

## Orlando Venues Dream Comes True

**ORLANDO**, Fla. -&nbsp;July 27, 2007.&nbsp; Central Florida is one step closer to realizing the dreams of having three important community venues.

This week, local community leaders approved plans for a new performing arts center, a new events center and a renovated Citrus Bowl.

Along with local tourism leaders, Walt Disney World Resort is proud to have been a part of this historic moment.&nbsp;

Below is a copy of a column written by Meg Crofton and Al Weiss that appeared in the Orlando Sentinel highlighting Disney's support of these community projects.&nbsp;

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### **Make the Venues Dream a Reality**

As the top tourist destination in the world,

Central Florida makes dreams come true for visitors every day. We both believe it's time to make the dreams of the residents of Central Florida come true by moving forward with plans for a new performing arts center, a new events center and a renovated Citrus Bowl – three visionary projects that will forever change the fabric of our community.

As longtime

Central Florida residents, we are proud of the strides our community already has made. Today, we enjoy many of the attributes of the world's greatest cities – a top-notch airport, thriving colleges and universities and an increasingly diverse mix of industries. But if we are to leave a rich legacy for the next generation of Central Floridians, we must not only have a vision for the future, but also be willing to act on it now.

One year ago, Walt Disney World® Resort united with a nearly unanimous group of tourism leaders in supporting an increase in the tourist-development tax to help fund the three venues. Disney signed the original agreement with Universal, Sea World and the entire leadership of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association. Our support was further strengthened with the announcement of a \$12.5 million commitment — our largest single donation ever — to the Dr. P. Phillips

Orlando Performing Arts Center.

With the creation of these three first-rate facilities, we have an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen our local economy, while committing to a quality of life that will make our community an even better place to live, work and play – not just for ourselves, but for generations to come.

We know the three venues will have a positive impact on our community – they will create and support jobs, attract major events and help us to further diversify our economy beyond our strong tourism base. Although the numbers alone are compelling, this isn't just about money.

This is really about giving back to the residents of

Central Florida and bringing the world to our front door. Most of all, it's about giving Central Floridians an opportunity to experience the very things that are already a hallmark of the world's greatest cities – we deserve nothing less.

Simply put, the time has come to move forward. This is the defining moment for our community's future and we must take advantage of this unique time when the best interests of our community and the public and private resources are aligned.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our elected officials for their support to approve all three of the proposed venues.

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