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If the citizens of Scott County were allowed to decide what to do with the $120 million budgeted for River Renaissance, we would instead vote for: • hiring 200 more police and firefighters and giving them all a big raise; • fixing the streets and sewers; • buying some kind of high-tech temporary floodwall; • renovating John O'Donnell Stadium; and • putting the remaining tens of millions of dollars in the bank for a rainy day.

Maybe, considering the terrible state economic crisis, the citizens of Scott County would generously say, "Please we can't take this money. Put it back in the state budget and restore the funding cuts to education."

But – and this is where it gets really crazy – we are somehow *obliged* to take the money. If we don't want it, the state is going to give it to somebody else. Somebody less deserving, like Ottumwa, which would probably blow all that money on a 400-foot statue of Radar O'Reilly.

So apparently we have a moral responsibility to spend all that money on a bunch of downtown stuff that nobody really thinks is necessary.

We've been told that spending this money will make Davenport more attractive to new businesses. You know what businesses look for when they relocate? Low crime, streets without potholes, and a sewer system that works.

The craziest part of this entire River Renaissance scheme is that we have been repeatedly told that it's all Other People's Money. We're going to be showered with free money from magnanimous and anonymous Other People. Unfortunately, we are the Other People. One way or another, the taxpayers are always the Other People.

Lastly, spending $120 million on a bunch of stuff we don't need seems selfish, wasteful, and greedy. I'm going to vote against it. It just feels like the right thing to do.

D. Ezra Sidran,
Davenport