



---

**TO:** Kent Studebaker, Mayor  
Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Ivan Anderholm, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** STUDY SESSION ON GOLF COURSE AND PARKS & RECREATION FACILITY

**DATE:** December 19, 2017      **MEETING DATE:** January 16, 2018

---

## **ACTION**

Provide staff with direction on the future of the Municipal Golf Course and a permanent facility for Parks & Recreation administration and programming space.

## **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

On July 18, 2017, the City Council conducted a study session on the future of the Municipal Golf Course. During the work session Council expressed a continued desire to provide a golf course for the public, and acknowledged the need for a permanent home for the Parks and Recreation Department. The Council directed staff to explore and report back on options for reconfiguring and improving the golf course, and building a permanent facility at the golf course for parks and recreation staff and programs. While the Council ruled out the possibility of selling the golf course property in its entirety, an option for selling a small portion of the property to pay for improvements is still on the table.

## **DISCUSSION**

The linked *Recreation Management* article (Attachment 3) confirms that Lake Oswego is not alone in dealing with declining use of its municipal golf course. As noted at the July 18 study session, one advantage of locating the recreation center at the golf course is to encourage families and younger players to experience the sport. To that end, during the last four months staff has worked with Robertson Sherwood Architects to identify potential layouts for an improved golf course and options for adding to the clubhouse space for parks and recreation staff and programming (classrooms, meeting space, and gym).

Some of the results of this work include:

- Consistent with current trends in municipal courses, redesigning the course for nine or twelve holes offers several advantages:
  - The time commitment for playing eighteen holes is a barrier for many potential players.
  - Redesigning the course for fewer holes provides opportunities for a better playing experience.
  - Maintenance cost would be reduced.

A disadvantage is that it would be a different experience for those who have become accustomed to the current course (designed in 1965). Another disadvantage is that fewer people could be playing at the same time, potentially increasing the wait during prime times. This could, however, be offset by taking advantage of opportunities for increasing the pace of play.

- There are a range of options for a recreation center located at the golf course. On one end, the activities that currently take place at the Palisades building might be able to be accommodated with existing funds (the Palisades lease cost, and assuming that the golf course itself could become self-supporting). These two income streams could support a loan or revenue bond in the amount of \$6.2 million, which could be supplemented by a modest amount of Parks Systems Development Charges.
- Ideally, to provide the full range of recreation activities as well as meeting space, a total of 37,500 square feet would be built (including renovation or replacement of the club house). While this could not be accommodated with existing funds, the cost is well within the amount that could be raised without a tax increase as existing parks bond mature (beginning in 2019).
- Improvements to the golf course itself could be largely funded through sale of a small amount of property. The east side of Banyan Street (on the west side of the course, and immediately south of Lakeridge High) is a good location for residential development for several reasons:
  - It takes advantage of an existing “single loaded” street.
  - The City could specify the kind of housing that is developed. For example, several people have expressed interest in smaller, single floor, common wall (e.g., duplexes or row house) homes with landscaping maintained by the HOA. This would appeal both to retirees who wish to remain in Lake Oswego, as well as to younger professionals who don’t need a large house and don’t want to deal with yard work.

### Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages of collocating the recreation center and golf course include:

- As noted above, locating the recreation center with the golf course could increase interest in, and use of, the golf course.
- Having a single customer service counter is a more efficient use of staff.

- While additional parking and building space would be required, it would take advantage of existing land and parking, and possibly the clubhouse building.
- The location, on an arterial road, is at the center of current and future active and passive use park facilities, with the potential for a trail and pathway system that would extend from Oswego Lake to the Tualatin River.
- It would provide broader community enjoyment of this 39-acre site.

Disadvantages include:

- The golf course isn't centrally located. On the other hand, no location really is, with the lake in the center of the city. Travel time is less than fifteen minutes from the farthest corner of the city.
- Stafford Road is often congested during rush hour. Most recreation programs, however, are scheduled outside the peak commute times.
- The additional space and parking needs would preclude retaining an 18-hole golf course.

### Alternatives

The golf course site is an economical solution to the need for a permanent home for Parks and Recreation. But there are other options, such as:

- Other city-owned property, such as the northeast corner of the Stafford/Rosemont roundabout (the "Rassekh Property").
- Property owned by the Lake Oswego School District, subject to the district's willingness to sell property or agree to a long term lease. (No sites are obvious candidates, though).
- Other private property. An example is the vacant Wal-Mart store on Jean Way (a footprint of approximately 35,000 square feet). At current rates, property and tenant improvements would be expensive (\$400,000/year lease).
- Discontinue offering classes and programs out of a recreation center, but instead use city and school facilities for outdoor recreation, and the LOSD Community Schools program for other course offerings. We are nearing the point of no return in providing for Parks staff space in the new city hall, but leased office space downtown could be possible.

Alternatives for the golf course include:

- Leave the golf course as-is and continue to cover the operating deficit through the general fund.
- Increase green fees to cover costs.
- Invest in modest upgrades that show a positive net present value (i.e., where the investment is more than offset by a long term reduction in the operating deficit). These could include converting the clubhouse to a small event center, converting the areas outside the fairways and greens to draught-tolerant plants, or installing driving simulators.
- Sell a small portion of the property to reconfigure the course as an improved 9 or 12 hole course, but without the recreation center component.

Policy Decisions before the City Council

1. Should we continue to explore co-locating the recreation center with the golf course? If so, should we plan for the ultimate recreation needs (and probably a bond issue), or a phased approach using currently available funds?
2. If the answer is “no,” what options should be explored for other locations for parks staff and programs?
3. If the answer to #1 is “no,” should the golf course remain as-is, with only minor modifications?
4. If the answer to #2 is “no,” should selling a small portion of the land be considered as a source of funding for golf course improvements or reconfiguration?
5. Should future park bonds be considered as a source of funding for golf course improvements, especially those that could reduce the operating deficit?

Recommendation:

The staff recommendation is to co-locate the recreation center with the golf course, reconfigure the course for an improved 9 or 12 hole playing experience, and sell a portion of the land to help fund the golf improvements and provide needed housing options. We do, however, welcome the City Council’s direction in balancing the various needs of the community.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Reference data
2. Golf Course/Recreation Center Concept Design Study (Robertson Sherwood Architects)
3. Recreation Management article <http://recmanagement.com/feature/201711FE04/1>