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It is disappointing to those of us who have supported the McDowell Sonoran Preserve since its inception to have the Desert Discovery Center – a City of Scottsdale project that the community has been working on for more than 25 years – subjected to a relentless disinformation campaign.

**Beware of Fake News.** We urge you not to be misled by the misinformation and inaccurate claims of either Protect Our Preserve or NoDDC because both continue to misrepresent the facts about the Center. You may receive a communication from Protect Our Preserve and it is important for you to have accurate information if you are asked questions by others in the community.

- The Desert Discovery Center Scottsdale's City contract requires a business plan to address costs and funding sources as well as a minimum of 10% of funding from private sector contributions.
- Preserve funds are one of the potential funding sources identified by the City (already authorized by public vote and thus not requiring additional taxes). Other sources include Bed Taxes paid by visitors, the General Fund and bonds. No funding decision has been made.
- The Center is intended to be consistent with the

Preserve Ordinance, which allows the City to provide educational and research uses in the Preserve.

- The Center was approved at the Gateway along with the existing trailhead by the City Council in 2007, and is being designed with sensitivity to maintaining the trailhead experience.
- The Center is being designed to provide significantly enhanced educational programming to complement, not compete with, existing offerings by the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy.
- The City used an online comment form to obtain feedback to guide Center planning, not to be a yes/no survey on the Center. City staff noted 825 invalid email addresses and other anomalies in survey responses, thus they cannot be used to accurately reflect citizen opinion.
- An interpretive/educational center was included within the Preserve in the original McDowell Mountain Task Force Report to the City Council in 1993, and has been part of Preserve planning ever since.

Additional misrepresentations by opposition groups are addressed below:

- The Center would not be a commercial project but rather another municipal use like libraries, parks, museums, cultural centers, many of which include a small café/shop or charge admission fees, which does not make them commercial uses.

- The Center is not being planned as a \$75 million project. That figure is from a prior study that is not being implemented. The cost has not been determined, but in response to public feedback it is being planned to be smaller and less expensive than the previous study indicated.
- The Center would not grade 30 acres, but rather is being designed with a minimalist footprint within the 30-acre boundary designated by the City.
- The Center is not being designed as a tourism/corporate event center or to have jeep tours or outdoor night-time rock concerts. The City paid the highest price of any parcel in the Preserve for the Gateway site so that the trailhead and Center would be located well away from homes.
- The Center is not being planned to need “subsidies into perpetuity,” but instead to be self-sustaining with an annual development funding goal for memberships and corporate/individual giving, in addition to earned revenue, just like other non-profits: Phoenix Zoo, Desert Botanical Gardens, Phoenix and Scottsdale art museums and performing arts centers.

For additional information about the Center, including Thinc Design’s inspiring [Project Definition Report](#), please visit our [website](#).

Thank you for taking the time to be informed, not fooled. Please, if you hear something that sounds outrageous, it likely is, and we encourage you to let us know so that we

can keep providing information to the community. If you know anyone or any group that would like a presentation also, let us know. We are eager to share the exciting vision that is evolving for the Desert Discovery Center.

Looking forward to working with you in 2017,  
**DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER SCOTTSDALE,  
INC.**



Visit our website [scottsdalecenter.com](http://scottsdalecenter.com)



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