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## Manhole art project nixed amid cost, site concerns

**Dolores Tropiano**  
 The Arizona Republic  
 May. 3, 2005 12:00 AM

SCOTTSDALE - The controversial plan to place as many as 100 artistically designed manhole covers throughout Scottsdale has been shelved.

Scottsdale's Public Art Program officials discovered recently that only about 22 sites were available, and many of those would be in out-of-the-way locations.

The project was originally hatched as a way to beautify Scottsdale's downtown shopping and arts districts and to provide an occasional surprise to locals and visitors.

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City arts officials also had planned to generate money for arts programs by selling replicas of the hatch covers as souvenirs.

"Twenty-two covers in out-of-the-way places wasn't making the statement we wanted to make," said Judith Patrylak, project manager for the Scottsdale Public Art Program.

One of the discouraging discoveries was that many of the sites would be in alleyways, Patrylak said.

The project was estimated to cost \$32,000, with most coming from the Scottsdale water department, and \$10,000 coming from a private, anonymous donor.

The idea generated opposition from those who believed the tax dollars for the project would be better spent elsewhere, such as for programs for children or other necessities.

Creatively designed manhole covers have become a cultlike phenomenon in major cities around the world including in Japan and Canada.

In America, they are all the rage in Vail, Colo., Seattle and New York.

Patrylak sees a significant difference between Seattle and Scottsdale.

"Seattle is a gutter city. Seattle has tons of gutters," she said. "It is always raining."

Reach the reporter at dolores.tropiano@arizonarepublic.com or (602)

444-6876.

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