

*The other side of the story...*

## SPET 2019 Minefield

Has SPET-2019 gone too far? Is Big Government abusing a useful tax and **stealing** the people's penny?

Apparently "yes." More and more, SPET is misused to cover local government mistakes and budget shortfalls. Example: Town encouraged Walgreens to build beside a man-made cliff, and then got stuck with the bill when, surprise, a landslide wrecked the store. Major mistake!

SPET is for large one-time capital projects — to build a community swimming pool, for example. It's not supposed to be an ongoing tax. It's being misused locally to cover normal budget items.

Financing sidewalks and sewer repair (**Prop 6**), is the regular, everyday business of local government, not a legitimate SPET project.

We used SPET in 1989 to build a middle school and a nursing home — good SPET projects. But since 2001 this added penny sales tax has been a constant. And our electeds have a bad habit of re-wording projects voters have already said NO to, like affordable housing (**Prop 7**) and buses (**Prop 2**). SPET is being abused locally.

Our electeds know they are pushing the envelope. After countless hours of joint town-county planning meetings, some electeds said it was unfair to "load up the SPET ballot with \$77M (5 years)" worth of tax. But the Big-Spenders out voted them, that's why we have a bloated 10-project SPET ballot.

And they want more! However many of these projects pass, our Big-Spending politicians have another \$90M they want you to fund next time.

Be careful what you vote yes on. There's a lot of smoke-and-mirrors in the descriptions. And some projects appear unnecessary, like **Prop 2**. Imagine claiming with a straight face that the "Core Services Vehicle Maintenance Facility" is necessary. Local school busses sit outside every winter, but snowplows need to be inside? Who are they kidding?

Unless you've done your research and understand the "**bundling**," the safe SPET vote is NO. Consider *Rec Center Expansion (Prop 9)*. It's a road and sewer project masquerading as *Rec Center* project. Most of the money is for normal expenditures that don't even belong on the SPET ballot. Best to wait a year and vote yes to a legitimate *Rec Center* project in 2020.

Yes votes could be dangerous. *Gregory Lane (Prop 6)* isn't about a safe route to school. Its long-term intent may be to gentrify the area with one-way streets that will force our needed light industrial businesses out of town.

Rather than focusing on the basic local government issues, too often our electeds have championed pet projects like a plastic bag ban, LGBTQ ordinances, and flipping real estate.

Politicians have chased personal hot-button 'wants,' while ignoring 'needs.' Cops, for instance, aren't paid a living wage and our blue-ribbon fishing streams are polluted. Too often priorities are upside down.

Local government needs a wake-up call.

Your SPET vote is worth a lot more than a penny. It's about sending an "end to big spending" message to town and county officials, too.