



# Committee for No on Measure J

## Revitalization without Taxation

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### Palm Springs City Manager Campaigns for Measure J

In a recent Valley Voice offering in *The Desert Sun* titled "*Don't reject Measure J just because you don't like John Wessman*" the author noted one name, developer John Wessman, is absent from campaign advertising on behalf of Measure J. Actually there are at least two names missing from the roster of Measure J principal players. The other is that of Palm Springs City Manager David Ready. He is the visible presence in city government responsible for taxpayer funding of Measure J supportive campaign propaganda that is being marketed in the City's name.

City Manager David Ready appears to view passage of Measure J as a personal quest and is leading a crusade in its support. Why a city official would become involved in a local ballot measure remains an open question. Is he the official who authored the Measure J sales tax hike concept and views it as "his baby"? If so, that may explain some of the following.

- The City Manager has used taxpayer funds to create and publicize an official city website primarily devoted to campaign propaganda supportive of Measure J.
- The City Manager has used taxpayer funds to produce and publish a four-page supplement in the local paper containing campaign propaganda supportive of Measure J.
- The City Manager has used taxpayer funds for an expensive glossy-paper mailing to Palm Springs residents with campaign propaganda content supportive of Measure J.

City Manager David Ready alleges his propaganda activities supportive of Measure J passage are "educational" and do not represent campaigning. The common theme in his campaign is the City needs revenues from Measure J or its project wish list will not have adequate funding. There is no theme discussing the many disadvantages to Measure J's passage.

The City's campaign website has a back page section that includes reference data from the voter's Sample Ballot and Information Pamphlet. That is the only instance where information in opposition to Measure J appears. That reference does not qualify the website as an independent or unbiased presentation of Measure J and its full impact. The website is but one more example of taxpayer funds used to fund Measure J campaign propaganda.

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Among the many genuine concerns missing from City Manager David Ready's extensive "educational" campaigning are the following.

- A sales tax is regressive and its burden falls most heavily on the low, moderate, and fixed income earner. It is one of the least desirable forms of taxation.
- Sales tax revenues will be pledged to repay approximately \$83 million in new twenty (20) year revenue bonds. Those bonds will adversely affect the City's future borrowing capabilities when funds may be required to meet unforeseen emergencies.
- A twenty-five (25) year sales tax partially used for recurring maintenance costs represents borrowing from the future to fund current needs. It leaves open the question where funds will come from to pay the next round of recurring infrastructure costs.
- Only twenty-four percent (24%) of the sales tax funds will be available for infrastructure needs. Twenty-six percent (26%) will go to developer John Wessman and fifty percent (50%) will be consumed by interest and other borrowing costs.
- The City will need to wait twenty (20) years before it will start receiving all sales tax revenues. Until then only twenty-four (24) cents from every sales tax dollar will have been available for its use.

City Manager David Ready is an employee whose salary and benefits are paid from taxpayer funds. His official position is one of government service to the community. It is not an office that should be involved in local politics. He may be the secret Svengali behind the entire effort; the puppeteer pulling the strings; or the fiddler whose tune causes others to dance. But he should not do so using his official government position and taxpayer funds in support of his campaign quest.

Taxpayers need to send a strong message to City Manager David Ready that use of his office and of public funds in support of Measure J is not acceptable. That message to him can best be delivered by voting NO on Measure J.

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