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**City of Alameda Countersued by Operator of Municipal Golf Course  
for Alleged Discrimination, Political Favoritism**

**Alameda has Engaged in a “Campaign of Harassment” Against Minority-Owned  
Golf Management Company to Terminate its Lease So it Can Provide  
“Preferential Access to Political Supporters,” Lawsuit Alleges**

**Alameda**—The City of Alameda is attempting to illegally terminate the contract of its municipal golf course operator based on prejudicial bias and discrimination, a lawsuit response filed in Alameda County Superior Court claims.

Greenway Golf Associates and its majority owners Umesh and Avani Patel filed their cross complaint (Case No. 22CV011964) Sept. 9 against the city for breach of contract and other actions.

Greenway is the manager and operator of Alameda’s [Corica Park Golf Complex](#), a 333-acre municipal golf facility with two 18-hole courses, a 9-hole course, driving range, and clubhouse.

“Greenway’s claims in this cross-complaint arise from the city’s campaign of harassment, false or baseless accusations, and character assassination directed at Greenway...in a concerted and premeditated effort by the city to strip Greenway and the Patels of their contractual rights under the lease,” according to the suit filed by the law firm of [Burke, Williams & Sorensen](#), the attorneys representing Greenway.

Greenway initially won a contract in 2012 to manage and operate the Corica complex for 20 years with a 5-year renewal option and then extended the original term of the Lease in 2018 to 40 years with a 10-year renewal option. At the time, Greenway was owned by George Kelley, Ken Campbell, and Marc Logan, not the Patels. Despite their substantial financial difficulties and troubles complying with lease obligations, the city “took no significant steps to enforce the lease against Greenway,” when the Patels were not owners, according to the lawsuit.

That changed in 2020, when Umesh Patel and his wife Avani Patel became majority shareholders in Greenway. According to the cross-complaint, the City of Alameda then began serving Greenway with a stream of violation notices and threats of default over alleged and trivial lapses in its lease.

The suit alleges that the city – through its city council, golf commission, and its recreation and parks department director – began a campaign designed to trigger a “material default” that would entitle the city to terminate the lease and to replace Greenway and the Patels with a new operator, assume operation of the golf complex itself, or continue with Greenway but without the Patels as majority owners or owners at all.

Confirming the city’s use of illusory “defaults” as a pretext for its discriminatory actions, Greenway has complied with or offered to compromise on every demand the city has leveled against it. For example, the suit alleges, Greenway has offered to allow the city a “full and unrestricted” audit of its books and records, in response to the city’s demand. In response to another city demand, Greenway has “twice provided the City with construction schedules for completion of the North Course.” In each case, Greenway alleges, the city has either “rejected” Greenway’s efforts at compliance or conciliation or simply failed to respond.

“The city’s abrupt change of its treatment of Greenway following the Patels’ acquisition of a majority ownership in Greenway was in stark contrast to the city’s treatment of Greenway before the Patels’ involvement,” the lawsuit states.

The suit claims the city’s notices of petty violations as well as false claims “are motivated by unlawful discrimination against Greenway and the Patels.” They allege the effort against them is calculated to ensure that the golf course has “operators who will readily accede to the City’s day to day management directives,” catering to a small group of vested interests and friends of the City council and staff rather than all Alameda and wider Bay Area residents.

As part of its complaint, Greenway and the Patels submitted a public records act request to the City of Alameda. The city provided a document to them that lays out a plan to terminate the lease with Greenway and the Patels, but the city has refused to share who wrote it, other than to say it came from “a concerned citizen.” The document recommends forcing the Patels to “divest all ownership” of the corporation to Greenway’s other current shareholder, Marc Logan.

“Providing a virtual “dog whistle” for the city to precipitously and without basis take extreme action against Greenway and the Patels, the memorandum implores the city to “seize” the golf complex “to ensure public safety.” The cry for action is reminiscent of historic efforts in America to remove persons of color from public lands, employing a variety of tactics such as maligning their moral character and questioning their abilities,” the lawsuit states.

The Patels have started numerous no-cost programs over the last two years, intended for golfers and non-golfers alike, in order to provide access to those who had little or no access to the park before. This new ethos has created opportunities for underserved youth, high school and college students, women and girls, local non-profits, small businesses, educators, and the community at large. They are pursuing their vision to make Corica Park a sustainable open space for everyone. It seems they are now going to need the support of everyone in their community to make that vision a reality in Alameda.