



Strategic Master Plan

July 17, 2014



PREPARED FOR:
CITY OF COMMERCE CITY
PARKS, RECREATION AND GOLF DEPARTMENT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 22, 2013, Commerce City Parks, Recreation and Golf Department staff went before City Council to bring awareness to the deteriorating state of one of the City's prominent recreation facilities and to design a strategy to rejuvenate excitement for current and future users of the facility. In response, the City decided that a collaborative plan was necessary to accomplish this objective for Buffalo Run Golf Course. The following mission and vision statements are reflective of the planning process.

Buffalo Run Golf Course Mission

- Buffalo Run is dedicated to providing exceptional golf, recreation, dining and social experiences for Commerce City residents, non-residents and guests.

Buffalo Run Golf Course Vision

- Enhance the "Buffalo Run Experience" by continuously improving amenities and service to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction.
- Provide golf, recreation and dining experiences comparable to the best in the area, ensuring that all of the facilities are inviting, functional and well maintained.
- Ensure the long-term success of Buffalo Run through dedication to financial soundness and fiscal responsibility.

Purpose of This Plan:

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide Commerce City with direction in addressing current and future opportunities and capital improvement opportunities at Buffalo Run Golf Course.

This Plan is the result of an extensive planning effort that included public and staff input, facility inventories, site visits, budget analysis, collection of trends, demographic and benchmark data, and cost analysis.

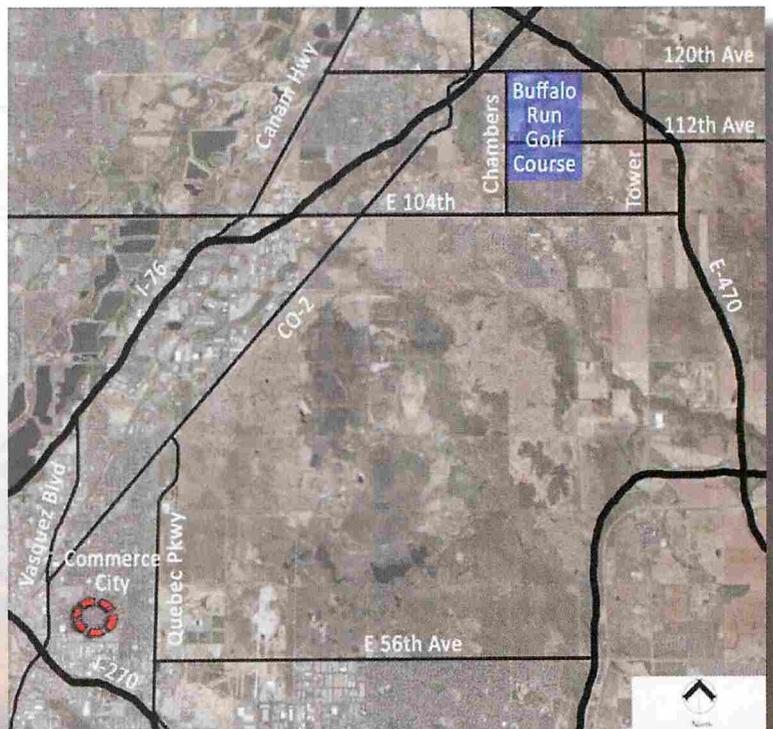
Following is a summary of key findings as well as recommended goals and objectives.

History:

Located just north of the heart of Commerce City, Buffalo Run Golf Course has been a Commerce City attraction since it opened August 9, 1996. Buffalo Run provides an array of services beyond its 18 hole, 7,411 yard course, driving range and practice facilities, including tournaments and events, men's/women's clubs, lessons and a full restaurant featuring a bar and patio dining.

Over the last 18 years, the course has been subjected to the same economic peaks and valleys as most other golf courses nationwide, seeing a strong surge of golf interest throughout the late 90's and early 2000's, to a severe decline in players due to primarily to the recession after 2008.

Since original construction, the condition of the golf course has been slowly deteriorating due to resource limitations. As part of the planning process, a level of service standard was established based upon comparable golf courses in the region. Originally designed as a mid-high level golf course, the course itself has fallen to a mid-low level course as depicted in the following photographs.



Existing Conditions

Course Conditions:

Upon inspecting the course, the following issues were identified:

- Due to the original design of the bunkers, the bunkers have lost their edges, allowing sand and loose soil to escape onto the course
- Due primarily to drainage issues, some areas around and on the tee-boxes, fairways and greens have degraded
- The course's irrigation system is approaching the end of its lifespan, creating additional maintenance costs and requiring frequent repairs
- Due to erosion, many of the lakes show shoreline degradation, exposing liners that are deteriorating; the lakes are also filling with sediment from run-off

These conditions are common to all golf courses. However, due to initial design leading to harsh soil and drainage conditions, Buffalo Run Golf Course experiences accelerated levels of degradation. These problems are only precursors to the more eminent issue of residential development around the course, which will add additional drainage challenges.

Equipment and Maintenance Facilities:

Buffalo Run houses 54 pieces of maintenance equipment including mowers, utility carts, aerators, tractors and other various pieces of maintenance equipment necessary to maintain the course. Some issues identified with the equipment and maintenance facilities include:

- Aging equipment, some of which has been around since the course's inception in 1996
- Lack of storage space for the larger equipment, reducing the life span of equipment left out in the elements
- Lack of storage space for irrigation parts, tools, course supplies and chemicals
- A single maintenance bay to repair equipment, creating efficiency and logistical problems
- Limited space and lack of heating in the cart barn

Clubhouse Facilities:

Challenges include:

- Parking facilities that lack lighting, landscaping and space, leading to parking along 112th Avenue (scheduled to be widened)
- Minimal space to receive, process and store inventory which causes it to spill onto the clubhouse floor
- A single office that is shared by the entire clubhouse staff, and regularly utilized for inventory storage, personal belongings and meals
- Absence of an employee break/storage area
- Lack of restroom facilities for both staff and customers

Restaurant:

Although the operations of the Bison Grill are different from the operations of the course, many of the issues identified are very similar including:

- Lack of storage space; many of the Grill's dry wares and other items are stored in sheds behind the clubhouse
- Lack of refrigerator and freezer space causing difficulties in maintaining proper inventory levels
- Undersized kitchen for the volume of customers during peak season
- Location and size of the bar for the volume of customers during peak season

Goals for the Future

Buffalo Run plays a vital role in helping enhance the positive image of Commerce City and promoting it as a place where people want to live and work. The goals established are directly related to the image of the facility and as an extension, also relate to the image of Commerce City. In addition, improvements that enhance Buffalo Run have a positive impact on the long-term financial stability of the operation because they improve the quality of the product in a highly competitive market.

THK Associates, Inc. helped facilitate priorities and ideas from the consultant team, Commerce City Parks, Recreation and Golf staff to develop the goals for the course:

Goal 1: Raise the course condition rating from a mid-low level course to a mid-high level course using the most cost effective and sustainable solutions and to maintain that condition through continued pro-active maintenance.

Goal 2: Improve the functionality of the clubhouse, cart barn, and maintenance buildings for customers and staff alike.

Goal 3: Improve infrastructure on site to address current challenges and accomodate growth.

Planning Process:

The planning process was led by THK Associates Inc. and included City and course staff. Multiple meetings of the project team, site visits, staff interviews and market research were used to create the goals and strategies of the Plan. Key members present throughout the process were:

Julia Emko	Josh Metsker
Michelle Halstead	Randall Navarro (THK)
Paul Hebinck	Will Panella
Garrett Hoffman	Kirk Reiber
Carolyn Keith	Tracy Schmer
Robert Menzer	Kevin Shanks (THK)

Recommendations

The project team developed a list of prioritized strategies to meet the stated goals.

1. Recover and improve soil and turf conditions
2. Create additional parking for customers
3. Update/Replace Irrigation System
4. Replace aging equipment
5. Analyze current drainage studies around golf course to identify drainage solutions
6. Renovate Bunkers
7. Clean and repair lakes
8. Evaluate and update facilities infrastructure to allow for increased development and usage
9. Increase storage capacity, operational capabilities and usability of maintenance facilities
10. Identify possible problems, solutions and opportunities to assist with the construction and widening of 112th Avenue
11. Add lighting to clubhouse and maintenance parking lots
12. Remodel front entrance and lobby of clubhouse to create additional space for restroom and restaurant expansion
13. Remodel kitchen to add additional space for storage and kitchen expansion
14. Install additional restroom facilities around the course
15. Build and repair cart paths as needed throughout the golf course
16. Add landscaping around the course, course entrances and clubhouse
17. Improve security around clubhouse and maintenance facilities