



CITY OF ST. ALBERT
ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER

TITLE: DISC GOLF COURSE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present a motion for which Councillor Hansen gave notice on January 25, 2021.

PROPOSED MOTION(S):

Direct administration to secure a site for the purpose of setting up a spontaneous use temporary disc golf course for the 2021 season, including mats and baskets (please provide costs).

Further that appropriate public engagement/input on the feasibility of a permanent course occur by Q3, 2021. That funding for this project come from the stabilization reserve.

ALIGNMENT TO PRIORITIES IN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #4: Infrastructure Investment: Identify and build needed capital assets.

ALIGNMENT TO LEVELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

N/A

Provision of disc golf is not a current service level for the City of St. Albert.

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL DIRECTION OR MANDATORY STATUTORY PROVISION

N/A

BACKGROUND:

Disc Golf is a growing sport, both regionally and nationally. Played like golf in rounds of 9 or 18 holes and scored based on a par system, the sport is inexpensive to play and requires limited infrastructure - a tee box or otherwise defined starting area and specialty disc golf baskets.

Regionally, there are several disc golf courses in parks in Edmonton, and courses in Leduc, Beaumont, Spruce Grove, Keephills and Strathcona County. The nearest disc golf course to St. Albert is located within Montreux Park in Morinville. These courses are typically managed by municipalities, however there are not for profit associations that assist in designing, fundraising, managing and/or maintaining these courses. There is no formal St. Albert disc golf group currently.

Administration has received a small number of requests of information regarding disc golf in St. Albert in the past three years, including a request for a potential 18 hole competition level course. Staff have researched the sport to understand the potential of adding this amenity to future park development or redevelopment plans. There are specific site needs for disc golf courses, including a large space, without high usage or many existing amenities, ideally with terrain changes and mature trees. Administration has not yet identified a viable park site for this amenity.

The Professional Disc Golf Association provides minimum course sizes based on skill level for appropriately designed disc golf courses, shown below.

9 Hole Course	Beginner: 3 acres
	Championship: 5.5 acres
18 Hole Course	Beginner: 6 acres
	Championship: 11 acres

Langholm Park was proposed by a resident in 2019 but due to the existing sportfields and ball diamond and the need for assessment and public engagement, the project was not able to be supported by Recreation and Parks at that time. In 2020, the resident sought permission to install a low impact temporary course at Langholm Park consisting of large buckets hung from trees.

Due to the lack of permanent infrastructure proposed and the cancellation of bookings on the field and ball diamond due to COVID restrictions, the course was supported for 2020. The resident developed a course map on a disc golf app and tracked approximately 1,500 rounds played between June and October.

Temporary Course for 2021

Site: Langholm Park

Capital Cost: \$5,500

Additional Operating Cost: \$0

Administration recommends permitting the existing temporary disc golf course to continue operation in Langholm Park in 2021, with residents bringing their own discs to the course. This site has an existing user base and Administration received no concerns from the public about course use in 2020.

If bookings proceed in 2021 at the ball diamond, site signage would be installed asking disc golf players to refrain from using the course while the ball diamond is in use. Contact information will be provided and any conflicts with existing use or surrounding residences from the public will be tracked and responded to as needed.

Portable baskets with an inground locking mechanism are recommended and can be installed by existing staff. Once a permanent course is in place, the baskets will either be moved to the new course or used as portable baskets by Recreation & Parks for various programs and events.

Administration is recommending chalk-lining tee boxes, rather than using starting mats, to prevent damage from mowing and potential vandalism. Tee box lining could occur when the sport fields are lined and touched up as needed. This is supported by the resident advocating for the Langholm course.

Maintenance of the temporary course would be completed alongside the standard park maintenance cycle. There are minimal additional operational costs expected and the work can be completed within existing budgets. Commercial quality portable baskets for 9 holes are anticipated to cost no more than \$5,500.

If Council wishes to move forward on permitting Langholm Park as a temporary course in 2021, Administration recommends the following motion:

That Administration be directed to install a temporary disc golf course at Langholm Park for 2021, to be implemented as soon as practicable and that funding in the amount of \$5500 to purchase equipment required to implement the temporary course be approved, to be funded from the Stabilization Reserve.

Permanent Course Feasibility

Feasibility Study Cost: \$15,000

Administration is proposing to hire a consultant to complete a feasibility study, which would establish key criteria for a 9-hole and/or 18-hole disc golf course and assess existing parks and near future growth areas for potential fit. The consultant would provide recommended options with preliminary course layouts and conceptual level costing. Based on industry estimates, this work is anticipated to cost no more than \$15,000.

Once viable permanent course opportunities have been identified, Recreation and Parks will complete public engagement on the potential site(s) and provide recommendations and costs to Council in fall 2021 for consideration, including identification of potential small economic opportunities for the sale or rental of discs to support the course. There are no anticipated additional funds required for public engagement.

Should Council wish to move forward on identifying a potential permanent disc golf course, Administration recommends that the following motion be approved:

That Administration complete a feasibility study and public engagement to identify a potential permanent disc golf site and bring forward a report and recommendations to Council on the potential permanent site by end of Q3 2021. And that funding of \$15,000 be approved to support the feasibility study, to be funded from the Capital Recreation Reserve.

Report Date: February 16, 2021
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