

A Brief History of SMPA - The Southeastern Michigan Pickleball Association

The Royal Oak Pickleball Club was formed in 2010, and it formally transitioned into SMPA on April 11, 2016 with the granting of 501(c)(3) status by the IRS. Below are "major life events" of our two pickleball facilities in Royal Oak, Michigan!

<p><u>Whittier Park - eight pickleball courts were made in July 2010 by converting two old tennis courts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- initiated by Royal Oak resident and pickleball enthusiast Pat Sullivan; completed with volunteer labor- funded through a government block grant, a Home Depot grant, and City of Royal Oak assistance- hosted first adult beginner lessons in 2010 using volunteer instructors- hosted first annual Royal Oak Tournament in 2011- hosted first league in 2010 and the first ladder leagues in 2011 using volunteer ladder coordinators- port-a-potty installed in ~2015; funded by SMPA- power-washed and repainted by volunteers in 2017; funded by SMPA; check out "The Repainting of the Whittier Park Courts" on our Facilities page!- major refurbishment completed in 2021 - ~\$23,000; funded by SMPA; completed by VTech Construction of Milford - Sean Vosburgh, owner (248-534 8784)- first rental of our courts for another organization's tournament; Michigan Senior Olympics in Aug 2021	<p><u>Upton Park - two more old tennis courts were converted into 7 pickleball courts & a seating area in 2014-15</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- check out "The Making of the Upton Park Courts" on our Facilities page!- initiated by the growing pickleball community's desire for more play; completed with volunteer labor- funded through City of Royal Oak assistance and Royal Oak Pickleball Club savings from 2010-14- hosted the first elementary school student lessons in 2015; funded by SMPA- port-a-potty installed ~2016; funded by SMPA- a shade canopy was installed in the seating area in 2020 and a 2nd in 2021; funded by SMPA- hosted first junior's tournament in 2020- major refurbishment completed in 2020 - ~\$25,000; funded by SMPA; completed by VTech Construction of Milford - Sean Vosburgh, owner (248-534 8784)
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Annually, our community of players assists with spring clean-up at both parks, plus with spring installation and fall removal of all wind screens and nets. Each season, volunteers lock and unlock the courts daily. They keep the courts clean from leaves, grass clippings, and sand, and they even pull weeds around the courts. The community has also done minor repairs and maintenance as has been needed between more major improvement periods; SMPA has funded this work including things like the courts wind screen and net replacements and repairs after vandalism and storm damage.

In addition to maintaining our pickleball facilities, our community of players also run our ladder leagues, our adult and childrens' lessons, and our tournaments; plus they organize our fundraisers, they answer our email (HelloSMPA@gmail.com), and they even built this website! We are extremely grateful to all our members and volunteers - we could not do what we do without you!