



Great communities like Scottsdale often share qualities that make them special -- including a strong economy, a vibrant downtown, an excelling community college and public school system, engaged citizens and civic and political leaders committed to keeping the city moving in the right direction.

However, one of the few shortcomings of living in the “West’s Most Western Town” is that some folks like to shoot first and ask questions later. These characters like jumping to conclusions without taking the time to learn the facts.

Many of those who oppose the Desert Discovery Center, now known as Desert EDGE, are dismissing years of decisions made by multiple City Councils and an overwhelming majority of voters. They are discounting decades of research that shows the project to be a desirable community amenity because of its contribution to our citizens as well as boosting our tourism industry. And they are choosing to ignore the fact that since 1995 the optimum location for the project has been envisioned to be at the Gateway Trailhead on the edge of the Preserve.

The DDC/Desert EDGE has been part of the community conversation for more than 30 years. Many preserve advocates, City Councils and dedicated citizens have supported the concept through its many iterations and designs. It is the culmination of thousands of hours of public outreach, research, creative thought and exhaustive discussion regarding the purpose and vision of the proposed desert center.

Desert EDGE is focused on education.

The project will be a place that people visit to learn more about our desert and better understand how to sustain themselves in an arid environment. This expanded knowledge is expected to lead to greater respect and preservation of our unique land. Additionally, ASU has committed to placing their Global Dryland’s Institute

headquarters at the Desert EDGE as an important portal for global research, providing an opportunity for visitors to interact with scientists to enrich their educational experience.

I am a long-time supporter of the Desert Discovery Center/Desert EDGE because I believe it will be an incredible amenity to our city and our McDowell Sonoran Preserve. I am also a long-time advocate of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. I served as chair of the McDowell Mountain Task Force, served two terms on the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission and was active in all five "Save Our McDowells" political action committees to educate voters about the value of the Mountain Preserve to our community. I was also the first executive director of the Center for Native and Urban Wildlife at Scottsdale Community College and I am a steward for the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy.

There is funding available to build the Desert EDGE without raising taxes. Citizens have already voted to use the Preserve sales tax to acquire land and make improvements in the Preserve. There are additional funds available through tourism bed tax dollars.

I will not support an amendment to the charter or a resolution. I will, however, support the right of citizens to collect enough signatures to place the issue on an election ballot.

With gratitude,



Virginia L. Korte



Copyright © 2016 Korte Scottsdale, All rights reserved.

For more information, visit [our website](#).

Our mailing address is:

Korte Scottsdale

PO Box 4981

Scottsdale, AZ 85261-4981

[Add us to your address book](#)
