

Keep the Sedona we love and vote 'yes' on Home Rule

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We encourage all Sedona voters to vote “yes” on the Alternative



Expenditure Limitation, aka Home Rule.

In 1980, voters approved a law that limited what towns and cities could spend.

The rate is adjusted for inflation and population, but does not take into account things like sales tax revenue generated by tourists, which accounts for a large portion of tax income in Sedona and other rural towns around Arizona. The state allows voters to override the limitation by approving Home Rule for their towns and cities, allowing them to spend what they collect.

Of Arizona's 91 towns and cities, 77 approve Home Rule every election cycle and Sedona voters have approved Home Rule for the last 18 years. Home Rule allows the city to spend tax revenue it collects on essential services like roads, drainage, storm water mitigation, the police department, Community Development, Public Works and city departments.

Home Rule also allows the city to give grants to nonprofits whose services residents enjoy like Sedona Recycles, the Sedona Public Library, the Sedona Community Center, the Humane Society of Sedona, the Sedona Main Street Program, YMCA and the destination marketing efforts of the Sedona Chamber of

Commerce to bring tourists to Sedona.

If Home Rule fails, the city will be unable to spend roughly \$9 million in taxes collected next fiscal year, more than a quarter of its budget, which will sit idle in the bank. The city has managed its budget well since the Great Recession and has a surplus of nearly \$15 million, which is allocated for major infrastructure projects like the Wastewater Reclamation Plant, monsoon flooding mitigation, the Barbara Antonsen Memorial Park and other community facilities. If Home Rule is not passed, funding for these projects will cease and our tax surplus will be unusable for years. The city will have to cut \$9 million from its budget in the next fiscal year and \$13 million by 2018, which will all sit unused in the bank. Flooding in West Sedona will continue to damage homes, businesses and roads and the city will be unable to alleviate the problem even if it had the money in the bank to do so. Police services will be cut, reducing response times. Festivals and Parks and Recreation events would suffer major cuts to their funding and may simply cease to exist.

Ironically, cities and towns that do not have Home Rule risk falling into severe debt because although they may have millions in tax surplus, they can't spend any of it and instead have to pass bonds or borrow money to make repairs and improvements to roads, drainage and community projects. This would actually increase the tax burden on residents and property owners.

The tiny number of opponents to Home Rule who appeared in the city's publicity pamphlet misunderstand what it could mean for Sedona. Voting "no" will not reduce tax rates nor tax collection. Voting "no" will not reduce sewer rates. Voting "no" will mean major cuts to basic city services. Voting "no" will mean state legislators in Phoenix will tell Sedona what it can or cannot spend. Voting "no" will decimate the budgets of local nonprofits that rely on city support for their operations. Misinformation by a handful of disgruntled residents should not be a determining factor for the Sedona's budget decisions.

We encourage all voters to vote "yes" on the Alternative Expenditure Limitation, aka Home Rule.