

NGF's Top-50 List Targets Metro Areas Most in Need of Public Golf Courses

JUPITER, Fla. — In its continuing effort to help avert what its research indicates is an impending crisis in golf, the National Golf Foundation has identified the 50 metropolitan areas in the U.S. most in need of public golf courses.

Ten of the 50 areas are in California. Next is the State of Washington with five, Wisconsin with four, Colorado and New Jersey with three each.

The list, according to NGF President and CEO David Hueber, was created to identify for municipalities and developers those areas with the greatest need and opportunity for golf facility development.

Earlier this year, an NGF research report concluded that the U.S. could be facing a shortage of more than 4,000 golf courses by the year 2000 if the rate of development of new facilities continues to fall behind the rising public demand for golf.

“Based upon current growth trends, we need to open a golf course every day between now and the year 2000 just to maintain the current level of access,” says Hueber, “And we are currently in a situation of undersupply throughout the sunbelt areas and most metropolitan areas in the U.S.”

NGF research shows that there are approximately 20.1 million golfers and 12,400 golf facilities in the U.S. today. This research also notes that, while the number of golfers in the U.S. has been increasing steadily at a rate of 3% a year over the past 10 years, growth in the total number of golf facilities has been increasing at only 0.5% a year.

If the U.S. golfer population continues to grow at its present rate, the NGF projects it will skyrocket to 31 million golfers by the year 2000, creating an estimated shortage in capacity of more than 4,000 golf facilities.

With this in mind, the NGF has launched a campaign to encourage the development of new golf facilities (especially public courses) where they are needed. As part of this program, the NGF is following up with communities in the targeted metro areas; talking with officials and civic leaders about how they might proceed in creating new public golf facilities.

Where interest is expressed, the NGF is offering its expertise and services to assist these communities or developers in the various stages of planning, building and operating a golf facility.

“Communities and local developers need a central source of information and assistance in creating new golf facilities,” says Hueber, “and the NGF has the network of resources to fill that need.”

A nonprofit golf market research and promotional organization, the NGF is supported by more than 5,000 members of the golf industry. Included are golf course architects and builders, national and state golf associations, golf course owners and operators, and, the major golf companies.

Grass Roots

One single grass plant has a tremendous root system. There may be as much as 375 miles of roots; 13,815,762 individual roots and 2,554 square feet of root surface. In watering your lawn, be sure to soak it long enough for moisture to penetrate this tremendous root system. A thorough soaking once a week is better for established lawns than frequent surface sprinklings.

Top 50 Metropolitan Areas with the Most Opportunity for Golf Facility Development

MSA — Name

Albuquerque, N.M.	Modesto, Calif.
Anaheim-Santa Anna, Calif.	New Haven-Waterbury-Meriden, CT.
Anchorage, Alaska	New York, N.Y.
Bergen-Passiac, N.J.	Oakland, Calif.
Boston-Lawrence-Salem-Lowell-Brockton, MA	Odessa, TX
Chicago, Ill.	Oxnard-Ventura, Calif.
Danville, Va.	Pueblo, Colo.
Denver, Colo.	Racine, Wis.
Detroit, Mich.	Sacramento, Calif.
El Paso, Texas	Salt Lake City-Ogden, Utah
Fayetteville-Springdale, N.C.	San Francisco, Calif.
Fresno, Calif.	San Jose, Calif.
Greeley, Colo.	Santa Fe, N.M.
Iowa City, Iowa	Seattle, Wash.
Janesville-Beloit, Wis.	Spokane, Wash.
Jersey City, N.J.	St. Louis, Mo.
Johnstown, Pa.	Tacoma, Wash.
La Crosse, Wis.	Toledo, Ohio
Las Vegas, Nev.	Vancouver, Wash.
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif.	Vineland-Millville-Bridgeton, N.J.
Manchester-Nashua, N.H.	Wausau, Wis.
Medford, Ore.	Wichita, Kan.
Miami-Hialeah, Fla.	Williamsport, Pa.
Milwaukee, Wis.	Yakima, Wash.
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.	Yuba City, Calif.

This list was derived from a recent National Golf Foundation study of 298 U.S. metro areas in which each area was analyzed and quantified in terms of:

- (1) Its total number of golf holes.
- (2) Total resident population.
- (3) That region's ratio of golfers vs. non-golfers
- (4) The average number of rounds played per year by golfers in that region.

The 50 areas listed here are not necessarily those with the highest raw number of golfers per golf hole. They are instead those which (because of their high number of frequent golfers) appear to have the greatest under-supply of golf holes for the size of the existing demand.

It should be noted that the analysis was based on resident golfers only and did not weigh the additional impact on demand of seasonal residents or tourists.

By the same token, the analysis also did not take into account the number of facilities that may be available for public play outside a given metro area.

The NGF recognizes that lack of available land often limits a metro area from golf course development. In these cases, facilities in outlying areas are becoming targets of opportunity ... especially for public courses.

In this regard, NGF research has detected an increasing willingness among metro area golfers to travel to surrounding areas ... again, especially if the facilities there are public, well-managed and maintained.

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