

Open Letter to Public Golfers:

The members of the City of San Diego's Municipal Golf Committee (MGC) have been appointed by the Mayor and City Council to provide public input for the Golf Division of the City's Park and Recreation Department concerning Torrey Pines, Balboa and Mission Bay Golf Courses. We also as a group feel a responsibility to be advocates for public golf in San Diego. As a result, we are extremely concerned about a project evolving in Mission Bay which materially threatens the viability of the Mission Bay Golf Course (MBGC) and access to public golf by San Diegans and other users.

The De Anza Revitalization Plan is a project to amend the Mission Bay Master Plan with a revised vision for the uses of the De Anza Cove acreage formerly occupied as a fabricated housing site. That site has now been abandoned and, in connection with a review of the best use of that area, the City has decided to put in play the uses for all of the neighbors of that housing site, including the tennis courts, balls fields, boat yard and MBGC.

Over the course of the last two years, the City has convened several public workshops to get input from the various users and interest groups at De Anza. Members of the MGC have diligently attended all workshops and advocated for preservation of MBGC. It is 62 years old, enjoys 60,000 rounds of golf annually plus 40,000 driving range customers; \$7,000,000 has been earmarked from existing Golf Enterprise funds to upgrade the clubhouse and other amenities. It is home to junior golf, footgolf and disc golf, social clubs, a teaching facility and it is the only lighted golf facility in the County. It generates \$2,000,000 in revenue to the Golf Division and no general fund dollars are used in its operation. Its 20 employees are paid entirely by the Golf Enterprise Fund. It is located in the center of San Diego near thousands of recreational residents. In short, it is an important facility in De Anza Cove and a perfect combination of recreational, commercial and environmental uses mandated by the De Anza Revitalization Plan. As a result of those meetings, the use and retention of MBGC as an 18-hole course with driving range has consistently scored well in the input process.

So, it was quite a surprise that both of the latest two options issued by the City show MBGC reduced by 30%! The elements which make MBGC so unique would be destroyed by such a cutback of acreage! Worse still, we have been informed that City planners are being lobbied further by environmental interests for more reductions in the golf course in favor of an addition to the wetlands of San Diego County. We do not oppose wetlands generally but unlike MBGC, they are not unique. There are thousands of acres dedicated to this purpose (we counted 18,000 acres of fresh and salt water coastal wetlands from the Tijuana Estuary to the Santa Margarita Estuary north of Oceanside) and the environmental community has already been allocated 170 acres in north Mission Bay compared to MBGC's mere 40 acres.

It is critical that the golf community stand up now for preservation of MBGC as a unique public 18 hole course and practice facility. We urge you to:

1. Attend the September 21 meeting of the Municipal Golf Committee at 6 p.m. at MBGC where Robin Schifflet, City Planner, will be in attendance. Come out and explain to her the importance of MBGC to the golfing community;
2. Sign up for notifications about the meeting of the Mission Bay Planning Committee (at which the Planning Department proposals will be presented) on October 3, 2017 by adding your email to the mailing list at denazarevitalizationplan.com and

3. If you cannot personally participate in these important meetings, write the Planning Department and Robin Schifflet, City of San Diego, 1010 Second Street MS413, San Diego, Ca. 92101-4155 or RSchifflet@sandiego.gov.

The future of public golf depends on accessible and affordable public golf facilities like MBGC; even if you do not play MBGC, your support for the future of public golf is very important; if MBGC is diminished by other competing public interests, maybe your golf course is next to be reallocated to parkland; for example, without a pipeline of young and new players, our beloved Balboa Golf Course could fail for lack of players in the future.

Additional information for your consideration:

1. MBGC gets tremendous use especially from juniors and weekend players
2. It is affordable (junior monthly tickets are \$10.50, resident seniors \$10/round weekdays), including the price of range balls and instruction
3. It has a unique configuration as a full course (players can use every club in their bag) and is playable in a couple of hours
4. It has a unique combination of full course, driving range and practice facility where learning is possible across the whole range of strokes (none of Torrey Pines, Balboa or even Tecolote can say this)
5. It is the only night lighted golf course in the County
6. It is home to recent trends attractive to young people such as disc and foot golf
7. It is easily walkable which is both cheaper and highly attractive to senior golfers
8. MBGC is financially independent of the City's General Fund and, in fact, if the course were reduced, funding flowing to the General Fund attributable to MBGC would decline
9. Unlike common misperceptions about golf courses, MBGC is anything but an elite operation but rather is the golf home to thousands of working class, senior and junior golfers as well as abundant birdlife which enjoy its water features and mature shrubbery
10. Most of us consider the only other golf course of this type in the area, Tecolote, to be actually too difficult for a learning golfer, too demanding to walk and lacking in the practice amenities of MBGC except the range

In addition, you might consider the demographics trends for golf as published recently by the National Golf Foundation:

1. The number of beginning golfers grew to 2.5 million, a nearly 14% increase over 2015. That number is an all-time high, breaking the previous mark of 2.4 million set in 2000, when Woods was at rapid ascent.
2. The number of non-golfers very interested in playing golf now has doubled since 2011 (12.8 million from just 6.4 million in 2011).
3. The overall number who say they are at least somewhat interested in taking up golf is 40.6 million, and well over a third of that number (15.2 million) were millennials (18- to 34-year-olds), which made up the largest single age group of non-golfers who expressed interest in playing golf.
4. The report found that 33% of junior golfers (age 6-17) are girls, a dramatic increase from the 17% they made up in 1995.
5. Young golfers today are also more diverse than in the past. 27% percent of junior golfers are non-white, up from 6% in 1995.
6. The number of "committed golfers" grew, as well. Committed golfers combines those who call golf either their favorite activity or one of several recreational pursuits.

According to the NGF, the committed golfer number rose to 20.1 million golfers, the first year-over-year increase in five years.

MBGC is ideal for addressing these trends and should, indeed must, be retained in its current form!! Thank you for your consideration of this information and for you anticipated support at these important meetings!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Parode Dynes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Parode Dynes
Interim Chair
City of San Diego Municipal Golf Committee