

## [Yahara Hills Golf Course FAQ](#)

### [Why is the course being reduced to 18 holes?](#)

The Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks was formed in 2019 to provide recommendations to the City related to the Golf Enterprise Program and the land that it currently uses. The Task Force's [FINAL REPORT PDF](#) was accepted by the Common Council in January 2021. The report offered ten recommendations, including that the City should continue providing golf services and that it should reduce 18 holes of golf at Yahara Hills. Though the Task Force did recommend against selling of park land to generate reinvestment funding, it did not have the specific proposal related to a sale to Dane County to consider.

In February 2023 the City of Madison closed on the sale of roughly 200 acres of Yahara Hills Golf Course to Dane County, with a visionary plan to develop a [Sustainability Campus](#). The Sustainability Campus offers benefits to the City such as reduced transportation costs and emissions, increased operational efficiency, localized waste management control, and a heightened awareness of responsible waste practices. The Sustainability Campus is still in the planning stages, and full implementation will take place over a number of years.

The City of Madison is currently leasing back the property from Dane County in order to continue to operate 36 holes. However, the lease ends at the end of the 2024 season and requires preparations for the reduction to 18 holes prior to the start of the 2025 season.

### [How are the funds from the land sale being used?](#)

A portion (approximately \$500,000) of the \$5.5 million in funds is being used to pay off the General Fund Loan balance from 2018/2019. The loan was required for the golf program to remain functional during a period of low revenue. The remaining funds will be used for capital improvements across all of our courses. Some needs identified are listed below. Proceeds from the sale will fund a portion of the work, but not all.

- Yahara Hills: Course redesign, irrigation redesign, new maintenance facility, clubhouse and parking lot improvements
- Odana Hills: Course improvements, installation of new well, clubhouse and parking lot improvements
- Monona: Course improvements, clubhouse and parking lot improvements

### [What is the project timeline?](#)

All 36 holes will be available for play through the end of the 2024 season. The proposed 18 hole course will be available for play starting in 2025. An additional 9 holes may be available during the 2025 season, however, a determination has not yet been made and will depend on a variety of factors.

Construction work for the redesign project is planned to begin in October 2023 and continue throughout the 2024 season. We expect the work will have some impacts on play while work is on-going. However, plans are being made to reduce major impacts as much as possible.

### When will the landfill be constructed?

The landfill project is still in the planning stages with several other landfill permitting efforts progressing. Parks is in close contact with representatives from the Dane County Landfill and will continue to be as the project progresses.

### The course has been seeing a high number of rounds played. How will all of the golfers be accommodated?

The City of Madison Golf Program currently operates 72 holes of golf, starting in 2026, the Program will operate as a 54 hole operation. The team will undergo strategic planning efforts over the coming year to ensure that the program can accommodate as much play from as many players as possible while continuing to achieve the ultimate goal of providing quality affordable municipal golf. It is very probable that tee times will need to be reserved in advance, and that spontaneous/walk-on play may be more difficult to achieve than currently available.

### What are the goals and objectives of the design?

First and foremost, the goal of the reconfiguration and reinvestment is to position the Golf Program to be both financially and environmentally sustainable for generations to come. Our vision specifically for Yahara is to optimize the golfing experience for 18 holes while utilizing existing infrastructure and preserving/improving the natural landscape. In addition, one of our key objectives is to make golf more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. To achieve this, we are committed to providing enhanced short tees. These tees will allow beginners, juniors, and those seeking a more relaxed round of golf to have a satisfying experience while still enjoying the challenge of the course.

Overall, the design generally:

- Reduces existing tee box sizes
- Creates additional tee options by using “runway style” tee boxes
- Adjusts fairway mowing lines to accommodate forward tees and reduce overall fairway mowing area, which in turn will reduce input costs
- Preserve existing greens
- Modify existing irrigation system in the most efficient manner possible to provide for design changes
- Anticipates drainage issues as a result of soil structure and environmental factors, and works with nature as opposed to trying to prevent historically problematic weather patterns.

### What is the plan for the bunkers?

The proposed plan includes approximately 30 bunkers, which is a reduction from the original 43. Any existing bunkers that remain will be reconstructed, generally reduced in size, and reconfigured. All bunkers will be zero entry on one side for ease of player and maintenance equipment entry. This reduction will allow for better maintenance of the bunkers on the course. While the amount of bunkers is being reduced, the plan does call for numerous new topographic features to provide challenges to golfers. Those features include “Chocolate Drops”, “Volcanoes” and “Bulkheads”.