



November 23, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you as the President and CEO of Tennis Canada in support of *Airport Tennis*, a brand-new indoor tennis facility that would serve to benefit existing and future tennis players, of all skill levels in the Greater Toronto Area.

Tennis Canada is the national governing body for Tennis in Canada but speaking within the context of tennis in the GTA there is a problem. As Canada's largest metropolitan area, we are in the midst of a tennis facilities crisis. The demand to play has never been higher with clubs at full capacity, tournaments have long reserve lists and interested community members are forced to wait years to gain access for limited court availability.

Tennis Canada's mandate is to encourage participation in and access to tennis as part of a healthy lifestyle, fostering the pursuit of excellence and providing opportunities while promoting diversity and inclusion of all individuals.

Tennis has been growing in popularity for some time now. If we look between the lines, it is apparent that the current capacity is not meeting the demand for the sport. There are 260 clubs and academies tracked in Ontario, in the GTA almost every indoor club has waitlists. The facilities closest to Toronto's core have waitlists that take years to get through.

Looking broader, Canada has only 750 accessible year-round tennis courts. In comparison to other leading tennis nations, we are severely underperforming by a country mile. That's only 1 year-round tennis court per every 50,000 Canadians while most of Europe boasts 1 year-round tennis court per every 10,000 people. Simply put, when the weather gets colder in Canada, most recreational tennis players have nowhere to go to satisfy their need to hit a tennis ball.

Despite being focused on tennis, we also support the inclusion of dedicated pickleball courts at Airport Tennis. Pickleball is a fast-growing sport that is part of the tennis pathway for life, especially for seniors. There is also a lot of overlap, with over 30% of pickleball players also engaged with tennis. Finally, Tennis Canada as a mature organization has an exclusive agreement to deliver coach certification for pickleball.

Tennis Canada is excited to work with Airport Tennis to increase the reach of tennis and pickleball to more people in the GTA.

Regards,

Michael Downey  
President and CEO  
Tennis Canada