



Steve Toschi News: St. Helens Needs Smart, Slow Economic Growth. Here's How We Can Do It

St. Helens is facing financial challenges. Our expenses are spiraling out of control. Your debt burden has gone from \$8 million to more than \$40 million in 4 years! What's the solution from the current leadership and my opponent? They want us to pay more by hiking utility costs, and other sneaky forms of taxation. In reality, St. Helens doesn't only have a revenue problem; we have a money management problem. While the current administration wants to blame the budget shortfall on residents, their incompetency is the clear culprit. As one citizen put it, "They are spending our money like drunken sailors!"

This city is going through a growth spurt. St. Helens' population jumped nearly 12% in the last decade. That's more than **ten times** the average city! Our community's expansion has brought equal amounts of excitement and challenges. As someone who moved here from out of state, I've seen firsthand how this city draws people in, and how welcoming the community is. But, locals shouldn't have to shoulder the financial burden that comes with growth.

The cost of living is skyrocketing. Prices of essentials such as housing, groceries, and energy are getting out of hand. Our most vulnerable neighbors are being crushed under the weight of rising expenses. St. Helens' leadership turns a blind eye to these concerns and unapologetically tries to raise taxes on an already financially burdened population. Instead of owning up to their failures, they expect us to pay the price.

To make matters worse, the reigning administration is blocking local growth at every possible angle, rather than kickstarting St. Helens' economic engine. They're stifling crucial infrastructure development with unnecessary, time-consuming, and expensive red tape. At the same time, they're blowing the city's hard-earned tax dollars with dangerous mistakes, like planning a million-dollar state-of-the-art police headquarters on a flood plain. Catering to special interests and personal conflicts of interest is killing us. My opponent fails to address her financial conflicts of interest. I'm planning to move our community forward.

This one-two gut punch of restricting St. Helens' economic potential and wasting its resources is constricting locals financially. Here's the thing: we have everything we need to fund our future without squeezing another dime from hardworking residents. What we lack is the leadership and vision to make it happen. That's one of the main reasons I'm running for Mayor – to put St. Helens on a path to financial success on our own terms.

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My economic plan is simple, yet effective: A key element of which is to tap into the economic potential of the riverfront to increase the taxpayer base. Residents have been pleading with the city for decades to do something with this publicly owned land. Nobody knows how much their inaction has cost us. By unlocking the St. Helens riverfront, we'll tap into the most valuable asset we have. The potential of the prime real estate is enormous.

The valuable property will naturally attract valuable, long-term commercial and private investments. This would automatically increase St. Helens' tax base without unfairly burdening local residents. That means NO tax increases for the existing population. We shouldn't (and don't have to) be penalized for being a place where people love to move. We can grow our economy, keep taxes low, and preserve everything that makes St. Helens special. We need a Mayor who has professional experience to attract the right developers. Saying things like "we don't need people who aren't from here" is hardly the way to make investors feel welcome.

I'm running for mayor because, I too, am tired of paying for the incompetence of our current administration. St. Helens has everything it needs to achieve smart, slow growth. With competent leadership, we can transform population growth into an asset instead of a burden. All the while, we'll preserve our local values and everything about our home that we love. Please consider [volunteering](#) or [donating](#) to my campaign to put our city on the path to financial vitality.

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