



A Plan to Get the Golf Course You Want

Samples and tips for creating an annual Golf Course Plan.

Developing a Golf Course Plan is an opportunity for your club leaders to align on priorities and ensure your golf course is being managed with transparency and accountability while delivering the course conditions you expect. It's an important tool for any club, regardless of whether your golf course is managed by an in-house superintendent or a golf maintenance partner. A Golf Course Plan can help you:

- Make adaptations to past course maintenance practices to address problem areas noted in the last season.
- Identify course maintenance standards that aren't being met and what changes can improve performance.
- Plan for anticipated events so your course is ready and maintenance plans don't conflict.
- Objectively evaluate equipment maintenance and replacement needs and recommendations.
- Find the right time of year or month to slide in a special project or tackle an item on your long-term plan.
- Ensure club leaders can plan for the budget required to cover your golf maintenance expenses for the year, and create transparency around how the budget will be used.

Whether your club already has a Golf Course Plan or you're starting from scratch, this guide provides advice, tips, and examples from tenured golf course agronomic experts at BrightView that you can use to ensure your club has a plan that is commercially viable, agronomically appropriate, and fiscally responsible.

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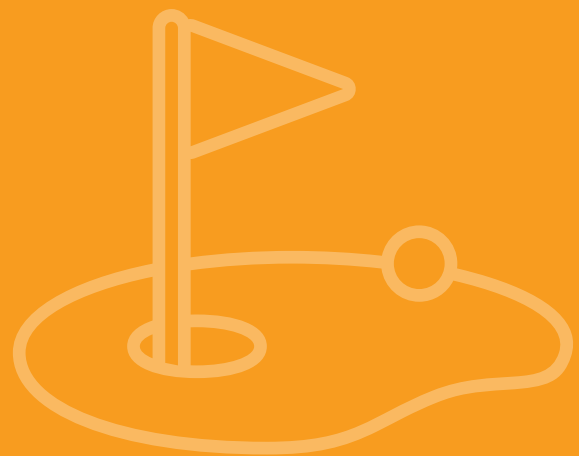
How to use it

Once your plan is ready, use these tips for creating accountability and transparency while retaining flexibility when priorities change.



CHAPTER ONE

When to get started



Golf Course Plans should be your club's roadmap for maintaining your course over the coming year. To ensure it captures challenges and successes from the previous season, as well as changes anticipated for the next busy cycle, your team should carve out time to review and refresh your Golf Course Plan annually.

The end of your peak-playing season is the best time of year to refresh your Golf Course Plan or build one anew if you don't already have one. It's when the past season is still top of mind and your team can reflect on lessons learned that can influence planning for the next one. For some clubs, it might be October; for resorts or clubs that cater to snowbirds, it could be May or June.

If this is your club's first Golf Course Plan, it may take up to a month to create it. There's a lot to it and it will need input from several parties. Once you have the crucial input from key stakeholders, it may take a few weeks to finalize the plan. Don't give up. It gets easier. Your first plan will serve as the infrastructure and springboard for next year's plan.





CHAPTER TWO

Who should be involved



Just as critical as having an annual Golf Course Plan, is creating one that key club stakeholders support. The plan should take into consideration nearly all aspects of your club operations as they relate to your golf course, so several parties will have varying levels of involvement.

- The golf course **Superintendent** will play a lead role in your Golf Course Plan's development. S/he will lead the effort and will ultimately be responsible for drawing up and driving the plan.
- The **Golf Pro** should work closely with the Superintendent at the beginning of the planning process, providing dates for all tournaments and events along with member feedback on the course such as turf conditions, tree issues, tournament preparations and special needs.
- The **General Manager, Owner, Greens Committee, and Board** (as applicable) should be brought in after a first draft of the plan is ready to share. This leadership group will review the plan to confirm it aligns with club priorities, provide feedback, and ultimately approve the plan and associated budget.
- **Agronomic consultants** and advisors are sometimes brought in to help the Superintendent review soil and turf tests and provide prescriptive recommendations based on the data. Be aware that while these consultants can be helpful, they often don't have a full-picture understanding of the course's health, challenges, and progression, which in some cases results in disappointing outcomes.
- **A Golf Course Maintenance Partner like BrightView Golf Maintenance**, will come with a team of experts who will work with you and the Superintendent during the development of your Golf Course Plan. Of course, we stay engaged throughout the year to support the onsite team, hold everyone accountable to the plan and to help make adjustments as we observe and track results. This added resource is helpful to the club as experts like PhD agronomists and tenured operations managers will offer a second set of eyes backed by years of experience on decisions and recommendations. Plus, they will take on some of the burden of the planning workload to free up the Superintendent to focus on the course and playability work of the day.

All individuals you will be bringing into the planning process will be impacted by the plan, but beware of the “too many cooks in the kitchen” syndrome. Bring in the appropriate parties at the right time so you can move the plan development process forward efficiently and effectively.





CHAPTER THREE

What's in the plan



Your Golf Course Plan will have 6 sections touching on

- Agronomics
- Cultural Programs
- Labor Management
- Equipment Assessment, Repairs, and Replacements
- Course Improvements
- Club Events
- Budget

All details included in these sections will be focused on work scheduled to be done over the next 12 months. Long-term planning items should be captured in a formal Long-Term Plan, not your Golf Course Plan.

It's important to note that your Golf Course Plan should be designed to be flexible so your golf maintenance team can adjust for the unexpected and accommodate changing club priorities.





Agronomics

Keeping the turf and greens healthy on your golf course is a top priority in your course maintenance agenda. Agronomics is the use of inputs to help your turf perform at its best, even in challenging environmental conditions. Your course likely has some problem spots and some variance in how different areas need to be treated depending on drainage, light, soil composition, and turf variety.

An annual agronomic plan should account for these variances, noting specific frequencies inputs should be applied at key times throughout the year. It's also an opportunity to determine where changes need to be made based on lessons learned from the prior year. Documentation on what worked, what didn't, turf health progression, and pest pressures that cropped up during the last season are useful for making adaptations to your plan for this next year.

BrightView Golf Maintenance customers get the added benefit of having a PhD agronomist accessible to your superintendent as needed during the planning process and actively engaged throughout the year. It's an invaluable resource for troubleshooting problem areas in your turf and proactively managing course conditions. From monitoring and testing the latest herbicides, pesticides, and generic products to reviewing soil and turf samples, our PhD agronomist provides our superintendents with the added support and knowledge to design a Golf Course Plan that is agronomically appropriate and cost effective.

Here's an example of what's included in an agronomic plan.

BrightView Golf Maintenance - Master Production Calendar

2020			October					November				December				
Activities	Unit (ft oz or lbs)	% Area Coverage	Week #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			10/6	10/13	10/20	10/27	11/3	11/10	11/17	11/24	12/1	12/8	12/15	12/22	12/29	
Greens and Maintenance																
Mow Greens																
Roll Greens																
Hand Water Greens																

Fertilizer Products

Dry Fertilizer Products

Dry Combination Products

Liquid Fertilizer Products

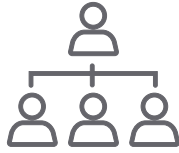


Cultural Programs

Appropriately managing the organic matter beneath the surface of your turf and greens is what should drive your cultural program. This is a scientific process that requires a soil physical analysis. Your superintendent can run this simple test with the help of a reputable lab. This is a standard annual test our professionals at BrightView run for all of our clients. Every green should be tested, and the results will help you determine what cultural programs are needed to keep your turf healthy.

This plan should note when cultural activities should take place, such as core aeration and verticutting, and where more aggressive treatments are needed.

Cultural programs can be outlined inside of your Agronomic Plan. See the sample in the previous section on Agronomics.



Labor Management

Managing the people who care for your golf course is a delicate balance. You want your team to feel invested in the quality of your course and the success of your club. At the same time, you need a team that is working efficiently and strategically. Taking the time to plan for the work that needs to be done on your golf course over the next year will give you a clear understanding of labor needs during busy and slower months, as well as when there's capacity for special projects, training, and employee development. In an ideal scenario, you should have a plan for your full-time, year-round team members as well as seasonal specialists.

To develop your labor plan, evaluate the work you anticipate for the year to come, note special projects and items you earmarked to tackle in your Long-Term Plan, and training and development programs you'd like to offer to your team. During slower periods, slide in special projects and training, and during busier months, determine which specialists and how many will be needed to ensure the work gets done.

Operational experts at BrightView are available to our customers during the planning process and for recruiting support in preparation for the busy season. Our tenured experts in organizational efficiency observe course maintenance teams at work, collaborate with the superintendent to define work scope and roles, and design schedules and routes for labor plans that maximize productivity and available resources while achieving the desired golf course standards.

Here is a sample labor plan.

Sample Labor Plan

Course: _____

Week to be Scheduled: _____

Available Man Hrs/Day	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total	FTE
	74	52	64	57	60	35	35	377	9.425
Task	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total	
Triplex Greens	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	
Mow Tees and Approches	6		6		6			18	
Mow Fairways	6		6		6	3	3	24	
Mow Rough	8	8	8	8	8			40	
Green set up	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	
Tee set up	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	
Practice area set up	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
Rake bunkers	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	
Details (edging)	8	8	8	8	8			40	
Irrigation repair	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	
Hand Watering	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
Fert/Chem applications	8			5				13	
Roll Greens		4		4		4	4	16	
Cultural practices (v-cut/topdress)	6		4					10	
Equipment repair	8	8	8	8	8	4	4	48	

FTE

Daily Totals	74	52	64	57	60	35	35	377	9.4
Daily Surplus/Deficit	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0



Equipment Assessment, Repairs, and Replacements

When golf course maintenance equipment goes down, outlives its useful life, or isn't right for the job, production suffers, conditions degrade, and player satisfaction drops. Monitoring your equipment, maintaining it, and replacing it when it's time is critical for an efficient golf course maintenance operation.

As part of your annual golf course planning, review notes on equipment challenges you encountered throughout the year. Evaluate the ROI of new options in the market or upgrades. In scenarios where replacements are needed, determine if a lease or purchase is right for your club. Document your equipment maintenance and repair needs. This process will help you create an equipment plan that's right for your club.

At BrightView Golf Maintenance, we consider a five-year equipment master plan the foundation of successful golf course and budget planning for all our customers. This plan details every piece of golf course maintenance equipment on a customer's course. It notes the age of the equipment, the years in use, and the expected lifespan of each piece of equipment according to industry standards, and takes into consideration course specific nuances such as water quality, down time, and heavy usage. Ultimately, this master plan indicates where and how money is being spent on your golf course equipment and how a club can proactively plan for equipment maintenance and replacement expenses.

This is a what a five-year equipment master plan looks like.

5-Year Equipment Projection 2020

Current Equipment	Proposed Equipment	Equipment Priority	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Greens Mower #1	Toro 3150Q Triplex greens mower	1	\$35,000				
Greens/Tee Aerator	Toro ProCore 648 aerifier	2	\$27,000				
Large area Mower	Toro GM 4500D Rough Mower	3	\$75,000				
Small Utility #2 Electric	Toro Workman GTX light utility vehicle	5	\$9,000				
Debris Blower	Toro ProForce Blower	6	\$7,500				
Small Utility #1	Toro Workman GTX light utility vehicle	7	\$9,000				
Small Utility #3	Toro Workman GTX light utility vehicle	8		\$9,100			
Large Utility #2	Toro Workman HDX 4WD	9		\$26,500			
Surrounds mower	Toro 3100D	10		\$28,000			
Fairway mower #1	Toro RM 5610 4WD fairway mower	11			\$62,000		
Tee Mower #1	Toro 3150Q Triplex tee mower	12			\$35,800		
SandPro #1	Toro 3049	13				\$15,000	
Large Utility #1	Toro Workman HDX 4WD	14				\$26,000	
Small Utility #4	Toro Workman GTX light utility vehicle	15				\$9,300	
Greens roller	Toro GreensPro 1240 roller	16					\$15,000
Fairway mower #2	Toro RM 5610 4WD fairway mower	17					\$64,000
Total Cost			\$164,520	\$65,621	\$99,822	\$52,323	\$81,024



Course Improvements

Investing time and resources in your course beyond the routine maintenance tasks is critical for keeping your club competitive in your market, and avoiding costly surprises when key components of your course fail unexpectedly.

Your golf course annual planning project is an ideal time to review your Long-Term Plan, infrastructure maintenance needs, the performance of key components on your course, and areas where enhancements could increase your course's appeal. Prioritize what is feasible to tackle this year based on your labor plan and budget available. Plug those items into your Golf Course Plan.

Long-term planning support is a part of our service when we come on as the golf maintenance partner with clubs. Senior leaders on the BrightView Golf Maintenance team spend time with club leaders to understand your vision for your club and define how your course needs to evolve over time to achieve that vision. Last, we help define areas where course improvements can give you a competitive advantage in your market.

Here's an example of a course improvement plan. Note that these projects will also need to be reflected in your labor plan and budget.

Sample Course Improvements Plan

Capital Improvement Priority List

Tee Leveling	\$196,000
Green Drainage Installation	\$200,000
Tree Management	\$202,000
Storm Drain Infrastructure	\$201,000
Landscape Improvements	\$30,000
Driving Range Grade & Turf Project	\$70,000
Maintenance Shop	\$40,000
Water Features	\$60,000
Hole #8 Fairway Project	\$200,000
Cart Path Repair	\$250,000
Bermudagrass Nursery Installation	\$42,464
TOTAL	\$1,491,464

Estimated by Project & Hole

Hole	Tee Leveling	Tree Management	Landscaping Improvement Clearing	Drainage Infrastructure	Bermudagrass Nursery Installation	Other Projects	Total Costs Per Hole
1	\$10,074	\$22,500	\$20,000				\$52,574
2	\$12,000	\$7,800	\$10,000	\$35,000			\$64,800
3	\$4,672	\$25,400		\$1,000			\$31,072
4	\$12,360	\$20,800					\$33,160
5	\$7,170	\$4,900			\$12,000		\$24,070
6	\$15,750	\$14,500			\$10,000		\$40,250
7	\$24,490	\$5,000					\$29,490
8	\$11,900	\$18,200				\$200,000	\$230,100
9	\$12,202					\$5,000	\$17,202
10	\$8,920	\$11,000		\$55,000			\$74,920
11	\$8,700	\$13,000			\$20,000	\$40,000	\$81,700
12		\$3,000					\$3,000
13	\$10,600	\$3,500					\$14,100
14	\$14,160	\$12,000		\$30,000			\$56,160
15	\$16,608	\$10,000					\$26,608
16	\$6,544	\$6,200				\$15,000	\$27,744
17	\$10,450	\$16,000					\$26,450
18	\$9,464	\$6,000		\$80,000		\$40,000	\$135,464
Driving Range		\$2,600				\$70,000	\$72,600
Cart Path Repair						\$250,000	\$250,000
Green Drainage Install						\$200,000	\$200,000
TOTAL	\$196,064	\$202,400	\$30,000		\$42,000	\$820,000	\$1,491,464



Club Events

Planning ahead for club events — tournaments, weddings, annual celebrations — is key to ensuring your course and grounds are well prepared for a seamless event and to minimize damage to the course. Work that needs to be done before and after the event should be planned in advance so it can be scheduled among the routine work the golf course maintenance team already has on the calendar, and staffing changes can be planned for as needed.

You may have events that are scheduled after your Golf Course Plan is completed and approved. Having a plan in place is an important starting place and makes it easier to adapt to changes as new events are scheduled throughout the year. Make sure your club's events team and superintendent are aligned on the lead time needed between when an event is scheduled and the event date.

All scheduled events should be included in your Golf Course master calendar. Make sure agronomic and cultural programs that are needed for each event are included in the respective plans for the year.



Budget

Your budget should be built off of the resources and activities developed in the Golf Course Plan. Every course or club has their own budgeting format. The course maintenance budget should follow the established club budget format.



CHAPTER FOUR

How to use it



Your course is dynamic; your plan should be too. Mother Nature will surprise you, club priorities will shift, or an unexpected event will pop up. With a documented plan to review it will be easier to identify appropriate changes and adaptations to accommodate to changing circumstances.

To be watchful and aware of changes and when they're needed, regular communication with department heads and club leaders is important in addition to ongoing observation of course conditions with soil and turf testing as needed. Issues should be recorded so notes can be referenced when refreshing the Golf Course Plan for the next season.

While it's important to expect the unexpected, your Golf Course Plan will be a tool that is used and referenced throughout the year. It will serve as a clear roadmap for scheduling work and a record of what was done so it will be easier to understand specific changes that need to be made mid-year or in the next season.

Here are some basic practices you can implement at your club to create accountability to your Golf Course Plan and ensure transparency in how it's executed.

- Hang a copy of your agronomic and cultural program plans on the wall in your golf maintenance yard. It will serve as a daily reminder of activities that need to be done.
- The superintendent should review the plan weekly for scheduling work.
- The superintendent should reference the plan monthly to order materials.
- The plan should be reviewed and changes should be discussed during weekly or bi-weekly staff meetings with department heads.
- The superintendent should report on progress against the plan and changes to the plan during Greens Committee and Board meetings.

In working with customers, BrightView Golf Maintenance has processes in place that add an extra layer of accountability and support.

- Our Area Director visits each course monthly to review how the course is performing against the plan and to make sure expected progress is made.
- Our PhD Agronomist on our team visits courses regularly to review course conditions, hear feedback from club leaders, and provide recommendations on changes as applicable.
- Our Area Director, PhD Agronomist and Regional Vice President are available to the superintendent for questions, advice, and added support as needed. They also work with club leaders for strategic direction or should concerns need to be escalated.

Creating your Golf Course Plan is the first important step and a big investment of time and resources. But, using the plan and adapting it to respond to needed changes is where you will see your upfront efforts pay off.

Hopefully, this Guide has provided you with the tools and information you need to develop your Golf Course Plan. As you can see, it requires an investment of time, collaboration among your leadership team, and input from your stakeholders to be a successful tool for your club and golf course maintenance team. In the end, we're confident you'll find it to be worth the effort.

This kind of planning is a basic discipline of how we operate at BrightView Golf Maintenance. We undertake this process with every client, every year, creating a plan interactively and with great transparency.

If you need help getting a plan going, we're here. If you're game to take it on yourself — and we firmly believe no club should be without one — please take advantage of the information we've provided to get started.

Here's to your success!



BrightView Golf Maintenance is the industry's leader in golf course maintenance. For over 30 years, we have invested in refining the science, technology and human expertise behind golf course maintenance to establish an operational model that is unlike any other in the industry. Designed to be highly efficient in helping our clients reduce their operating expenses, this powerful business model also helps to effectively maintain and improve course conditions down to every last detail.

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