



October 10, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

In 2009 the City of Oak Harbor opened a disc golf course at Fort Nugent Park. Since its opening, it has been a very popular feature in the park.

Disc golfers walk an average of one mile when they play the course, which creates the opportunity for physical exercise for individuals who might not normally be runners or walkers. It has also proven to be a tourism draw, with many people traveling to Whidbey Island just to play this course.

Shortly after opening the course, the Whidbey Island Disc Golf Association was formed. We have enjoyed a good relationship with the association. They are our connection to the course users, relaying information to the disc golfers, as well as making the City of Oak Harbor Parks Division staff aware of potential hazards, maintenance needs and public comments.

The Disc Golf Association has also donated numerous hours of volunteer time assisting with the maintenance and development of the disc golf course, which includes the graphic design and creation of the course signs.

Disc golf is a great sport which is growing in popularity. I fully support the Whidbey Island Disc Golf Association in their efforts to open an additional course in Island County.

Sincerely,

Hank Nydam
City of Oak Harbor Parks Manager

DISC GOLF COURSE PROPOSAL ISLAND COUNTY- RHODODENDRON PARK

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1. Introduction

The game of disc golf has exploded in recent years, and is now being enjoyed by people all ages on over 1700 courses worldwide, with more than 1400 in the U.S. alone. It is our belief that the game has grown to the point where Rhododendron Park and the community it serves can greatly benefit from the addition of a disc golf facility.

We respectfully propose that you consider amending your park plan to include a request for \$10,000 of funds targeted to establish a 18 hole (with the future consideration for an additional 9 holes) disc golf course within Rhododendron Park.

2. What is Disc Golf?

The concept of the game is easier to understand when the term 'Frisbee® golf' is used, but since Frisbee is a registered trademark, we call the game disc golf instead.

The game is similar to traditional ball golf. Players use special frisbees (golf discs) instead of balls and clubs, and throw them at an above-ground target instead of a hole in the ground. There are different types of golf discs used for different purposes, much like ball golfers use different clubs.

The object of the game is to throw a golf disc into the target for 'par' or better, i.e., in the fewest number of throws. The target is typically a steel basket over which chains hang, known as a Pole Hole®. The player begins by 'driving' from a designated concrete tee area and continues toward the target, throwing each consecutive shot from the spot where the previous throw has landed. Finally, a successful 'putt' sends the disc into the target, and the hole is completed. The combination of challenges to players, including distance, accuracy, wind, trees, shrubbery, water and terrain changes, offer plenty of action and excitement during the course of a game.

A complete, tournament-ready course of 18 holes typically utilizes 18 to 27 acres of land, depending on terrain and course design. Hole lengths typically run anywhere from 150 to 700 feet.

Disc golf is enjoyed all year long, and in many types of weather conditions, including snow.

Nationally, the growth of disc golf is exploding. The game's governing body, the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA), reports an annual 15% growth rate, a total of 3 to 5 million persons who have tried the game, and a 2010 total of over 4400 U.S. disc golf courses. The statistics also showed a total of nearly 5608 courses worldwide (in 40 countries), up from 700 in 1999. The PDGA is on the Web at <http://www.pdga.com>.

3. Who Can Play?

You'll find men, women, and kids of virtually all ages playing on your disc golf course.

Players are drawn by many of the same pleasures found in traditional ball golf: fresh air in a beautiful landscape, the camaraderie of friends, and the challenge and excitement of combining personal skill and speed to project an object toward a target.

The rules are simple to grasp, allowing beginners to immediately have fun challenging themselves and their friends. A typical round of 18 holes takes approximately 60 to 120 minutes to play.

Perhaps the greatest factor behind disc golf's broad accessibility is its low cost. Players need nothing more than an \$8-\$15 frisbee, and since most courses are located in parks, there are little or no admission fees. This factor alone opens the game up to countless residents who cannot afford many of today's other popular recreation activities.

Bottom line: disc golf is fun for everyone regardless of age, gender or economic status.

4. Community and Park Benefits

Disc golf's high benefit-to-cost ratio makes it a positive choice for your overall community service plans. In addition to appealing to nearly all age and gender groups, the game is environmentally sound and serves a great number of people for a very low investment in time, energy and financial costs.

Disc golf courses differ from ball golf courses in that they fit into the existing flora of the park, rather than requiring the clear-cutting of trees or the manicuring and fertilization of fairways. They tend to utilize areas within parks that are otherwise underused, including thick woods and slopes, yet can easily co-exist with other activities such as hiking and dog-walking. There is almost no noise pollution created, and players take great pride in the care of their course, cleaning up litter and reminding others to use trash receptacles.

Installing a course also creates extra traffic in areas which might otherwise be remote, providing a year-round human presence and deterrent to the few parks guests who may have mischief on their minds.

By having camping available on site, your park can realize the potential for added income per year.

Finally, for less than the cost of installing one tennis court which can serve four people at a time, your park can install an 18 hole disc golf course and serve a minimum of 72 people at any given time, all year round.

5. Costs and Land Requirements

5.1 Costs

A first class 18 hole disc golf course can be installed for as little as \$22,000. This includes the purchase/construction and installation of 18 galvanized steel baskets, 36 cement tee pads, 18 tee signs, trash cans, seating and a message board. This figure is very flexible, as costs can be easily cut using inexpensive seating & trash cans and, most importantly, utilizing player volunteer efforts. Our proposal is for \$10,000 in funding thanks in part to our club volunteers and our own fund raising efforts.

5.1.1 Baskets

These estimates are based on the latest disc golf basket -- the lockable Mach V Pole Hole -- and two placement sleeves. Other types of baskets are available at similar prices. Each sleeve would be set in a cement hole measuring approximately 8 inches in diameter and 18-36 inches deep. Once in place, they are relatively maintenance free.

DGA Mach V Basket: $\$353.00 \times 18 = \6354.00

Locking Collar 4"x2" tubing: $\$9.00 \times 18 = \162.00

Anchor Assembly 18"x2" tubing: $\$17.00 \times 36 = \612.00

Concrete: 1 cubic yard = \$65.00

Total Basket costs: \$7193.00

5.1.2 Tee Pads

Each hole would have two cement tee pads, one closer to the basket for amateur players, and the other farther away for advanced players. Each would be flush to the ground or elevated depending on design & terrain factors, approximately 6x12 feet in length and 4 inches thick, requiring approximately 1 cubic yard of concrete. Once in place, they are relatively maintenance free.

Concrete, forms, fill and seed: $\$80.00 \times 36 = \2880.00

5.1.3 Signs, Message Board, Seating and Trash Cans

Tee signs are important in directing new players through the next hole and providing information about hole length, terrain and out-of-bounds areas. The message board serves as a player gathering place and communications outlet. Trash cans are also a critical component of the course, as their presence on a minimum of every other hole we will considerably reduce the amount of course litter. If constructed of solid material, all these items are also relatively maintenance free.

Tee Signs (estimated): $\$60.00 \times 18 = \1080.00

Message Board (estimated): $\$250.00$

~~Trash Cans (estimated): $\$50 \times 9 = \450.00~~

5.1.4 Course Design and Development

If you have any further questions about course costs, designs or the local disc golf community you can contact Danni Baugher at (850-426-1513) or Whidbey Island Disc Golf's President, Tim Baugher, at (850-426-1514). We can also be reached at gstdtimmay@yahoo.com

5.1.5 Installation and Maintenance

Once a course is in place, maintenance costs are relatively low. Mowing, tree trimming, and seeding will be required as needed. Erosion concerns should be monitored regularly depending on terrain, and occasional maintenance can be required on heavy footpaths. Tee pads should be regularly checked for safe grade, signs checked for maintenance needs, and hazardous trees or limbs removed. A regular routine to empty trash cans will ensure a tidy course.

Installation and maintenance costs can be drastically offset by player volunteer efforts.

Maintenance labor and materials estimates:

~~Mowing: 15 hours/week~~

Trash removal: 5 hours/week

~~Seeding: 4 hours/year~~

Tree Trimming/Miscellaneous: 5 hours/month
(COURSE MAINTENANCE)

Installation labor requirements for disc golf holes will vary by terrain. Fieldgrass areas will need only mowing, while heavily wooded areas will require selective tree removal, including falling, chipping, stump removal and hole filling. While hole preparation time for a fieldgrass area may need only four hours of labor, a heavily wooded area may require 40 hours.

Installation labor estimates:

Baskets: 4 hours each

Tee Pads: 8 hours each

Holes: 16 hours each/average

Signage: 1 hour each

Total installation labor hours (estimated): 667

5.1.6 Economic Summary for 18-Hole Course Installation

Total Basket costs: \$7186.00

Concrete Tee Pads (estimated): \$80.00 x 36 = \$2880.00

Tee Signs (estimated): \$60.00 x 18 = \$1080.00

Message Board (estimated): \$250.00

~~Trash Cans (estimated): \$50 x 18 = \$450.00~~

Installation labor (estimated): \$10 per hour x 667 hours = \$6670.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS: \$18.516.00

5.1.7 Amenities

Adding the following amenities will further increase the quality and enjoyment of your disc golf course:

- Benches
- Practice putting area (one to three targets)
- Concession area
- Driving range/disc sports area

5.2 Space Requirements

Depending on terrain, each disc golf hole will require one to two acres of land.

6. How Washington relates to U.S. Disc Golf

With at least 78 courses currently maintained on a full-time basis, Washington is beginning to establish itself as a premier state to play disc golf.

As the sport continues its exponential growth, tourist dollars will begin to flow into Washington and other states which offer first class courses, facilities and tournaments. We have already established a solid base on which to continue building Whidbey Island's reputation for disc golf and recreational park excellence.

7. Whidbey Island Disc Golf Club

Whidbey Island Disc Golf is a non-profit organization made up of volunteer representatives from local disc golf clubs throughout the area. Our goals are to encourage cooperation between the local community to further the growth of disc sports. We host several annual tournaments, along with main local, weekly events. Whidbey Island Disc Golf runs dozens of tournaments and player clinics, as well as programs with schools. Our members are committed to education, professionalism, and of course, fun.

This year Whidbey Island Disc Golf, through fundraising and volunteer efforts, installed several new holes to Ft Nugent's disc golf course as well as alternate pin placements to further the versatility of that park to appeal to disc golfers.

As a club we are always trying to bring the next generation into the sport, so in keeping with that theme we installed concrete t-pads for the youth players 12 years-old and younger.

As part of our "give back to the local community" philosophy we also funded and ran a clinic for the Island Chapter of the Big Brother Big Sister.

Part of our future goals is we have plans to host a STATE series tournament on Whidbey Island in the summer of 2013. This is a great honor for a local disc golf community and a benefit to the community at large bringing in several hundred players from around the state.

8. Appendices

8.1 Testimonials from Parks Departments

A statement from Hank Nyman – Director of Parks for Oak Harbor.

8.2 Newspaper and Magazine Clippings

Adventure Northwest Magazine, Fall 2011 edition. Whidbey Island Disc Golf was the cover photo.

8.3 Technical Specifications for Installation of Tee Pads

Courtesy of Innova-Champion

Tee Pad Concrete Specifications

- 4" minimum thickness
- 3000 PSI minimum
- 4" slump
- Approximately 1 cubic yard per each 12' x 6' x 4" tee pad.
- Use rebar or wire when building on unstable soil

Finish:

Create a very coarse finish. Most broom finishes will wear smooth within one year and will be ineffective during wet conditions. To achieve an excellent finish, affix a weighted Astroturf mat to a broom and drag the mat across the wet concrete. Timing is essential to finish.

Drag the grass-like blades across the wet surface shortly after floating but before a broom finish would normally be applied.

Two inch finished edge (optional)

Grade:

The tee pad should be essentially level from side to side.

From front to back, the pad may slope to follow grade, but slope must not exceed 1 inch per foot. To allow for drainage, the pad should never be perfectly level or have low areas that will harbor water.

Pad elevation should not interfere with mowing and other maintenance operations.

Concrete Specifications © Innova-Champion, reprinted with permission.

8.4 PDGA Disc Golf Course Design Standards

Prepared by the Disc Golf Course Designers Group, December 1997

Adopted by the Professional Disc Golf Association, January 1998

8.4.1 Disc Golf Course Design Goals

- A. Satisfy the design requirements of the people and organizations who approve use of the land and fund the equipment for the course.
- B. Design course to be safe for both players and non-players who may pass near or through the course.
- C. Design course with the potential for multiple configurations to serve not only beginners but players with advanced skills; consistent with the budget and design needs expressed in Goal A above.
- D. Design a well balanced course with a wide range of hole lengths and a good mixture of holes requiring controlled left, right and straight throws.
- E. Utilize elevation changes and available foliage as well as possible. Take care to minimize potential damage to foliage and reduce the chances for erosion.

8.4.2 Course Design Elements

8.4.2.1 SPACE:

A Community Full Service course requires up to one acre per hole. However, a Recreational Standard course can sometimes fit 2-3 holes per acre depending on terrain.

8.4.2.2 HOLE COUNT:

Most courses are either 9 or 18 holes. There are several with 12, 24 or 27 holes. Tradition appears to dictate that the number of holes be divisible by 3. It is better to install a well designed, dual tee 12-hole course than it is to install a cramped, less safe 18-hole course on the same piece of land.

8.4.2.3 LENGTH:

All courses should have at least one configuration for beginners and casual recreational players that averages no more than 250 feet per hole (75 meters). This is a maximum of 4500 ft (1350m) for an 18-hole course or 2250 feet (675m) for a 9-holer. The preferred length range is 3600-4300 feet (1080-1290m) for the shortest setup on an 18-hole course. This is an average length of 200-240 feet per hole (60-73m). No hole should be shorter than 120 feet (35m) and 150 feet (45m) is the "normal" low end limit. Longer configurations are achieved by installing alternate tees or target positions on several holes. Typical 18-hole course setups for advanced players range from 4500-6000 feet (1350-1800m). Course setups longer than 6000 feet (1800m) are primarily for expert players and tournament play. There is no maximum length allowed for a hole. The longest holes in the world are about 1000 feet (305m).

8.4.2.4 HOLE NOTES:

There should be a preferred flight path to a hole. Ideally, there should be more than one flight path (including rollers) to play several of the holes. There should not be too many obstructions within 30 ft (10m) of each target. An obstruction should not be so imposing that a player can not at least try to putt by stretching sideways, throwing from a low stance or throwing over the top of or through any obstacles near a target. No player throwing from the shortest (or only) tee on a hole should ever be "forced" to throw over water that is normally greater than 18" deep (50cm). Have an alternate flight path (usually to the left) that gives players the option to not cross water. Any normally dry trenches or bodies of water under 18" deep that are regularly in play should have safe paths down and out to be able to throw and/or retrieve discs safely.

8.4.2.5 TEES:

Hard surface tee pads of textured cement or asphalt are preferred. Recommended size is 6 ft wide by at least 12 ft long (1.8x3m). Maximum size is 6 ft wide by 20 ft long with the back end flaring out to 10 feet

wide. If you need to conserve materials, make tee pads shorter on short or downhill holes and longer on long holes. For example, a hard surfaced tee pad at the top of a hill on a short hole might only need to be 8 ft long because players will just stand at the front edge of the tee to make their throws.

Non-hard surface tee areas should be even surfaced and not contain protruding rocks or roots. Tee areas should be level from left to right. They should not slope too sharply from front to back. The front edge of tee area must be indicated by the front edge of a tee board buried flush in the ground or by the imaginary line between two stakes that mark the front edge.

Beyond the front of each tee pad should be adequate room for follow-through so a player doesn't risk twisting an ankle, falling off a ledge or whacking their arm on a tree or sign. If possible, provide adequate level ground for a runup behind each tee pad, especially on longer holes. Avoid major obstructions that severely block flight path up to 20 feet in front of tee.

On courses with alternate tees on some holes, the tees in the shorter positions should always be better or at least equal in quality to those in longer positions. For example, avoid designs where the long tee pads are cement and short tee pads are grass or dirt.

8.4.2.6 TARGETS:

Any well-marked object, post or basket can serve as a target. Make sure targets do not have any sharp edges that might injure players or damage discs. Locally fabricated targets for sale or to be installed on public land must not violate any basket manufacturer's patents.

8.4.2.7 SIGNS:

Install a rules sign prominently before the first tee plus post a rules sheet on an information board (if there is one). Signs or marker arrows near each target should indicate the direction to next tee (as needed). Signs should indicate Out-of-Bounds boundaries and any other areas players should avoid. The shortest tee on each hole should have permanent signs indicating the hole number, length, teeing direction (if needed) and recreational par. Signs on shortest tees should always be equal to or better than those at longer positions on each hole.

8.4.2.8 PAR:

Par for recreational players using the short tees should range from about 68-75 on an 18-hole course. Many holes should be par 4s. A hole up to 200 feet (60m) is at least a par 3; from 200-280 feet (60-85m) is a par 4; from 280-400 feet (85-125m) is a par 5. (Add 1 to par for every additional 150 feet (45m) if needed.) Adjust par on a hole up or down if it has a significant upslope or downslope, respectively. Since it's easier to keep score in your head, advanced and expert players usually play all holes as par 3s (even if they rarely score 3 on long holes).

8.4.2.9 LAYOUT:

Fairways should not cross one another and should be far enough apart so errant throws are not constantly in the wrong fairway. Fairways should not cross or be too close to public streets, sidewalks and other busy areas where non-players congregate. Avoid hazardous areas such as swamps and thorny or poisonous foliage. Tees and targets should be far enough from the targets and fairways of other holes.

The tee for the first hole should be the closest to the regular parking area. The target for the last hole should not be too far from the parking area and relatively close to the first tee. If possible, try to locate at least one other hole in the middle of course near the parking area. Try to minimize the amount of walking between holes (still keeping safety in mind).