The odds

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search golf demand and supply, residential development (first) and for golf (second). Who will live in the community? Where are views, ambience or the club atmosphere important reason could be open space and surrounding area, quality of access, character of the area and site, suitability for residential development — The most important reason could be open space and views, ambience or the club atmosphere. Remember, an average of just 20 to 30 percent of residents will play the golf course.

There is nothing worse than an empty golf course. If it's empty, it's not selling homes. Encourage play, sponsor outings and get the community environment around the golf course — This is the opposite of designing a wonderful golf course and throwing some housing in. The community design is the primary concern.

Utilize the golf course to benefit residential site planning — The golf course should be visible from as many homes as possible and as vehicles enter the community.

Design the course and membership structure to the residential market — The course must be playable by the residents. It must be affordable and have adequate capacity.

Prepare realistic budgets and cash flow analyses — Development is heavily front-loaded and early operating losses must be considered.

Market the community intelligently and creatively — Just offering golf isn't enough, especially in an area that already has many courses.

Utilize the golf course to sell homes — There is nothing worse than an empty golf course. If it's empty, it's not selling homes. Encourage play, sponsor outings and get the market involved in the lifestyle.

Balance housing products — Make sure to have product for all viable markets and pockets. Phase development. If premium course-front lots are selling much faster than back lots, raise the price of the premium lots. 'The last home site you want to get on the range, from sand to water, playing on bentgrass or bluegrass.' It includes four target greens, a chipping green and bunker complex, and large putting green.

Ken Giesler, formerly at Ingersoll Golf Course, is superintendent at the Aldeen course, which is all bentgrass from tee to green.

Nugent adds his artistry to Rockford, Ill.'s 5th muni

ROCKFORD, Ill. — A forward-looking Rockford Park District and forward-thinking architect Dick Nugent — nudge on by a donation from a public-thinking industrialist — have created the fifth municipal golf course here.

Taking a $2-million gift from retired businessman Norris Aldeen that included 143 acres from his family farm and $300,000 in trees, the Rockford Park District added $4.8 million from two bond issues, another $10,000 in private donations and built an $8.2-million facility.

The course carries the name of Aldeen, who also donated a small bridge reminiscent of that over Swilcan Burn at St. Andrews.

Nugent added mounding and contours, heavily bunkered greens, and a layout that skirts water on 10 holes to transform the flat and wide-open farm. Nine of the holes opened July 36 and the back nine will open next year. "They wanted a course suitable for all levels of public play up to and including state amateur championships and maybe some day the national public links championship, so we designed with that in mind," Nugent said.

Four sets of tees make the course playable from 7,026 to 5,030 yards. "Everybody is extremely pleased," said Jim Reid, manager of design and construction for the Park District. "The course is much more than I thought it was going to be."

Course manager David Claeyssens, who now oversees five courses, described the newest as an upscale public facility.

One of its most unique features, he said, is a $1.25-million practice area Nugent designed so that "any shot you can get on a course, you can get on the range, from sand to water, playing on bentgrass or bluegrass."

It includes four target greens, a chipping green and bunker complex, and large putting green.

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