

**REPORT OF THE
TASK FORCE ON MUNICIPAL GOLF
IN MADISON PARKS**



July 31, 2020

**MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE ON
MUNICIPAL GOLF IN MADISON PARKS**

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Common Council created the nine member Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks (“Task Force”) to consider all options for the parkland currently in use for municipal golf and to make recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, Committees and Commissions on the future of the City’s Municipal Golf Courses. The Council directed the Task Force to solicit input from local stakeholders, examine best practices, and balance the allocation of resources among various parks uses. The Council also directed the Task Force to prioritize equity, public health, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability in making recommendations on the future of Madison’s Municipal Golf Courses by May 1, 2020.¹

The Task Force originally scheduled nine meetings over a seven month period beginning on October 23, 2019. With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, the final three meetings scheduled for March and April were cancelled. Subsequently, the Common Council adopted a resolution² to extend the deadline for the Task Force until July 31, 2020. Beginning on May 18, 2020 the Task Force began meeting virtually, for a total of eleven meetings before the conclusion of its work. Many Task Force members toured the courses to better understand the capital needs of the facilities.

The Task Force reviewed the current operational model for the Golf Enterprise including course utilization, current operations, staffing, capital infrastructure, and financial performance of the courses. The Task Force received substantial feedback and input from the community through surveys, focus groups, town hall type meetings, and direct testimony (both written and verbal).

The Task Force voted at its final meeting on July 30, 2020 to approve this Final Report with a vote of five members in favor and two members opposed. The Task Force submits to the public, Board of Park Commissioners, Common Council, and Mayor Rhodes-Conway the following ten recommendations related to Municipal Golf in Madison Parks:

- 1. The City should provide Municipal Golf in Madison Parks.**
- 2. The City should remove the enterprise fund designation from its golf course.**
- 3. The City should update the mission of the golf program.**
- 4. The City should issue a Request for Proposals to evaluate the option of a private or non-profit operator for Monona and establish a plan and timeline to eliminate eighteen holes at Yahara Hills.**
- 5. The City should work with the University of Wisconsin, including the OJ Noer Ag Research Station, to develop Integrated Pest Management protocols that are at the forefront of managing public golf courses sustainably.**

¹ Resolution Establishing the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks, see Appendix A

² Resolution Extending the Deadline of the Task Force, see Appendix B

6. The City should work to promote positive ecological outcomes at the golf courses through reducing reliance on limited natural resources and providing ecological assets.
7. The City should work with stakeholders and staff to develop a specific action plan to promote equity and inclusion at all courses.
8. The City should work with residents, stakeholders, and partners to promote wider utilization by the community of the golf courses to better integrate the courses into the wider park system for uses other than golf.
9. The City should ensure that if City resources are used to invest in capital projects at golf courses it is done in an equitable and fiscally responsible manner to reduce negative impact on park services across the system.
10. The City should not sell park land to fund capital improvements of the golf courses.

B. CURRENT OPERATIONS

1. Level of Service and Market Analysis

The City of Madison owns and operates four public municipal golf courses with seventy-two holes of play on approximately seven hundred fifty (750) acres of park land. There are nine hole courses at Glenway and Monona, an eighteen hole course at Odana Hills, and a thirty-six hole facility at Yahara Hills. The City has offered golf to its residents and visitors since opening Glenway in 1927. After acquiring an eighteen hole Monona Golf Course from private operators in 1932, the City operated twenty-seven holes of municipal golf until the opening of Odana Hills in 1957. In 1968, Yahara Hills opened as a thirty-six hole facility, and between 1966 and 1978 Monona was reduced to a nine hole course. The City has always been a significant provider of golf within Dane County, with a decline in percentage of golf holes provided by the City of Madison over the past five decades. The table below shows the relationship between the number of holes provided by the City to the number of public holes and total holes available within Dane County over time.

| Year | City Holes | Public Holes | City/Public% | Total Holes | City/Total % |
|------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1950 | 27 | 36 | 75.0% | 126 | 21.4% |
| 1960 | 45 | 100 | 45.0% | 180 | 25.0% |
| 1970 | 77 | 176 | 43.8% | 284 | 27.1% |
| 1980 | 72 | 171 | 42.1% | 279 | 25.8% |
| 1990 | 72 | 198 | 36.4% | 306 | 23.5% |
| 2000 | 72 | 288 | 25.0% | 414 | 17.4% |
| 2010 | 72 | 378 | 19.0% | 504 | 14.3% |
| 2020 | 72 | 360 | 20.0% | 486 | 14.8% |

This indicates that the City's relative share of holes in the Dane County golf marketplace has been in decline since the 1970s. This is due to the opening of 207 holes of golf in Dane County since 1985. The majority of these additional golf holes (171 holes, or 82.6%) are public daily fee courses. Both fully private and municipal golf holes increased by 18 holes (8.7% of holes added) during this time period. As the game of golf was growing in popularity among the general population, the supply of holes publicly available were limited, and private investors recognized an opportunity to enter into a competitive and profitable business. The increase in courses benefits golfers by providing a variety of options to golfers and acting as a restraint on cost increases across the marketplace.³

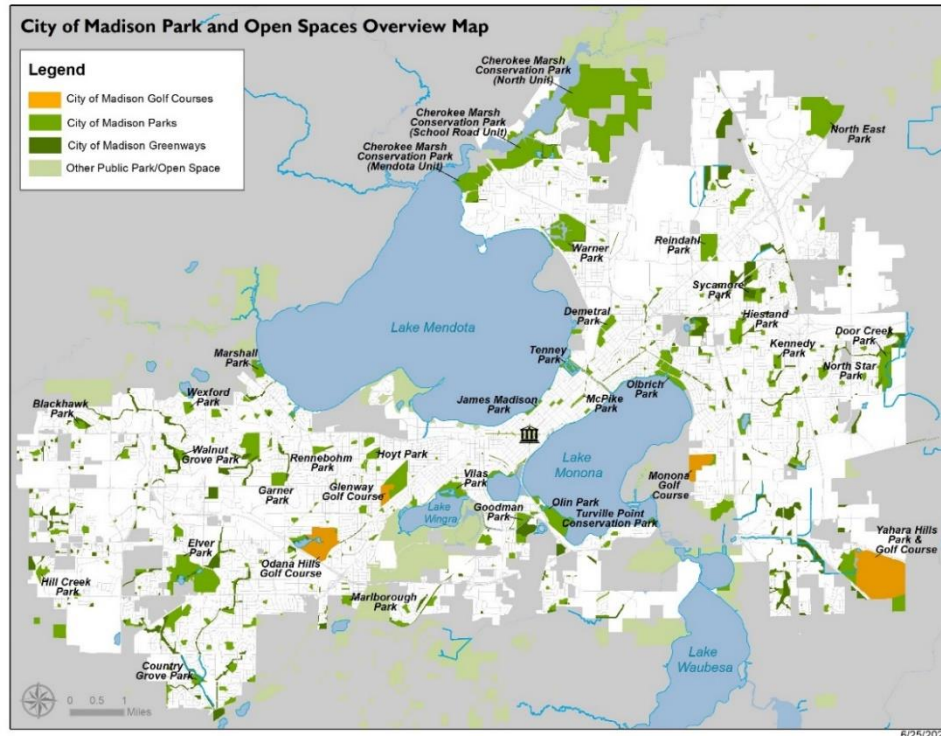
The Madison Metropolitan Statistical Area ("MSA") has a total of 711 holes of golf, which equates to 16,563 people per eighteen hole golf course. This compares to the National median average of 22,027 and mean average of 23,757 people per eighteen hole golf course. This means that the Madison area provides approximately 30% more golf access than the national average. The Madison MSA ranks 93rd out of 381 metro areas ranked by the National Golf Foundation in its annual industry report. This report also highlights that the State of Wisconsin offers the 10th most golf by state across the United States. Wisconsin also has a higher than

³ See Appendix D, Legistar File #58298 – Operational Models of Municipal Golf Courses and Market Comparison

average golfer participation rate than the national average.⁴ It is likely that Dane County also has a higher than national average participation rate, though data on this is limited.

2. Land and Facilities

The four courses currently utilize approximately 750 acres (13.13%) of the 5,712 acre system of public land managed by the Parks Division. This includes land owned by other City entities (e.g. City Engineering), but that is managed as part of the parks system, most notably former landfill sites.



The Mission of the City's golf operations is "to provide the Madison area golfing public with the finest possible golfing conditions at reasonable prices and for all levels of play." The objectives of the program include promoting physical, mental, and social health for all golfers while also providing land stewardship of the public lands on which the courses are located. The four courses operate as a separate budgetary unit within the City of Madison Parks Division. This separate budgetary unit is referred to as the Golf Enterprise Program ("GEP") based on the City's policy choice to budget and account for golf operations using enterprise fund accounting standards. This method of accounting has been in place since at least the early 1980s. Though financial records are limited from the 1980s, available information indicates the GEP was profitable in the 1980s and continued to generate profits into the 1990s. These profits were held as reserves within the fund. The GEP has been unprofitable over the last twenty years and has exhausted all available financial reserves. The GEP has been supported by a \$1.5M loan from the City's General Fund, which is supported by the property tax levy.

⁴ NGF 2019 Edition Golf Facilities in the U.S. – Golf Accessibility by MSA 2018

Glenway Golf Course, located on the west side of Madison at 3747 Speedway Rd., is a 9 hole, 2,346 yard Par 32 executive course. The course occupies 41.98 acres of land at the intersection of Speedway Rd, Glenway St, and Mineral Point Rd. The course is adjacent to the Forest Hill Cemetery, a 94.59 acre parcel owned and operated by the City of Madison Parks Division. The course opened in 1927, and was originally intended as future expansion space for Forest Hill Cemetery.



Glenway's modestly sized clubhouse is approximately 50 years old and includes a concession counter, restrooms, merchandise, and limited seating. A 45 stall parking lot adjacent to the clubhouse is aging, but in average condition for the parks system. The parking lot does not meet current standards for stormwater management. A 1,360 sq. ft. maintenance building constructed in the late 1960s is used by Glenway, but technically is located on Forest Hill Cemetery land. The golf course itself is in generally good condition, with limited deferred maintenance or capital needs over the next decade.

Glenway's land consists of signature hills with landscape elevation change of 80 feet and a significant number of trees along the fairways and edges of the property. Though no tree inventory has been completed, the vast majority are in good health and are desirable native species. Significant mature oak trees occur on the property, with the largest occurring along the ravine that runs across the property from west to east beginning near the terminus of Meyer Ave at Glenway St. Aerial photos from the 1930s confirm that the course itself was mostly without trees other than along Glenway St. and along this ravine. Of particular note on the eastern edge of the golf course is a woodland edge of mature oak trees that is part of a larger approximately 12 acre tract of oak woodland dominated by white oak and bur oak. This oak

woodland contains a significant remnant herbaceous plant community featuring abundant patches of wild geranium, large-flowered bellwort, and Solomon's plume. This land is technically part of Forest Hill Cemetery, but staff consider it to be an area of acute interest and high value from a preservation of natural lands perspective.

Residents often use Glenway for walking and nature viewing (often with dogs) and for sledding, skiing and snowshoeing in the winter months. The course is also adjacent to the Southwest Bike Path and to Glenwood Children's Park, which is a Landmark site. The Forest Hill Cemetery is also a National and State Landmark.

Monona Golf Course is located on the east side of Madison at 111 E. Dean Avenue. The course is a 9 hole, 3,183 yard Par 36 regulation course with a quality driving range. The course occupies 85.42 acres of land with an additional 8.48 acres of land on the east edge serving as Monona Park, which is a neighborhood park. The park includes a playground and an athletic field. The park does take on stormwater and a portion of it is regularly wet during the spring months, though the course itself drains quite well. The course is often used for walking and nature viewing (often with dogs) and for sledding, skiing and snowshoeing in the winter months. The course is adjacent to La Follette High School and Sennett Middle School.

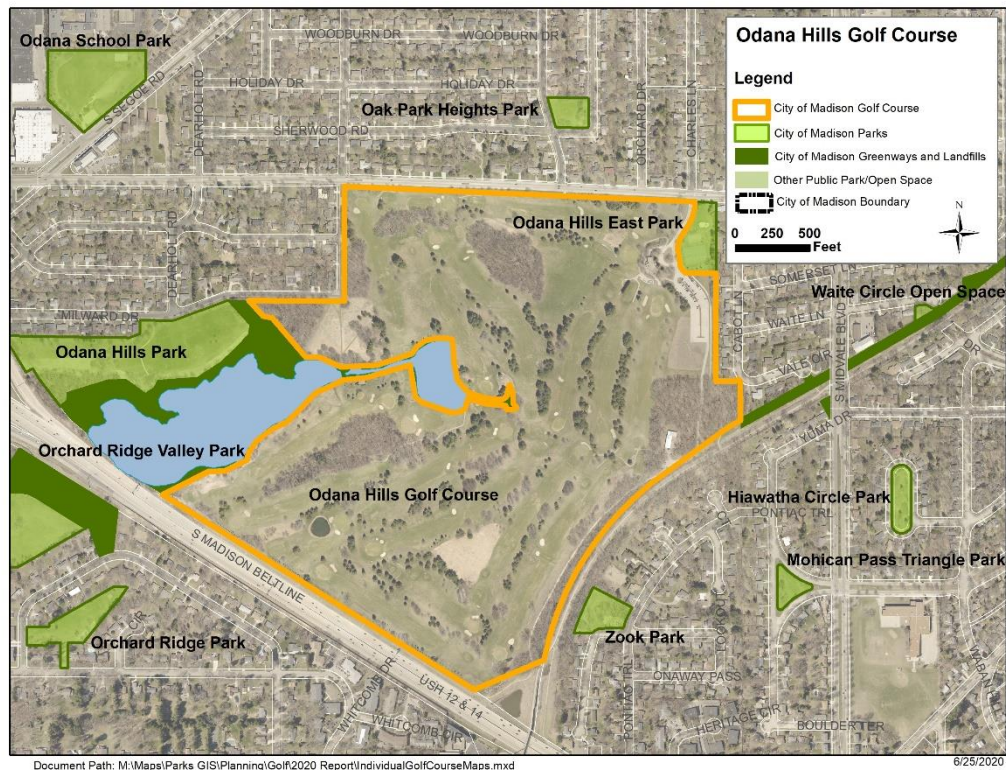


The course, constructed in 1920 as a private course, was acquired by the City of Madison in 1932. It was originally an eighteen hole course, with a reduction of 4 holes in 1966 for the development of La Follette High School and a subsequent reduction of 5 additional holes in 1978 for the development of Sennett Middle School. The Nathaniel W. Dean House is adjacent to the course parking lot, and for a time served as the golf clubhouse. The Dean

House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places. It is currently leased to the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society and hosts numerous meetings and events.

Monona's gentle terrain consists of 32 feet of elevation change. The course was significantly impacted by the loss of trees due to Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), but those trees are being replaced with a number of diverse species in order to reduce the likelihood of a similar loss in the future. High quality trees exist on the property, but notably very few oaks and century old trees. This is likely due to clearing of the land for farming before it was a golf course. Aerials from the 1930s to the 1950s show very limited tree cover.

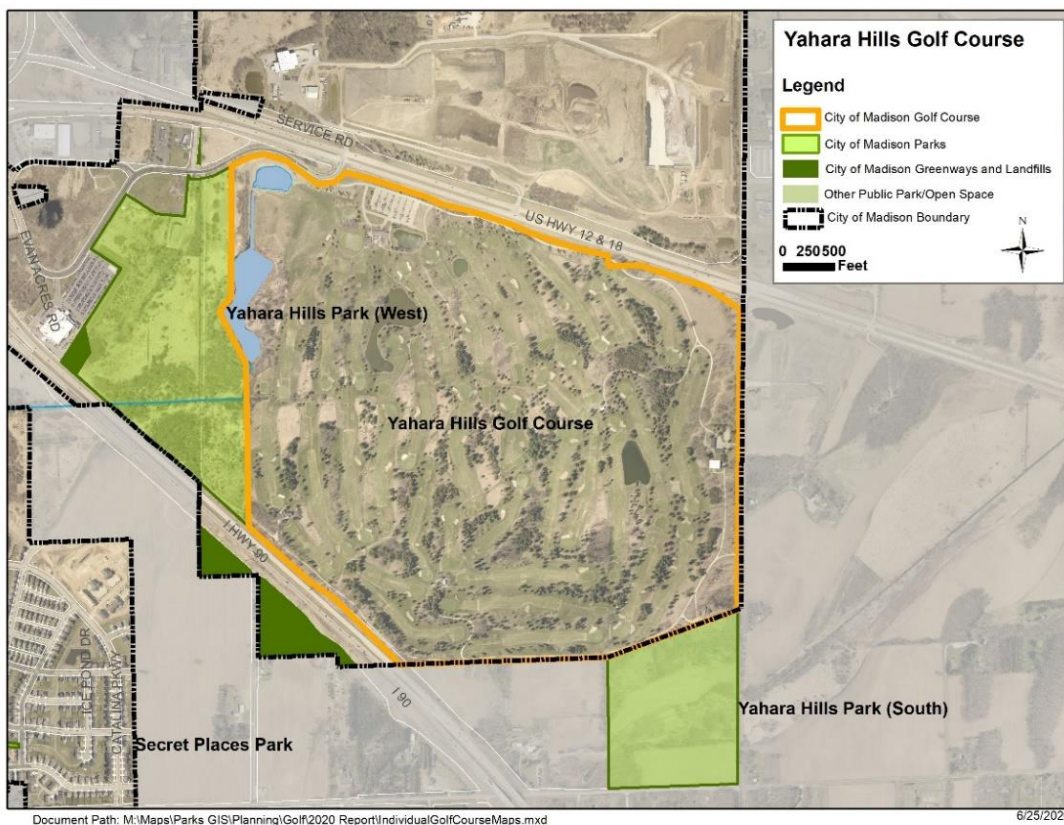
Odana Hills, located on the west side of Madison at 4635 Odana Rd, is an eighteen hole, 6,690 yard Par 72 regulation course. The course occupies 171.27 acres of land with additional land on both the east (2.28 acres) and west (12.78 acres) edges of the course that serve as neighborhood parks. In addition, approximately 24 acres on the property is administratively parceled to City Engineering for stormwater management purposes.



Odana Hills Park includes a playground, soccer fields and is part of the cross country ski system. Odana Hills East Park includes a playground, basketball court and three tennis courts. The landscape at Odana Hills consists of very gentle terrain, with 25 feet of elevation change. Similar to Glenway, there are some mature oaks on the course, mostly in the three main wooded areas (between holes 14 and 15; between the driving range and hole 11; and near the maintenance shop on the eastern edge of hole 9). These areas were the only areas showing canopy in the 1930s era aerials. Hundreds of trees have since been planted on the

golf course to provide a significant increase in the canopy on this parcel. In addition, a number of natural areas have been introduced to the course over time. Of note is a large volunteer-driven pollinator prairie at the southwest corner of the parking lot and a newly established prairie along hole 2 as a result of EAB mitigation work.

Yahara Hills, located on the southeast side of Madison at 6701 Hwy 12&18 East (i.e. Beltline Highway), features two eighteen hole Par 72 courses, East and West, which both opened in 1968. At maximum playing distance, the West Course measures 6,885 yards and the East Course measures 6,983. The two courses are mostly geographically oriented, but are interwoven to an extent across the first five holes. The courses represent a 451.08 acre assemblage of parcels.



In addition to the golf course, Yahara Hills Park (West) (82.2 acres) and Yahara Hills Park (South) (43.59 acres) are both undeveloped park lands held for future community park development to serve the Southeast side of Madison as the area develops further. The Yahara Hills West parkland was initially contemplated to be developed for additional golf holes, but the project did not move forward. Winter disc golf does utilize the Yahara Hills West area to a significant extent, which is more practicable with colder temperatures given the wet nature of this area.

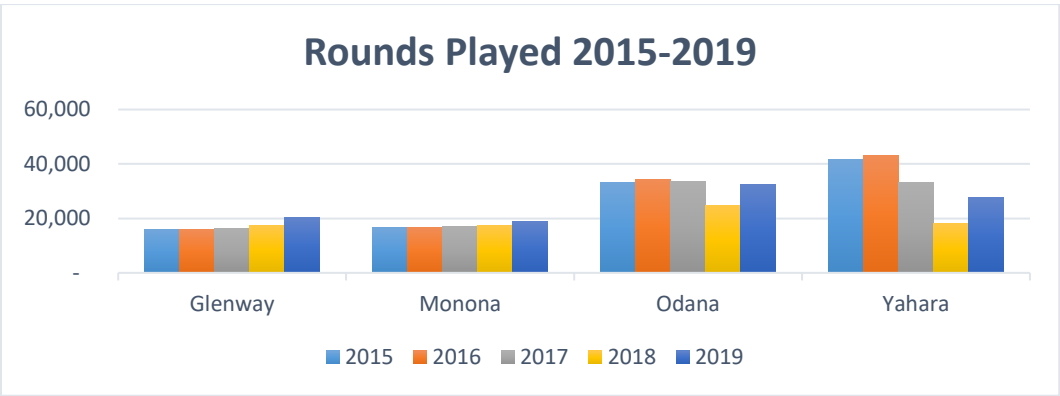
From a landscape perspective, Yahara Hills is more accurately one large hill that slopes from the southeastern portion of the property back to the northwest near the clubhouse. The elevation change on the 500+ acres is nearly 100 feet, which is substantial. A diverse tree

canopy exists across the entirety of the course, including significant mature oak trees on the east side of the property. A number of these oaks are prevalent on the 1937 aerials, when the area was mostly in agricultural use. In addition, about 15 acres of land were once intensively managed as turf areas have been converted to natural areas over the past 15 years. Significant wetlands occur on and around the property, including an old excavated agricultural ditch on the southwestern corner of the property that serves as the site’s primary drainage.

3. Course and Park Usage

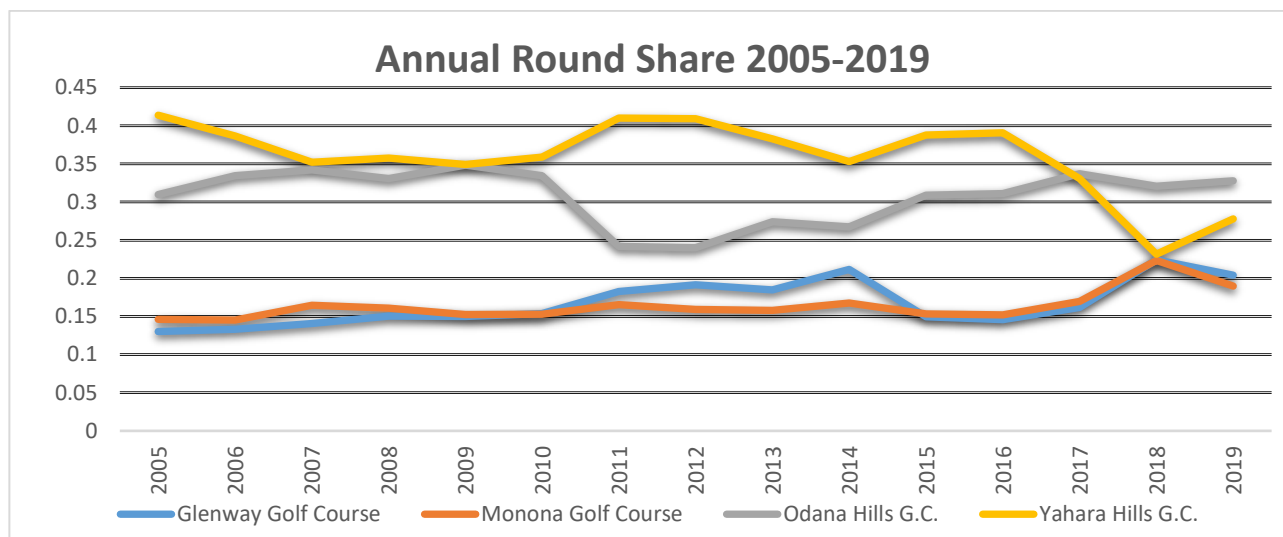
The GEP uses rounds played, in conjunction with revenue generated, as the primary metrics for measuring the level of play on the four courses. In this analysis a round is equal to eighteen holes of golf, which means that for the majority of customers at Glenway and Monona, both nine hole courses, the average customer counts is 0.5 rounds in these numbers. Rounds data from prior to 2019 is not completely accurate due to limitations of the GEP’s software at the time. While software used prior to 2019 went through a number of upgrades that led to data that is reliable overall, concerns about the validity of the unit counts exist. In addition to software changes, the management of the courses transitioned in 2013 and data on rounds before that date are inconsistent with data since 2013. GEP upgraded to a new software program in 2019 that provides substantially more reliable and valid data.

Over the past five years (2015-2019), the courses hosted 494,009 rounds played in total. Yahara accounted for the largest number of rounds played over this time period (163,284 or 33.1%), with Odana a very close second at 158,479 (32.1%). Both Odana and Yahara experienced significant reductions in rounds in 2018 due to extreme flooding. Odana recovered to nearly 2015-17 averages in 2019, while Yahara was still 10,000 rounds below the 2015-17 average. Monona (86,317, 17.5%) and Glenway (85,929, 17.4%) were very close and both quite stable over the five-year time period. Overall, Glenway and Monona have shown very little dispersion on an annual basis for rounds played, while Odana has been mostly steady with the exception of 2018 flooding. Yahara, however, has shown dramatic swings, with a high of 42,972 in 2016 and a low of only 17,955 in 2018, for a peak to trough gap of 25,017.



Staff performed an analysis comparing the share of rounds by course over the time period of 2005-2019 to consider longer term trends, with the caveat above regarding rounds data. This analysis showed that over the ten year period the approximate share of rounds played was Yahara 36%, Odana 31%, Glenway 17% and Monona 16%. The most notable

trend across this timeframe is the significant stability of all but Yahara which experienced an extreme decline in share of rounds played in 2018 and 2019. In 2018, nearly as many rounds were played at Glenway and Monona as were played at Yahara. In 2019, Yahara did bounce back to a 28% share, but remained behind Odana for the third consecutive year.



In addition to the amount of play, the Task Force reviewed and discussed available information regarding who uses the courses. This data is heavily reliant on staff, public, and task force observations and perspectives given the lack of demographic information required to use a course. Survey and observational data indicate that while the vast majority of customers are relatively loyal to the course they play the most often, a significant number of players do play multiple municipal courses in a given year. All four courses serve the public broadly and many dedicated users enjoy each facility.

Glenway attracts players from all generations and abilities. The course works well for young and beginner golfers as well as seniors looking to stay active in the game but are not able to play longer courses. Glenway is, in general, more popular with women than an average course. Glenway hosts a large junior program through the First Tee of South Central Wisconsin. With 15 weekly leagues, Glenway is a busy course for league play for a course its size.

Monona attracts a large number of senior golfers, hosting six morning senior golf leagues each week. Senior golfers find the course well suited for their golfing abilities, especially those looking for a bit more length and challenge than is offered by Glenway. Monona also has a significant presence of the First Tee and is the primary East Side course for our partnership, as well as for local high school teams. Monona also boasts more popularity with women than an average course.

Odana Hills is one of the busier courses in the state, based on its excellent location and golfer friendly layout. It is home to 20 weekly leagues and hosts a number of events annually. Given its level of business, there has been limited focus on developing an outing business at Odana. Odana's popularity and level of use does create its biggest negative, which is pace of play being notably slow at times.

Yahara Hills hosts 17 weekly league groups and approximately 35 golf outings annually. Yahara is the home course for 4 high schools and two colleges, hosting over 30 high school and 12 college teams each year. Yahara also hosts multiple junior tournaments annually, which normally have well over 100 participants. Yahara is also the most popular City course for members of the African American golfing community. With thirty-six holes, the course is popular with casual golfers on perfect golfing days due to the ability to get out and play without having to book a tee time significantly in advance.

The four courses are all sized and located as important assets within the broader park system. As referenced above, all four courses provide additional non-golf amenities to the broader park system. It is difficult to assess the total number of actual users or uses throughout the course of the year, but it is considered to be significant based on feedback and staff observations. All four courses offer year-round recreational opportunities, as Odana and Yahara have regularly groomed cross country ski trails, while Monona and Glenway are open for cross country skiing and snow shoeing. Other popular uses of the spaces include nature viewing, walking, dog walking and jogging on all courses. In addition, the courses have served as cross country meet locations for local high schools.

4. Operational Model and Staffing

The Golf Enterprise Program ("GEP") is currently operated entirely using City staff, for both operations and maintenance. The GEP incurs all expenses and receives all revenues associated with the program. Within the Golf Industry, this is known as a Direct Management Model.

Prior to 2013, the GEP used a model where the City was responsible for course and facility maintenance and contracted golf professionals were responsible for clubhouse operations, termed an Indirect Management Model. Under this model, the City incurred all expenses for the course maintenance and received revenue from the course greens fees. The contracted golf professionals received a retainer from the greens fees from the courses, incurred all expenses related to the clubhouse operations and received the vast majority of revenues from clubhouse sales and cart rentals, paying a commission on select revenue streams to the City.

Starting in 2013, the City moved to the Direct Management Model. Under the current model, 2 program Supervisors, trained and experienced in the golf course industry, oversee the day-to-day clubhouse and course maintenance operations with executive oversight from the Parks Superintendent and Assistant Parks Superintendent. The program also has 5 dedicated permanent employees -3 Greenkeepers, and 1 Maintenance Mechanic, all with degrees in Turfgrass Management and extensive experience in golf course maintenance. Additionally, there is one Equipment Mechanic responsible for maintenance and repairs of equipment for all four courses. The program also employs between 115 and 120 seasonal and hourly employees annually. This includes Assistant Golf Professionals, who assist in running clubhouse operations, Attendants to provide customer service, Food and Beverage Servers, and Laborers to maintain the courses on a daily basis. All staff are paid at minimum the City's Living Wage. Overall, the level of staffing is substantially lower than it used to be. Since 2008, the level of permanent staffing has decreased from 10 full time employees ("FTE") to 7 FTE while taking on clubhouse operations in 2013. This reduction in FTE is a continuation of austerity measures that have been occurring in the GEP since the early 2000's, when there were over 14 FTE at the courses. One of the

operational impacts of this change was that the City cannot, based upon advice from the City Attorney's Office, sell intoxicating liquor or wine due to the City's inability to license itself for such sales. The City is permitted under State Statute to sell fermented malt beverages directly to customers without a liquor license. Estimates are that this restriction reduces revenue generation by approximately \$70,000 annually.

5. Capital Infrastructure

Significant capital infrastructure needs across all asset classifications at the four courses characterize the Golf Enterprise Program. The three main asset classifications are Clubhouse and Restroom Facilities; Golf Course Infrastructure; and Golf Maintenance Equipment and Facilities. The failing infrastructure, including both course and building conditions, as well as equipment, pose an increasingly concerning problem to the GEP's overall profitability. They have led to course closures and increased operating expenses as staff work to make repairs and short-term fixes to keep mission critical areas and equipment functional.

Staff prepared a capital needs assessment, which identified all known capital investment needs as of today and anticipates the need for reinvestment over the next decade or two, to demonstrate the scale and scope of capital infrastructure necessary to operate 72 holes of municipal golf at four courses. The estimates are based on the assumption of having the same number of holes on the same corridors that currently exist. Modifications on this would likely significantly change the capital costs associated with future project work. This is particularly true at Yahara, where with fewer holes to address drainage issues, and more land to work with, the capital costs profile would likely be substantially smaller than estimated for the thirty-six hole facility. Conservative estimate ranges are based off comparable work completed within the City and golf industry, and known conditions. More detailed analysis would be required for true project budget development in the future.

Stormwater management is the biggest concern on Yahara's course and is the leading factor in loss of revenue over the past three years. Correcting the existing drainage concerns will require increasing the course's stormwater capacity, raising the grade on a number of holes, improving drainage across the course and likely incorporating a path system. Critical course infrastructure is failing and in need of investment, including the irrigation system, well pump and bunkers. The addition of shorter tee boxes would appeal to a wider variety of golfers. Capital needs of Yahara range from \$21-32 million over the next 20 years, with significant immediate need.

Odana plays an important role in the drainage of the Lake Wingra watershed. With more frequent and significant storms, saturated course conditions are now a major concern. Correcting the existing drainage concerns will require increasing the course's stormwater capacity, raising the grade on several holes, improving drainage on key areas of the course and incorporating a cart path system. Installation of a well and updating the irrigation system would provide for more sustainable turf management. The clubhouse, one of the oldest in the parks system -- is energy inefficient and ADA noncompliant. Replacement of the facility also would require redesign and reconstruction of the parking lot. The maintenance facility lacks bulk storage capacity, resulting in loss of product and/or increased expenses due to ordering in smaller quantities. Odana's capital needs range from \$12.2M-\$18.4 million, with significant immediate needs.

While smaller in scale, Monona's critical course infrastructure is failing and in need of immediate replacement or repair, including the irrigation system, pumphouse, and driving range tee box. The clubhouse is inefficient in terms of layout for maximizing and utility usage. Its replacement, regardless of scope, would require redesign and reconstruction of the parking lot. The fairways also need attention, as regrading will be required to repair some terrain concerns. Additionally, the oversized bunkers need to be downsized and redesigned to limit maintenance costs. Estimates for Monona's entire capital project needs range from \$2.5M-3.8M.

Overall, Glenway's course and amenities have withstood the test of time, and has significantly less need than other courses. Replacing or removing the failing clubhouse patio is a necessity. The tees, which see heavy use yearly, now require renovation. In addition to the tees, the greens complexes receive heavy use and should be evaluated for future improvements. The modest clubhouse should be replaced and the parking lot redesigned to better meet the needs of the community. The entire project for Glenway is estimated to be between \$1.7M-2.5M.

The aging fleet of equipment consists of a variety of specialized mowers, implements and other machines necessary for proper course maintenance. Deferred maintenance costs of approximately \$2M are estimated to cover immediate needs of the courses. As machines age and reach the end of their useful life, staff continue to incur inefficiencies and expenses to keep the operations running. Improvements to the fleet and equipment would also have a significant positive environmental impact.

6. Financial Analysis

The golf program is operated as the Golf Enterprise Fund (GEF) within the City's budget and accounting program. This means that from a financial perspective the City treats the golf program as if it were a stand-alone business, whereby its revenues must cover all related expenses over time. The enterprise method of accounting has been in place for the golf program since at least the early 1980s. The City operates multiple enterprise funds (e.g. Water Utility, Sewer Utility, and Parking Utility). The designation of an enterprise fund for a specific service or activity is made by the Common Council. There are, however, accounting standards related to operating an enterprise fund once it is established.

The enterprise accounting method requires that all revenues and expenses be accounted for within the fund. This includes recognition of non-cash items such as depreciation and pension liabilities. The GEF also is required to cover the direct costs that are not charged to non-enterprise budgetary units, such as unemployment benefits. The GEF also incurs charges related to City services provided by other agencies in the form of an annual Central Services charge. Additionally, the GEF incurs a Payment-in-lieu of taxes (PILOT) cost annually, paid to the general fund. The PILOT is intended to treat the GEF as a private entity would be treated, as private golf courses are responsible for both real and personal property taxes. The enterprise fund method of accounting does not create any exemptions from the City's Living Wage Ordinance or purchasing guidelines. Since 2000, the GEF has struggled to be profitable on a comprehensive net income basis, with total expenses exceeding revenues in all but four years since that time (and all but one since 2003). The primary driver of these losses has been the sustained long-term lack of growth in revenue. Due to market and course conditions, the ability to increase price or volume has not provided financial stability.

The GEF spent \$3,305,901 in 2019, which is up from \$2,177,494 in 2000. This equates to an annualized growth rate in expenditures of only 2.59%. It is critical to recognize that embedded in this number is the City taking on the clubhouse operations in 2013, which added approximately \$750,000 in annual expenditures to the GEF. If the annual rates of increase are adjusted for this fact, the growth rate is 0.87%. In 2019, the GEF earned \$2,769,146 in total revenue, which was up from \$2,390,322 in 2000. This equates to an annualized growth rate in revenue of 0.79%. Of the \$2.77 million in revenue in 2019, approximately \$1.84 million came from greens fees and memberships. This is the value closest in comparative value to the 2000 revenue, which indicates an annualized loss rate of -1.15% over the past twenty years. The financial losses over the last four years now exceed \$2 million. Despite the fact that 2015 was the only profitable year since 2003, the outlook for the financial position and condition of the GEF is dire and clearly unsustainable. The significant flooding issues in 2018 led to losses of \$863,320, the worst performance on record for the GEF. This was also the first time on record that the GEF's Total Net Position went into negative territory, requiring Common Council action to provide a loan to the GEF. In 2019, despite a rebounding in rounds played, the GEF lost \$536,755. This loss in 2019 effectively exhausted the \$1.5M loan authorization from the general fund to the GEF. With another challenging economic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely the City will face another significant golf-related financial loss in 2020.

The table below shows the financial results by course over the last four years. On average, Glenway and Monona have been relatively consistent in their amount of losses. Odana has shown significantly more volatility than it has historically; but this is primarily driven by the 2018 flooding, leaving Odana in the red for the first time on record. Yahara has shown the most significant dispersion between financial results with a range of outcomes of almost \$500,000 over the four year period. This correlates to the exceptional volatility in rounds played due to the course conditions as referenced above.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | AVG |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Glenway Exp. | 454,043 | 383,736 | 473,022 | 434,105 | 436,226 |
| Glenway Rev. | (372,358) | (359,215) | (354,555) | (386,351) | (368,120) |
| Glenway Net | 81,685 | 24,520 | 118,467 | 47,754 | 68,107 |
| Monona Exp. | 549,595 | 490,397 | 524,592 | 484,467 | 512,263 |
| Monona Rev. | (448,116) | (440,721) | (402,651) | (405,898) | (424,347) |
| Monona Total | 101,479 | 49,676 | 121,941 | 78,568 | 87,916 |
| Odana Exp. | 1,040,864 | 944,106 | 986,814 | 1,002,216 | 993,500 |
| Odana Rev. | (1,163,494) | (1,116,039) | (986,091) | (1,172,269) | (1,109,473) |
| Odana Total | (122,630) | (171,933) | 723 | (170,053) | (115,973) |
| Yahara Exp. | 1,566,168 | 1,413,798 | 1,339,233 | 1,385,114 | 1,426,078 |
| Yahara Rev. | (1,233,328) | (943,279) | (717,045) | (804,628) | (924,570) |
| Yahara Total | 332,841 | 470,520 | 622,188 | 580,486 | 501,509 |
| GEF Total Exp. | 3,610,671 | 3,232,037 | 3,323,661 | 3,305,901 | 3,368,067 |
| GEF Total Rev. | (3,217,296) | (2,859,254) | (2,460,341) | (2,769,146) | (2,826,509) |
| GEF Total | 393,375 | 372,783 | 863,320 | 536,755 | 541,558 |

It is important to note that the GEF operates as an integrated unit and there are costs that are recognized at one course, but truly incurred at another. This is particularly true at Yahara due to it being the primary shop and warehouse of the system. Overall, expenditures are relatively fixed and growing within normalized rates, but revenue is exceptionally unstable and significantly impacted by changing climate, lack of reinvestment in capital infrastructure and robust competition from the large number of non-municipal golf courses in Dane County. The trend lines are clearly going in the wrong direction and there is no reason to believe the current level of service can be sustained without significant structural changes and very considerable investment.

C. METHODOLOGY

The Methodology Section provides an overview of how the Task Force completed its work and references to the information it studied and discussed as part of its deliberations. The Task Force was created via resolution in 2019 (with a later resolution in spring 2020 extending the deadline for submission due to the COVID-19 pandemic) to make recommendations about the future of golf courses in Madison Parks. The Task Force met 11 times between October 2019 and July 2020. The Task Force gathered relevant information and made requests of staff for additional information for consideration. The Task Force provided input and oversight on a public engagement process that included an online survey, focus groups, and two well attended public input meetings.

Step 1 - The Resolution

The Common Council created the Task Force by Resolution (RES-19-00456, Legistar File 56004).⁵ The Resolution provided that the Mayor appoint eight Task Force members, including a current or former member of the Board of Park Commissioners and one member of the Golf Subcommittee. The Resolution provided that the President of the Council appoint one Alderperson as a Task Force member. The preamble of the Resolution notes some of the reasons for creating the Task Force:

- The City of Madison currently owns and operates 4 golf courses that utilize 750 acres of parkland;
- The courses are currently considered a Special Use within the City's Park and Open Space Plan;
- The golf courses are operated as a Golf Enterprise Fund, which means they are to be operated independently of tax levy support;
- The Golf Enterprise Fund has incurred significant financial losses, including an \$813,848 loss in 2018.

The Resolution then listed the issues the Task Force is to address including:

- Solicit input from local stakeholders,
- Prioritize equity, public health, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability,

⁵ See Appendix A, Establishing a Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks

- Review available research, best practices, and operational models related to municipal golf,
- Discuss and evaluate all options for the use of the land currently occupied by Madison's public golf courses,
- Consider how to balance the allocation of resources among various park uses,
- Recommend if the City of Madison ought to provide municipal golf to the public, if so, recommend how much, where, and how,
- Develop recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, Committees or Commissions, on the future of Madison's Municipal Golf Courses that provide for both Golf and the City of Madison to be in a long-term financially sustainable position. At least one recommendation should not require an annual general fund operating subsidy and no tax levy supported debt.

Finally, the original Resolution stated that the Final Report shall be submitted by May 1, 2020 and that the Task Force will be dissolved upon the submission of the recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and Board of Park Commissioners. A subsequent Resolution⁶ was adopted by the Common Council to extend the deadline to July 31, 2020 due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff have worked diligently to support this new deadline while also working to open golf courses in a manner that is safe for the public during the pandemic.

Step 2 - Information Gathering

The Task Force began meeting on October 23, 2019 and spent its first three meetings gathering information. This included receiving information from staff and prior public input. A list of information the Task Force received and considered is included in Appendix D. Staff prepared and led tours of Yahara, Monona, Glenway and Odana courses for all Task Force members, which were open to the public. Additionally, individual tours were offered for those unable to attend the scheduled tours.

Information reviewed by the Task Force included staff presentations on:

- Current Operations of City of Madison Golf Courses
- Golf Enterprise Budget and Financial Reports
- Operational Models of Municipal Golf Courses and Market Comparison
- Land and Resource Management
- Capital Infrastructure Needs
- Previously Explored Concepts and Processes
- Racial Equity and Social Justice Comprehensive Tool

⁶ See Appendix B, Legistar ID# 59434

Step 3 – Outreach and Input

The Task Force solicited input from local stakeholders using a number of methods. Staff established a dedicated [website](https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/about/golftaskforce.cfm)⁷ for the work of the Task Force and to keep the public informed of its progress. Staff provided all previous survey data and public comment prior to 2019 to members of the Task Force during the early stages of the assignment. Between October 2019 and July 2020, approximately 4,300 contacts were made for the purpose of soliciting feedback via survey, focus group meetings, two public input meetings, emails and phone calls. The majority of respondents were white males over the age of 50. However, women, non-binary/third gender individuals and people of color, from youth to over the age of 64, also responded as either golfers or non-golfers. All public input received was provided to the Task Force for review and is available in Legistar.⁸

1. Review of Previous Public Input

The Task Force was provided with surveys prepared in 2013 and 2015. These surveys provided insight as to customers' needs, preferences and satisfaction with the program and its offerings. In addition, public comment in the form of emails from 2017 to 2018 regarding the future of golf courses was included.

2. Task Force Survey

A survey was developed with the Task Force's oversight and administered via Survey Monkey. The survey was open from February 28 until April 9, 2020, and was announced through a press release, social media posts, the Task Force website and via email to golf contacts and Parks contacts. In total, 4,092 people responded to the survey and many followed up with more detailed email responses. The majority (3,590 or 88%) of survey respondents were golfers, with the remaining respondents (502 or 12%) using the courses for purposes other than golf. Full survey results are available online.⁹ The majority of golfers feel the amount of golf currently offered is the right amount. These individuals are satisfied with the quality and cost of the courses, but recognize a need for capital improvements. Individuals using the courses for purposes other than golf, such as disc golf, cross country skiing, walking/jogging and nature viewing tended to indicate that there were too many holes of golf within the city.

3. Golfer Focus Group

The focus group consisted of seven golfers, those who golf all four courses, a high school golf coach, a woman, a person of color and various ages ranging from graduate student to retired, who were selected by staff and invited to participate in a facilitated discussion. The group met on March 10, 2020 for ninety minutes to discuss their perspective on the current program and proposed scenarios discussed by the Task Force. The group was largely satisfied with the number of holes, cost, quality of play and professional customer service offered. There was concern over the use of the enterprise accounting system, deteriorating infrastructure of courses and that other options were not discussed, particularly the possibility of eliminating only eighteen holes at Yahara.

⁷ <https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/about/golftaskforce.cfm>

⁸ See Appendix D, Legislative File #58296

⁹ See Appendix D, Legislative File #58296

4. Public Input Meetings

The public input meetings were attended by approximately 150 members of the public, who received an update on the work completed by the Task Force to date and overview of the four possible scenarios being considered by the Task Force. Approximately 95 people attended the meeting held at Olbrich Botanical Gardens and approximately 55 attended the meeting held at Goodman Maintenance Facility. Attendees were encouraged to complete comment and/or question cards. Those that wished to speak were allowed to do so and staff answered all written and verbal questions.

While some voiced concerns over past mismanagement and the severity of capital needs, many opposed any sort of course closure or reduction in holes, especially at Monona. There was some support for considering closure of just eighteen holes at Yahara and additional course configurations ranging from nine to eighteen holes. There was considerable support for eliminating the enterprise accounting system. In addition, there were suggestions for improved marketing, differentiation of services, environmentally sustainable practices and consideration of alternative park uses for the park land.

Step 4 – Initial Findings and Discussion

Prior to the public engagement meetings and survey, the Task Force came to a general consensus that affordable and accessible municipal golf is important to the residents of the City of Madison and some number of holes should remain open for play. The Task Force generally indicated that the 72 holes of golf provided by the city of Madison was too much for the demand and competition in the marketplace. The Task Force requested that staff prepare and present four different course closure scenarios for the body and the public to consider. These four course closure scenarios included closing eighteen, twenty-seven, thirty-six, and forty-five holes. All four scenarios improved the financial position of the GEF, but as an Enterprise none of the four were estimated to produce a profit. Course closure scenarios and information presented to the Task Force are available and attached to Legislative File #59227.¹⁰ Not all members of the Task Force supported a reduction of holes and there was an interest in exploring additional options before hole reduction, such as seeking Dane County's financial or operational support of public golf given the number of non-residents who play the City Courses.

The Task Force determined that the capital infrastructure needs of the courses were significant and many are quite pressing. There was significant discussion about what capital needs are truly vital, with some innovative concepts being discussed, such as not rebuilding a clubhouse at Glenway in the future. Many members of the Task Force were concerned with how to pay for the capital needs, and they encouraged staff to consider creative partnerships towards funding necessary improvements. While some members of the Task Force indicated that the sale of land currently used for golf courses could provide adequate funding for capital improvements and long-term financial stability, there was significant opposition to such a sale in general, especially for the sole benefit of one sport.

¹⁰ See Appendix D, Legislative File #59227

The Task Force recognized the importance of adequate and well-maintained greenspaces in relation to the mental and physical well-being of the community. In addition, the Task Force determined that it would not consider future uses of park land that may no longer have golf as its primary use. The Task Force indicated a preference that the Board of Park Commissioners and staff should commence planning for this land to integrate it into the parks system. The Task Force spent significant time discussing and reviewing considerations for the Board of Park Commissioners in regard to creating a new mission statement for the golf program. The Task Force also reviewed and analyzed the financial information presented, especially as it relates to capital needs and course closure scenarios. Many members of the Task Force expressed concerns regarding the policy choice of having Golf be an Enterprise Fund, when other recreational activities are not. There was interest in establishing a budget that would require golf revenues to support all of the operational costs directly attributable to golf, but to either allow more flexibility on purchasing or revenue options, or to relieve financial pressures from select expenditure items.

Step 5 - Debate, and Final Recommendations

After gathering information, the Task Force spent its remaining meetings discussing, debating, and making recommendations to be included in the Final Report. The Task Force supported 10 recommendations to be included in the Final Report. One proposed recommendation was not supported by the Task Force. Those recommendations and corresponding vote information is attached to this report.¹¹ The remainder of the Final Report will detail and give context to those recommendations. Minutes of all meetings and recorded Zoom meetings of the last five meetings can be found on the City's Legistar site at <https://madison.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO MUNICIPAL GOLF IN MADISON PARKS

The Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks recommends that:

1. The City should provide Municipal Golf in Madison Parks.

The Task Force recommends that Madison continue providing golf course opportunities to its residents and visitors. The Task Force found that golf is a highly desired recreational outlet for a number of residents and visitors and provides significant positive social, emotional, and physical health benefits to the public.

2. The City should remove the enterprise fund designation from its golf courses.

The Task Force recommends that the City remove the enterprise fund designation from the golf courses to better integrate the golf courses within the park system. The Task Force found that being in an enterprise was incompatible with a mission of equity, inclusion, affordability, and accessibility. The Task Force also found that the enterprise fund inherently skews prices to keep up with market forces without regard to those who are financially burdened. Removing the courses from the enterprise fund would allow

¹¹ See Appendix E

for layering of additional uses of the park land beyond golf. It would also allow community members who have not historically visited these properties to find purpose in these public lands. Removal from the enterprise fund also offers opportunities for creative partnerships and revenue sources.

3. The City should update the mission of the golf program.

The Task Force recommends that the mission for municipal golf be updated by the Board of Park Commissioners to include the values of inclusivity, accessibility, affordability and environmental sustainability.

4. The City should issue a Request for Proposals to evaluate the option of a private or non-profit operator for Monona and establish a plan and timeline to eliminate eighteen holes at Yahara Hills.

The Task Force recommends that Madison reduce the number of golf holes operated to better position the golf program to be financially stable and meet the long term needs of golfers and non-golfers. The growth in available golf courses in the marketplace and the lack of corresponding increase in golfers makes the current allocation of land and resources to golf unsustainable. The Task Force recommends that the City expeditiously create a plan to reduce the number of holes at Yahara Hills by eighteen holes. This reduction should focus on reducing capital and operational costs, and increasing climatic resiliency, while also considering potential alternative land uses.

The Task Force recommends that any partnership at Monona be focused in a manner that demonstrates the ability to meet the City's mission for municipal golf, including instruction for all ages and serving youth, and eliminate the City's obligation for capital and operating expenses for Monona. The City should work diligently to ensure it provides an RFP process that is conducive to a successful response.

If the RFP is not successful the City should consider eliminating additional holes from City operation and/or course closure in order to ensure the sustainability of the golf program in the City of Madison. The Task Force is hopeful that if this occurs that the policymakers will consider and recognize the significant and complex issues in these decisions. The Task Force unanimously agreed that setting a specific number of holes for reduction without specific context on what course is impacted is not a reasoned and balanced approach to meeting the community's needs. The Task Force spent significant time and resources on these discussions and recommends that this process be informed by the values and recommendations incorporated and highlighted in this report.

5. The City should work with the University of Wisconsin, including the OJ Noer Ag Research Station, to develop Integrated Pest Management protocols that are at the forefront of managing public golf courses sustainably.

The Task Force recommends that Parks staff deepen the existing working relationship with the University of Wisconsin's world-class research teams to establish a rigorous scientifically based management program for the courses that promotes quality playing conditions while ensuring golf courses are a benefit to the natural environment.

6. The City should work to promote positive ecological outcomes at the golf courses through reducing reliance on limited natural resources and providing ecological assets.

The Task Force recommends that Madison should work to eliminate the use of potable City water for irrigation across the system by investing in new on-site well installations and utilizing surface water as feasible. Special emphasis should be placed on Odana Hills given its size and usage rates in dry years. Additionally, the City should work to reduce energy usage and consider adding additional non-fossil fuel production capacity to the courses. The City should also work with partners to utilize golf courses to manage stormwater in a way that enhances playability and improves the quality of the watersheds. The City should also work to increase biodiversity on the golf course properties.

7. The City should work with stakeholders and staff to develop a specific action plan to promote equity and inclusion at all courses.

The Task Force recommends the City make conscious choices around budgeting and outreach processes to ensure those who have been historically unwelcome and continue to be marginalized, particularly people of color, women and individuals from the LGBTQ+ community, have an opportunity to recognize the benefits of the golf program. The City should work to enhance its golf instruction options to increase equitable access to the game of golf. The City should consider working with community partners to develop and implement innovative plans to ensure that golf is a game that can be accessed, learned, and enjoyed by all members of the community. The City should focus on creating a welcoming environment through developing a staff that is reflective of the community it serves.

8. The City should work with residents, stakeholders, and partners to promote wider utilization by the community of the golf courses to better integrate the courses into the wider park system for uses other than golf.

The Task Force recommends the City explore and develop relationships with residents, users, stakeholders, and partners to promote the vision of the golf courses being a part of the community's park system. Consideration should be given to both alternative time based uses and complimentary uses.

9. The City should ensure that if City resources are used to invest in capital projects at golf courses it is done in an equitable and fiscally responsible manner to reduce negative impact on park services across the system.

The Task Force recommends that if the City considers allocating city funding towards capital needs at the courses, it does so in a manner that balances the needs of the entire park system.

10. The City should not sell park land to fund capital improvements of the golf courses.

The Task Force recommends that the City refrain from selling park land of any type for the sole purpose of funding capital improvements for the golf courses.

E. CONCLUSION

The Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks first met in the Fall of 2019. The Task Force, after a brief interruption, worked through the COVID pandemic to meet the adjusted deadline set by the Common Council. The Task Force met virtually five times and included four meetings in a five week period to meet the July 31st deadline. The Task Force believes it successfully met the objectives of the authorizing resolution and humbly submits its recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and Board of Park Commissioners for their review. The Task Force fully recognizes its advisory role in this process, and that many difficult choices are still before policymakers, especially due to the pandemic and its impact on City finances. The Task Force hopes policymakers in the process will find value in the work, analysis, and participatory democracy that occurred through the Task Force's work. The recommendations presented were analyzed, discussed, and debated by the membership.

The Task Force met the objectives of the authorizing resolution by guiding a significant public engagement process that included input from local stakeholders through the use of surveys, focus groups, town hall meetings, and public presentations directly to the Task Force. The Task Force prioritized equity, public health, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability in its work. The Task Force determined it was important to keep a portion of Yahara Hills open out of concerns of the disparate impacts of closing the facility. The Task Force discussed and reviewed the numerous physical, mental, and social health considerations of golf courses as both for golf and for the general public. The Task Force recommends making improvements to the courses in a manner that promotes environmental sustainability by reducing resource inputs, sourcing them efficiently, actively working to increase biodiversity and habitat, and by establishing an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy at the forefront of the golf industry.

The Task Force did determine that the City should provide municipal golf. The Task Force found that the amount of golf provided should be the 45 holes of City managed golf at three courses and seeking a partnership for another 9 at the fourth location. This would keep all four locations functioning, but would reduce the holes managed by the City by 37.5% and the total holes available on City land by 25%. The Task Force determined that it was not reasonable to consider all alternative land uses for the land currently in golf, but indicated a preference to utilization of any land no longer needed for golf to be planned in a manner to prioritize integration into the broader parks system. The Task Force also recommended against the sale of parkland for the purpose of capital investment in golf courses.

The Task Force developed recommendations on the future of Municipal Golf in Madison Parks that will promote a more financially sustainable position for the golf program. The Task Force recognizes that the elimination of the enterprise accounting method would impact the general fund, but the Task Force found this to not be an operating subsidy. The recommendation to remove 27 holes from City operation should reduce or possibly eliminate annual financial losses. The Task Force recognizes that without any tax levy supported debt the capital needs will be a significant challenge to address. The Task Force is hopeful that, by providing a little less golf in a more efficient way, the City will be able to improve the financial position and condition of the golf operation. The Task Force is also hopeful that additional partnerships can be established to reduce the City's share of needed capital improvements.

APPENDIX A – Resolution Establishing the Task Force (RES-19-00456, Leg#56004)

SUBSTITUTE - Establishing a Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks to make recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and the Board of Park Commissioners regarding the future of the City's Municipal Golf Courses.

The City of Madison Parks Division currently operates a municipal golf program at Yahara (36 holes on 451.08 acres); Odana (18 holes on 171.27 acres); Monona (9 holes on 85.45 acres); and Glenway (9 holes on 41.98 acres). The courses have all been in operation since at least 1968. Over the past four years, the golf program has hosted an average of 100,000 18 hole equivalent rounds (a 9 hole round is 0.5 rounds). The golf program has been structured within the City's financial system as an Enterprise Fund since approximately 1980 and the program is budgeted for as a separate budgetary agency as the Golf Enterprise Fund ("GEF"), which is intended to be a fully supported business type activity fully funded via user fees. This includes funding all operating and capital expenditures related to the courses.

WHEREAS, the Adopted 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan ("POSP") provides the vision, mission, strategies, and goals for the Parks system for the next five years and beyond; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP aligns with the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* update through the use of guiding lenses of equity, public health, adaptability, and sustainability; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP contains twelve strategies to meet the needs of the community which, along with the guiding lenses are the basis for park planning and development during the next five years; and,

WHEREAS, the twelve strategies are:

- Improve Public Access to Lakes
- Design Park Facilities to Accommodate Diverse Activities and Populations
- Protect and Enhance Natural and Cultural Resources
- Acquire Parkland to Reduce Parkland Deficiencies and Address Increasing Residential Density
- Ensure that New Park Development Occurs in a Fiscally Sustainable Manner
- Ensure That Existing Levels of Service Are Maintained and Supported Through the Park System and Are Increased as New Parks and Facilities Are Developed
- Create Equitable Access and Funding For Parks
- Improve the Park System's Capacity to Withstand Future Environmental Changes
- Increase Connectivity Between Parks to Enhance Access
- Develop a Healthy and Diverse Urban Tree Canopy Within Parks
- Increase Engagement with Groups and Organizations and Develop New Ones
- Pursue Regional Solutions to Regional Issues, and;

WHEREAS, the mission of the Golf Enterprise is to provide the Madison area golfing public with the finest possible golfing conditions at reasonable prices and for all levels of play; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP classifies golf courses as a Special Use park use, the classification that is used for "parkland whose primary function serves unique recreation opportunities" based upon the model of the GEF being independent of tax levy support; and,

WHEREAS, the GEF has had a negative net income in nine of the last ten years and had liabilities exceeding assets in the amount of \$888,442 as of the close of 2018; and,

WHEREAS, to address this deficit, an advance to the golf courses enterprise fund of \$813,848, was made from the general fund on the City's 2018 financial statements with 1st quarter projections for 2019 indicating an additional loss of approximately \$400,000 by the end of this year; and,

WHEREAS, this liability on the City's financial statements creates real and significant financial and budgetary concerns for the City of Madison moving forward; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Common Council need to recognize, through resolution adopted in 2019, the advance from the general fund to the golf courses enterprise fund and identify the source(s) and schedule for its repayment,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council direct the creation of a taskforce on the future of the City's municipal golf courses that will be primarily staffed by the Parks Division and comprised of the following members: .

- An Alderperson appointed by the City Council President
- One Current or Former Member of the Board of Park Commissioners appointed by the Mayor
- One Member of the Golf Subcommittee appointed by the Mayor
- Six Residents appointed by the Mayor, to include representation of golfers, parks users, non-golfers, potentially impacted neighbors, and youth residents, if possible; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the taskforce shall conduct and complete the following actions/duties:

- Solicit input from local stakeholders,
- Prioritize equity, public health, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability,
- Review available research, best practices, and operational models related to municipal golf,
- ~~Consider the highest and best use of the land currently occupied by Madison's public golf courses,~~
- **Discuss and evaluate all options for the use of the land currently occupied by Madison's public golf courses,**
- Consider how to balance the allocation of resources among various parks uses,
- Recommend if the City of Madison ought to provide municipal golf to the public; if so recommend how much, where, and how,
- Develop recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, Committees or Commissions, on the future of Madison's Municipal Golf Courses that provide for both Golf and the City of Madison to be in a long-term financially sustainable position. At least one recommendation should not require an annual general fund operating subsidy and no tax levy supported debt; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the taskforce complete its review and make final recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council and the Board of Park Commissioners; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the taskforce will be dissolved upon the submission of its recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and Board of Park Commissioners **by May 1, 2020.**

APPENDIX B – Extending the Deadline for the Task Force (RES-20-00296, Leg#59434)

Extending the deadline to July 31, 2020 for the report and recommendations from the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks to the Mayor, Common Council and the Board of Park Commissioners regarding the future of the City's Municipal Golf Courses.

WHEREAS, Resolution RES-19-00456, Legistar File 56004, created the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks; and,

WHEREAS, the Task Force was given a deadline of May 1, 2020 to complete its work and issue its report and recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council and Board Parks Commissioners; and,

WHEREAS, it is clear that the report and recommendations will not be completed by the May 1, 2020 deadline due to the COVID-19 pandemic,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Common Council extends the deadline for finishing the work of the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks to be no later than July 31, 2020.

APPENDIX C – Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks Meeting Schedule

Agendas and Minutes for meetings can be accessed at:

<https://madison.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Information is also available through the dedicated website at:

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/about/golftaskforce.cfm>

| DATE | TIME | LOCATION |
|------------|----------|---|
| 10/23/2019 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 11/20/2019 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 12/18/2019 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 1/15/2020 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 1/29/2020 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 2/19/2020 | 6:00 PM | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 3/18/2020 | Canceled | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 4/15/2020 | Canceled | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 4/29/2020 | Canceled | Goodman Maintenance Facility, 1402 Wingra Creek Parkway |
| 5/18/2020 | 6:00 PM | Virtual Meeting |
| 6/11/2020 | Canceled | Virtual Meeting |
| 6/29/2020 | 6:00 PM | Virtual Meeting |
| 7/15/2020 | 6:00 PM | Virtual Meeting |
| 7/23/2020 | 6:00 PM | Virtual Meeting |
| 7/30/2020 | 6:00 PM | Virtual Meeting |

APPENDIX D – List of Topics and Legistar Numbers for On-Line Documents

| Legistar File Number | Title |
|----------------------|--|
| 57639 | Presentation of Current Operations of Golf Courses |
| 57871 | 2019-2020 Task Force Meeting Dates |
| 58298 | Golf Enterprise Program Budget and Financial Reports |
| 58297 | Operational Models of Municipal Golf Courses and Market Comparison |
| 58296 | Community Engagement and Input |
| 58295 | Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative |
| 58718 | Land and Resource Management |
| 59057 | Capital Needs Assessment |
| 59058 | Park and Open Space Plan Overview |
| 58735 | Annual Statement of Interest Due |
| 59229 | Partnership Presentation -- Change Golf Instruction |
| 59227 | Task Force Deliberation, Discussion, and Possible Recommendations |

Legistar, the City of Madison's Legislative File Database, can be accessed by going to the Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks [webpage](https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/about/golftaskforce.cfm)¹² and selecting the Current Agenda & Minutes link on the right side of the homepage. Once in Legistar, clicking on the agenda for a specific meeting will open the agenda file that includes hyperlinks for the topics above. Relevant attachments are available within the legislative files. Additionally, the virtual meetings were recorded and are available in Legistar

¹² <https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/about/golftaskforce.cfm>

APPENDIX E – Summary Table of Final Task Force Recommendations and Votes

| # | Submission of Final Report | Meeting Date | Vote |
|---|--|--------------|---|
| | The Task Force submits this Final Report to the Board of Park Commissioners, Common Council, and the Mayor for their consideration regarding the future of Municipal Golf in Madison Parks | 7/30/2020 | 5 Approve (Henak, Miller Fienen, Krueger, Steinbring, Vega, 2 Oppose (Shane, Kopp) |

| # | Approved Recommendations | Meeting Date | Vote |
|----|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | The City should provide Municipal Golf in Madison Parks. | 7/23/2020 | Unanimous |
| 2 | The City should remove the enterprise fund designation from its golf course. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 3 | The City should update the mission of the golf program. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 4 | The City should issue a Request for Proposals to evaluate the option of a private or non-profit operator for Monona and establish a plan to eliminate eighteen holes at Yahara Hills. | 7/23/2020 | 4 Approve (Lopez, Steinbring, Krueger, Henak) 2 Oppose (Kopp, Shane) |
| 5 | The City should work with the University of Wisconsin, including the OJ Noer Ag Research Station, to develop Integrated Pest Management protocols that are at the forefront of managing public golf courses sustainably. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 6 | The City should work to promote positive ecological outcomes at the golf courses through reducing reliance on limited natural resources and providing ecological assets. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 7 | The City should work with stakeholders and staff to develop a specific action plan to promote equity and inclusion at all courses. | 7/30/2020 | Unanimous |
| 8 | The City should work with residents, stakeholders, and partners to promote wider utilization by the community of the golf courses to better integrate the courses into the wider park system for uses other than golf. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 9 | The City should ensure that if City resources are used to invest in capital projects at golf courses it is done in an equitable and fiscally responsible manner to reduce negative impact on park services across the system. | 7/15/2020 | Unanimous |
| 10 | The City should not sell park land to fund capital improvements of the golf courses. | 7/23/2020 | 4 Approve (Lopez, Steinbring, Krueger, Henak) 2 Oppose (Kopp, Shane) |

| # | Not Approved Recommendations | Meeting Date | Vote |
|---|--|--------------|---|
| 1 | The City should close Glenway and Monona if the golf program is to remain in the Enterprise model. | 7/23/2020 | 3 Approve (Shane, Kopp, Henak) 4 Oppose (Barker, Krueger, Lopez, Steinbring) |
| 2 | In the event the RFP for Monona fails, the City should set a target number of holes to operate of 45 in total. | 7/30/2020 | Unanimous |