

On Course

News & Thoughts from Forrest Richardson & Associates, Golf Course Architects

Spring 2014

CREATIVE RENEWAL TO THE RESCUE FOR MUNICIPALITIES



Hole No. 5 of the new Baylands Golf Links at Palo Alto after transformation to its new native habitat theme

In the heart of Silicon Valley an old and tired muni is redefining its future, while at the same time adding value to the City of Palo Alto

What began as an effort to find a solution to chronic flooding of nearby communities has turned into a win-win. In fact, according to former Mayor Patrick Burt, “It’s five wins...”

“By looking at a golf course from multiple perspectives — physical, financial and social — we are able to open new avenues to success,” says golf course architect Forrest Richardson.

For the City of Palo Alto, he began by shifting the golf course to make way for a new river channel. In the process, his design also reduced the footprint of the course and added 40 acres of natural habitat. The neighboring Baylands Preserve is now linked to the course, and water use will reduce by 40% or more.

“This is a great opportunity with multiple ‘wins’ on the horizon, five to be exact. Not only do we receive critical flood protection, but we get a more exciting golf course, a stronger economic model, new land for public recreation and an environmental win with less turf and more natural habitat.”

— PATRICK BURT
Palo Alto City Council

To address the need to bring new golfers to the course, Richardson has designed a new Youth Golf Center as part of the rebuilding project. This loop of three “mini” holes will be designated for teaching and practice.

“We set out to make things better, but that had to include the financial sustainability, too,” he notes. Indeed, a separate pro forma analysis shows that the renewed course and its new features will generate more revenue.

Parks Legacy Project

“On the social side there is probably no other activity in the nation which does more to fix the conditions that determine the health and mold the character of our people than housing.”

To find out about the Parks Legacy Project and how public park land can be creatively reconfigured for dual uses, go to:



FREDRICK LAW OLNSTEAD

www.parkslegacyproject.org

DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

Success in the public sector relies on a family of solutions.



BAYLANDS GOLF LINKS PALO ALTO

Change is not always costly, such as the name and theme for Palo Alto’s “new” golf facility.



A CLUBHOUSE, FROM RAGS TO RICHES



Conceptual plans for exterior changes to the outdated clubhouse (at right)

Taking cues from the Mid Century Modern movement of 1960s Palo Alto, clubhouse designer Brian Curtis envisions a transformation of the new Baylands Golf Links clubhouse.

In addition, he adds 4,000 s.f. of new banquet and event spaces adding to the financial strength of the golf operation.



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