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Enjoy Valle Vista view, but skip submarine races | **ROBERTS, PAGE 4**



Feel the force of Carrie Fisher
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SCOTTSDALE REPUBLIC

CAREFREE CAVE CREEK FOUNTAIN HILLS PARADISE VALLEY ARCADIA SALT RIVER COMMUNITY FORT MCDOWELL

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2008 SCOTTSDALE.AZCENTRAL.COM

Cultural Council gets donation

City aid offsets arts center's closing renovations starting in May and will remain closed through next summer.

By Lesley Wright
 THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

SCOTTSDALE — The Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts will be dark for the next year, but the City Council ensured that the Scottsdale Cultural Council will keep the arts alive.

The council voted unanimously late Tuesday to boost the non-profit arts group with \$1.25 million to offset lost ticket sales.

The performing arts center will close for last 20 years. Besides upgrading the performing arts venue, the city this year will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art.

Councilwoman Betty Drake said Scottsdale spends less per capita on the arts than do Mesa and Tempe, which are giving Scottsdale competition in culture and the arts.

"We need to send a message," Drake said. "The Cultural Council is in for a tough year. There are many (arts) programs that are going to be affected by the renovation."

William Banchs, the Cultural Council's new president and chief executive officer, said the group counted on the increases when making its budget.

The Cultural Council, founded in 1988, is drafting a new strategic plan and will sign a new agreement with Scottsdale that could

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Council OKs funding Soleri-designed bridge

Bed tax may be tapped for city's \$1.7 million share of project

By Lesley Wright
 THE REPUBLIC | AZCENTRAL.COM

SCOTTSDALE — After nearly 10 years of talk, Scottsdale is ready to build a Paolo Soleri-designed bridge over the Arizona Canal.

It was an item that city officials specifically excluded from the initial fiscal 2008-09 budget.

But it was one that Scottsdale City Council members and residents said Tuesday they could no longer ignore.

"Public art is the defining characteristic of this community," said resident Mark Ortega, one of dozens who have urged that the bridge be built. "The funding of public art is just as important as what we put up and where we put it."

The council voted unanimously to contribute the remaining \$1.7 million needed to build the bridge. The rest of the \$3.2 million fund has come from other sources.

The renowned architect, 89, was present for the council's vote and said he was grateful the design would finally come to life.

The bridge will span the canal southwest of Camelback and Scottsdale roads and feature one of the largest bells ever cast by Soleri. It will connect the Scottsdale Waterfront on the north side of the canal with SouthBridge and other retail outlets on the south side.

Craig Clifford, the city's acting treasurer, had excluded the bridge from the new budget because of lean economic times. But Clifford said the money could come from funds for transportation, capital projects and the city's bed tax.

The council asked the Tourism Development Commission, which has already recommended not using bed taxes to build the bridge, to hold a special meeting on the issue before the next budget hearing on May 6.

Councilman Ron McCullagh said the tourism fund provided the most appropriate source of financing for the bridge.

"I believe the Soleri Bridge is a perfect example of the type of thing contemplated by voters when this tax was passed," McCullagh said.

The council also voted this week to retain control of the Loop 101 photo enforcement cameras for another couple of months.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety was supposed to take the cameras over this month, but now wants to wait until construction begins on the freeway's carpool lanes. At that point, the cameras will temporarily go dark.

Scottsdale Police Chief Alan Rodbell said the timing of the construction was a "moving target," but should start about mid-July.



DEIRDRE HANMLI/THE REPUBLIC

An artist's rendering shows Paolo Soleri's pedestrian bridge, which will span the canal southwest of Camelback and Scottsdale roads.

SCOTTSDALE REPUBLIC

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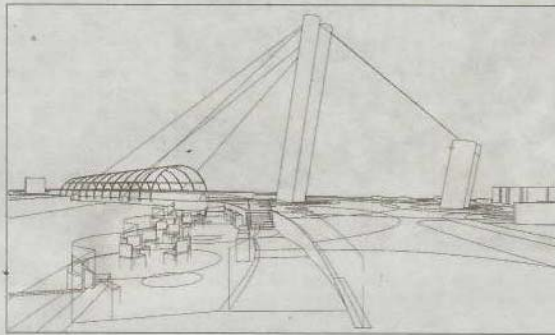
Please include your name, address and phone number. Please limit letters to 200 words and columns to 400 words.

OUR VIEW

What do you think?

Is the council right to include money for the Soleri pedestrian bridge in its 2008-09 budget?

Send e-mail to ne.letters@scottsdalerepublic.com, faxes to 602-444-8933 and mail to Opinions, Scottsdale Republic, 8800 E. Raintree Drive, Suite 250, Scottsdale, AZ 85260.



An artist's rendering shows the Paolo Soleri bridge over the Arizona Canal. The City Council has agreed to provide \$1.7 million for its share of the project.

City right to fund bridge; art lovers should help out

The economy is struggling. Sales tax revenues are down. So what is the Scottsdale City Council doing adding \$1.7 million to next year's budget for a nonessential bridge? Two words. Paolo Soleri.

The architect, a rock star in the Northeast Valley, a decade ago designed a pedestrian bridge to cross the Arizona Canal at the Waterfront. The city's Public Art program set aside \$1 million and the Waterfront developer added \$500,000. All eyes turned to the city for the remaining \$1.7 million, but other priorities took precedence.

This year looked no more promising. Craig Clifford, the city's chief financial officer, presented the council with an austere budget, reflecting difficult economic times.

But this is Scottsdale, where the council is more apt to add items to the proposed budget than trim them. Sentiment has been growing that the bridge needs to be completed sooner rather than later, what with Soleri approaching his 90th birthday.

That sentiment is on target. The bridge will add a jewel to the city's strong public art collection, an amenity that brings residents and visitors to Scottsdale. "I choose to live here because of the commitment to the arts," Carol Nunzio told the council. "Keeping Scottsdale a strong cultural destination is vital to our economic prosperity."

The pedestrian bridge will not merely make it easy to get across the canal. It will celebrate Soleri, who refined Frank Lloyd Wright's ideas into "arcology," or architecture coherent with

ecology. Arcosanti, a town near Cordes Junction, put theory into practice.

The Waterfront bridge will be suspended from two 64-foot-tall pylons intended to create a light dagger as the sun moves across the sky, marking the equinox, solstice and other solar events. Soleri, who fashions and sells bells at his Paradise Valley studio, will create his largest bell ever and hang it from two 22-foot pylons.

The bridge will connect to a plaza arranged for individual relaxation or small art shows and concerts. "I think this bridge could even be a moneymaker if events are organized quite intensely," said Soleri, who sat in the front row of the Kiva during the council's discussion.

It didn't take much to persuade the council. The discussion focused not on whether to add the bridge to the budget but how to pay for it. Clifford suggested taking the money from three sources: the general fund, hotel tax revenue and the transportation fund.

But there should also be a place for private involvement. Council members said they received 120 e-mails supporting the bridge. What if each of those had made a pledge? And each had encouraged a few friends to donate as well? It might not have raised enough to complete the bridge, but it could have made a good dent. As Council member Betty Drake said, a private effort could also help in maintaining the bridge after it is completed.

The Soleri bridge will be a community treasure. The council is right to put money into it. Arts lovers should join in, too.

YOUR VIEWS

Baracy could overwhelm board

At the April 15 Scottsdale school board meeting, Superintendent John Baracy insisted he will provide the board with all the ideas generated during the public brainstorming sessions. Such an act will only derail the process further by overwhelming it.

I believe it is further mismanagement on his part. He is the CEO of the school district and his team, the managers, are the ones who need to sift through the ideas generated, analyze them and present the most feasible ones to the board.

Transparency is critical, but it needs to come in the form of making public the factors used to arrive at the short list of solutions, not dumping the whole thing on the board. Board member

Mayor's Award for Energy Efficiency at the U.S. Energy Conference in Washington, D.C.

In her State of the City speech, Manross proposed creating a high level office of environmental initiatives that will put Scottsdale on the fast track to sustainability and significant cost savings. The office can be created by reassigning existing employees. She also challenged all of us to make "green" revitalization the centerpiece of plans for the southern area and anywhere revitalization is taking place.

How refreshing, a mayor with vision and leadership.

— **Bill Zaffer**, Scottsdale

Miststeps by Manross

Backers of Mary Manross can attempt to twist her re- was the one who presented obstacles that prevented Elluman Cos. from placing the hockey arena here. Make no mistake about that!

But worse, she sided with the builders and ran Rawhide out of town, thereby depriving Scottsdale of the greatest visitor attraction any city could have. Visitors loved the stagecoach rides, the shows and the fine restaurants, which can never be replaced.

She was also instrumental in closing forever the only senior center for people living south of Indian School Road down to McDowell. It was on Second Street. This leaves those living in south Scottsdale with the choice of going way north or far to the east to locate another center.

In addition, she tried to close the only public golf course in south Scottsdale so that a pro-baseball team could use it for a few days a year. The only reason she failed was due to a contract and deed restriction.

— **Jim Taylor**, Scottsdale

Mayor has real vision

Talk about vision, our mayor, Mary Manross, has it in spades. I attended the State of the City speech at the Waterfront, and left inspired and hopeful.

Many people may not know Manross' passion for building a truly sustainable future for Scottsdale. Last June she received national attention as the winner of the