

Golf at Canal Shores

Connecting a Community to the Spirit of the Game

Golf in Scotland exploded as a leisure pursuit for the masses in the mid-1800s. It was a game with low barriers to entry, a game that started kids early, and a game that brought people outside to enjoy nature, have fun, and experience community. In GB&I, that spirit of the game still exists in many places, and communities across the British Isles reap the benefits.

A fair case can be made that golf in America has lost connection to its roots, and consequently, to its spirit. In America, golf has high barriers to entry. Barriers of difficulty, cost, and inflexibility have led to reduced participation rates, especially among younger generations. Discussions amongst golf's leaders are ongoing about whether to reinvent the game, and if so, how.

At Canal Shores, we do not believe that golf needs to be reinvented. Instead, we believe that the game needs to look to its humble beginnings and reconnect to the spirit that originally made it take hold and explode in popularity. Therefore, we propose to transform golf at Canal Shores to embody its spirit of challenging fun for all.

The Canal Shores Golfer

The new Canal Shores will be organized for the maximum enjoyment of all ages and skills levels.

- We want to see kids out at Canal Shores from the time that they can hold a putter and whack a ball.
- We want to see youth golfers developing their skills, and testing those skills in friendly competition.
- We want to see high school and college golfers practicing and pushing themselves to find out just how good they can become.
- We want to see groups of adults, and parents with kids out for a round, experiencing the joy of hitting shots and the deep camaraderie of walking the fairways together.

The Multi-Course Concept

Ideally, all golfers share the same love of the game. However, not all golfers are the same. Levels of attention-span, maturity, skill, and strength do vary and differentiate players. That is why it is nearly impossible for a standard 18-hole golf course to effectively serve all players.

The property on which Canal Shores sits is uniquely laid out to allow for the segmentation of different golf activities into different spaces. We propose to create four separate and distinct "courses" appropriately designed for each playing group.

The Rolling Green

Putting courses are tremendous fun for beginners and advanced players alike. The Rolling Green will be an 18-hole putting course where players of all levels can spend hours watching their ball roll up, down, around, and into the cup; and where beginners can learn the game properly - from the hole outward.

The Kids Links

A space that kids can call their own is a time-honored tradition in the game that is being revived at facilities across the U.S. The Kids Links will be a 4-6 hole course that will allow children to learn all aspects of the game at their own pace. It will also be the home of the First Tee of Greater Chicago, and will be designed to accommodate their specialized programming.

The Jans Course

Golfers of all skill and experience levels know the difference between a mediocre course and a great one. The Jans Course will be a 9-14 hole executive course of holes between 80 and 300 yards that will expose players to great golf architecture and the experience that it provides - that of variety, interest, and fun. It will be challenging enough to attract leagues, junior and high school events, and other competitions.

The Back Lot

Every player likes to feel that they are improving, and practice is an integral part of development within the game. The Back Lot will be a highly dynamic practice area, including 6 full greens, that can challenge the best players. It will be the home of the Northwestern University men's and women's golf teams, as well as doubling as a short course during non-practice hours.

The culture of Canal Shores will be one of both inclusion and graduation. Inclusion in that all are welcomed and encouraged to play. Graduation in that it is age and skill level that dictate which courses a player will be able to access. This culture ensures that all players will have the best golf experience.

For more on our sources of inspiration for the new Canal Shores, visit <http://bit.ly/JATS-9>

Sustainable Design

The golf industry has rightly been the subject of intense scrutiny in recent years for the environmental impact of its construction and maintenance practices. Canal Shores will incorporate best practices in agronomy, water and tree management, habitat restoration, and chemical usage to ensure that the course is a sustainable benefit to the community.

Sustainable Operations

The renovation of the new Canal Shores will be achieved through significant fundraising, with contributions coming both from the "game of golf" and the Evanston and Wilmette communities. The facility must be organized for long-term economic sustainability as well, including appropriate maintenance cost structures and revenue generation for each course:

- The Rolling Green will generate revenue through sponsorships and leagues.
- The Kids Links will generate revenue through memberships, clinics and sponsorship by The First Tee.
- The Jans Course will generate revenue through greens fees, memberships, events, leagues, and sponsorships.
- The Back Lot will generate revenue through greens fees and sponsorship by Northwestern.

Note that our intention is to continue to make Canal Shores available for non-golf events - football parking, parties, concerts, races, etc - and the revenue from those events will be set aside for capital projects.

Our Core Team

We are fortunate to have a core group of individuals leading the transformation of Canal Shores, whose considerable skills and experience are coupled with a love for the game and a belief that Canal Shores can be even more unique than it already is.

- **The Canal Shores Board of Directors** - This group of leaders from the Evanston and Wilmette communities saved Canal Shores from near death. They are parents, professionals, businesspeople, and golfers. They are not satisfied that it merely survives, they are committed to making sure that Canal Shores thrives.
- **Pat Goss** - Throughout his career, Pat has been a teacher of the game of golf. For his students, the teams at Northwestern University, and Luke Donald, Pat has worked tirelessly to develop players who are both skilled and attuned to the spirit of the game. As a teacher, father, and member of the community, Pat is committed to giving back by creating a one-of-a-kind golf facility at Canal Shores that will expose players to the greatness of golf for generations to come.
- **Luke Donald** - Luke first discovered Canal Shores in his playing days at Northwestern. His success in the game has not caused Luke to forget his roots. He is a heavy supporter of youth golf, and as a North Shore resident, is committed to giving back to his adopted home.
- **Lisa Quinn** - It might be impossible to find a more enthusiastic promoter of youth golf and the spirit of the game than Lisa. As Executive Director of the First Tee of Greater Chicago, Lisa has overseen a turnaround and is now poised to move forward into the exciting years ahead. This includes a partnership with Canal Shores to give youth golf an amazing new home in the north suburbs.
- **David Zinkand** - Dave learned and perfected his craft as a golf course architect and shaper working alongside masters like Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw. He designs beautiful and fun courses filled with interest, and he is excited to take on a project as different and challenging as the new Canal Shores. For more on Dave's approach to design, visit <http://bit.ly/ZinkandGolf>.
- **Drew Rogers** - Over a decades-long career, Drew has led design, construction, and renovation projects around the country, including work at Chicago gem Old Elm Club. He has been a valuable sounding board for our nascent project and is enthused about the opportunity to give back to the game through design consultation. For more on Drew's work, visit www.jdrewrogers.com.
- **Jason Way** - Jason grew up playing competitive golf and caddying. After a long absence from the game, he is back to it with more passion than ever. He writes of his adventures on a golf course architecture focused blog - GeekedOnGolf.com. As an Evanston resident and father to two young boys who are discovering golf, he looks forward to creating a special place where they can walk the fairways together.

Our Partnerships

We have already received a humbling amount of affirmation and encouragement to follow through on creating the new Canal Shores from parties within the game, including:

- USGA
- [The First Tee of Greater Chicago](#)
- The First Tee of Metropolitan New York
- The Golf Practice
- CDGA
- Wadsworth Foundation

- Lohman Golf
- [Global Golf Post](#)
- KemperSports
- The Golf Channel
- [Hundred Hole Hike](#)

Their support ranges from offers of expert consultation to direct assistance with fundraising and execution of the renovation. This roster of partners will be expanded and the relationships cultivated throughout the Master Planning process.

Taking the Initial Steps

In order to bridge the gap between vision and reality, we are in need of a detailed Master Plan, including budgets for the renovation and go-forward operation of the facility. The Master Planning process, which must include elements such as a boundary survey, tree inventory, community outreach, and architects' fees will cost a considerable amount of money. Those funds will be raised, and the Master Plan will follow.

Canal Shores has applied for a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and will also seek a grant from the [USGA/ASGCA First Links program](#). In the event that we are unsuccessful in obtaining funding through these programs, alternative funding sources will be pursued.