

## Ward 6 Staff



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# Ward 6 - Newsletter

## Tucson First

August 26, 2013

Today and tomorrow, I'll continue to touch on specific issues with the intent of encouraging you to take part in tomorrow's primary election. We're tackling some significant topics at the Mayor and Council table, and they're worthy of you taking a few minutes and casting a ballot.

**Today:** Spending Limit Proposition – What does the 'Home Rule on spending level' Proposition potentially mean for the City of Tucson?

**Tuesday:** Advocacy – A list of some of the key areas in which I've played a solid role in terms of keeping our community safe and attractive.

### Spending Limit Proposition

The State imposes a limit on how much a city or town can spend, regardless of how much that jurisdiction raises in local tax revenues. I guess it's just their way of suggesting that we should not maximize private sector development, job growth, or expand the economic pie. If we do those things and generate more revenue than what is allowed by the State, the money sits on the countertop until next fiscal year.

It's as though a piece-worker is paid a certain amount, even if he/she produces more than is reflected in the amount being paid.

The State put into place a formula back in 1980 that still governs how much we can spend. The base amount has been 'allowed' to grow consistent with inflation and population. That's nice in concept, but the costs of providing services to the general public often times increase at rates greater than the increases we're permitted through adjusting for those two metrics. In order to account for that potential, there are two ways we can exceed the formula driven limit. Both require voter approval.

That is the approval that we're asking of you in November.

We are allowed to request a temporary spending increase that is equal to our budgeted expenditures in a given fiscal year. If we are approved for that adjustment, it expires in four years and we have to return to you for subsequent approval. This option is called Home Rule.

We can also ask for a permanent increase in the base. In that case, the formula still adjusts based on population and inflation, but the increase in the base is tweaked to take



### Important Phone Numbers

#### Tucson Police Department

911 or 791-4444  
nonemergency

#### Mayor & Council Comment Line

791-4700

#### Neighborhood Resources

791-4605

#### Park Wise

791-5071

#### Water Issues

791-3242

#### Pima County Animal Control

243-5900

#### Street Maintenance

791-3154

#### Planning and Development Services 791-5550

#### Southwest Gas

889-1888

#### Gas Emergency/ Gas Leaks

889-1888

#### West Nile Virus

#### Hotline

243-7999

#### Environment

#### Service

791-3171

#### Graffiti Removal

792-2489

#### AZ Game & Fish

628-5376

## Continued: A Message From Steve

advantage of it having fallen behind spending needs. This is what you'll be voting on in November. We're asking that the base be increased by \$75M.

This is not a tax increase. This is very simply you telling us that, in order to continue to provide the services we're obligated to provide, you're ok with us using the tax revenue being generated by the private sector successes we've been seeing in the past 3 years. Our current spending limit is within \$25M of our current receipts. With the development we see going vertical, it's clear that we need to begin to talk about either service reductions, or allowing the limit to increase.

Last week I listed off the various development incentives a business can apply for. Just as the budget, compensation, and the pension issues all relate to one another, our economic development progress relates to this Spending Limit issue. Right now in the downtown core alone, we have over \$60M in vertical construction happening. As those projects finish and the businesses are occupied and open for customers, our tax receipts will grow.

There are people who believe that the government should not be nearly as expansive as it is today. That's a group who might vote to leave the extra revenue sitting on the countertop. They're also possibly the first ones to cry foul if Tucson Fire Department response time is too long, if they have to wait longer for plan review to be completed, or if they miss our municipal swimming pools being open for our youth.

And then there are those of us who know how far we've reduced services to you over the past three years due to the downturn in the economy and know how far we've come in terms of projects that will aid in boosting our revenues. Being given the approval to use those revenues to serve the ever growing needs of the community is what the Spending Limit Proposition is geared to achieve.

If you've followed my voting record you know that I'm pretty frugal with your money. I also recognize our Charter-driven responsibilities in terms of service provision to you. I'm going to vote to support the spending limit increase because I see no good purpose to be realized in not taking full advantage of the private sector growth we've worked so hard to achieve. I hope you'll join me in that.

And remember, at 5:30 today, I'll be hosting a Council-on-the-Corner meet/greet at ... located at Speedway and Swan. Come and bring your own thoughts on this issue. I'd love to hear what you have to say.



Sincerely,

Steve Kozachik  
Council Member, Ward 6  
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