



Disc Golf in Mackenzie

Mackenzie Outdoor Route and Trail Association



What is Disc Golf?

Disc golf is a sport that shares similarities with traditional golf but uses flying discs (similar to Frisbees) instead of golf balls and clubs. The goal in disc golf is to complete each hole (similar to traditional golf) in as few throws as possible. Players aim to get their disc from the tee area to the target (usually an elevated metal basket with hanging chains) in the fewest throws.

Disc golf is one of the fastest growing sports in Canada. From 2000 to 2023, the number of disc golf courses in BC increased from 8 to 173 (UDisc, 2024a). In 2023, an average of 3.4 disc golf courses were built per day globally (UDisc, 2024b).

To learn more about disc golf and to see a map of all disc golf courses in BC, check out [UDisc.com](https://www.udisc.com).

Course and Targets

- Disc golf courses typically have nine or 18 holes.
- Instead of holes in the ground, disc golf targets are metal baskets with hanging chains that catch the discs.
- Course obstacles include trees, bushes, terrain changes, water hazards, and out-of-bounds zones, which may result in penalty throws.
- Disc golf courses can be built on a variety of terrains. Often, courses are built using existing infrastructure such as clearings and ski trails.

Gameplay

- The goal is to complete each hole in as few throws as possible
- A player starts from the tee area and throws their disc toward the target.
- After each throw, the player continues from where the disc landed.
- The farthest away player always throws first in group play.
- When the disc lands in the basket (the “putt”), the hole is complete.

Why Does Mackenzie Need Disc Golf?

Disc golf is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world. It has wide appeal to both recreational and competitive players. Some of the benefits of disc golf are as follows:

Accessibility and affordability

Disc golf is both accessible and affordable. Typically, disc golf courses are free to play, similar to trails and parks. Further, the discs themselves are quite cheap (typically around \$10-25 per disc) and you only need one to get started. As such, disc golf is a very family-friendly sport. It is easy to learn and fun to play. Often, courses will have multiple tee locations to allow for easier play options.

Community involvement

Disc golf has great potential for community involvement. It is common for disc golf courses to have weekly league nights and events. These events are great for introducing people to the sport and building community. There are further options for larger events such as tournaments which can further introduce people to the sport.

Tourism

A disc golf course in Mackenzie would be another activity which the town could offer. Further, having a disc golf course here would certainly bring some traffic from disc golf enthusiasts in the surrounding areas. Events such as tournaments can also be a great way to bring people to the town. There are no disc golf courses within 2-hours of Mackenzie. Building a course here has great potential to attract people to the town.

Repurposing unused spaces

Disc golf is unique in that there are very few requirements for a course. It can be anything from a well-manicured park space to a rugged trail system. This is one of the main draws of building a course. It is very easy to repurpose unused spaces for a disc golf course, which greatly reduces costs and reduces wasted space.

The main location identified in this proposal is the old rodeo grounds and surrounding cross-country ski trails. It is very common for disc golf courses to be built on ski trails since they are not used much during the summer months. An example of this is in Prince George. Prince George's most recent disc golf course was built on the trails at Caledonia Nordic Ski Club just outside the city. Further, the rodeo grounds itself serve as an area for more open throwing.

Low cost and low maintenance.

Since disc golf can be built using existing spaces, the costs are typically quite low. The main costs come from construction. The cost of baskets, tee pads, initial preparation of the area and signage are the primary costs. Once a course is built, it is very easy to maintain. Finely manicured grass fairways are not required for disc golf courses. This eliminates the need for watering, fertilizing and frequent mowing, especially on the ski trails. Wooded holes require occasional trimming of new growth and debris.

The Course in Mackenzie

We propose to construct a disc golf course in Mackenzie. The primary location which we are recommending is the old rodeo grounds and surrounding cross-country ski trails (see the attached map). The specifics of the course are as follows:

- Parking at the rodeo grounds and access through the rodeo grounds road.
- 18 holes with an additional practice putting basket.
- Holes will be built in the open areas of the rodeo grounds for large open throws and on the ski trails for tight technical throwing.
- Minor clearing in some areas to allow for baskets to be offset from the ski trails slightly to avoid damage to the groomer.
- Easy and hard tee pads to allow for greater accessibility for new players while maintaining a challenge for experienced players.
- Clear signage at every hole to make following and understanding the course easy.

The rodeo grounds are a great location for multiple reasons:

- If the road is maintained and parking is made available onsite, it is easily accessible. This would be ideal because it allows all of the holes to be relatively close to the start of the course, meaning a player can quit at any point in the course without a huge walkout.
- The space is not typically used during the summer months, which will reduce conflict with other activities. It is very common to integrate disc golf with cross-country ski trails.
- The area is also ideal because it allows for a variety of hole types (wooded and open).
- The area would require very little alteration for construction and would be low maintenance once the course was built. Further, much of the maintenance in this area is already done by the town and the course would not require significant increase in maintenance.

Although this location works well, we are open to work with the council to find a better location should it not be possible. District staff have expressed a desire for some disc golf to be closer to town, this is why we will include funding for a smaller project in our application.

If the district would prefer an 18-hole course closer to town, it is possible. However, this would require significant clearing of trees and increased maintenance post-installation. We will work with the council to determine the best solution prior to installation.

Concerns and Mitigations

Parking and Access

A disc golf course requires easy access and relatively close parking options. Ideally, if the course was built at the rodeo grounds, parking could be built onsite before the gate. Alternatively, parking could be available at the golf club. However, the golf club has expressed concerns in the past over the use of their parking spaces. Consultation with the golf club about parking and road use may need to be done.

District staff have expressed a desire for closer access to the community center. However, there is not a space large enough to accommodate a disc golf course closer to town without significant clearing and felling of trees and brush and increased maintenance. Our solution is to provide funding to the district for a smaller in town disc golf feature.

Cross Country Ski Trail Integration

The Nordiques Ski Club will need to be consulted to construct the course on the trail. Likely, integration will not be an issue. As previously mentioned, it is very common for disc golf courses to be built on ski trails. Recently, Prince George has built a course on the trails at Caledonia Nordic Ski Club. The main concern is basket placement. In order to reduce risk to trail grooming equipment, the baskets could be offset from the trail. This strategy would require minor clearing of vegetation (approximately 5-10 meters around the basket). This would allow baskets to be left standing year-round.

We have met with the president of the ski club and have tentative support. We will work closely with the club to acquire full support and throughout the project to ensure maximum integration.

Upkeep

One concern which has been expressed is the continued upkeep of the site. We are requesting that yearly maintenance consisting of mowing and brush removal twice per season be done by the district. We have spoken with Jody Murray, Director of Operations and briefed him on the requirements.

Multi-use

One recommendation we have gotten is to put the course in a more centralized location for easier access. Although this would be a benefit, we do not believe that there is a space in the town which could support an 18-hole disc golf course without significant additional construction and maintenance requirements. Although "park golf" is common, it requires large spaces. Typically, these courses are constructed in a way to mostly avoid trails and pathways to reduce risk to other recreators. The rodeo grounds eliminate the risk associated with multi-use park spaces. The alternative for a more centralized location will be funding for an in town, small beginner style disc golf feature.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

We are more than happy to meet with the council to discuss the project. Please note that the grant application submission deadline is October 31st.

In the meantime, feel free to reach out to the project lead, Miller Lewis. He is more than happy to address any questions you may have.

Best Regards,

Miller Lewis, Project Lead

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References

British Columbia Disc Golf - Your Guide to Disc Golf in British Columbia, Canada. UDisc. (2024a). <https://udisc.com/places/british-columbia-canada>

Disc Golf Growth Report powered by UDisc. UDisc. (2024b). <https://udisc.com/disc-golf-growth-report>

Estimate Small 9 Hole Course

To: Miller Lewis



2024-09-12

DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
Baskets, locks, hardware and mulch around baskets	\$9500	\$9500
Teepads, materials and installation	\$10500	\$10500
Signage design and material	\$2440	\$2440
Fairway design and travel/lodging costs	\$7950	\$7950
Basket assembly and installation. Signage installation. Fairway Mulching	\$8850	\$8850
	TOTAL	\$39240



Philip Duffy
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Estimate Full 18 Hole Course

To: Miller Lewis



2024-09-12

DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
19 Baskets, locks, hardware and mulch around baskets	\$19100	\$19100
Teepads, materials, concrete delivery and installation	\$47000	\$47000
Signage design and material	\$4940	\$4940
Fairway design and travel/lodging costs	\$16050	\$16050
Basket assembly and installation. Signage installation. Fairway Mulching	\$11500	\$11500
	TOTAL	\$98590



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Parking Lot Expansion

To: Miller Lewis



2024-09-12

DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
Gravel, delivery and labor	\$10000	\$10000
Mulching, tree removal, stump grinding and chainsawing	\$6500	\$6500
Clearing land and clean up	\$3800	\$3800
Signage and installation	\$2000	\$2000
Equipment rental and tamping	\$4300	\$4300
	TOTAL	\$26600



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