

# Fairmont Scottsdale Princess expected to announce expansion

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SCOTTSDALE - Owners of the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess are expected this week to announce a major expansion that could transform the resort into the largest hotel in the Valley.

Scottsdale planners have been meeting with representatives of Princess owners Strategic Hotels & Resorts Inc. about an expansion that would add 334 rooms to the 651-room resort.

That would make the resort 985 rooms, compared with the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa's 950 rooms, currently the Valley's largest.

Preliminary plans submitted in January include a new senior-living facility, office complex, new ballroom and meeting rooms, parking structure and landscaping on the Mediterranean-style campus. New restaurants and retail shops also are expected.

In addition, the hotel would renovate all of the rooms during the course of the three-year project, which could total \$230 million worth of improvements.

"It's a complicated deal because they want to stay open during construction," said Scottsdale Senior Planner Don Hadder.

Scottsdale planners expect to receive site plans for the project within the next few weeks. Public hearings before the Development Review Board could take place this fall with the first stages of construction beginning late this year, Hadder said.

Strategic Hotels & Resorts executives would not comment until all the plans are in place, probably within a few days.

The Chicago-based company acquired the resort from Fairmont Raffles Holdings International in September. Raffles had just purchased the property in January 2006.

The Princess resort, southeast of Princess Boulevard and Scottsdale Road, acquired a 99-year lease of nearly 35 acres of state-trust land to the west of the campus in 2003. Plans for the expansion were put on hold, however, as the resort changed