

# Smithers Golf and Country Club

## DRAFT Strategic Plan 2018-2023



Draft Approved by The SGCC Board of Directors: March, 2018

## Introduction

The Smithers Golf and Country Club (SGCC) is an 18 hole championship-length golf course located within the town of Smithers, British Columbia. The facilities include a spacious clubhouse with golf shop, kitchen, dining room, and bar. The Club was first established in 1931 and is operated by a Registered Non-Profit Society for the benefit of the members and the communities of the Bulkley Valley. The golf course property and facilities are owned and operated by the members through the Society and an elected Board of Directors. It is the only 18 hole full-length golf course within 200 km along Highway 16 in northern British Columbia.

The Club currently has approximately 350 members from Smithers and the adjacent communities of Hazelton, Moricetown, Telkwa, and Houston. The golf course is typically open for play from mid-April until mid-October by members and through Green Fee use to non-members and the travelling public. The Club hosts a number of tournaments annually, which attract players from throughout Northwest BC. The Clubhouse facilities are available for rental by the community for social and corporate events throughout the year.

The Club provides employment for 2 full-time employees, 1 part-time, and up to 30 seasonal staff. The SGCC is a local tourist attraction and destination; providing spin-off to local businesses. The Club provides economic benefit to the community by purchasing goods and services from local and regional suppliers and uses local trades people for repairs and maintenance. The Club supports charitable functions throughout the year with most proceeds going to local community charities and institutions.

In 2017, a Strategic Planning Committee initiated a Membership Survey to gather membership input into the Vision and Values of the Club and ideas for future operation and management of the SGCC. This important membership input (summary attached) is reflected in this 5-Year Strategic Plan for the Club.

## **Our Vision**

To be an inclusive and affordable community-based Golf Club with a golf course of the highest possible quality, providing a challenging and enjoyable experience for golfers of all ages and abilities.

## **Our Mission**

To maintain and continuously improve the golf course and clubhouse facilities for present and future members and guests; to deliver a rewarding membership experience in line with our core values, both on and off the course, by ensuring that our customer services and facilities are of the highest possible standard, while maintaining our financial stability and providing our members with excellent value for money.

## **Our Core Values**

### **Community**

- Smithers Golf and Country Club strives to maintain our position as an integral part of the Town of Smithers and the communities of the Bulkley Valley and support community initiatives whenever possible.

### **Teamwork**

- We work together in the best interests of Smithers Golf and Country Club, with integrity and professionalism in order to achieve our goals. We are inclusive, consistent and transparent in our decision-making; we share information and resources and communicate clearly and simply. We encourage and foster a volunteer ethic within our Club.

### **Continuous Improvement**

- We focus on continuous improvement in the provision of our golfing, clubhouse services and social activities. We apply our skills and knowledge to generate creative and practical ideas. We consult regularly with our members to seek out new ideas in relation to all of our club's activities.

### **Respect**

- ! We provide a friendly, caring and respectful environment for all of our members, visitors, staff, partners and sponsors.

### **Inclusiveness**

- ! We promote the game of golf and provide an affordable recreational facility with a welcoming atmosphere to all who wish to participate.

## **Core Elements**

The Strategic Plan consists of the following Core Elements:-

- ! Governance and Management
- ! Finance
- ! Marketing and Membership Initiatives
- ! The Golf Course
- ! The Clubhouse and Supporting Facilities
- ! The Pro Shop
- ! Communications and Club Culture
- ! The Game

There are interconnections between many of these elements.

## **Governance and Management**

### **Summary Goal**

- ! Develop and maintain an effective governance/management structure for the Club to ensure the best possible management of the Club's finances, staff, operations, and planning on behalf of its members, within a framework of accountability and transparency so that the Board of Directors is at all times accountable to members and responsive to their rights and wishes.

### **Specific Actions**

- ! Within the Board of Directors, establish and maintain individual accountability (or portfolios) for various aspects of the Club's operation – e.g. Financial (the Treasurer), Greens and Grounds, Clubhouse Facilities, Social Events, Marketing and Membership, etc.
- ! Establish and maintain a reporting arrangement and regular reporting schedule for the staff members reporting directly to the Board and ensure that there are appropriate performance targets and annual performance evaluations for these positions.
- ! Foster the formation of volunteer Working Committees to assist the Board in managing aspects of Club operations e.g. Financial, Greens and Grounds, Clubhouse facilities, Social, Marketing and Membership, Men's Club, Ladies Club, etc.
- ! Establish and maintain a Club operations policy manual to assist in management of all Club activities.
- ! Communicate clearly and consistently with the members in relation to the activities of the Board of Directors including minutes of meetings, updates on decisions taken, and summaries of activities of Working Committees.
- ! Complete an annual review of the Club's Strategic Plan and amend as appropriate.

### **Suggested Target(s)**

- ! These are On-going Actions that should be initiated immediately.

## Finance

### Summary Goal

- ! To provide Budget and Financial Management Stewardship as well as leadership in the development and implementation of the Clubs' Five Year Capital Replacement Plan.

### Specific Actions

- ! Develop an annual operating budget with Golf Pro/Club House Manager and Golf Course Superintendent's input;
- ! Present the proposed budget to the Board and AGM for approval;
- ! Monitor adherence to the budget;
- ! Develop a Five Year Capital Replacement Plan and Reserve Fund Strategy;
- ! Establish long-term financial goals in conjunction with the Club's Strategic Plan;
- ! Ensure sound accounting practices and internal controls are established and followed;
- ! Ensure compliance with all financial legislation, guidelines and policies.

### Suggested Target(s)

- ! These are on-going Actions that should be initiated immediately.

## **Marketing and Membership**

### **Summary Goals**

- ! To grow our membership by attracting new members in a mix of membership categories, retaining existing members, developing and promoting a junior golf programme, and raising awareness of Smithers Golf and Country Club in our local region.
  
- ! Increase all other Club revenue streams, including green fee revenue, pro shop revenue, restaurant and bar revenue, and clubhouse rental revenue by effective marketing in order to provide funds for management of the Club in accordance with our Vision and Core Values.

### **Specific Actions**

- ! Develop an Annual Marketing Plan for each revenue stream of our operation.
- ! Develop a communication plan.
- ! Re-brand our Bar/Restaurant with a new menu, name, etc.
- ! Develop a signage policy and consider new initiatives to increase sponsorship revenue.
- ! Offer corporate memberships.
- ! Initiate new tournaments and fund-raising events.
- ! Develop a "signature" hole and consider naming of holes as a marketing strategy for the course.

### **Suggested Target(s)**

- ! Increase membership in current 2018 calendar year.
- ! Increase revenue in each of the other categories in the 2018 fiscal year.

## The Golf Course

### Summary Goal

- ! Maintain and upgrade the course to an excellent standard, while observing best environmental practices, in order to provide an enjoyable and challenging experience for golfers of all ages and abilities, with emphasis placed on providing the best possible playing surfaces throughout the playing season.

### Specific Actions

- ! Identify and implement strategies to prevent or mitigate winter damage.
- ! Develop a replacement plan for key pieces of grounds maintenance equipment.
- ! Develop and maintain a short/mid/long term plan outlining opportunities for course improvements.
- ! Establish a Greens and Grounds Committee to work with the Superintendent to develop further strategies, priorities, and targets relating to short/mid/long term plans.

### Suggested Target(s)

- ! Develop a replacement plan for key pieces of equipment and work with the Financial Committee to establish a replacement fund to meet expected replacement requirements --- to be developed in the current fiscal year.
- ! Establish an effective Greens and Grounds Committee to be in place this 2018 golf season.

## The Clubhouse and Supporting Facilities

### Summary Goal

- ! To provide, maintain, and develop our clubhouse with an appropriate range of facilities and supporting services of the highest standards, delivered through welcoming, friendly personnel, while working within established objectives and budget.

### Specific Actions

- ! Re-brand the bar/restaurant with new menu, name, etc. Factors in re-branding to include developing competitive quality and pricing of food and beverages.
- ! Implement the POS system in the bar/restaurant to properly track sales and inventory.
- ! Continue to develop facilities and resources designed to increase the use of the clubhouse during the winter season through grants or other sources of funding as available.
- ! Establish a "house" Committee to advise and make recommendations regarding clubhouse facilities and services, including developing a replacement plan for key equipment as deemed necessary.

### Suggested Target(s)

- ! Re-branding of the bar/restaurant with new menu - to be developed in the 2018 calendar year.
- ! Implement the POS system in the bar/restaurant in the 2018 calendar year.
- ! Establish an effective House Committee in the 2018 golf season.

## **The Pro Shop**

### **Summary Goals**

- ! Ensure that the Pro Shop provides an attractive, welcoming, friendly atmosphere with appropriate stock and service to all members and visitors, while working according to the Club's core values and established objectives and budget.
- ! Develop and maintain an effective Junior Golf Program.
- ! Efficiently operate and administer various competitions in cooperation with tournament committees and Men's and Ladies Club representatives according to our Standard Operating Procedures.
- ! Provide conveniently-scheduled CPGA certified Professional golf lessons according to demand from members and visitors.

### **Specific Actions**

- ! Provide a competitively priced range and quality of golf equipment and clothing.
- ! Develop relationships with corporate sponsors, community groups, and the community at large as well as the membership and Committees to promote the Club's Vision and core Values.
- ! Effectively operate and use the POS system.

### **Suggested Target(s)**

- ! Increase the number of Juniors enrolled in the Junior Program this 2018 calendar year.

## Communication and Club Culture

### Summary Goals

! Develop and promote effective methods of communication between the Board and its Committees and the membership to achieve transparency in decision-making as per our core Values and to pass along information to members and the community regarding Club events, promotions, etc. in support of our Marketing and Membership Goals.

! To promote a club culture which values and respects Volunteerism within the club, respects the etiquette and spirit of the game of golf, and which promotes a friendly, welcoming, supportive environment for all members, our Staff, and visitors.

### Specific Actions

- ! Develop a monthly or quarterly club newsletter and expand the use of social media and electronic information methods where possible.
- ! Ensure that minutes from Board meetings are available to members.
- ! Develop a program for introduction/orientation of new members to the club.
- ! Develop effective methods for encouraging and acting upon membership feedback -- for example by implementing an annual member's survey.
- ! Encourage member participation in club initiatives and projects.
- ! Establish a Social Committee to encourage member participation and to plan social and fund-raising events.

### Suggested Target(s)

- ! Develop a Club Newsletter for implementation this 2018 calendar year.
- ! Establish an effective Social Committee this 2018 calendar year.

## **The Game**

### **Summary Goal**

- ! Effectively promote participation in golf for all ages and abilities according to our Vision Statement - including providing competitions, fun events, and professional coaching.

### **Specific Actions can be developed for the following**

- ! Daily golf opportunities and regular events
- ! Junior Golf Program
- ! Rules and etiquette
- ! Tournaments
- ! Lessons
- ! Community Outreach

### **Suggested Target(s)**

- ! Annual increase in participation in our Junior Program.
- ! Ensure all trophies and awards are maintained and current.

## Measuring Our Success

Nb. more needs to be done on this section.

### Example Summary Goals

- ! Improved protection of greens from potential winter kill
- ! Improved financial planning
- ! Development/maintenance of standard operating policies for all facets of club management
- ! Increased revenue from all revenue streams
- ! Increased membership and participation
- ! Increased year-round use of club facilities

### Specific Actions

- ! Regular surveys of membership and visitor satisfaction.
- ! Annual review of Membership numbers.
- ! Annual review of Business and Financial Plans.
- ! Review of participation in tournaments and Club events.

**Summary Statement:-**

This first draft of the Strategic Plan outlines the overall Vision, Mission, and Values of the Smithers Golf and Country Club and includes eight Core Elements and associated Goals and Actions. In some cases, Specific Actions and Targets have been suggested to facilitate achievement of the Goals and the overall Vision. It is envisioned that this is a working document and that additional goals, actions, and targets will be added to this framework over time, along with priorities to ensure efforts remain focussed.

**Appendix 1.****ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN****SWOT ANALYSIS 2018****Strengths (Internal)**

- ! Location – stunning natural surroundings
- ! The golf course – appearance, layout and challenge are of a high standard; only 18 hole championship course within a two-hour drive
- ! Volunteers – a major strength in this Club
- ! Friendliness
- ! Large clubhouse facility
- ! Staff competency and commitment

**Weaknesses (Internal)**

- ! Ageing membership (leading to high natural attrition, and diminishing levels of participation in wider club activity)
- ! Financial fragility – the club is currently managing only to pay its way operationally with limited ability to provide for future requirements
- ! Weak levels of communication between Board and membership
- ! Seasonal golf limitations (i.e. 7 month season)

**Opportunities (External)**

- ! Increase revenue streams
- ! Increase membership through marketing, recruitment and retention
- ! Increase green fee revenue through increased course usage
- ! Focus recruitment to reflect local demographic (juniors, over-45s, retirees, etc.)
  
- ! Year round use of our clubhouse
- ! Creation of a capital plan with revenue opportunities to fund
- ! Create and implement a Strategic Plan

**Threats (External)**

- ! Ever-increasing costs to maintain course and amenities to member expectations
- ! Susceptible to course damage depending on type of winter weather
- ! Competition from other sports available locally for the public's "activities" dollar
- ! Loss of key personnel
- ! Demographic challenges – older members leaving, attracting younger members
- ! Major machinery or irrigation failure/breakdown requiring immediate replacement

## **Appendix 2**

### **Summary of 2017 Member's Survey**