

Salida says they want affordable housing. Their actions say otherwise. Instead of facilitating construction, Salida punishes builders with enormous fees while enforcing moratoriums. How does this create affordable housing? It doesn't.

Not content, Council sought and rabidly defended the highest STR tax in Colorado, deterring visitors and damaging our economy. Lost wages harmed the same workers council claims to help. These tax payments fill their discretionary housing fund.

Royal tribute is commanded before developing property in Salida, including land donation, in-lieu-of cash payments, and/or taking a loss by building a prescribed percentage of "deed restricted" or other affordable housing. These policies each increase overall housing costs.

More recently, Council determined private developers are failing them, and decided to moonlight as land developers using our money.

But funds are scarce. Enter the broad powers of council, who seamlessly swap their multiple hats to generate cash to fulfill their land developer lust.

Using their Salida Council hat, they enacted stringent inclusionary housing requirements. In almost all cases, if anyone builds, Salida or their NGO surrogates get paid.

Using their Wastewater Board hat, council enacted a moratorium on building in Poncha while demanding new Poncha homes pay taps fees double that of Salida. Would this extorted money ever be used on the new trunk line, or instead funneled to finance Salida's priority, South Ark?

Salida will never perform a full accounting, but the NRCDC cost the Salida taxpayer millions. Officials abused their powers, and now it is happening again. Heed the cautionary tale!

And why aren't local housing advocates speaking out on the Poncha lawsuit? Dirty little secret: CHA, CHT and BETCH are not in the "housing" business. They are in the "collect money for housing" business. The primary objective of bureaucracies is their own survival and prosperity, aka securing funding. NGO funding comes from government grants, inclusionary housing money, and lands forcibly "donated" by developers. Therefore, challenging government policy, even terrible policy, is not something CHA, CHT or BETCH are willing to do. They stand mute, afraid to bite the hand that feeds them.

To compound their mistakes, Council actions demonstrate their belief that once housing money is allocated, their work is done. Who tracks how effectively this

money is spent? Certainly not Salida. My pleas to review NGO financials to ensure accountability before more tax money giveaways have fallen on deaf ears.

The system, like our leadership, is failing all of us.

Vince Phillips