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WRANGLER NEWS
INDEPENDENT

Bringing jobs to Tempe

Novus Innovation Corridor offers glimpse of how mixed-use projects can enhance communities

By Caroline Yu
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Novus Innovation Corridor in Tempe was initially started as a district supporting Arizona State University's athletic facilities.

As it continues to develop, it's shaping up to be a destination for employment, services and shopping for all of Tempe and the surrounding area.

Universities have struggled to provide the necessary upkeep of sports facilities without taxpayer and student funding, and a 2010 state bill allowed for Arizona's three public universities to create university athletic districts to address the issue.

As a result, ASU and Catellus Development Corp. partnered on a public-private collaboration that's

• See **Novus** on page **6**



Novus Innovation Corridor in Tempe continues to grow, bringing about new retail to complement the district's office space. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)

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PAGE 7

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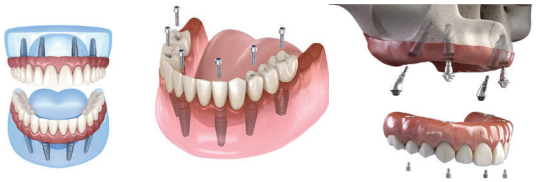
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IN BRIEF



Tempe Fire Medical Rescue personnel practice using a Stryker LUCAS Device on a practice mannequin. The LUCAS Device is a mechanical test compression device that will now be equipped on all frontline rescue vehicles in Tempe. (Courtesy City of Tempe)

FIRST RESPONDERS

Tempe equips all fire trucks, ambulances with new CPR technology

When a heart stops, every second counts — that's why Tempe Fire Medical Rescue has become the first fire department in metro Phoenix to fully equip all frontline fire trucks and ambulances with new lifesaving CPR technology.

All 12 vehicles now have LUCAS automated chest compression devices, a city release explained. These provide effective CPR compressions, ensuring high-quality chest compressions without the fatigue that can affect manual CPR.

The devices provide high-quality, consistent CPR compressions, allowing first responders to maintain lifesaving circulation without interruption, even while moving a patient. By equipping every fire engine and ambulance in the city, Tempe firefighters and paramedics

• See **Community** on page **38**



A mockup of TCAA's new building, which will break ground on March 18. (Courtesy Tempe Community Action Agency)

Victory Acres residents seek solutions to building, shelter

By Caroline Yu
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Work continues on developing the required safety plan for Tempe Community Action Agency's new headquarters, as many residents of the surrounding Victory Acres neighborhood continue to share concerns about how this could impact the area.

Residents and other community members from Victory Acres have spoken out against TCAA's new campus, which will house the group's shelter services along with its other community programs.

TCAA's new building will be located at 2425 E. Apache Blvd., the site of the old Watson's Flowers building and along the boundary of the Victory Acres neighborhood.

The Independent reported local landlord Albert Avelar filed an appeal against the Tempe Development Review Commission's approval of a use permit to provide temporary housing at the new building.

Avelar and many other residents from the surrounding area said they were worried about how a homeless shelter could impact the neighborhood negatively. Others also shared that they were not notified about this project, saying that they felt the city did not care for the residents' input.

Avelar's appeal was denied earlier this year, but to address the safety concerns, Tempe City Council added a condition of approval for the building's use permit, requiring TCAA to have a security plan at all times that complies with city code.

TCAA broke ground on this project on March 18, according to a

• See **TCAA** on page **32**

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Novus

• From page 1

come to be known as the Novus Innovation Corridor. Here, the two continue to develop a "unique innovation ecosystem" that aligns education with employment.

And it could provide some close-to-home employment opportunities and benefits for south Tempe residents, but a development this size likely won't come to that area because of myriad reasons, officials said.



Jay Donnelly

Jay Donnelly, vice president of University Real Estate Development at ASU, says given the development's scale along with the offerings it has, Novus Innovation Corridor is like "a city within a city."

He said certain revenue generated from the district goes toward building new facilities like Mullett Arena and relocating or maintaining other athletic facilities. This allows the university to hold its own in the "very competitive athletic landscape" in a way that doesn't use student dollars.

Novus Innovation Corridor is comprised of 10 million square feet of mixed-use space on 355 acres, which will include 6.5 million square feet of Class A office space once it's finished. It is also expected to add nearly 40,000 jobs by 2035 with its private partnerships.

Novus is one of eight ASU-supervised innovation zones, which have the goal of co-locating ASU's knowledge assets with private sector companies, according to Donnelly. He said it's a symbiotic relationship for ASU and the private companies housed within the innovation zone.

"What happens then is collaboration on curriculum research and (it) allows us basically to provide educational experiences for our students (and) create talent pipelines for those private sector companies," Donnelly said.

The corridor continues to be built out, and there's still much to come that will cater to the people and students working on site, also providing an entertainment and dining aspect for people around the Valley.

The district's core

There has been major headway with the development in 2025 with the heart of the district, Novus Place, bringing about new eateries, housing, parking and more in recent months.



Novus Place has a number of new dining options like Eureka for patrons to enjoy. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)

Stefanie Caimol, marketing manager with Catellus Development, said the team behind Novus Place has been thoughtful with the office and

• See Novus on page 12



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OPENINGS

1 El Pollo Loco recently held the grand opening of a new location at 1530 W. Baseline Road. Hours of operation are 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Most dining rooms close one to two hours prior to posted time at drive-thru locations, according to the website. Call 480-291-5763 for more.

2 Drug testing service **RPT Labs**, 3121 S. Mill Ave., Unit A8, opened Feb. 25. The location can be reached at 480-256-0230 via phone and 480-659-7294 via fax. They are open 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday.

3 Bubba's 33 opened on Feb. 21 at 1730 W. Ranch Road. The restaurant is open 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sunday to Thursday and 11 a.m.-midnight on Saturday and Friday. The location can be reached at 480-493-2184. For more, visit bubbas33.com.

4 Macayo's Mexican Food, the longtime traditional Mexican food brand with multiple locations around the Valley, opened its new Tempe location, 715 S. Rural Road, on March 4. For more about Macayo's Tempe, visit macayo.com/asu-tempe-new-location. For more about Macayo's, visit www.macayo.com.

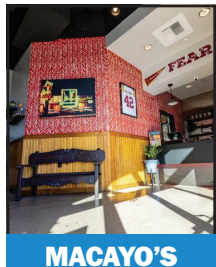
5 Feta Cowboy, a new fast-casual restaurant from the culinary minds behind Pita Jungle, is officially open at 1840 E. Warner Road. The restaurant is now open daily 11 a.m.-9 p.m. For more, visit www.FetaCowboy.com and follow along on social media at @FetaCowboy.

SALES & ACQUISITIONS

6 SIN 360 Dental recently bought a flex industrial property in Tempe at 8312 S. Hardy Drive for $14.4 million. CBRE arranged the sale of the 75,340-square-foot building, which includes 20,000 square feet of office space and 20,916 square feet of air conditioned warehouse space for SIN 360 Dental.



EL POLLO LOCO


MACAYO'S MEXICAN FOOD



FETA COWBOY


SIN 360 DENTAL


DIVERSIFIED HEALTHCARE TRUST

7 Diversified Healthcare Trust sold its 82,266-square-foot industrial facility at 1415 W. Third St. in Tempe for $16.8 million. Built in 1981, the infill property sits on about 5 acres along Priest Drive, with three acres of excess land available for heavy parking, yard use or potential building expansion.

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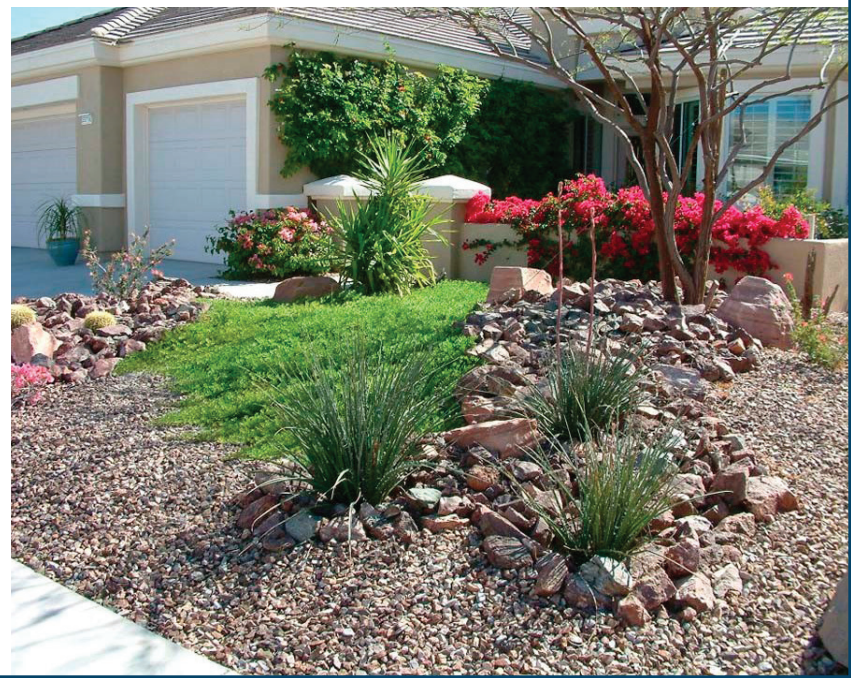
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Take the Civility Pledge

Yes, I will do my part to help my community become a safe place for people to engage in civil discourse about public issues. Visit iniusa.org/civility-pledge/ to take the pledge.

Your Opinion

Our opinions page is to provide an open forum for our readers. We hope to stimulate debate, not to dominate or control it. We reserve the right to edit our opinions, and we insist on civility. Please include your name and phone number, so we can contact you for clarification or confirmation. We welcome your photo. All opinions must be no more than 300 words.

Those that are judged as personal attacks or complaints about neighbors, businesses or other opinion writers will not be considered. No person may submit more than two opinions for publication during a calendar month. Two submissions in the same issue will not be published. The content of a submission is the responsibility of the person who submitted it.

Speak Up

We support the use of pen names. Too many people don't speak up because they fear intimidation or even danger to their families and/or careers. Pen names are an important part of our nation's history.

Corrections

We will promptly correct all factual errors. We offer a "right of reply" to the people about whom we write. Readers who disagree with a news story are welcome to respond with a letter.

Here are some comments about stories happening in your area:

Tempe looks into ways to tackle hate crimes, extremism, polarization

"Unfortunately, there will always be those who hate." — **Jane Dobos via story comment**

Arizona universities see $812M in grants at risk over Trump DEI purge

"(Arizona) did vote red and Trump. It's hard to feel sorry" — **Lou Harcia via story comment**

"Making Arizona Great Again?'Not sure we can afford all this greatness." — **Laurie Lewis via story comment**

Owners have the right to sell Shalimar; I have the right to fight development

"Fight the development if you don't like it, that is still your right as an American despite Trump, Elon and the Republican party. (Don't) come to the citizens of Tempe for a bailout just so you can keep your private open space." — **Dave Palmer via story comment**

"Unfortunately Tempe does not care about you Jane!" — **msjoid via story comment**

Operating Shalimar Golf Course isn't feasible for city of Tempe

"The Shalimar HOA needs to buck up and make a deal for the property. Those who border the golf course need to have a higher fee adopted if they want to keep the green open space view. (Just saying)." — **76BuenaColt via story comment**

"Let the people who want to keep it open, buy and operate the golf course." — **Dave Palmer via story comment**

ASU club hosts 'Know Your Rights' workshop for students encountering ICE

"The reason we call the immigrants "illegal" is because they are! Showing them how to hide from the police (a.k.a. ICE) only makes those who do so (lawfully) criminals. " — **Levi N. via submitted comment**

A message from Jane Neuheisel: The truth about Shalimar's future

By Jane Neuheisel
SHALIMAR GOLF COURSE

For 40 years, my husband, Dick, and I have poured our hearts, souls and every penny we had into Shalimar Golf Course. We didn't just run it — we lived it.

Every Christmas our family opened the course so our employees could spend the day with their families. Every repair was paid out of our retirement savings. Every early morning and late night we made sure this place stayed alive for a community we deeply love.

But today, at 88 years old, I need to speak some hard truths.

The same neighbors who are now crying out to "Save Shalimar" are the ones who never supported us when it mattered most. Out of all the homes surrounding our course, only six or eight families actually play golf here regularly. I've watched people bring their own drinks in Yeti cups rather than buy a simple coffee or glass of wine from our clubhouse. Now these same individuals are fighting to "preserve" something they never truly valued.


Jane and Dick Neuheise

Let me be clear: Dick and I didn't just maintain Shalimar — we saved it. Back in 1984, the previous owners wanted to develop the course into residential housing, we joined the other neighbors to fight the development. When the owners wanted to sell the course, we couldn't get anyone to invest with us. We bought Shalimar and we've been investing ever since.

Plumbing repairs, electrical repairs, a new pump, a new roof and repairs to our mowers and truck — all have depleted our retirement funds. We've cashed in our life insurance. We've sacrificed everything to keep this course running, often at a loss.

During the recession of the '90s, we

• See **Neuheisel** on page **11**

Shalimar neighbors aren't anti-Tempe

By Loretta O'Connor
TEMPE

Hear, hear! to the letter by Robert Tieni, Shalimar unlike any other asset in the Valley, posted Feb. 20, 2025, in response to Jane Neuheisel's commentary, A message from Jane Neuheisel: The truth about Shalimar's future.

My husband and I bought a home on Shalimar Golf Course in June 2018, and I'm pretty darn sure our house price included a premium for our beautiful view of the golf course.

When we bought into this neighborhood, we accepted the risk that, upon the expected sale of the golf course property in 2025, as many as 44 houses could be built on the green space, due to the agricultural zoning. Our unwillingness to swallow 277 units in that same 44-acre space does not make us NIMBY, anti-Tempe or ungrateful to the Neuheisel family.

The Neuheisels have the legal right to sell their own property, but they don't have the legal right to give developers free rein to fill the golf course with high-density housing.

Furthermore, the construction of 44 houses, as allowed by the existing zoning, would prevent or minimize the destruction of the gorgeous and life-giving trees currently on the property — which would indeed "protect our backyard view."

There are some 100 properties that abut the golf course. To date, we owners haven't heard a word about any plans to compensate the homeowners with money from the family's extra profit if a last-minute rezoning goes through.

This home is one of our biggest assets. Its value includes that backyard view with agricultural zoning, and it seems fair to want to protect it. Surely the Neuheisel family can understand our perspective and our truth.

Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

Neuheisel

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lost Shalimar to the RTC along with other holdings. Dick went to California and convinced the new owner to sell Shalimar back to us. Once again, we saved Shalimar.

The reality is that nine-hole golf courses aren't viable anymore. Every expert will tell you the same thing. The East Valley's explosion of golf courses and the rise of casinos hit us hard. We tried everything to keep Shalimar thriving — sending flyers, knocking on doors, bringing in live music. Nothing worked.

Now, at this stage of our lives, we've found partners in Cachet Homes and BB Living who understand Tempe's needs. Their plan will bring 277 new families to our community, generating about $1.3 million annually in property taxes compared with our current $3,800. It will provide approximately $800,000 yearly for our schools which are facing declining enrollment. The development preserves 25% of the property as open space, which would be privately maintained by the developers but available to residents of Tempe.

This isn't about golf — it never was. When the city surveyed residents about Shalimar's future, barely anyone mentioned golf. They talked about open space, but many also warned against adding more unused space that could become unsafe.

Tempe needs housing. It's in the general plan approved by Tempe voters. This plan shows Shalimar as residential. The plan also calls for no more than nine units per acre. This development is coming in at only six units per acre and checks every box for our city's needs. We're not just selling land — we're creating opportunities for new families, supporting our schools and strengthening our tax base.

For those claiming to want to save Shalimar, I have one question: Where were you for the past 40 years? Where were you when we were repairing broken pipes, keeping the course green within the new water restrictions and sacrificing our financial security to keep this place running? I should mention that the new development, when fully occupied, will use less water than watering Shalimar Golf Course.

Dick and I love Tempe. We've given this city our best years, from helping start Tempe Sister Cities which now has 11 sister cities around the globe and has won national awards for "Best in America" eight times. It was Dick's idea to start the annual Oktoberfest, which supports the TSC Student Exchange Program. Well over 1,000 Tempe high school students and families have participated in this program over the years. In addition, Sister Cities International will hold its annual conference next October in Tempe, bringing more dollars to Tempe's tax base and introducing our wonderful city to hundreds of new visitors.

Now, in our final years, Dick and I are trying to do what's right one last time. This isn't just about us anymore — it's also about Tempe's future. The city we love deserves better than empty promises from people protecting their backyard views. It deserves real solutions, new families, stronger schools and a sustainable future. That's what this development offers, and that's what Dick and I stand behind.

Editor's note: Jane Neuheisel is owner of Shalimar Golf Course. Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

Civility Checklist

How to engage in respectful, honest & civil dialogue about public issues.

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA
Celebrating & Connecting Our Communities

☐ **Take the high road.** Respond to the topic — not the person. Refrain from demonizing others for their opinions. Assume those you disagree with are, like you, genuinely interested in improving the community.

☐ **Be respectful.** Bullying, public humiliation, insults, name-calling, harassment and threats directed at another person — or that person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. — have no place in civil discussions. Find ways to respectfully disagree without questioning someone's character or motives.

☐ **Be truthful.** Base your opinions/arguments on facts. Value honesty. Make only accurate statements when making your point and avoid exaggeration and stereotypes. When appropriate, cite your sources of information that others may question.

☐ **Don't misrepresent.** Always identify your opinions as opinions (not stating opinions as facts). Never misrepresent the views of others or falsely claim your opinions represent someone else. If quoting the words of others, identify and credit the source.

☐ **Listen and learn.** It's both polite and respectful to listen to those we disagree with (as well as those we support) and be genuine in our attempts to understand their point of view. Expand your mind by thoughtfully seeking out views that don't agree with your own.

☐ **Look for common ground.** When disagreeing with others, look for even small areas of agreement — which can be the gateway to working together for the greater good.

☐ **Respect privacy.** Keep private things private — whether it involves your own information or those with whom you disagree. Revealing private information about someone else is rude, unethical, potentially harmful and, in many cases, illegal.

☐ **Set a good example.** Practice civil behavior online as well as in public and in your interaction with others. Encourage others to practice these civil behaviors. And it's OK to challenge disrespectful behavior — but be courteous, respectful and helpful in your approach.



Part of Novus Place includes an outdoor stage where future events can take place. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)



Novus Place also created a new parking structure for visitors and ASU community members to use. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)



Novus Place is almost at capacity with its retail leases, but more is still to come with the development. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)

Novus

• From page 6

retail tenants brought to the new development.

"This experience is way different than Mill (Avenue) or anywhere else that you would go that's been around in Tempe for ages," Caimol said.

The district is young and evolving, welcoming a host of attractions residents have yet to experience, according to Caimol.

The recent openings of restaurants like Flower Child, Eureka and Blue Sushi Sake Grill have been fun to see as they provide dining options for those who work at Novus and bringing in diners from across the Valley, Caimol said.

Donnelly said as Novus Place and the corridor continue to develop, there will be a surge of activity not related to the university, given that there's an environment to bring in more attractions like concerts and other events at Mullett Arena and other locations throughout Novus.

Along with the entertainment features, Novus is creating 4,100 urban homes including luxury apartments, multifamily housing and micro-units for busy professionals. A Hyatt Place is expected to open in August with the development's third phase.

"It's an exciting time as a Tempe resident, especially for those who sit in South Tempe that maybe haven't ventured up here," he said. "Maybe now is a good time to check it out."

What's yet to come

Work on the Novus Innovation Corridor continues, with Donnelly saying the development is serving as a model for urban redevelopment, specifically with public and private collaborations.

Being around and growing near universities proves to be less of a risk for private developers, according to him, and coupled with the fact ASU has decided to generate resources with Novus, it's an ideal opportunity for both sectors.

"It allows an opportunity for these very complex public/private partnerships where public agencies, whether it be a university or someone else who has access to real property, to partner with the private sector, to monetize it to carry on their actual core mission," Donnelly said.

As it stands, Donnelly said Novus Place's retail district is 98% leased, but there is still more to be built to complete the district. The next development phase will work to connect Novus to ASU's athletic venues and the community.

"Really embedding this next year and taking advantage of all the traffic generated by those athletic venues, and you have Gammage, you have other things in the area that we really need to connect it to, because I think there's a real symbiotic relationship," he said.

Future additions to the corridor include the hotel in August, some projects along Tempe Town Lake and even some remaining green space at Novus Place in the development's third phase.

Donnelly said the "grand opening" of the Novus Place Entertainment District is targeted for the fall, with all its tenants expected to be moved in and operating just in time for the rush of traffic from ASU move-in.

"We think that's a really good way... (to) really draft off that and make sure the broader community at ASU knows about the project," Donnelly said.

Expanding elsewhere

Novus Innovation Corridor is creating a new type of development in the downtown area, but south Tempe residents may be wondering how develop-

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EDUCATION

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IN BRIEF



Kyrene School District now has 12 schools that hold an A+ recognition. (Courtesy Kyrene School District)

ARIZONA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Four Kyrene schools earn A+ recognition

Four Kyrene School District schools have been awarded the 2025 Arizona Educational Foundation A+ School of Excellence award.

All four Kyrene schools that received A+ recognition site visits this year were successful in their bids for the coveted award, a district release explained. Twelve Kyrene schools now hold an A+ recognition.

Kyrene 2025 A+ Schools of Excellence are:

- Kyrene de las Brisas Elementary School
- Kyrene de las Lomas Elementary School
- Kyrene Monte Vista Elementary School
- Kyrene de la Mirada Leadership Academy

This is the first time that Kyrene de las Lomas has been awarded the A+ recognition, according to a press release. Kyrene

• See **Jumphed** on page **36**



Kyrene approved the issuance of its first bond sale from the November 2023 election, supporting capital projects throughout the district. (Special to the Independent/Arianna Grainey)

Kyrene board approves $43M bond sale, also saving taxpayers $2M

Special to the Independent

Kyrene School District will be issuing its first bond sale from the $161 million bond approved by voters in the November 2023 election.

The Kyrene School District Governing Board approved the sale last month, which will provide the district with approximately $43 million to cover capital projects for the next three years, including:

- Safety and security upgrades;
- Replacement of aging school buses;
- Maintenance of playgrounds, fields, parking lots and other facilities;
- Technological improvements, ranging from computers to fire alarm systems;
- Building maintenance, such as roofing and HVAC system repairs or replacements.

For these types of projects, only a fraction of Kyrene's costs are covered by state funding. School needs exceed the available funding, so the district relies on voter-approved bonds and overrides to provide safe, healthy learning environments.

Kyrene would not be able to keep facilities in the condition they are in without voter support, according to a press release from the district.

The governing board also voted to refinance approximately $40 million of outstanding bonds to save taxpayers roughly $2 million.

Kyrene takes fiscal responsibility and public trust seriously, and the district is always seeking opportunities to save taxpayers money, according to the release. The funds will be used to refinance old bonds at a better interest rate, which will mean lower tax rates in the future for the Kyrene community.

Chris Herrmann, Kyrene CFO and associate superintendent, said in the release that Kyrene spends a lot

• See **Kyrene Bond Sale** on page **36**

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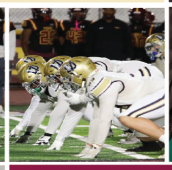
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East Valley readers pick their favorite businesses

The Daily Independent at YourValley.net hosted an online best-of competition where readers vote for their very favorite places to visit. 48,959 people voted for their favorites.

At its core, Valley Favorites helps businesses to thrive. It celebrates the great local businesses and organizations serving our communities and keeps them top of mind with local consumers. Congratulations to those who take home the honors for their local community.



In reverse alpha order this year by heading and category.

Vehicles & Services

Used Car Dealer	Sullivan Motor Compan
Used Car Dealer	Elohim Auto Sales
Used Car Dealer	iAUTOHAUS
Tire Services	Discount Tire / Queen Creek
RV Dealer	State Trailer RV & Outdoor Supply
Oil Change	OOROO AUTO
Oil Change	Christian Bros
Oil Change	Brake Masters
New Car Dealer	Earnhardt Chevrolet
New Car Dealer	Auto Nation Nissan
New Car Dealer	CardinaleWay Mazda Mesa
Golf Cart Store	East Valley Golf Carts
Golf Cart Store	Robinson Golf Carts
Gasoline Stations	QT - Queen Creek
Car Wash	Cobblestone
Car Wash	Super Star Car Wash
Car Wash	Highline Car Care
Auto Service	OOROO Auto
Auto Service	Christian Bros
Auto Service	H&I Automotive
Auto Body Shop	Caliber Collision
Auto Body Shop	H&I Automotive
ATV Dealer	RideNow Chandler

Shopping & Beauty

Thrift Shop	Deseret Industries
Thrift Shop	Peyton's Hidden Treasures
Sporting Goods	Scheels
Sporting Goods	Big 5
Optical Service	Experts on Sight
Make-up Artist	Anissa Cristal Blancas- Bad Gal Beauty
Make-up Artist	Raquel Lowery
Jewelry Store	J'Renee Bejeweled - The Bling Bus
Jewelry Store	GG GEMS
Jewelry Store	Kyhn's Jewelers
Hair Salon	Rockin Locks Mobile Salon
Hair Salon	Eunice's
Hair Salon	Shaggy's Hair Salon
Gift Store	Queen Creek Olive Mill
Gift Store	Casa de Baca Studios
Florist	Arizona Flower Girl
Florist	The Cottage
Florist	Full Garden Floral
Firearms Store	The Shooting Range
Dispensary	Ponderosa
Barber Shop	The Chop Shop
Barber Shop	The Hangout Barber Shop
Aesthetician	Ashleys Beauty Lounge
Aesthetician	Jeannette Ortiz - Wallflower Beauty & Wellness
Aesthetician	Mackenzie Tipple Live Life Now Wellness Center
Aesthetician	Marie Baker, FNP-C (DermaCrush)

Professional Services

Veterinary Hospital	Arizona Animal Wellness Center
Veterinary Hospital	Queen Creek Veterinary Clinic
Veterinary Hospital	Seville Veterinary
Veterinarian	Queen Creek Veterinary Clinic
Veterinarian	Arizona Animal Wellness Center
Veterinarian	Dr. Jill Bronz
Travel Agent	Martin Magical Travels
Travel Agent	Dream Vacations
Travel Agent	Ashley Leatham
Travel Agent	Dominique Barba Bliss Travel Service
Title Company	Pioneer Title
Title Company	First American Title
Title Company	Grand Canyon Title Agency
Tax Preparer	Accounting Services by ACP
Tax Preparer	Gina-Maria Magel, CPA
Tax Preparer	Mesquite Tax LLC
Signage	Speed Pro Mesa-Gilbert
Signage	Americraft Sign Co LLC
Signage	Desert Digital
Senior Resource	All About You Senior Placement and Resources
Senior Resource/Placement	Assisted Living Locators
Senior Resource/Placement	Pheadra Earhart
Senior Living Community	The Summit at Sunland Springs
Senior Living Community	Trilogy
Senior Living Community	Abbington
Senior Living Community	Gold Canyon Assisted Living
Residential Real Estate Team	Denise and Lisa Real Estate, ProSmart Realty
Residential Real Estate Team	The Home Selling Team | Keller Williams Integrity First Realty
Residential Real Estate Team	The Lynch Team
Residential Real Estate Agency	The Home Selling Team | Keller Williams Integrity First Realty
Residential Real Estate	Prosmart Realty
Residential Real Estate	Ravenswood Realty
Real Estate Agent	Denise Siemen Prosmart Realty
Real Estate Agent	Janine Igliane
Real Estate Agent	Adrianne Lynch
Printer/Photocopying	SpeedPro Mesa-Gilbert
Printer/Photocopying	UPS Store
Printer/Photocopying	Minute Man Press
Photographer	Christine Lowell Photography
Photographer	Casa de Baca Studios
Photographer	Nichole Rae Photography

Professional Services	Pet Grooming	K9 Resorts Chandler
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Professional Services	Pet Grooming	La Bella Spa
Professional Services	Pet Boarding	K-9 RESORTS CHANDLER
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Check out next edition for the remaining list of winners.
If you can't wait, go to YourValley.net and click on Favorites.


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THINGS TO DO

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Sea Life Arizona turtle celebrates 13th anniversary in Tempe

Sea Life Arizona welcomed Ziva, a green sea turtle, 13 years ago in February 2012 from the Georgia Sea Turtle Center — marking the first sea turtle to call Arizona home.

Aquarists at the Tempe-based aquarium celebrated the milestone with a custom "cake" for Ziva, made up of bell peppers, lettuce and her favorite fish, which she promptly chowed down on, according to a press release.

Ziva was the victim of a boat strike off the Florida coast, and because of her injuries, had a hard time swimming properly in the wild. After a year of rehabilitation in Georgia, she was ready to make the move to Arizona and Sea Life, flying over 1,700 miles to arrive here in the Valley, the release stated.

Weighing in at only about 35 pounds on arrival, Ziva spent about a month getting acclimated to her new surroundings, before being released into the 160,000-gallon ocean view exhibit at Sea Life where she still resides today.

Since then Ziva has grown to 185 pounds and is now over 5 feet long, impressing children and adults of all ages during her 13 years at the aquarium.

To further celebrate all things sea turtles, guests can become a turtle rescue expert in a limited-time event at Sea Life Arizona that runs through April 13.

Aquarium guests can join the Turtle Rescue Team and complete hands-on turtle rescue activities. They will discover how rescuing sea turtles works, including how to find them, feed them, track them and set them up for success on their return to the ocean, the release stated.

Guests can also come face to flipper with rescued sea turtles Ziva and Donna in the ocean view and turtle rescue reef exhibits respectively.



Ziva, Arizona's first sea turtle, recently celebrated her 13th year in the state. (Courtesy Sea Life Arizona)


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BUSINESS

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IN BRIEF



Real estate development firm Creation recently broke ground on a new project in Tempe. (Courtesy Creation)

DEVELOPMENT

Industrial facility project breaks ground in Tempe

Creation, a real estate development firm, recently announced it has started construction on Source Logistics Center, a 144,885-square-foot Class A industrial facility located on the southeast corner of Warner Road and Hardy Drive in Tempe.

Partners, investors and city officials participated in a ceremonial groundbreaking event on Feb. 12, following Creation's acquisition of the 15-acre site alongside investor CrossHarbor Capital Partners, according to a press release.

Creation made a $25,000 donation to benefit Lily's Pad, a hyper-clean indoor playground in Tempe designed to provide immunocompromised children and their siblings with a clean environment to play in.

Grant Kingdon, principal of Mountain West Region at Creation, said in the release that groundbreaking on the Source Logistics Center showcases the

• See **Business** on page **40**



Microchip Technology, headquartered in Chandler, has decided to close its Tempe plant, taking as many as 330 jobs out of the East Valley. (Google Earth image)

Chipmaker closing Tempe plant, local leaders respond

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

An East Valley semiconductor firm has decided to close one of its plants, taking hundreds of jobs away.

Two local economic leaders plan to do what they can to deal with the fallout.

Microchip Technology is closing its plant at 1200 S. 52nd St. in Tempe. A WARN (worker adjustment and retraining notification) notice published by AZ Workforce Connections on March 5 shows the company will let go as many as 330 workers.

Microchip Technology, which will keep its corporate headquarters in west Chandler, has a wafer fab in Gresham, Oregon, which has room for expansion, and one in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The company's assembly-and-test facilities are in Thailand and the Philippines.

"We are saddened to learn of the jobs lost in our community, and Tempe has been working with those employees on career placement opportunities through our in-house staff and local partners," said Mike DiDomenico, Tempe's economic development director.

In Chandler, where Microchip Technology hasn't had a plant since it closed it 2003 but where it's still a major employer and a partner with local educators, there is still plenty of optimism surrounding chipmaking and other technology.

"The closure of Microchip's Fab 2 campus in Tempe and the resulting job losses are unfortunate," said Micah Miranda, director of economic development for Chandler. "However, with the continued growth of the semiconductor supply chain in Chandler, there are strong opportunities for new employment."

The company has suffered some financial setbacks within the past few years as winners and apparent losers have emerged within the semiconductor world.

• See **Chipmaker** on page **40**

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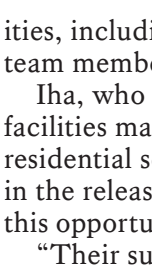
IN BRIEF

LEADERSHIP

Chetu promotes national account manager at Tempe office

Chetu, a global software solutions and support services provider, recently announced the promotion of Randall Iha, who works in the Tempe office, to senior account executive.

Jeff Parcheta, director of sales at Chetu, said in a press release Iha has always been willing to help his colleagues when needed.



Randall Iha

Previously a national account manager for more than two years, Iha, who works out of Chetu's Tempe office, will now take on additional responsibilities, including coaching new team members.

Iha, who specializes in the facilities management and residential services sectors, said in the release that he is grate for this opportunity at Chetu.

"Their support contributed greatly to my growth and success, which is why I'm excited to pay it forward by mentoring new National Account Managers as they start their journey at Chetu," Iha said. "The future looks promising."

For more, visit www.chetu.com.

Hardware store brings local connections to community

By Don Kirkland
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Though somewhat unceremoniously, the 80s seem to be upon us — not only temperature-wise but as my own countdown of the years marches on. Yes, that annual celebration of birthdays is now only weeks away, and I don't dread it as much as having to crank our air conditioning on once again.

Time for my regular get-together with Gary McKay.

Gary, you see, is my go-to guy around this time every year, not only because his hardware store is stocked with all sorts of cool (get it?) ideas for combating summer's inevitable heatwave but for commiserating about ways to stay as comfortable as possible when the thermometer sneaks into the teens, as it always does.

This from a guy like me who spent his teen-plus years playing volleyball on the sandy expanses of California's South Bay oceanfront and hanging out with equally aimless beach bums. Well, we weren't completely unproductive: We did find time for a beer or two (or more?). Geez, how did we ever survive the rigors of those days?

So back to Gary McKay.

With what I gather was a more productive expenditure of his — shall we call them formative — years, Gary will happily share the ups and downs of what adds up to nearly a half century, time that has not only helped him create a popular go-to store for all things hardware-related



Gary McKay grew up in the hardware business, and now he owns a story in Chandler. (Submitted photo)

but made it possible for him to get enjoyment from going to work every day.

The store's growth was typical of any new endeavor but has accelerated over time, McKay says. "We're never going to be Rockefellers or anything, but it's a good living for us.

"And what makes it great is we get to do it as a family."

During the summer of 2018, McKay, who also has been a traveling hardware wholesaler, owner of a landscaping business and a volunteer firefighter, bought and reopened a hardware store on the southeastern corner of Ray and Rural roads, now McKay's True Value.

"It was natural to do this," McKay said. "It's in our blood. I've tried to go away from the business but I

• See **Hardware** on page **26**

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Community Spotlight: Parkside



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Tempe residents to see increased rates for solid waste, wastewater, water

By Caroline Yu
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Tempe City Council recently voted on several resolutions to increase rates residents pay for solid waste, water and wastewater services.

The average Tempe single-family residential customer who receives water, wastewater and solid waste services is expected to experience an increase of about $7.87 a month in their monthly utility bill.

These changes will bring about $750,000 for solid waste, $5.9 million for wastewater and $7.7 million for water to ensure the financial stability of each utility, city officials said.

Council considered the resolutions for each department during a February meeting, where the mayor and council unanimously voted to approve each change. No public comments were received for any of the items.

Tempe approved its notice of intent to raise the utility rates at its Dec. 19, 2024, meeting. An internal study by the city showed that "additional funding is necessary for the financial stability of those departments."

Public Works Business Manager Stephen White wrote in several city staff reports the department conducted an evaluation of revenue and expenses, determining additional funding was necessary in 2025 and going forward to ensure financial stability of the city's solid waste, water and wastewater services.

"This additional funding will be realized through collection of revenue utilizing appropriately set user charges, rates, fees and deposits," White stated.



Tempe City Council recently approved the proposed rate increase for solid waste, water and wastewater services. (Metro Creative)

He continued that funding generated would be used for capital improvement projects to ensure continued compliance with regulatory requirements, maintain sufficient operational budget and make sure there is an appropriate fund balance at the policy level.

Looking at each utility, single-family residential customers with a 5/8-inch water meter and using 8,000 gallons of water each month can expect an increase of $2.43 in their monthly water bill.

A typical single-family residential customer with a 5/8-inch water meter and producing 6,400 gallons of wastewater monthly should experience an increase of $4.26 a month, and for solid waste, a typical residential customer will have an increase of $1.18 each month.

Now adopted by city council, the resolution will adjust the rates for solid waste, water and wastewater services beginning April 1.

Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines. Reporter Caroline Yu can be reached at cyu@iniusa.org

Tempe Neighborhood Celebration Event takes place April 5

Tempe's annual Neighborhood Celebration Event has been set for 9-11 a.m. Saturday, April 5 at Kiwanis Park Fiesta Ramadas, 5711 S. All-America Way.

The city invites the community to connect with each other over free coffee and breakfast refreshments, yard games, free event t-shirts (while supplies last) and a lively, informal awards celebration, according to a city release.

This year community members can enjoy free Brick Road Coffee, breakfast items, live music by Bohemian Insurgence and shopping with local vendors like Uplighten Life, Naked Fig Soap, Map Stand and Voyce Threads.

Children are welcome to play yard games provided by Tempe's Play Mobile, the release added.

The celebration is free to attend and the community is invited. Tempe's mayor and city council, small businesses, local organizations, boards and commission members, residents and volunteers will be present.

Mayor Corey Woods said in the release that each year, community members attend the event in droves to "laugh, learn and connect at the park."

"Compassionate, connected and uniquely Tempe neighborhoods are sources of comfort, strength and beauty for the residents who live in them," Woods said. "The Neighborhood Celebration is a chance to honor and build on Tempe's strong community bonds."

In addition to community connection, this event celebrates those who go above and beyond to serve the Tempe community.

Earlier this year, Tempe asked residents to nominate their neighbors for awards, the release stated. Award possibilities include honors for individuals, neighborhoods, spaces, events or initiatives related to community-building, arts and culture, water conservation and sustainability.

Winners will be recognized at the event along with Dolores Huerta Scholarship recipients.

For more, go to tempe.gov/NeighborhoodCelebration.



The city of Tempe's Neighborhood Celebration Event will take place April 5 at Kiwanis Park Fiesta Ramadas. (Courtesy City of Tempe)

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Back pain is a life-altering disruption

By Don Kirkland
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

For those of us who have navigated life with a minimum of health worries, having back pain come crashing in on us in our late 80s is almost as bad as having relatives appear unannounced at the doorstep. And announcing they plan to stay for six months.

Actually, it's not so much the unannounced part, or even the six months. After all, we can venture out when the pain of keeping Aunt Peg and Uncle Charlie entertained becomes its own kind of disruptive headache.

Having back troubles, especially when we've never had to deal with anything like that, is a real pain in the you-know-what. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Just ask me.

When my back started to hurt six or so months ago, I figured it was a fleeting aggravation that would go away on its own. You know, like a twisted ankle or a bum knee or a little cut on your finger from slicing open a section of cantaloupe for breakfast.


Don Kirkland

No siree. This is the real thing: actual pain. And with it, actual life-altering disruption of the things we're used to doing without much notice — yes, for those seven days a week mentioned above and, for the most part, that same around-the-clock misery.

To suggest I've gotten used to it, well, I guess you could say that. I can hobble around when I venture out, as long as I make sure I see something I can lean on if I think I might tip over — maybe even, god forbid, fall. That likely would result in an outcome even worse than a sore back, and none of us can say we haven't heard the horror stories that come from old people taking a tumble.

So as of the last couple of weeks upon direction of my primary care doctor, I've been convening twice a week with Tracy, a no-nonsense Banner Health physical therapist whose training seems to have included the admonition to start the reconditioning regimen with moderation.

This was a welcome departure from the PT I had once before at a different clinic, where all I can think of is that the therapist must have been absent the day the teacher offered those two important words, or something similar, about dealing with new patients: Go easy.

So on it goes. I think I'm making progress with Tracy, although both she and I admit we can't predict the outcome.

I gave my longtime friend Dave O'Grady, who I ran into the other day at Safeway, a condensed version of my back situation. Dave, like so many other people I know, either have had back troubles or know someone who has. Including him.

What he says worked for him when back trouble struck was paddling around their backyard pool. Counseled Dave: Massage sessions, painkiller pills, traditional therapy be damned. Those backyard pool sessions worked better than anything else.

Now that it's warmed up a bit, I think I'll try a few laps. But I don't think I'll be taking my sessions with Tracy off the calendar just yet. Wish me (us) luck!

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Hardware

• From page 22

keep getting sucked back into it.

"I figured I might as well stay."

Shortly after McKay opened his store, he convinced his wife and son, who was managing a pizza shop, to join him, making it a three-generation enterprise. Four if you count Sonny, the store's official greeter. Tail wag optional.

McKay senior, who grew up working in his father's store in South Haven, Michigan, found his way to the Valley in 2002. His brother, Barry, already was here and the owner of two hardware stores in north central Phoenix

As to the Chandler store's growth in the years since then, McKay says he knew at startup the area was ripe for a mom-and-pop hardware operation run by knowledgeable staff and dedicated to providing one-on-one customer service that most big-box competitors typically can't provide.

In the start-up days, while still in the wholesale business, McKay called on the previous owner. He did a demographic analysis. He knew the area was balanced with a good mix of do-it-yourselfers and those who need guidance with home projects. He beefed up the grilling and outdoor department and the fastener department and created a made-to-order screen department.

Now, years later, the response has been overwhelming and favorable, McKay said.

"We wanted to do a few things over the top," he added. He loves working with customers, gratified by stories like the elderly lady who'd lost her husband. She brought in cookies and brownies after he told her the steps involved in fixing leaky toilet, and she went home and did it herself.

"I enjoy those kinds of rewards," he said. "I don't consider it working. I consider that I'm retired and get to help people."

"My brother and I always told my boys what my dad told us: Hardware is going to be one job that you get paid to get educated in. You're going to take away from this more than you ever give to it, because you'll learn things you're going use the rest of your life."

Age, Valley summers and the Big 80s notwithstanding.

McKay's True Value is at 4939 W. Ray Road, Chandler.

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Tempe nonprofit partners with Ballet Arizona on fashion show

FABRIC Tempe and Ballet Arizona have partnered on a one-of-a-kind fashion show celebrating ballet and high fashion on April 26 at a private residence in Paradise Valley.

The local nonprofits have teamed to create a collaborative high tea-themed fundraiser benefiting the two organizations that will feature an afternoon of elegance, innovation and sustainability during Eco Fashion Week, from April 19-26, a press release stated.

Ten fashion designers from FABRIC's community will reimagine costumes donated from the Ballet Arizona archive by upcycling them into couture pieces.

To assist in the creation of the designs, FABRIC is donating three yards of fabric from its stock of material that was used to produce 800,000 reusable medical gowns during the pandemic, the release explained.

FABRIC's designers will additionally have the chance to create custom prints to complement the assigned costume using FABRIC's eco-friendly textile printer. The results will exemplify the beauty of the dance and fashion, as well as the ingenuity of the designers.

Angela Johnson, co-founder of FABRIC, said in the release that this collaboration is a "beautiful" way to celebrate both the arts and sustainability.

"By blending the timeless elegance of ballet with the ingenuity of upcycled fashion, we're showcasing the incredible talent and innovation in our community," Johnson said.

This event presented by Ballet Arizona's Contemporary Council, Ballet Arizona's junior board, and FABRIC is co-chaired by Lindsay Danto-BenAviv, a member of Ballet Arizona's Contemporary Council, and Johnson.

Contemporary Council cultivates a new generation of patrons through creative fundraising, events, and volunteering, according to the release.

Serena Remy, council member and senior vice president of marketing and communications at GPEC, said in the release that Ballet Arizona's Contemporary Council is thrilled to partner with FABRIC on this event.

"Reimagining treasured ballet costumes as contemporary couture honors the artistry of dance, amplifies the brilliance of local designers, and advances the principles of circularity, all within this one of a kind experience," Remy said.



Ballet Arizona and FABRIC Tempe are partnering on a fashion show celebrating ballet and high fashion. (Courtesy Ballet Arizona)

The En Pointe fashion show and fundraiser will be held 2-5:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26 at a private residence in Paradise Valley.

Attendees will enjoy a handcrafted high tea menu by chef Smail Yaakoubi, while experiencing a salon-style fashion show featuring 10 upcycled garments by local designers using costumes from Ballet Arizona's archives.

General admission tickets are $150 and VIP tickets are $275.

There is a limited quantity of VIP tickets available. These provide early access for shopping of designer collections, two drink tickets, custom swag tote bags and more. The release noted that proceeds of the shopping experience will support the designers.

To purchase tickets to "En Pointe: High Tea & Couture Reimaged," visit https://ballet-arizona.networkforgood.com/projects/245971-en-pointe-high-tea-couture-reimagined.

For more, visit https://balletaz.org/support-us/en-pointe-high-tea-couture-reimagined/.

Tempe



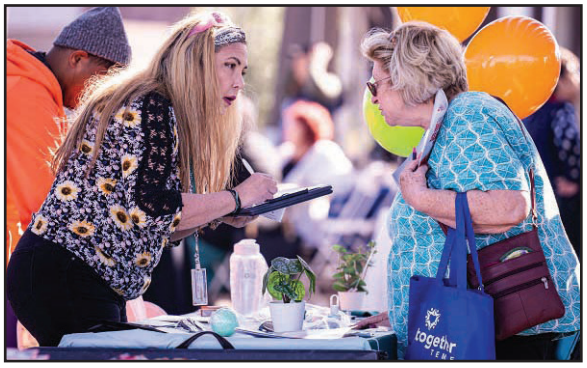






Last two Free Art Fridays of the season

Bring your little ones to explore sensory play, music and movement perfect for ages 6 months to 5 years. Join us Friday, March 28 for Under the Sea and Friday, April 11 for Bumblebee Ball. There will be hands-on activities, light refreshments and lots of creative fun to enjoy! Details at tempe.gov/FreeArtFriday.



Tempe Health and Human Services Day

Join us March 29 for the 7th annual Care Fair Tempe and the Tempe Community Health and Human Services Pop-Up. Stop by this free, family-friendly event 9 a.m. - noon at the Tempe Community Complex, 3500 S. Rural Road, for resources and fun. Visit more than 70 nonprofit info booths to get help or learn about volunteering, plus enjoy live entertainment, a fun zone for kids, on-site services, food vendors and giveaways. The event is hosted by Tempe Community Council and the city's Community Health and Human Services Department. Get details about attending or volunteering at TempeHumanServicesDay.org or by calling 480-858-2300.



Nominations open for Tempe's annual Bike Hero award

Do you know a Tempe resident or a local group who has demonstrated a commitment to bicycling in the city? If you appreciate their impact, large or small, then you should showcase their efforts by submitting a nomination for the 2025 Tempe Bike Hero by March 31. It's an easy process to nominate your two-wheeled champion by going to Tempe's Bike Month web page at tempe.gov/BikeMonth, then filling out a form to tell the story of their admirable cycling deeds.

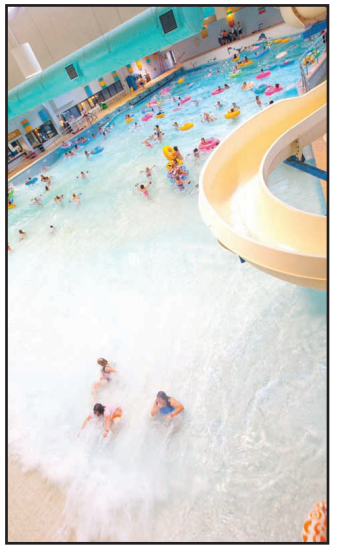
Neighborhood Celebration

Mark your calendars for food, games and neighborhood bonding. This year's Neighborhood Celebration is approaching quickly, and it will be a blast! Join your community for free breakfast, live music, small business vendors, yard games and more on Saturday, April 5 from 9-11 a.m. at Kiwanis Park. 2025 Neighborhood Award honorees will be recognized at this event. More info at tempe.gov/NeighborhoodCelebration.



Kick off pool season

April Pools Day kicks off wave season at Kiwanis Wave Pool with free water safety activities, CPR demos, a visit from Tempe Fire Medical Rescue and more on Saturday, April 5, from 1-5 p.m. Brush up on water safety skills and enjoy a fun afternoon riding the waves. Kiwanis Wave Pool will be open every Saturday in April, and every Saturday and Sunday in May. Daily waves begin June 2. Learn more at tempe.gov/waves.





Open Streets Tempe: April 13

Introducing Open Streets Tempe – a vehicle-free day on Mill Avenue where you can walk, bike, roll, dance and connect with your community. Without the usual traffic, Tempeans can see just how much is possible when we prioritize people over cars - creating spaces that bring us closer together. This free, family-friendly event is for everyone. Whether you're biking in a parade, joining a yoga session or simply strolling with friends - come reimagine our streets as places for people. Open Streets was created out of a partnership between Tempe Bicycle Action Group, the City of Tempe and Downtown Tempe Authority. Learn more at tempe.gov/OpenStreets.

Tempe prepares for tax revenue losses, proposed legislation

By Caroline Yu
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Tempe maintains its plan of more frugal spending and budget balancing measures with the loss of residential rental taxes, while staff looks at other potential losses of revenue and how the city plans to address them.

Deputy City Manager Lisette Camacho and Interim Municipal Budget Director Julie Hietter gave a presentation to Tempe City Council last month, providing the latest update on the city's long-range financial forecast for its major operating funds.

Council last received a long-range financial forecast at a Nov. 19, 2024, meeting. Since then, Camacho said there has been a continued decline in local tax revenue because of lower year-to-date taxable sales and collection, and staff is recommending additional budget-balancing measures.

She noted while the forecast does account for the loss of residential rental tax revenue, it did not include the reduction of federally funded projects and programs as well as the proposed legislation that would repeal the tax on groceries.

"That issue is evolving at a fast pace," Camacho said. "It's very fluid right now, so we didn't feel that it would be something that we would include in this forecast until we know more on the passage of that legislation."

Addressing impacts from the elimination of residential rental taxes, Camacho said the city will see the greater impact in Tempe's monthly sales tax report for February, given that it went into effect on Jan. 1.

Other forecast assumptions discussed included the reduction of state-shared revenue distributions because of decreases in state income and corporate tax collections, a continuation of strong building and trade revenues, an increase in investment earnings because of high interest rates, and continued salary plans and market adjustments.



Tempe City Council received an update on Feb. 24 about the city's long-term financial forecast. (Special to the Independent/Arianna Grainey)

Forecast updates

Camacho shared some of the updates since the November forecast, saying local taxes are coming in lower than budget and in comparison to fiscal year 2024, and staff adjusted revenue even lower to reflect current trends.

"We are recommending to continue the budget-balancing strategies we presented last November that includes suspending recurring and non-recurring supplementals for two more years," she said.



Lisette Camacho (Courtesy City of Tempe)

In addition to more conservative spending, staff is recommending the suspension of cash funding for capital projects, using drawdown from Public Safety Personnel Retirement System reserves to fund pension contributions for public safety personnel and using drawdown from Other Post Employment Benefits reserves for post-employment health benefits.

Camacho explained these reserve funds were set aside for this purpose, and they are being put forth for their intended use.

As for revenues, she said that staff expect the passage of Proposition 479, which continued the half-cent sales tax in Maricopa County to fund transportation, to increase revenue for Tempe's share of regional transit funding, but they will continue to monitor that.

Going over what has been observed since the repeal of the residential rental tax, Camacho said Tempe's general, transit and arts and culture funds are affected, totaling a 9% loss in sales tax revenue in fiscal year 2023.

"We are estimating $10 million of revenue loss across all three funds," she said,

The revenue loss is expected to grow in the following years, estimating a $25 million loss in the 2028-29 fiscal year.

What's to come

While staff didn't include the proposed legislation prohibiting the food tax in this forecast, Camacho did briefly go over what that might mean for Tempe.

This legislation, Arizona House Concurrent Resolution 2021, would prohibit a municipality from imposing a transaction privilege tax on the sale of food items intended for home consumption. It's intended to be sent to voters in the 2026 general election, and if approved, the exemption from taxing would be effective July 1, 2027.

Camacho also brought up the recent amendment to food tax legislation that capped the food tax at 2%, but she noted it would not impact Tempe because its tax rate on food is at 1.8%.

"So even though this is evolving, we wanted to provide a worst-case

• See **Financial Forecast** on page **34**

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TCAA

• From page 4

press release, but a safety plan has still to be developed, leaving some Victory Acres residents still waiting on answers.

Where it's at

Jacob Payne, principal planner with the city of Tempe, said the security plan in development will go over the operational procedures and safety components at the site. It will also be on file with the Tempe Police Department once it has been finalized.

"In order to satisfy that condition of their use permit, they'll need to have that completed before they can get their building permits issued," Payne said.

He said while he hasn't heard anything about the progress on this document, TCAA is likely still working with Tempe Police and other stakeholders to get this together.

Addressing the notification of residents, Payne explained the city had done its required outreach per Tempe's zoning code regarding the approval of a project's development plan review and use permits.

A notification, like mailers, is sent to all property owners within 600 feet of the site.

"We do post a 4-foot by 4-foot public hearing sign, which was attached to the chain link fence around the site facing Apache Boulevard and was up for 15 days, which is our minimum advertisement period," Payne said.

Additionally, Tempe also sent notices to the contacts for homeowners and neighborhood associations within a quarter mile of the site, which included the Victory Acres Neighborhood Association and the Oaks 2 & 3 Neighborhood Association.

Community outreach

Outreach was completed by the city about TCAA's new building, but some residents are still unhappy with the lack of communication and resident input being gathered.



Victory Acres resident Sean M. speaks during a neighborhood meeting with TCAA. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)

The Victory Acres Neighborhood Association held a neighborhood meeting in March, bringing together some concerned residents, leadership from TCAA and representatives from multiple city departments.

Megan Wilson, TCAA's director of programs, explained during the meeting that while many people have focused on the shelter aspect of the new building, it's not the only thing that group will bring to the neighborhood.

"We think it is going to be a huge enhancement for the neighborhood," Wilson said.

TCAA will be phasing out its mobile shelter services with its new building, creating 75 shelter beds on the second floor, which will be available for homeless individuals with a preference for older populations.

Aside from the shelter, TCAA will operate a food pantry, a commercial kitchen for community food services and rent utility assistance among other programs at this new headquarters.

Residents at the meeting questioned the TCAA representatives about how the shelter will be run, to which Wilson and Bob Brantstetter, TCAA's senior manager of shelter services, explained there will be conditions in place to manage people staying in the shelter.

"The idea is to end the cycle of homelessness," Brantstetter said.

He explained the shelter aspect has structures to ensure people being served are not just getting a bed for the night. TCAA will work with them to get them the necessary documents and resources to bring them out of homelessness.

There will be intake guidelines to ensure there is no drug use on site, certain beds will be set aside for transitional or medical cases, and there will be checks on site to ensure that no illicit substances have been brought in.

Brantstetter also noted they will not accept sex offenders and violent offenders who committed offenses in the past five years.

Irene Larios, a resident and the owner of Greenheart Landscapes, said during the meeting she understands the importance of ending cycles of homelessness and people experiencing homelessness include people who are older, suffering with mental illness and more.

While she understands TCAA's mission in helping the homeless population, she and other residents are still upset with the lack of inclusion of their input about having this facility in their community and how it may affect them.

"When I say affect, it could be positive or negative, but that is a town hall meeting that should have been placed already to take the residents in consideration of such an enormous, (multi-million dollar) facility that is three blocks away from my home and many others," Larios said.

She added that the city's notification of the project felt insufficient, and there are a number of other concerns to be considered besides the safety arm, including the environmental impact of the project and whether the project is equitable to low income and minority communities.

Victory Acres is a historically low-income and minority neighborhood, and its residents like Larios, have shared that having the shelter in the area feels like the site might have been chosen for that reason.

Wilson said this meeting was an important move in developing the safety plan and also understanding more about what residents hope to come out of TCAA having its building in the community.

She said that there will be future opportunities for the community to provide their input to TCAA as it progresses on the new headquarters. Brenda Clark, neighborhood services specialist, also noted at the meeting that there would be more notice for future meetings regarding the project.

"This is not going to be a one and done conversation," Wilson said.

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Customers concerned over SRP price increases

By Brent Ruffner
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Some Valley veterans and retirees are concerned over the recently approved Salt River Project utility price hike.

On Thursday, the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District Board approved a rate hike that will increase energy bills by 2.4% for all residential and commercial SRP customers, on average.

The average residential customer is expected to see a monthly bill increase of 3.5%, or $5.61, according to a press release.

In December, SRP announced the price change "reflects a proposed increase of $168.8 million in base revenue to support upgrades to the power system and an anticipated decrease of $67.7 million in fuel and purchased power revenues, which are recovered through the fuel and purchased power" adjustment mechanism rate.

SRP asked its board for an increase of 3.5%, or $5.64 for the average residential customer.

The new rates take effect on the November 2025 billing cycle. SRP serves about 1.1 million Valley residents.



Valley residents are concerned about Tempe-based utility SRP increasing its energy rates. (Metro Creative Connection)

But some Valley residents are less than happy over the rate hike.

Chris Hill, a U.S. Army veteran, said his SRP energy bill has gone up about 20% over the past four years.

Current high temperatures have prompted the Gilbert resident to turn on his home's air conditioning unit in February.

Valley temps are heating up. On Feb. 25, Sky Harbor International Airport hit a high of 90 degrees — two degrees shy of the record mark set in 1921, according to the National Weather Service in Phoenix.

"I just know everyone (is dealing with) higher prices," Hill said. "You can give up some things. Utilities and energy isn't one of them."

Some residents on fixed incomes also are feeling the financial pinch of rising costs of items such as eggs and gas. Adding a hike to energy doesn't help, said Anna Cicero, a Chandler resident who attended Thursday's meeting.

She said she knows of peers from the Arizona Alliance of Retired Educators that some adult children have had to take their kids in which drives up costs.

"Everything has gone up," Cicero said. "...How much more can you take?"

Hill said Arizona State University — which touts itself as a sustainability leader — should partner with the local utility on renewable energy.

The cost of inflation and everyday bills increasing is a "heavy" pressure, Hill said.

"I've got three kids in college," Hill said. "Every dollar counts."

Financial Forecast

• From page 30

scenario for the city council" she said.

Camacho provided the estimated annual revenue loss including the residential rental tax losses and if the food tax is repealed in the coming general election, totaling a $35.2 million loss in FY 2027-28 and a $38 million loss in FY 2028-29 across Tempe's three operating funds.

For food tax alone, Tempe would lose about 5.3% of sales tax revenue, which is equal to $12.5 million in all funds. Camacho noted that Tempe is among the top five municipalities losing revenue if the legislation is passed.

Hietter also touched on Tempe's enterprise funds and special revenue fund highlights, which mostly showed minimal impacts on the city's water/wastewater, solid waste, emergency transport, transit, transportation and arts and culture funds.

Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

Tempe

Combined Estimated Annual Revenue Loss

	FY 27-28	FY 28-29
General Fund		
Residential Rental	$ 15.0	$ 16.6
Food for Home Consumption*	$ 8.3	$ 8.7
Total General Fund	**$ 23.3**	**$ 25.3**
Transit Fund		
Residential Rental	$ 6.3	$ 6.9
Food for Home Consumption*	$ 3.5	$ 3.6
Total Transit Fund	**$ 9.8**	**$ 10.5**
Arts & Culture Fund		
Residential Rental	$ 1.4	$ 1.5
Food for Home Consumption*	$ 0.7	$ 0.7
Total Arts & Culture Fund	**$ 2.1**	**$ 2.2**
Total	**$ 35.2**	**$ 38.0**

($ Millions)
* if approved by voters

12

The estimated annual revenue loss if Arizona HCR 2021 is approved. (Courtesy City of Tempe)

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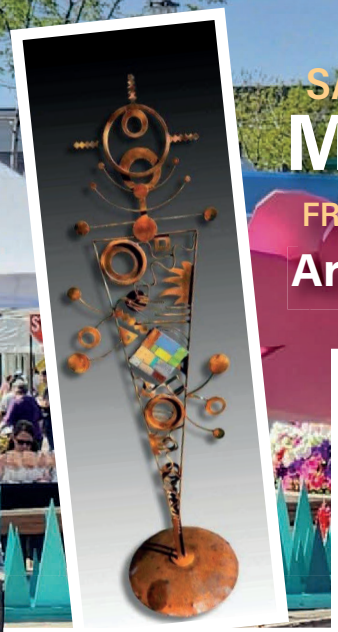
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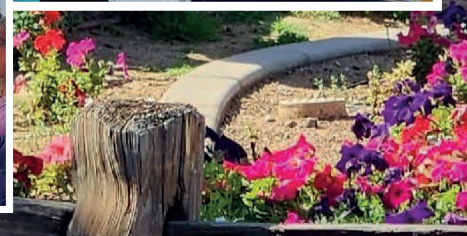
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Kyrene Bond Sale

• From page 14

of time in this area, supporting their goal to always lower tax rate over time whenever possible.

"It's a huge point of pride that we can look back at the last five years and see those rates consistently dropping due to our efforts," Herrmann said.

All of the savings and benefit of refinancing goes to taxpayers in the form of lower rates, and through bond refinancing, Kyrene has saved taxpayers almost $8 million over the course of a decade, the release stated.

Kyrene Superintendent Laura Toenjes said in the release this is another example of Kyrene's commitment to fiscal responsibility, noting that the district and governing board seek every opportunity to manage the bond efficiently.

"Taxpayers place their trust in us when they support our bonds, and we want our community to see the value of their vote," Toenjes said.

Kyrene allocates the majority of bond dollars to schools. On average, 96% of bond funds directly support students and maintain schools, while a very small percentage is used to maintain office facilities and other work environments, according to the release.



Chris Herrmann (Courtesy Kyrene School District)



Laura Toenjes (Courtesy Kyrene School District)

Jump

• From page 14

de las Brisas and Kyrene de la Mirada are both renewing their A+ status, last awarded in 2020 and Kyrene Monte Vista was previously recognized as an A+ School of Excellence in 2019.

Schools applying for this recognition take part in a rigorous process that includes a written application, on-site visits by a team of trained judges and participation by faculty, students and families, the release noted. Schools are evaluated in areas such as school culture, curriculum, leadership, assessment data and community involvement.

Schools receive an A+ School of Excellence banner and receive a $500 award. Visit Kyrene School District online for a complete list of Kyrene's A+ Schools of Excellence.

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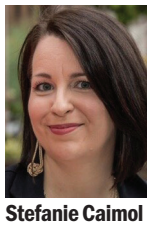
- Get information about housing assistance, homeless programs, free/affordable preschool, programs for older adults, victim services and much more.
- Talk with our experts about the best ways we can assist you.
- Find out how to volunteer with us!

Novus

• From page 12

ments like this could make their way to their neighborhoods.

Mike DiDomenico, Tempe's economic development director, says the residents of south Tempe likely won't see any new developments quite like Novus, given the population tends to embrace more unique, specialty businesses or attractions.



Stefanie Caimol

"South Tempe is not looking for chains. We're not looking for something that you can find in every other neighboring city," DiDomenico said.

He also said the opportunities for redevelopment in south Tempe, like with the Novus project, are harder to come by.

Existing commercial centers continue to thrive and survive, and the city hopes to foster their success further to support Tempe's sales tax base, seeing new retail tenants take over vacant spaces rather than rezoning to allow for housing. DiDomenico says they're going to be a little more "protective" of these existing developments to avoid rezoning those areas, especially with the recent loss of rental tax collection.

Housing is a priority for the city, as seen with new projects like Cabana Kyrene, but DiDomenico says sales tax dollars are also important to preserving the city's budget.

Changes are heading to south Tempe, just not in the way that residents have been seeing near downtown.

For example, South Tempe Square is an anticipated commercial development coming to an undeveloped plot of land, and the city also continues its work to bring new life to Danelle Plaza while preserving its cultural significance to the area.

"(There's) lots of opportunity for the developers there to embrace that and find a way to develop around that participation or that partnership," DiDomenico said.

Community

• From page 4

can now use this advanced technology immediately upon arrival.

"By putting LUCAS devices on all of our frontline trucks, we're ensuring this tool is available the moment crews arrive on scene — giving our patients the best possible chance of survival and overall better health outcomes," Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Deputy Chief Kevin Bailey Jr. of the Medical Services Division said in the release.

The LUCAS device has also been used on a wide range of incidents, including cardiac arrests, collision injuries, drowning, gunshot wounds and overdose patients, demonstrating the device's versatility in critical care.

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Friday, April 11, 7 p.m.
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tempe.gov/MuseumEvents

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Chipmaker

• From page 20

Nasdaq says Microchip Technology's shares fell 2.3% following its Q3 2025 earnings release on Feb. 6. The company reported adjusted earnings per share of 20 cents, missing the consensus estimate and plunging 81.5% year-over-year, while revenue of $1 billion declined 42% year-over-year.

In May of last year, The Oregonian reported Microchip Technology stating that it will shutter its factories for a second two-week furlough of 2024 at the end of June after another steep decline in quarterly revenue.

In November, not only did Microchip announce the impending closure of the Tempe fab, it also announced the retirement of CEO and board chair Ganesh Moorthy, bringing back longtime CEO Steve Sanghi.

Nasdaq.com says the chipmaker's shares have declined 13.4% over the past three months.

Miranda said there are options for some employees displaced by Microchip Technology's downsizing.

"Displaced workers can explore local job opportunities within the semiconductor industry and other targeted sectors through the Chandler Career Center," Miranda said. "That's a job platform dedicated to connecting Chandler companies with local talent."

DiDomenico said Tempe is "actively working" with Microchip Technology on finding a buyer for the property and production equipment.

"It's ready-made for a new tenant to begin operations," DiDomenico sad. "We are confident that a new company will soon fill the gap and bring high-quality jobs, thanks to the growth we are seeing in the technology and manufacturing industries."



Tempe Economic Development director Mike DiDomenico, pictured at a 2024 Tempe Chamber of Commerce event, says the city is working to help impacted employees. (Independent Newsmedia/Caroline Yu)

Business

• From page 20

group's commitment to delivering modern, infill industrial space in land-constrained submarkets with high barriers to entry.

Kingdon added the group takes "great pride" in redeveloping sites like this and looks forward to contributing to logistics and light manufacturing facilities in Tempe.

The facility is already attention from various industrial users looking for next-generation space in a high-demand market, according to the release. Completion is targeted for mid-2026.

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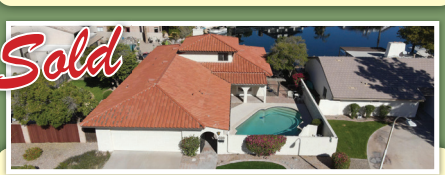
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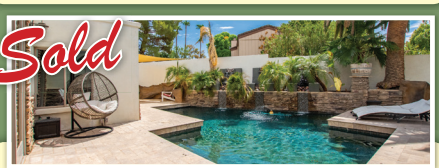
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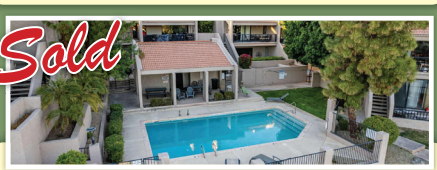
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