

Houston plans to privatize city's course

HOUSTON, Texas — The Houston City Council voted 10-3 to approve a plan to privatize the golf and tennis facilities at the city's Memorial Park. Houstonian Group Inc. would oversee the golf course and tennis courts and spend \$6 million on park improvements, including a new fitness center.

Opponents pledge to challenge the plan, and the contract will be voided if the group's market study finds little demand for the fitness center.

Parks Director Don Olson says the plan would benefit the city, allowing private money to upgrade facilities while earning the city a percentage of revenues. The city would get a percentage of revenues from the improved operations or \$300,000 a year, whichever is greater, and would still control fee increases at the park. Memorial Park is the fourth Houston park to be privatized.

American Golf Corp. would run the course as a subcontractor after losing in the original contractor's competition. American Golf is responsible for spending \$4 million on golf course improvements. The Houston Golf Association also supplied a losing proposal.

Private mortgage broker found for Mass. project

GEORGETOWN, Mass. — A private mortgage broker in New York has agreed to finance the Georgetown Club golf course, and construction will resume on the remaining nine holes of the course.

The project includes a clubhouse, bar and grill, 250-person function room, and a health club with pool and tennis court, slated for completion this summer. The first nine holes have been in play for more than a year.

Partners Gene English and Peter Wojtkun expect course construction to be completed before work on the buildings begins. The partners had been trying to find funding to complete the project for more than two years.

Burlington Island ownership at stake

BURLINGTON CITY, N.J. — Burlington Island might belong to Burlington City after all. After 12 years, the state of New Jersey is ready to negotiate on who controls the tidelands around the island, an issue which had stopped the town's development plans.

The city of Burlington wants to use 100 of the island's 400 acres for family recreation facilities, and the other 300 acres, which include a 100-acre lake, for a marina, golf course, hiking paths, amphitheater and picnic area.

Annexation would triple Madison neighbor's taxes

BLOOMING GROVE, Wis. — In a move intended to allow Madison to bring city water lines to Yahara Hills Golf Course, Madison officials are proposing to annex 177 acres of Blooming Grove, a little town outside of the city. The annexation

would remove the town's biggest taxpayer from the lists and cost the town one-third of its annual tax revenue, tripling property taxes for remaining residents.

The 36-hole golf course and clubhouse is served by wells, but Madison

is proposing a nine-hole expansion. The \$875,000 expansion will be built on 31 acres the city already owns next to the course. The extra nine holes will be used for lessons and league play, and paid for by greens fees.

In order to annex the acreage, owners of at least 50 percent of the affected area must approve. Because Madison already owns 31 of the 177 acres, approval of just one or two of the remaining landowners could give the entire parcel to Madison.

Illinois town building public course on former landfill

BLUE ISLAND, Ill. — This community is slated for an 18-hole public golf course now that aldermen have agreed to draft an ordinance issuing \$7 million in bonds to finance the

course.

The bonds will be repaid with money generated by the golf course development and should not affect the city's annual tax

levy.

The course, on 138 acres of a former landfill, will be built by Blue T Golf Inc. of Nebraska and include a 3,000-square-foot club-

house, a barn to house 40 electric golf carts, a maintenance building and 120 car parking lot.

Planned completion date is April 1993.

