

DEEP RIVER GOLF CLUB

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028



Ninth green overlooking clubhouse

This document lays out the Strategic Plan for the Deep River Golf Club (DRGC) for the years 2024 to 2028. Although there are various methods and depths for the development of strategic plans depending on the size and complexity of the organizations, this plan is prepared with the understanding that the DRGC is a small member-driven non-charitable not-for-profit corporation with limited financial resources and which relies heavily on the volunteer efforts of its members. The plan attempts to cover all aspects of the operations of the club and keeps goals and actions manageable and measurable with the best interest of maintaining a sound organization on behalf of the members.

1.0 Introduction

This Strategic Plan strives to provide the members of the Deep River Golf Club (DRGC) with the best possible facilities and services in a fiscally responsible manner and to retain existing members and attract the next generation. This plan covers a five-year period and the circumstances that are likely to be within the organization's control over that period.

The strategic plan defines who the organization is and lists desired outcomes to achieve its goals. It is a process that helps determine where the organization is heading and how it will get there while being true to the organization's values and mission.

A primary emphasis for the Club is to seek to foster an atmosphere of friendship, civility, and respect for members and guests to promote overall enjoyment of the Club. This is the joint responsibility of the Board, staff and club members requiring the commitment and goodwill of all.

The DRGC is in a unique location, in a beautiful environment and the Club's prime focus has been to improve the playing conditions to make the course a stand-out for both prospective members and visitors.

The Strategic Plan is a living document and will be reviewed and updated on an as required basis.

2.0 Mission

The Mission statement is a declaration of the organization's core purpose, reason for being, identity and central values.

DRGC Mission:

The mission of the Deep River Golf Club is to provide quality golf experience in a safe, professional, and fiscally responsible manner with opportunities to learn, compete, and to socialize, while contributing to the community.

- Our course will be maintained in excellent condition and provide a rewarding, enjoyable and challenging test for golfers of all standards.
- Our clubhouse will be a hub of activity both before and after golf.
- Our staff and catering contractors will enjoy a supportive and engaging work environment and will be committed to outstanding customer service.

- Our club will be known in the wider community as a good corporate citizen, for the quality of our facilities, service, and friendly atmosphere and within the golfing community as a progressive leader.

3.0 Vision

The Vision Statement identifies what the club should strive to become in the future. It serves as the basis for the evaluation of the existing situation and the development of the strategies and action items for future development.

DRGC Vision:

The vision of the Deep River Golf Club is to become the club of choice in the Ottawa Valley. We will do this by providing excellent course conditions, comprehensive facilities, inclusive and varied programs, and friendly services to meet everyone's golf and social needs.

4.0 Values

DRGC Values are as follows:

- We want all our members, visitors, and staff to feel welcome, respected and included.
- We care about maintaining a positive and enjoyable golf, social and work experience.
- We encourage fellowship and camaraderie amongst members and promote family participation.
- We care about being good stewards of our excellent golf course.
- We are progressive and forward thinking and use our resources wisely to ensure long-term success and sustainability.
- We are proud of our Club, its history, and traditions.
- We promote good sportsmanship and keen competition.
- We provide our employees with safe and enjoyable work experience while challenging them to continually improve the level of service to our membership.
- Without exception, we manage the Club's finances in a fiscally responsible manner.

5.0 Input to the Strategic Plan

Meetings were held with a cross section of members and board members to discuss several questions related to the Club. The meetings revealed several opportunities for improvement and resulted in good feedback. A summary of the findings can be found in **Appendix A** of this document.

The members were canvassed through a survey in July 2022. A summary of the survey can be found in **Appendix B**.

6.0 History and Current Status

The Deep River Golf Club was originally established in 1952 to serve the local community of the newly formed town of Deep River, established to house the workers and family of the nuclear research plant at Chalk River. It has seen numerous years of growth and prosperity and continues to be one of the best kept courses in the Ottawa Valley. Its design, layout, meticulous care and maintenance, and sound governance continue to provide the local community and the Ottawa Valley with excellent grounds and services.

As with many other similar clubs, the DRCG faces ever-changing demographics, and modern-day realities of extensive and expensive demands on maintenance and refurbishment needs. As the local population ages, new residents are otherwise occupied with families and careers. The ever-increasing demands of maintaining a course of this quality often results in added annual costs and expenses. The cost of golfing is becoming an increasing burden on many new potential recruits as well as existing members. The challenge now is how to best provide our local residents and visitors with an opportunity to join the club, thereby enhancing our financial status and ensuring our survival in the community.

Some of the current statistics are as follows:

1. The 2023 membership, which includes juniors and out-of-town members, was 294. The full-time adult membership comprises 76% of this total.
2. Payroll continues to be the largest expense for the club, representing about 50% of our annual expenses.
3. Costs outside our control such as land taxes, insurance, electricity and other utilities, fertilizers, to name a few, continue to rise.
4. Many of the clubs' assets are deteriorating as the facilities are 60+ years old and in need of repair, refurbishment, or replacement.

7.0 Club Operational Sections

The Board has identified the following sections that best define the overall governing concerns of the club and set out the goals and actions going forward:

7.1 Members and Communication

Communication Goals

- Encourage a Club atmosphere of friendship, civility, and respect for all, whereby members enjoy and value their membership.
- Establish a pattern of periodic surveys of members' views and responses to their feedback.
- Provide quality communication with members, staff, and visitors.

Desired Outcomes

- Consider views from user groups regardless of age, gender, and golfing ability.
- Encourage participation and support for social events for members, their families, and friends.
- Encourage members to play with a diversity of players.
- Actively welcome new members.
- Create an empathetic environment where members, particularly new members, feel a sense of belonging.
- Schedule functions appealing to a wide cross section of members.
- Review and refine communication channels.
- Keep members informed on all significant matters affecting the Club.
- Publish and enforce policies on appropriate conduct and behavior.

Membership Goals

Produce a full list of members in each of the categories of membership.

Desired Outcomes

- Review categories of membership and develop flexible options for new member target groups.
- Benchmark our membership categories and fees for specific membership groups against other clubs and adjust where appropriate.
- Investigate more flexible financial arrangements for members and prospective members.
- Establish a marketing strategy for new members in target categories.
- Conduct exit interviews for members leaving the Club.
- Offer a range of services and programs that will attract, maintain, and retain a strong membership base taking advantage of changing demographics and needs of the existing and potential members and guests.

7.2 The Course

Goals

Establish an interesting, attractive layout providing a challenging and enjoyable experience for all standards of players.

Desired Outcomes

- Minimize disruption to members.
- Raise member awareness of ongoing care to the tees, fairways, bunkers, and tree management.
- Develop a greens strategy of maintenance and renewal based on the Superintendent's recommendations and advice.
- Consider and introduce improvements to tees to provide a more playable course for women, seniors, juniors, and novice golfers.
- Improve pathways and cart paths.
- Maintain and continue development of tree-management.
- Control occurrence of unwanted grasses and weeds.

7.3 Safety

Goals

Ensure a safe and positive environment for members, staff, and visitors.

Desired Outcomes

- Review Occupational, Health and Safety policy and practice.
- Review emergency plans to ensure regulatory compliance and safety of members, staff, and visitors.
- Review adequacy of insurance coverage.
- Review risks associated with the course.
- Investigate the requirement for a Vulnerable Persons Background Check for volunteers, specifically for the junior program.

7.4 Staff

Goals

Ensure staff enjoy a supportive and engaging work environment that is committed to outstanding customer service.

Desired Outcomes

- Ensure staff are provided with a work environment which is safe, secure, and supportive, and one which is committed to providing outstanding customer service.
- Explore training and career development opportunities for employees.
- Review and develop staff position descriptions, including areas of responsibility and expectations.
- Implement and document formal annual performance reviews.
- Review staffing structures and streamline rostering.

7.5 Golf

Goals

Plan and introduce a broad range of events for all membership groups. Provide a well-structured Junior Program. Full fields for all major events. Host golf events at DRGC.

Desired Outcomes

- Encourage mixed and medley competitions.
- Identify a leader to run the Junior Program.
- Continue inter-club matches and course exchanges.
- Develop strong, competitive, and successful club teams.
- Improve speed of play by continuing to educate members on speed of play and rules.
- Encourage members to care for the course, including proper repair of divots, pitch marks and bunkers.
- Transition to the Golf Canada Handicap system.
- Re-establish the Club Handicap Committee that provides guidance on handicapping and ensure compliance with the Golf Canada Handicap System.

7.6 Clubhouse

Goals

Increase the use of the Clubhouse by members and guests before and after golf; at members' social functions; at special events; and for casual meetings and dining. Increase the use of the Clubhouse by visitors but avoid undue interference with the rights of members. Consistently develop high standards of food, beverages, and service at reasonable prices. Encourage stronger participation in/by non-golfing membership groups and activities such as bridge, wine, food, and guest speakers. Improve the ambience and efficiency of Clubhouse facilities.

Desired Outcomes

- Develop new programs and offerings.
- Promote use of the Clubhouse for external functions, especially small corporate workgroups.
- Act on the results of member surveys — facilities, events, food, and beverage.
- Plan and implement a diverse range of member and guest functions, dinners, and celebrations.
- Meet with representatives of non-golfing activities to foster expansion of activities.
- Continuous improvement of staff training programs to enhance variety, quality, consistency and value of food and beverages.
- Develop and implement plans for cohesive programs for Clubhouse/kitchen renovations and upgrades.
- Renovate the locker rooms as required.
- Renovate the upstairs patio to provide an enhanced social gathering location.
- Develop a marketing plan for achieving additional income.
- Investigate and improve media coverage for the Clubhouse.

7.7 Strategic Planning and Governance

Goals

Provide the Club with sound governance and ensure that Strategic Plans, By-Laws, Club Policies and proper communications are established, followed, maintained up to date and meet all legal requirements.

Desired Outcomes

- Reflect good corporate governance.
- Conduct annual governance/strategic planning review with Directors to establish the annual work plan..
- Develop a skills matrix of members and engage their expertise in Committees, subcommittees, and projects.
- Ensure balance and diversity in Board, Committees and sub-committees and foster succession planning.
- Conduct annual (or as required) review of the Strategic Plan.
- Maintain a set of operating policies to assist in the proper operations of the club.
- Prepare a fiscal year work plan based on items listed in the strategic plan.

7.8 Finance and Risk Management

Goals

Provide sound, prudent and sustainable financial planning, management, and risk management. Target operational surpluses to build reserves to ensure long-term success and financial strength.

Desired Outcomes

- Provide financial guidance and overall planning for the operations and to accompany the actions laid out in the Strategic Plan.
- Benchmark staffing and expenditure for both the Clubhouse and course against other clubs.
- Provide bookkeeping and financial monitoring of club finances including capital expenditures, club leases, and other commitments.
- Undertake risk assessment and ensure appropriate risk management strategies are in place.
- Provide members with timely financial updates.
- Seek and apply for grants to fund improvements to facilities and services for the benefit of members and the club.

7.9 Opportunities

Goals

Position DRGC to take a role in the regional tourism marketplace.

Desired Outcomes

- In collaboration with regional tourism agencies and local business entities, investigate and establish golf related holiday packages for families and common interest groups.
- Be alert to and investigate any opportunities which may arise during the planning period which, depending on the Club's financial circumstances at the time, may have potential to benefit the Club and its future.

7.10 Asset Management

Goal

The club shall prepare a separate Asset Management Plan covering the club's capital assets that will pinpoint the club assets and define plans for ongoing repair, refurbishment, or replacement of the asset along with the business case for each category.

The data will then be considered as part of the club's fiscal year work plan.

8.0 Fiscal Year Action Lists

Prior to the onset of the next operating year for the club (ie the winter months) the board shall prepare a fiscal year work plan for the upcoming operational year. The input to the fiscal year plan will consists of actions gleaned from Appendices A and B of this strategic plan, items requiring attention from the Asset Management Plan, and any input received from the members throughout the year that are deemed worthy of consideration.

Progress against the fiscal year work plan will be reviewed monthly at board meetings.

9.0 Evaluation measures

Several measures shall be used to evaluate these actions plans, including, but not limited to the following:

- Growth in membership and green fee users.
- Delivery on fiscal year annual work plan actions.
- Expenses against overall budget. Maintain a net profit annual budget.

10.0 Review

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the DRGC Strategic Planning Committee.

11.0 Approval:

The following approve the plan on behalf of the Deep River Golf Club (1972) Board of Directors:

(original signed by:)

President: J, Aiston _____ Date: _2024 04-10_____

Secretary: T. Sanderson _____ Date: _2024 04-10_____

Appendix A: Input

(Notes from Mac Jones)

The following input was garnered in an informal discussion with selected members of the club in September 2022. I focussed on a small number of questions related to the Club, how it is doing and its history.

1.0 How is the Club doing, compared to 5/10/15 years ago?

- Doing well; some things could be improved such as dress code, especially for our guests.
- As a place to golf, it is good, although some fairways are under stress and the pond on #5 needs “something” doing to it (dredging?). However, the atmosphere at the club is low compared to what it used to be in the past.
- The question of low morale and participation may involve looking at how to integrate the millennials into the club. Society has changed and is quite individualistic these days. How do we adapt to this – around F & B and other services we provide?
- The board composition is currently 50/50 men and women, which is good.
- The demographics of players in A/B Leagues is older – perhaps we need to acknowledge that and provide earlier tee times i.e. better course utilization for retired players, while not discriminating against those players who are still in the work force.
- We need to be more welcoming to new members, and although this has been improving over the past few years, more needs to be done.
- Given staff shortages, perhaps some members might volunteer their time in the kitchen or at the bar? Note that some degree of training/certification would be required.
- Can we focus some of our hospitality efforts more towards the community?

2.0 What is the best thing that ever happened at/to the Club?

- Getting the water system/pumps from the Ottawa River!
- All the beautiful trees and their management in relation to course conditions
- The overall beautification of the golf course
- On-line booking is great.
- Our volunteers make this Club work. We could not survive without them.

3.0 What could we do better?

- Better course utilization. For example, in the past, there used to be a Thursday afternoon/evening group that was organized to play by a member.
- Our cart paths need attention, as does cart etiquette when playing and pace of play.
- Need to be mindful of cash flow at the end of each season.

- Perhaps we could run a fundraiser each season (like Golf-o-Poly prior to the pandemic). To be noted that this would work best if there was a particular focus/project for the fundraiser.

Appendix B

Membership Survey (2022) Preliminary Analysis

- 1.0 Total responses to survey 121 (78% electronic, 22% paper)
- 2.0 Membership Category: 58% Seniors, 44% Adult, 4% Limited, .08% student
- 3.0 Gender: 29% Female, 70% male, .08% Binary, .08% Prefer not to say
- 4.0 Age: 4.2% under 30, 21% 30-50, 30% 50-65, 45% over 65
- 5.0 Importance of activity or service (by number of responses)

Topic	Not Important	Very Important
Driving range	34	58
On-line booking	11	90
Pro-shop service	10	82
Social Activities/interaction	24	47
Having your own cart shed	47	40
Pace of play	20	75
Communication with members	18	79
Club storage and retrieval	18	34
Course playing conditions	0	113
Stableford	39	48
Interclub events	47	45
A/B Leagues	58	31
Club Tournaments	27	71
Social Golfing Events	35	50
Restaurant with full menu	17	66
Upstairs patio refurbishment	27	61
Bar service	13	94
Price of items on menu	19	67

6.0 Responses to survey question #8 (98 responses)

- 8 related to pace of play, suggestions include a marshal on weekends and evenings.
- 9 state cart paths need improvements.
- 10 comments about food quality and/or service and or price.
- 2 comments about lack of beer cart
- 7 comments about the state of men's locker room.
- 8 comments about refurbishing the upstairs patio.
- A few requests to put descriptions on ladies' tee or more full description of all holes.
- A few requests to extend dining hours.

- A few complaints about landscaping and cutting grass in pond on hole 5.
- Improvements to the clubhouse in general seem to be desirable.
- Complaint about organization of information on website.

7.0 Additional feedback (*issues that may lead to actions only*)

- Should be one “welcome to the club, here’s how everything works” session per season.
- Pro shop needs to educate green fee players on pace of play.
- Need to better coordinate tee times/groups making the turn. Far too often there are multiple groups meeting at the same time.
- Kitchen service requires improvement.
- The website needs improvement, updated and have more than one person able to manage it.
- Dedicated kitchen staff and beer cart of weekends and men’s night.
- Marshall would make a big difference between Friday and Sunday.
- Men’s locker room and washroom need refreshing.
- Member fee for driving range should be lower than public.
- The restaurant service and bourse need to be improved. Also having wing night on a very busy ladies night makes no sense.
- Inform slower playing members to let others through when there is a clear hole ahead.
- Availability of alcohol on course on weekends.
- Clubhouse staff needs improvement with preparation and customer service.
- Give greens keepers more appreciation.
- Eliminate cigarette butts from course.
- Club activities are dominated by male activities. More balance is needed. There shouldn’t be shotgun starts on weekly basis, this limits the ability of others to play because course is shut down.
- Have a long-term plan to refurbish the outer buildings, garage and such.
- Lots of feedback on kitchen and service.
- Teach course etiquette for new members and juniors.
- Place more than one rake per bunker. Re-enforce the 2hrs-10mins for 9 holes of play.
- Consistent and predictable (posted) closing time for pro shop and club storage would be appreciated.
- Love the course just wish the bar was open more often and access to beer was easier.
- Place markers on two par threes to indicate yardage (front tees)
- Signage to allow guests to navigate from the green more easily to the next tee (coming off greens at hole 5, 7) and to navigate from #9 to #10.