

# lakewood outdoor basketball committee

**It's Free.** There will always be a need for organized sports programs, but they cannot exist alone. Once hoops have been established, all one will need to play a game of basketball is a ball. The flexibility of basketball is unlike baseball, football, soccer, and tennis: a game can consist of 1-10 players, games have a quick turnaround allowing others to frequently jump into a string of games, and a wide range of skill levels can all participate together without degrading the experience. Unlike checkbook sports, outdoor public hoops will bring about a social spontaneity that will be able to occupy our youth's most unpredictable patterns of boredom while giving them a great platform to make new friends.

**It's Healthy.** It's no question that we need to encourage our youth to participate in more physical activities. Hoops will provide aerobic exercise to people of all physical conditions. With the emergence of groups like Live Well Lakewood there will be an opportunity to provide programming centered around the new hoop locations.

**It has History.** Basketball is a good old American sport that has recently grown deep roots all across the globe. Being a suburb to the home of the Cleveland Cavaliers (one of the world's most elite clubs), there is no denying the fact that basketball is simply a part of our local identity. The stardom of Lebron James alone is sparking desires in the minds of our youth who are now asking for nothing more than an opportunity to try and make their dreams come true. The popular attraction to basketball is unmatched by any other sport in the area.

**It will boost our High School sports programs.** Once a consistent contender in the LEL, Lakewood's competitive basketball teams' performance has been on a steady decline since the hoops have been removed from the city. Without hoops, just a fraction of our students are obtaining a significant amount of exposure to the sport. To breed top of the line athletes, our youth must have easy access to hoops. Public hoops will attract and hone the skills of talented players that (at no fault of their own) might not have had access to the pay-to-play indoor recreational programs. Hoops will increase the quality and quantity of Lakewood's experienced basketball players.

**PHASE 1: Short Term = Hoops.** Because there have been past connections between basketball courts and city disturbances such as residential noise and loitering, our committee has recognized the importance of reintroducing courts to the city in as thoughtful of a way as possible. To start, we must distinguish the difference between "Hoops" and "Courts". Hoops will be restricted to half-courts which will naturally eliminate the attraction to mass quantities of players looking to participate in organized competitive games. Hoops will have more of a playground-type attraction and be used for simply shooting around and smaller scale games. The size of the basketball hoop's play area alone will act as a rudimentary security system. By filtering the types and quantity of players that will be attracted to the hoops, we can dismiss the need for security measures that may later be required for full-sized courts.

**Hoops will have an immediate impact at our parks** by giving our city's teenage crowd a space to play without having to continue exploiting our parks' playground areas. The hoops that we are looking to install have a six-foot overhang, which means they can be installed on an existing tennis court without having to remove the tennis court itself. Both will functionally coexist. Additionally, hoops will require minimal initial costs to install. Because we would be sharing existing tennis court surfaces, the only required costs would be for the hoop itself and the labor to install it. Without the risk of disturbances and with the extremely low initial costs, there's no reason we shouldn't consider strategically installing hoops immediately...



...stay updated @ lobb.org

# RETURN THE HOOPS

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