

The other side of the story...

Time to Stop Pretending

Politicians are in a tough spot. Those that preached 'housing-now' must now decide—will they follow 'the will of the people' or not?

Voters just said NO for a second time. They don't want to pay additional taxes for public housing or START busses.

Last November voters said no to the extra one cent tax for housing and transportation. Politicians put it on the ballot again, repackaged as four separate SPET items. Last week voters said no again; all four failed. The other six SPET items all passed. That's a strong message!

Locals know START is not a "transportation solution" even if our electeds don't get it. We all see the empty busses. After 3-decades of operation, costing perhaps \$100-million, and only getting 1% of the cars off the road, voters know START is not a transportation solution. Politicians are in denial.

Likewise with housing, we have 1,900 subsidized housing units already, yet politicians want more, always more. How much is enough? That's never discussed.

We heard the same old election claim: we have to build housing for first responders. But it's a bogus claim. There's already enough affordable housing for all our critical needs, first responders, teachers, etc.

But there's an allocation problem. Those we most depend on aren't getting the public housing we all pay for.

Local affordable housing regulations badly need revision. But instead of fixing them, government wants to keep building more. It's time politicians fixed their broken housing allocation system.

All the first responders and critical needs workers that want to live locally can easily be housed in a fraction of the 1,900 units we already have.

Our START bus management approach needs fixing too. Bus systems in other mountain ski towns are twice as efficient as ours.

Managers need to get financial efficiency up to where it belongs before they ask for more money. Asking for another \$30-million in new funding, as they did last week, was foolish.

For years, local citizens have complained about empty busses traveling our quiet residential streets. Folks don't want the noise or the disruption.

START needs to focus on their routes to the Village, Alpine and Victor where there are riders. They need to cull sparsely traveled routes and eliminate empty busses.

Let's be realistic. Busses are mass transit vehicles. They work in New York City and Los Angeles where there are millions of commuters.

We're the Old West. The bus isn't a "transportation solution" for Jackson Hole. Time to stop pretending.

*Those we most depend
on aren't getting the public
housing we all pay for.*
