

DATE ISSUED: August 6, 2004

REPORT NO. 04-182

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee,
Agenda of August 11, 2004

SUBJECT: Status Update Regarding the Torrey Pines Golf Course

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee regarding recent issues and changes at the Torrey Pines Golf Course and to allow the Committee an opportunity to provide comments regarding future golf operations and maintenance improvements within the division. This report has been prepared in response to recent questions about Torrey Pines and is not intended to address all of the operational issues outlined in the annual operations report. That information will be presented to the Committee later in the fiscal year following the selection and placement of the new Golf Operation Manager and Assistant Operation Manager.

DISCUSSION

1. Status of Projects and Maintenance

a. Improvements and Enhancements at Torrey Pines

i. Torrey Pines South Course Greens

Staff has been working diligently to address on-going issues at the south course related to the condition of the greens. Staff has consulted on a regular basis with national experts from the United States Golf Association (USGA) and Professional Golf Association (PGA) and developed an aggressive maintenance program. This program includes increased aeration to reduce the existing subsurface thatch layer and speed the conversion of the greens from Penncross to Poa annua, increased monitoring of the green size and shape to

ensure proper greens dimensions, additional topdressing, and increased salinity monitoring, fertilization and grooming. This aggressive treatment program has been implemented within the last several months and it will continue as long as needed.

In order to allow sufficient time for course maintenance, staff is planning to adjust the start time for early bird play. This adjustment is scheduled to go into effect in late September. Early bird play will start no earlier than one hour prior to reservations. This will allow maintenance staff to have some time daily, to address course maintenance ahead of scheduled play.

The recent focused attention on course maintenance is showing indications for long term success. Staff understands the absolute necessity for this maintenance program and also recognizes that this additional maintenance impacts the course conditions for current golf customers. In an attempt to reduce this impact as much as possible, staff has worked hard to inform course users of the maintenance schedule by updating the telephone reservation system, posting the current course conditions at the starters' booth, and coordinating with the pro shop and hotels. Staff has also taken additional steps on the course to minimize the impact to users and speed the recovery process. These include increasing the number of smaller top dressings, using the speed rollers immediately following greens aeration, increased hand watering, and, in some cases, hand mowing.

Staff is committed to improving the long term condition of the greens while focusing their work efforts to ensure that the golf course is challenging and enjoyable to current users.

ii. Torrey Pines North Course Maintenance Renovation

The north course at Torrey Pines has been scheduled in the CIP program for renovation for the last few years. The scope of this work will include reconstructing the greens, adding or expanding tee options, and updating and adding bunkers. This construction is scheduled to start in February 2005, immediately following the Buick Invitational, and will be complete prior to the Junior World Tournament in July 2005.

The scope of work for this maintenance project is intended to improve overall course conditions, update the course to address general new golf course expectations, and expand the tee and pin placement options thereby improving maintainability of the course and increasing the challenge level for professional tournament play.

The specifics of this work include:

1. Rebuilding all of the greens and repositioning seven or eight existing greens to improve their placement and visibility. This reconstruction will include rebuilding the greens to conform to current USGA standards. This work will require construction of a completely new underground profile for each of the greens. The existing greens do not include any of the recommended elements of the USGA green structure nor do they include a much needed drainage system. In addition to conforming to USGA standards, the new greens will provide additional pin placement options, improving the long term maintainability of the greens.

Currently the construction process is scheduled to include stolonizing with material from the existing *Poa annua* greens and over seeding with Pennncross. This process will accelerate the reestablishment of the *Poa annua* as the primary greens turf.

2. Releveling and expanding nearly all of the tee box areas. This work will expand the tee options for tournament and general use, thereby reducing the impact of play on the course. This will also allow the course to be arranged in a more challenging configuration, consistent with conditions on the south course.
3. Rebuilding and/or relocating all of the existing bunkers on the golf course as well as adding new bunkers along the fairways and at the greens to update the course. Each of these new bunkers will be much improved from the existing bunkers because they will include a drainage system. This work will improve the bunker conditions, the challenge level of the course for professional tournament play and the overall course conditions.
4. As part of the north course work there will be some minor work conducted on the south course. The scope of this work will focus on minor adjustments needed to prepare the south course for the 2008 US Open. At this point two primary issues would be addressed. These include releveling the landing area on the 18th fairway and adding two or three bunkers to the left side of the fairway on hole number six.

All of the proposed work is intended to maintain the golf course character and high quality experience that is currently available at the north course, while improving the long term conditions and expanding the flexibility of the course.

iii. Torrey Pines Golf Course Clubhouse

Currently the City is exploring possible locations for a new or reconstructed clubhouse. These improvements will address the needs of the overall golf operation at Torrey Pines and provide the facilities needed at this major golf complex. The Clubhouse would include an expanded pro-shop, new administrative areas for Club Corp and the City, improved ADA accessibility, additional storage space along with upgraded cart storage and maintenance areas. The project will also include expansion and reconfiguration of the parking lot and driving range, the possible relocation of the maintenance facility and construction of a new building for the Century Club. The proposed Century Club Building would include office space for the Century Club and locker rooms for professional tournament use.

The project is targeted for construction starting in February of 2006 following the Buick Invitational. At this time, staff is reviewing funding alternatives with Financial Management and the Auditor to determine the best financing strategy for the project.

b. Improvements and Enhancements at Balboa Park

Currently there are two on-going projects at the Balboa Park Golf Course. They are the construction of a new half-way house/comfort station on the 18 hole course and construction of a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible restroom within the existing clubhouse.

The halfway house/comfort station is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion before the end of the calendar year. This facility will include a new ADA accessible comfort station and an expanded refreshment/concession area.

The new ADA restrooms within the existing clubhouse have been designed and funding is in place for construction. The project is scheduled for completion prior to the end of Fiscal Year 2005. Currently the plans for a new clubhouse at the Balboa Park Golf Course are on hold.

2. Status of Golf Course Operations

a. Utilization of the Golf Courses

i. Torrey Pines Golf Course

A total of 161,429 rounds were played on Torrey Pines golf courses in FY 2004. Two thirds of those rounds were played by residents (19% of the resident rounds were senior play.) About 20% were played by County and Non-Residents. Hotel tee time reservations accounted for 5% of the rounds. Tournaments represented about 9% of the rounds.

The 69,204 south course rounds compared favorably with the established goal of approximately 72,000 rounds annually. The south course plays at 10 minute intervals and aims for a pace of play not to exceed five hours.

The 92,225 north course rounds compares well with the goal of 100,000 annually. The north course plays at 7/8 minute intervals and aims for a pace of play not to exceed four hours 30 minutes.

As a percentage of the total rounds played, the south course play was proportionately higher for Non-Resident, tournament and hotel tee time play, while north course play was proportionately higher for Residents, especially seniors.

b. Golf Course Audit Report

The City Auditor issued a report on June 21, 2004 regarding the internal controls at the Golf Courses. Staff immediately addressed and implemented the recommendations for cash handling. In addition, the Century Club account was reviewed and it was determined that \$142,639 was owed to the City under their agreement for the 2004 Buick Invitational. This amount was promptly remitted by the Century Club. The tournament bank account has been closed and a review of expenditures is in process. Staff is also in the process of conducting a physical inventory of all fixed assets, and ensuring that other recommendations contained in the Auditor's report are promptly addressed.

3. Mission Bay Golf Course

In November 2003, the Park and Recreation Department welcomed the challenge of assuming operations for the Mission Bay Golf Course. Immediately, staff set out to improve the overall condition of the Golf Course and Practice Center. Our goal was to meet and exceed the expectations of our customers and conform to standards and practices of the Golf Division. A motivated team lead by a skilled supervisor immediately assessed and initiated an ambitious schedule to address the facility conditions. One of the most challenging issues has been working to improve the turf conditions with a very outdated irrigation system.

The overall results have been good. The turf quality on greens, fairways, and practice range tees has improved. In addition, the course lighting system was partially rewired and included lamp replacement with assistance from the City's Facilities Maintenance Division to provide a well lighted facility suitable for evening play. Other steps that have been initiated to improve the course conditions include regrading, leveling, and resodding four tee areas. The Golf Course Manager and the starter/practice range staff have been well received by the golf patrons and have been receiving positive comments regarding the facility.

The next key issues to be addressed at the golf course are continuing to address the general course and facility conditions and improving the facility capabilities by providing food and beverage services for the golf course customers. Currently, the Real Estate Assets

Department is reviewing proposals from concessionaires who wish to enter into a lease agreement with the City to provide this service. Staff anticipates that a recommendation regarding a lease will be brought to City Council for consideration later this year.

4. Golf Staffing

Currently the City is conducting a nation wide search for two key positions with in the golf program. These are the Golf Operations Manager and the Assistant Golf Operations Manager. Under the direction of the Park and Recreation director, these positions will over see the entire golf program. At this time, resumes are being gathered, candidates will be interviewed soon and the positions should be filled later this fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Oppenheim
Park and Recreation Director

Approved: Bruce A. Herring
Deputy City Manager

OPPENHEIM/MM