

## Hudson Mills Golf Course Public Input Summary

Over the duration of the Hudson Mills Master Plan planning process, the Metroparks Planning Department offered a variety of opportunities for public input and feedback. Input was solicited at meetings and via questionnaires, comment cards, and online comments. Following the draft plan being posted for public review on the Planning Department page of the Metroparks website, two additional meetings were scheduled for public input focusing on the future of the 18-hole golf course. This public input summary is specific to the golf course and will be integrated for consideration in the draft plan to be presented with any revisions at an upcoming Board of Commissioners meeting.

### **Overview of Input Opportunities**

**Public Input Meeting (July 5, 2017, 9:30am)** – located at the Hudson Mills golf course starter building. The public was invited to provide feedback on what makes Hudson Mills golf course unique and significant along with suggesting further ideas for future plans specific to the golf course.

**Public Input Meeting (July 19, 2017, 6:00pm)** – located at Creekside Elementary School. The public were again invited to provide feedback on what makes Hudson Mills golf course unique and significant along with suggesting further ideas for future plans specific to the golf course.

**Public Input Survey** – a brief survey developed to gather general thoughts on the golf course and their recommendations for improving features and amenities offered at the golf course. The survey was made available for those in attendance at the two public input meetings.

**Huron Clinton Metroparks Planning Department Website** – the public could email comments on the website, which also included additional resources about the Hudson Mills Master Plan.

<https://www.metroparks.com/about-us/planning-department/>

**Hudson Mills Master Plan  
Golf Course  
(Public Input Meeting #3)**

**Public Input Meeting**

**Location: Hudson Mills Golf Course Starter Building**

**Wednesday, July 5, 2017**

**9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

The Public Meeting #3 for the Hudson Mills Master Plan was held on July 5, 2017 at the Hudson Mills golf course starter building. Stakeholders and members of the public were invited via email including government representatives, community residents, business organizations, educators, and golfers. The meeting was also advertised on the Metroparks website, social media, and a banner posted along the roadside of the golf course entrance. Furthermore, flyers were hand delivered to the park office, starter building, Dexter Township, the City of Dexter, the Dexter library, Putnam Township, and the Village of Pinckney.

The intent of this meeting was for stakeholders and the public to provide input on the future of the golf course which was suggested for repurposing in the draft master plan. A total of 185 attendees at the public input meeting were shown a series of presentation boards including an overall map of the Hudson Mills Metropark, an aerial base map of the golf course, and the biodiversity areas surrounding the footprint of the golf course. The meeting began with a 25 minute presentation including an overview of the Hudson Mills Master Plan followed by existing conditions and analysis of projected expenses/revenues of the golf course. In addition, the golf course marketing efforts and suggested strategies were presented for additional golf course revenue. The presentation ended with three general questions outlined below for discussion among the meeting participants:

- How is the Hudson Mills Golf Course unique and/or special?
- What complementary activities might take place at the golf course if it were kept open?
- What are some lower-cost opportunities for increasing revenues and/or decreasing expenses?

The following is the input gathered from stakeholders and members of the public based on verbal comments to these discussion questions.

**How is the Hudson Mills Golf Course Unique and Special?**

- Walkable
- Beautiful
- Community golf course
- Playable golf course
- Challenging course but competitive
- Ann Arbor market potential
- Course for nature lovers
- Locally not a lot of public golf course competition
- Very friendly, family-atmosphere golfing community
- Wildlife setting unique to this golf course

- No issue with houses or freeways adjoining golf course
- Quiet and peaceful
- Very good condition
- Destination golf course with location in close proximity to downtown Dexter
- 97% of golf users suggested they would recommend the course to a friend
- Only metropark golf course in Washtenaw County (HCMA goal of one golf course per county in park system)
- Senior friendly
- Economic spin off for local economy

### **Suggested Complimentary Activities with Golf Course**

#### **Trails**

- Connect to the B2B Trail
- Winter cross country skiing/snow shoeing
- Rental bikes/trikes

#### **Programs**

- Clinic/lessons for all age groups
- Kids camp for golf integrated with other park activities/amenities
- More special events

#### **Golf Starter Building**

- Add large screen television
- Revamp snack bar with possible outside vendor
- Offer hot chocolate for winter activities
- Offer dining option with outdoor patio improvements for better experience
- Enhance starter building into a clubhouse for golfers
- Offer pro shop services

#### **Repurposing Areas of Golf Course**

- Disc golf (vast majority in attendance against this idea)
- Chipping/putting practice area
- Driving range
- Par 3 course
- Shorten forward tees for woman golfers

#### **Expansion of Golf Course**

- Consider additional land acquisition for driving range
- Challenge biodiversity areas (assessment of natural features)

### Suggested Lower Cost Opportunities

- Transfer revenues from other golf courses in the system
- Maintenance volunteers (stewardship) for free golf rounds
- Reduce asphalt pathways
- Offer memberships
- Too expensive for kids to play
- Offer discounts
- Fund raising opportunities
- Sales promotion in traditional media (newspaper)
- Partner with Dexter library
- Partner with Dexter theater
- Partner with community centers
- Donations
- Cross promotion with sister golf courses
- Implement "Brandon's List"
- Replace cart fleet in increments
- Create a maintenance plan for infrastructure phasing improvements
- Half price for first time players
- Metroparks wide golf tournament
- Junior league
- Change negative management philosophy (can't deny low density geographic market)
- Electric carts
- Promote club house for concessions including alcohol for trail users
- Reach out to high school
- Offer more refreshments
- Manage golf course with positive communications
- Offer free meeting spaces
- Reintroduce family atmosphere
- Promote golf in tandem with other park amenities (ie. golf camp with canoeing)
- Transit from targeted areas (senior residences)
- Entry signage
- Additional parking
- Nerf balls for kid golf lessons
- Email blast advertising

### Public Input Survey Meeting #3

Category	Yes	No	Maybe
Keep golf course open?	141	8	
Support additional activities at golf course?*	118	22	2
Support reducing infrastructure to save costs?**	49	71	12

\*7 respondents did not answer this specific question

\*\*17 respondents did not answer this question

Below are written feedback received on public input survey sheets organized by area of topic.

### General Comments

- Keeping 18-hole golf course(4)
- Encourage walkability of the course (no carts) (4)
- Replace paths with gravel (4)
- Do not need bike rental/canoe rental in this area of park(2)
- Do not need driving range (2)
- Update and keep carts(2)
- Provides wonderful opportunity for people to enjoy a healthy, fun activity
- Very friendly course
- Poor access to river
- Selective irrigation
- Disregard the biodiversity areas for purpose of a driving range
- In long term young people are not playing traditional golf so change are/will be needed
- Any plans to increase/ improve sustainability should also include a time frame and criteria for success that are predefined in 3 years plus 2 year breaking even.
- Public input is important but action is needed by the local golfing community
- You cannot wait 90 days to decide- golf leagues will leave to make sure they have a place to play in 2018- decide now or you've made the decision by default
- Reduce to 9-hole golf course
- Great course for the entire family and will benefit with potential closure of Reddeman Farms
- Re-check demographic assumptions-there is a lot of growth in Dexter area
- If park fees included in green fees, would it be better to separate them to lower green fees?
- Why is the meeting when most people are working?
- It is a playable walkable championship course
- The group campsites are not utilized much at all put additional activities there if you need it
- Closing course to duplicate what is available elsewhere does not make sense
- Do not undermine current canoe business
- It's a playable, walkable championship course
- Infrastructure well maintained now. How much worse would it get and how would that effect play/revenues?
- Increase value of facility versus reduction of infrastructure
- Keep course open in fall when maintenance people are here doing work
- July 5<sup>th</sup> meeting was a painful attempt to control and keep bottled up something [local] people feel strongly about. It may have served you but not an honest open discussion.
- I don't believe the HCMA should go into competition with the private sector business interests.

## **Sales Promotion/Marketing/Advertising**

- Additional marketing/advertising/signage (15)
- Incentives for leagues/ tournaments/outings (5)
- Discounts for students(3)
- Memberships (3)
- Lower prices(3)
- Email blasts(2)
- Cross promotion(2)
- Fundraising through donations(1)
- Merchandise sales
- Modest increase in fees

## **Additional Facilities**

- Put in driving range(12)
- Put in a practice area for pitching, chipping, and sand trap (5)
- Incorporate a disc golf course into the existing golf course
- Build/incorporate family based facilities & activities (playground, water park, shelters, pavilion)
- Golf club rentals
- Mini-golf
- Foot golf
- Golf boards
- Bike rentals
- Dog park

## **Programming**

- Clinics/Lessons (all ages and levels) (8)
- Youth camp in summer (2)
- Weddings(2)
- Outdoor education restoration and preservation of wildlife habitat are priorities (2)
- Golf tournaments (2)

## **Trails**

- Trail connection to B2B (6)
- Nature trail restoration bird/wildlife habitat

- Add walking trails

### **Golf Course Starter Building**

- Enhancements to the building (6)
- Improvements with new food vendor (2)
- Promote snack bar and beer sales for trail users with related products(2)
- Expand with food trucks(2)
- Rent for special events
- Refreshment/restroom stop from trails
- Large screen television

### **Wildlife/Natural Features**

- Very nice golf course with wildlife, we already have parks. Thank you

### **Administrative**

- Better fiscal/public relations management(6)
- Volunteers paid with golf privileges(2)
- Hiring of a golf coach or pro

### **Connection to Local Community**

- increase community outreach with schools, non-profits, community agencies (6)
- great community asset(4)

**Hudson Mills Master Plan  
Golf Course  
(Public Input Meeting #4)**

**Public Input Meeting**

**Location: Creekside Intermediate School, 2615 Baker Road, Dexter, MI 48130**

**Wednesday, July 19, 2017**

**6:00 PM – 7:30 PM**

The Public Meeting #4 for the Hudson Mills Master Plan was held on July 19, 2017 at the Creekside Intermediate School. This meeting was facilitated in partnership with the City of Dexter. Stakeholders and members of the public were invited via email including government representatives, community residents, business organizations, educators, and golfers. The meeting was also advertised on the Metroparks website, social media, and a banner posted along the roadside of the golf course entrance. Furthermore, hard copy flyers were made available at the park office, starter building, Dexter Township, the City of Dexter, the Dexter library, Putnam Township, and the Village of Pinckney.

The intent of this meeting was for stakeholders and the public to provide input on the future of the golf course which was suggested for repurposing in the draft master plan. A total of 79 attendees at the public input meeting were shown a series of presentation boards including an overall map of the Hudson Mills Metropark, an aerial base map of the golf course, and the biodiversity areas surrounding the footprint of the golf course. The meeting began with a 25 minute presentation including an overview of the Hudson Mills Master Plan followed by existing conditions and analysis of projected expenses/revenues of the golf course. In addition, the golf course marketing efforts and suggested strategies were presented for additional golf course revenue. The presentation ended with the same three general questions outlined below for smaller groups of ten participants each to discuss:

- How is the Hudson Mills Golf Course unique and/or special?
- What are some lower-cost opportunities for increasing revenues and/or decreasing expenses?

The following is the input gathered from stakeholders and members of the public based on the smaller group exercise feedback on the discussion questions.

**How is the Hudson Mills Golf Course Unique and Special?**

- Close to home (our local course) (9)
- Wildlife and beautiful natural scenery (8)
- Hudson Mills is located within a growing area of the county/region (7)
- Course is very fair well marked, great condition (6)
- Proximity to downtown Dexter (6)
- Nice community facility for all age groups to enjoy (5)
- No residential development surrounding the course (4)
- Peaceful and quiet (3)
- Easy access to tee times (rarely wait time) (2)
- Only course supported by our Washtenaw County tax dollars (2)
- Walkable (2)



- Well maintained (2)
- Land, environment, and location- a great neighbor
- Different course than local competition (Pierce Lake and Reddeman Farms)
- Good rates
- Interesting course- turns, water, woods
- Course has become place to relax and spend time with friends
- Provides savannah habitat in promoting biodiversity

### **Suggested Complementary Activities with Golf Course**

#### **Programs**

- Instructional clinics
- Tournaments
- Bring back super golf day
- Senior scramble

#### **Golf Starter Building**

- Better concessions (3)
- Outdoor pavilion area (2)

#### **Marketing outside the box**

- Outreach to leagues (2)
- Beverage specials (ie. free coffee) (2)
- Discount coupons with local businesses (2)
- Lower food prices
- Promote repeat golfers
- Discount metropark pass holders
- Promote in sun times
- Promote golfing with water activities offered at the park
- Reach out to high school to become their home golf course

#### **Repurposing Areas of Golf Course**

- Driving range (8)
- Chipping/putting practice area (3)
- Add driving net (3)
- Add beginners tees (3)
- Indoor driving range
- Foot golf
- Cross country skiing in winter season
- Par 3 course

### Suggested Lower Cost Opportunities

- Promote tournaments, outings and leagues (8)
- Reduce asphalt pathways (crushed fines) (6)
- Target marketing/local advertising (6)
- Preventative maintenance (4)
- Spend more marketing dollars (4)
- Shorten ladies tees (3)
- Lease carts (3)
- Partner with restaurants downtown (ie. Dexter Bakery) (3)
- High school home course (2)
- Cross promotion with sister golf courses (2)
- Lower fees for kids (2)
- Increase rates (2)
- Replace cart fleet in increments
- Rotate carts with other courses
- Used carts
- Implement 10 year CIP
- Beginner golf lessons
- Address back nine from tornado
- Work with wellness centers
- Better concessions
- Improve clubhouse experience
- Dexter residents only
- Main Street banner
- Lower rates
- Pleasant staff
- Longer season
- Save money during good years
- Volunteers vs paid staff
- Partner with BBQ vendor
- Less mowing in protected areas
- Shared maintenance with park
- Bring back bluebird houses
- Fix contract issue with leagues
- Brainstorm with successful courses
- Spread the good word
- Advertise natural setting of course
- Energy savings
- Pool money from all courses
- Promote dinner/golf deal

### Public Input Survey Meeting #4

Category	Yes	No	Maybe
Keep golf course open?	68	1	
Support additional activities at golf course?	60	5	
Support reducing infrastructure to save costs?	48	12	2

Below are written feedback received on public input survey sheets organized by area of topic.

### General Comments

- Keeping 18-hole golf course (5)
- Do not compete with private business (canoe and kayaks) (5)
- No driving range (3)
- No par 3 course (2)
- Offer options for personal golf cart storage for frequent players and charge an annual storage/fuel fee (2)
- Please get input from Mark Jackson
- Allow coolers on the course
- Patch the paths instead of replacing them
- Reducing asphalt would cost more and be harder on the carts
- Make sure adding additional activities will generate revenue
- Make pitch for more leagues for retiree's
- +1.2 million to bring a failing course up to date does not seem prudent, there are plenty of other golf courses in Metroparks and plenty of other local golfing options
- Review capital plan expenditures and phase in over longer period of time
- Review staffing levels
- Make commitment you are staying open to attract leagues/players
- Golf course for casual golfers who don't want membership
- Sell memberships for guaranteed revenue and loyalty
- Problem with slow play, replacing pivots, repairing green ball marks
- Rent carts for shared revenue
- Make a links course with minimal cart paths
- With \$772,000 slated for car path repairs, some areas have bad spots, most of the paths are in good shape, why not look at fixing bad spots only?
- Is the pump house equipment really bad or just need pump rebuilds and new paint on pipes
- If park is closed what happens to the property?
- If the golf course was not making money, why so long to do something
- Kaufman golf course in Grand Rapids is a good example of what Hudson Mills could be
- Reduce congestion during "work hours" for "after work" leagues
- Better marshalling of course needed to ensure good pace of play

### Sales Promotion/Marketing/Advertising

- Additional marketing/advertising/signage (6)
- Local marketing (2)
- Lower fees seniors

- Memberships

### **Additional Facilities**

- Put in driving range (4)
- Driving net (2)
- Bike rentals
- Short game practice area

### **Programming**

- Golf leagues(5)
- Clinics/Lessons (all ages and levels) (3)
- Golf tournaments (2)
- Golf development programs (train new golfers) (2)
- More fun activities

### **Trails**

- Cross Country ski in winter/ snowshoeing (4)

### **Golf Course Starter Building**

- Improvements with new food vendor (2)
- Promote snack bar and beer sales for trail users with related products(3)
- Rent for special events
- Add club house
- Add pavilion/grills
- Partner with outside caterer
- Scale back food concessions (limited snacks and self serve beverage dispenser)

### **Administrative**

- Share cost of operation/revenues between metroparks golf courses (4)
- Better fiscal/public relations management(1)
- Hiring of a golf coach or pro(1)

## Connection to Local Community

- increase community outreach with schools, non-profits, community agencies (4)
- great community asset(2)