurfaced about every five years. To complete this five-year cycle for all 108 courts, the PRCR budget was handling about 22 courts per year.
- The Great Recession caused a long-term negative effect on the PRCR's tennis court maintenance budget. For six years between 2010 and 2015, that budget was virtually eliminated, causing all courts to develop cracks — with some large enough to be trip hazards. Cracks, lumps, depressions and weeds were common and the public started referring to them as “neglected,” “in disrepair” or “not usable.”



- Once resurfacing started again, the court repair costs were much higher due to the court damage from years of budget neglect. Although the PRCR budget was increased to help meet the need, there was still a gap in funding. This gap meant that some courts would continue to deteriorate, and potential court closures due to safety concerns was the next step.



- The USTA's Facility Services program gave PRCR the guidance and funding needed to fill the gap and put the city's courts back on schedule with the proper repairs and resurfacing. Instead of closing courts, PRCR is four years into the current five-year cycle of having all courts repaired and resurfaced. Leagues, lessons and drop-in play have all increased, as these shabby-looking courts are brought up to a much higher standard. PRCR would not have been in the same position without this USTA assistance.



Lesson:

- What is important to you and the community that will help inspire people to play tennis? Develop a plan that will meet that. Aim for something big and exciting that inspires you and those around you. Enroll others around you by painting a picture of what could be and be prepared to be persistent over several years.

RESOURCES

- [USTA Parks and Recreation](#)
- [National Recreation and Park Association \(NRPA\) Advocacy](#)
- [USTA and NRPA](#)

XII. ADVOCACY IN MOTION WORKSHEET

- 1. State your goal in one sentence.**
- 2. Who can give you what you want?**
- 3. What is the message that will get you what you want?**
- 4. Who will spearhead and/or co-spearhead your efforts?**

Can this person effectively lead discussions and set agendas?

Does this person have the time to devote to this cause? If not, select a co-chair to help.

5. Who will be your core leaders? (Select 4-6 dedicated individuals from varying organizations if possible). What key positions will they hold?

a. City/Town Relations:

Is there an advocate for your cause who already serves on a town/city/school/college board who can keep the group updated on important meetings to attend?

What key municipal contacts will this person make?

What techniques will this person use to make contact?

b. Communications:

What communications tools will you use to communicate with your group and the public? Social media, email, newsletters, phone?

What will the frequency of updates be?

Who will information be sent to on a regular basis?

Will you develop a website? Will you have a social media manager?

c. Media Relations:

What vehicles will you use to get the media's attention?

Press releases, letters to the Editor, television stories, blog posts, social media?

Is there a member of the local media who is a tennis player that can serve as an ally?

d. School Relations:

Is there someone who already sits on a school board or PTA board that is the parent of a junior tennis player?

e. Fundraising Coordinator:

What methods will you use to raise funds for this effort?

Does this person have experience writing grants, or will you need a Grant Coordinator as well?

f. Treasurer:

If this project is not associated with a CTA, you will need someone to keep your books. Is there an accountant or CPA in your community who plays tennis?

If this project is not associated with a CTA or other nonprofit group, will you apply for nonprofit and/or 501(c)(3) status in order to accept donations and raise funds?

g. Tennis Specialist:

Is there someone familiar with the USTA organization that can help you obtain information and keep contact with your state or section office?

Do they feel comfortable working with municipal staff?

6. Who will be your “lieutenants”?

- Think in terms of group leaders who can motivate the “troops” when called to action for petitions, city council meetings, letter-writing campaigns, etc.
- Suggestions: USTA team captains, Lead Teachers, coaches, PTA liaisons, high school or college club players.

7. Who will be your allied groups, who will have an interest in seeing your goal completed?

- How can you convince others to help your efforts?
- What will your completed goal offer them?
- Who will engage them?

8. Do you have opposition for any reason?

- What can be done to win over your opponent’s support?

9. Draft a timeline for your group to get you through the next year.

- Cite short-term goals that will move you toward your long-term goal.
- Start with your first organizational meeting and include other important meetings and/or presentations with decision-makers that will help move you forward.

XIII. SCHOOLS & AFTER SCHOOL

Teachers help shape the future of the kids you teach every day, and tennis is an excellent sport to help in that mission. Studies show that youth who play tennis are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and volunteer in the community. The USTA created the Net Generation suite of tools and resources with teachers in mind and with their help, we can inspire kids to get active—and stay active!

RESOURCES

- [Tennis in Schools](#)
- [The Tennis Impact](#)
- [Net Generation School Flyer](#)

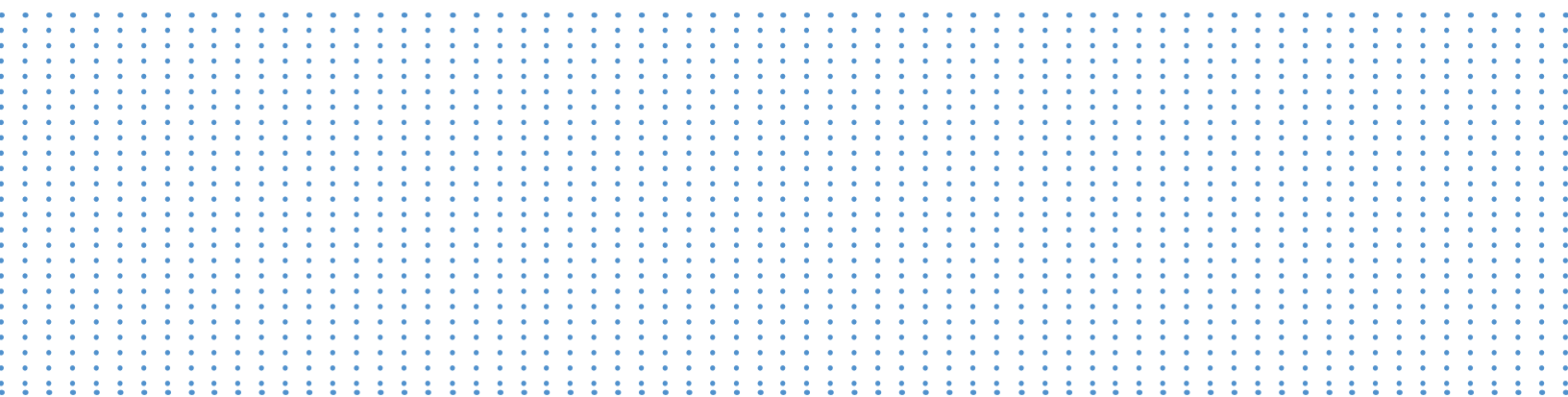
XV. TENNIS INDUSTRY UNITED

The tennis industry has come together to analyze the needs and concerns of all involved in our sport, collaborating on programs that can provide both immediate and longer-term support in the aftermath of COVID-19. We have assembled a list of resources focused on financial assistance and relief, in order to make access to the potential help available easier and quicker. We will continue to provide you with more information and resources throughout this crisis as they are developed.

RESOURCES

- [Overview](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Podcasts](#)
- [Facility Resources](#)





[usta.com](https://www.usta.com)