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**Photo courtesy of Nelson & Wright**

**Lease one, build two**

BY MARK LESLIE

Honolulu could earn a quick $100 million if investors bid on a proposed lease for the just-completed municipal West Loch Golf Course in Ewa.

Mayor Frank Fasi, for years Hawaii's leading critic of foreign investment, has proposed what may be an unprecedented build-lease arrangement. He hopes to lease or sell the course and clubhouse, which cost the city $20 million to build, for $100 million or more and use the profits to build two golf courses plus affordable housing.

The West Loch project sailed through the permit process while private ventures in Honolulu remain mired in the bureaucratic red tape. Officials feel potential developers may be willing to pay the large lease fee rather than tie up funds in the lengthy permit process.

The surprise is that 'no one has said that's (amount of money) out of line. Everybody I hear is saying, 'That's reasonable,' " said Dave Mills, administrator for the Department of Planning and Community Development.

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**Environment the major concern of architects**

BY MARK LESLIE

Environmental issues running the gamut from wetlands to pesticide use are the most important problem facing golf course architects, according to a Golf Course News survey of the nation's leading architects.

Of the 55 architects who responded to the question of what is the most important issue they face, 37 listed a topic concerning the environment.

Several other issues received from one to seven mentions from architects, including the cost of construction and maintenance; water usage; keeping design natural; financing; obtaining permits; finding qualified help; the speed of play; the distance golfers are hitting the ball; the speed of the greens; and the influence of the professional tour on standards of maintenance.

The overwhelming response that environment was the major concern came from every region of the United States.

Denis Griffin of Braselton, Ga., decreed:

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**Super Focus**

Paul Latshaw conquers Handicapped-accessible tourney travails

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**1st course planned for handicapped**

BY MARK LESLIE

An Ohio rehabilitation hospital plans to build the first golf facility for the handicapped in a project that could have far-reaching effects on golf courses nationwide.

Lessons learned from the technologies and designs used at the course at Edwin Shaw Hospital in Akron may usher in a new era, especially for municipal courses that must abide by laws making public facilities accessible to the handicapped.

The project of the hospital's Development Foundation has drawn support and it promises to provide challenges for all involved, from the design work (donated by Hurdzan Design Group of Columbus, Ohio) to the construction (some part of which is a gift of Goods and MacGregor Golf).

The hospital's vice president for development, Linda Cinson, said officials will soon decide exactly what type of facility to add to its current small driving range and two practice greens. They are leaning toward initially building a large driving range and three holes. Another six holes could follow later.

They hope to get construction started by this fall, probably building the driving range first so that it can be used even before year's end.

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**Focus on environment**

Company options are abundant

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Honolulu

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the Golf Course Division of the City and County of Honolulu Man-
aging Director’s Office.

"I don't think it's far-fetched," said Ron Duran, who as executive assistant to Managing Director Jeremy Harris, has been closely involved with West Loch since its inception 1 1/2 years ago. "Beach homes are now selling up to $20 million ... and waterfront property is going for $5-$10 million."

March 15 is the deadline for bids and by mid-February more than 20 people had spent the $100 necessary to buy the specs. Who has taken the specs is unknown, although Duran and Mills believe wealthy Japanese developers — among those enduring the long wait for approvals on projects — must be interested.

"There are 49 golf courses on the drawing board and seeking permits from the government, and you have an attitude of the government that you've got enough golf courses, and all new sorts of regula-
tions are coming into play in the Legislature as well as the City Council," Duran said. "It's going to be difficult to implement these golf courses, so, from that standpoint, it makes that $100 million not too much money."

"When you stop to think that in Japan right now a membership costs $1 million or more, you only need 100 members to form a golf club."

Duran said the initial interest in the lease is from "promoters who probably have contacts with foreign investors, primarily the Japa-
ese. What is the commission on a sale of that magnitude? So the inter-
est we're getting may only be the promoters."

Fasi told the Honolulu Adver-
siser: "Since I can't stop them (foreign investors), I'm going to try to realize what I can for the city."

Under the agreement Honohulu proposes, the course would be semi-public for the first two years; the operator would have to allow 150 rounds a day to residents. After two years it would become a private course and the leasee could sell memberships.

There is also the possibility of the city selling the course through an option that carries an additional price tag of just $4 million.

Once the bids are all in on March 15, the Managing Director's Of-
fice will review them and negotiate with bidders if necessary.

The ultimate decision to accept a bid, however, lies with the City Council. Indications is that most of the councilors support the idea.

"It has not been put to vote," Duran said, but approval takes six votes from the nine-member coun-
cil and "only one or possibly two have said anything negative about it."

He added: "It sounds like a real good idea. For example, assuming we sell it and end up with two more public golf courses, and in the meantime we can fix the prices that the purchaser charges for the local people to play golf, I think it's a good deal."

Among the conditions the city expects to impose during the first two years of lease agreement are: • Hawaii residents will be charged $27 a round on weekdays and $32 per round on weekends and holidays. Non-residents will pay market rates.

• A non-refundable $2-million deposit will be required of the high-
est bidder.

Mills said the city could open the course on April 1. Any leasee or buyer would have to open by May 15.

Designed by Nelson & Wright of Hawaii, the 178-acre, 18-hole course has received the award for excellence in planning by the Hawaii Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. It was de-
signed and built to withstand the flooding in Central Oahu, and Robin Nelson and Rodney Wright consider it the most complicated and environmentally sensitive course either has worked on.

For his part, Mayor Fasi is al-
ready looking ahead to the pros-
ts of building two more municip-
al courses and $40 million or so in
affordable housing.

He said their construction is "guaranteed."

MARCH 1990

Shangri-La facilities face $7M facelift

Club Resorts Inc. of Dallas, Texas, plans a $7-million remodel-
ing of the golf courses, public ar-
eas and 500 guest rooms at Shan-
gri-La, a regional conference facil-
ity and full-service golf resort the company bought in northeastern Oklahoma.

A $1.5-million renovation plan had already been implemented by the previous owner, Resorts, Inc., a subsidiary of Tulsa, Okla.-based Fourth National Bank.

"Shangri-La is in the same resto-
ration category that world-famous Pinehurst Hotel & Country Club fell under when we purchased it in 1984," said Allen Anderson, Club Resorts’ vice president of sales and marketing.

It is the third major property purchase by Club Resorts in the last 18 months, joining Pinehurst in North Carolina and Barton Creek Conference Resort in Austin, Texas.

Anderson said the resort will remain fully operational during the renovations. It encompasses two championship golf courses, full-service health spa, bowling, indoor and outdoor tennis and swimming and other facilities.