MINUTES OF THE HELPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.
in the Council Chambers
19 South Main Street
Helper, Utah 84526

ATTENDANCE:
Mayor Lenise Peterman

Council Members:
David Dornan
Robert Olson
John Serfustini
Cole Stapley
Edward Chavez

City Staff:
City Recorder: Zack Tonc
Police Chief: Sean Draper
Police Officers:
Public Works Co-Director:
DJ Romero
City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes
Deputy Recorder: Shaley Vasquez

Citizens:
Roman Vega, Jean Boyack, Charlene Burnham, Gary Burnham, Amanda Mcintosh, Cindy Nielsen, Jason Wenger, Aidra Mortensen, Meranda Saccomano, Kevin Sacco, Mike Parry, Kathy Parry, Bryant Hansen, Beth Mecham, Jerry Mecham, Monica Hansen, Hollie Stapley, Michelle O, Blayke Noyes, Jordan Noyes, Michelle Fidell, K. Royster, Angel Otero, Malarie DeVincent, Gary DeVincent, Mark Montoya, Peggy Callahan, Mark Callahan, Gina Hay, Jenifer Douros, Felicia Garcia-Otero, Richard Pasmann

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public Comments were made by the following.
- Matt Montoya
- Anne Jespersen
- Jean Boyack
- Malare DeVincent
- Michelle Goldsmith
- Mike Perry
- Angel Otero

Exhibit A – Public Comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 1, 2024 MEETING.

Board Member Chavez requested the correction of his name. There were no other corrections.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve the minutes from the August 1, 2024 meeting with correction. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF POLICE CHIEF.

Sean Draper was recommended by Mayor Peterman to be appointed Helper City's Police Chief.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve appointing Sean Draper as Helper City's Police Chief. Council Member Stapley seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

PROCLAMATION TO MAKE SEPTEMBER SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH. – AMANDA MCINTOSH

Mayor Peterman read a proclamation and proclaimed September as Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month.

Amanda McIntosh introduced herself to the council, she oversees The Hope Squad of Carbon, Emery, and Grand Counties. Amanda McIntosh further explained the upcoming events and timelines for September Suicide Prevention and Awareness.

Exhibit B – Proclamation.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT FOR HELPER MIDDLE SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY RACE. – JODI STOWE

Mayor Peterman explained to the Council the plans of blocking Main Street, times, and parking for the event.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve appointing Trinity Kerby to the Main Street board. Council Member Dornan seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LOCAL AREA CONSENT AND CLOSING PARKING SPOTS FOR HELPER PROJECTS FUNDRAISER. – MICHELE SULLEY

Cathleen informs Council that on October 5th Helper Projects will be holding its annual fundraiser. This summer college scholarships were given to 26 students and are re-building the basketball court on the south side of town. Also, the event may need closing parking spots in front of the venue.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve local area consent and closing parking spots for the Helper Projects Fundraiser. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LOCAL AREA CONSENT FOR ST. ANTHONY'S CARNIVAL ON NOVEMBER 7, 8, AND 9, 2024. – HOLLIE STAPLEY

Council Member Dornan stated this has been a continuously successful event for years.

Council Member Dornan moved to approve appointing Trinity Kerby to the Main Street board. Council Member Chavez seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent	Recused
Dornan	X			
Olson	X			
Serfustini	X			
Stapley				X
Chavez	X			
Motion passed				

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO CLOSE MAIN ST. FRIDAY OCT. 4, 2024.

Mayor Peterman informs the Council the event is the traditional First Friday, an "All things Harry Potter" event. Council Member Dornan said it has always had a great turnout in the past.

Council Member Dornan moved to closing Main Street, on Friday, October 4, 2024. Council Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A 20-MINUTE UNLOADING ZONE AT THE CORNER OF MAIN STREET AND IVY STREET, AND A NEW ADA PARKING SPOT ON MAIN STREET. – MALARIE DEVINCENT

There was a lengthy discussion and PowerPoint explanation for a 20-minute unloading zone, and a new ADA parking spot on Main Street.

Exhibit C – Presentation.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve a 15-minute unloading zone at the corner of Main Street and Ivy Street, and a new ADA parking spot on the Main Street. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION ON PETITION BY PROPERTY OWNERS AROUND THE MAIN HELPER CITY PARK. – GARY BURNHAM

Gary Burnham presented a petition and photos to the Council. There was a lengthy discussion on the concern of himself and neighbors in his community about the decline in the upkeep of residential properties.

Exhibit D – Petition and Photos.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO SURPLUS THE PUBLIC WORKS 1996 CHEVROLET TRUCK.

Public Works Co-director DJ Romero informs Council that one of their trucks had been taken to the mechanic for a break change and was told there were multiple other issues needing to be addressed on the truck estimating around $3000. The mechanics suggest that the truck be totaled out. They can not guarantee that fixing the truck will work, and more repairs will be needed to maintain the truck.

Council Member Chavez moved to approve to surplus of the Public Works 1996 Chevrolet truck. Council Member Dornan seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF PURCHASING A SNOW PLOW AND SALTER IN THE AMOUNT OF 19,000.

The Public Works Co-Director informs Council that with surplusing the 1996 Chevrolet they will be losing a snow plow and salter truck for the winter storm season.

Mayor Peterman asked if the right truck was verified because a salter can not be placed on a water truck. Also if it has already been budgeted. Board Member Stapley answered Mayor Peterman that it had not been budgeted and would need to be found in the budget and Public Works was hoping that they could repair the previous truck that is being surplused.

Council Member Dornan moved to approve purchasing a snow plow and salter in the amount of $19000. Council Member Stapley seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2024-10 A RESOLUTION AMENDING HELPER CITY'S ELECTRIC FEES BY INCREASING THE MINIMUM BASE CHARGE FOR METER BASES.

Discussion tabled.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2024-01 AN ORDINANCE INCREASING THE FEES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL WATER USE.

Discussion tabled.

CLOSED SESSION.

Council Member Doran moved to a closed session for a personal discussion. Council Member Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		

Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

Council Member Chavez moved to leave the closed session. Council Member Dornan seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Council Member Chavez moved to adjourn. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

Council Member	Yes	No	Absent
Dornan	X		
Olson	X		
Serfustini	X		
Stapley	X		
Chavez	X		
Motion passed			

I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Helper City Council meeting held on Thursday, September 5th, 2024.

Lenise Peterman
Mayor

Zack Tonc
City Recorder

Approved on October 3rd, 2024

Exhibit A

Gmail

Zack Tonc <ztonc@helpercity.net>

Unloading Zone

Fire Chief <firechief@helpercity.net> Thu, Sep 5, 2024 at 12:35 PM
To: Zack Tonc <ztonc@helpercity.net>
Cc: Malarie DeVincent <malariedevincent@gmail.com>

Zack, I understand there is talk about an unloading zone at the corner of Ivy and Main. I am in favor of this zone as it will be more designated when we respond to medical emergencies at the Avalon. We already use the space for ambulance parking but its not always available. However designating a unloading zone will make the space more available if we need it.
I don't feel its necessary to designate as a fire lane.

Matt Montoya
Fire Chief
Helper City Fire Department
Office: 435-472-3572
Cell: 435-650-6308

Gmail

Zack Tonc <ztonc@helpercity.net>

An unloading Zone for South Main Street

1 message

Anne Morgan-Jespersen <anne@amjworks.com> Wed, Sep 4, 2024 at 4:46 PM
To: Zack Tonc <ztonc@helpercity.net>

I wanted to write the council in support of the request for an unloading zone in front of the newly renovated New House Hotel. We all know that parking is a premium in Helper and it is important to utilize each space with thoughtful purpose.

The fact that the existing handicapped space can be re-located and the fact that a new unloading space can facilitate UPS and FED EX deliveries for businesses and residences on the South end of main street, makes the request even more sensible.

Thank you for considering my input.

Anne Morgan-Jespersen

Helper City
Citizen Public Comment Form

Comments Only

Name: Jean Bryant

Date: _____

Address: _____

I wish to address the Council during public comments regarding:

Thank You to Public Works

Note: This form must be filled out and handed to the city recorder before the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. All citizens attending Council Meetings will be expected to respect the rights of others by refraining from any open display of support or opposition to the remarks of any speaker, or open demonstration thereof. Anyone not complying with these rules of procedure may be asked to leave the meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules listed above.

Jean Bryant

Signature (This form is not complete unless signed)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Helper City
Citizen Public Comment Form
Comments Only

Name: Malarie Dennent
Date: 9/5/24
Address: 455 Anton Ave H.C.

I wish to address the Council during public comments regarding:
Rate increases

Note: This form must be filled out and handed to the city recorder before the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. All citizens attending Council Meetings will be expected to respect the rights of others by refraining from any open display of support or opposition to the remarks of any speaker, or open demonstration thereof. Anyone not complying with these rules of procedure may be asked to leave the meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules listed above.

Malarie Dennent
Signature (This form is not complete unless signed)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Helper City
Citizen Public Comment Form

Comments Only

Name: Michelle Goldsmith

Date: 9/5/2024

Address: _____

I wish to address the Council during public comments regarding:

Playground
"Trail"
farmers Market
Yards

Note: This form must be filled out and handed to the city recorder before the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. All citizens attending Council Meetings will be expected to respect the rights of others by refraining from any open display of support or opposition to the remarks of any speaker, or open demonstration thereof. Anyone not complying with these rules of procedure may be asked to leave the meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules listed above.

_____

Signature (This form is not complete unless signed)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Helper City
Citizen Public Comment Form

Comments Only

Name: Mike Parry

Date: 9-5-2024

Address: 110 W 300 No Helper

I wish to address the Council during public comments regarding:

Assignment of Chief of Police

Note: This form must be filled out and handed to the city recorder before the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. All citizens attending Council Meetings will be expected to respect the rights of others by refraining from any open display of support or opposition to the remarks of any speaker, or open demonstration thereof. Anyone not complying with these rules of procedure may be asked to leave the meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules listed above.

Mike Parry

Signature (This form is not complete unless signed)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Helper City
Citizen Public Comment Form

Comments Only

Name: ANGEL OTERO

Date: 9/5/24

Address: 295 S 200 E HELPER

I wish to address the Council during public comments regarding:

PATH CUT INTO SPRING GLEN CANAL FROM 300 E CAUSING TRAFFIC AND DUMPING ON OUR PRIVATE PROPERTY

Note: This form must be filled out and handed to the city recorder before the beginning of the meeting. Comments are limited to 2 minutes. All citizens attending Council Meetings will be expected to respect the rights of others by refraining from any open display of support or opposition to the remarks of any speaker, or open demonstration thereof. Anyone not complying with these rules of procedure may be asked to leave the meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules listed above.

Signature (This form is not complete unless signed)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Exhibit B

Proclamation

A PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF HELPER CITY PROCLAIMING SEPTEMBER 2024 TO BE

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, the state of Utah has consistently been in the top ten states for suicide deaths since 2012 (currently 9th in the nation); and

WHEREAS, Carbon, Emery, and Grand Counties often lead the state of Utah in suicide deaths per capita; and

WHEREAS, people who lose a loved one to suicide are at a 30% higher risk of ending their lives to suicide as a learned coping mechanism and learned behaviors, and

WHEREAS, the risk of suicide can be reduced through awareness, training, proper educational resources, and treatment; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's statistics, suicide is the **second** leading cause of death amongst Utahans ages 10-24, the **second** leading cause of death amongst ages 25-34, **second** for ages 35-44, **fifth** for ages 45-54, **ninth** for ages 55-64, and **eighteenth for** ages 65 and older, and

WHEREAS suicide affects everyone, suicide is everyone's business, and suicide is one of the most preventable deaths that can be avoided by: 1. learning the warning signs of depression and suicidal ideation, 2. knowing how and when to ask about one's suicidal thoughts, 3. being aware of life-saving measures, and 4. familiarizing ourselves with the resources available locally such as Four Corners Community Behavioral Health and state-wide such as Live On Utah and nationwide such as calling or texting 988 - the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Helper City Mayor Lenise Peterman, on this 5th day of September 2024, do hereby proclaim September 2024 to be

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH

in Helper City and encourage all residents of Helper City to recognize how serious suicide is and the steps each of us can take to protect those around us from this preventable tragedy; one with devastation generational and community-wide effects.

Lenise Peterman, Mayor

ATTEST:

Zack Tonc, City Recorder

Exhibit C

Unloading Zone Request

Main Street and Ivy

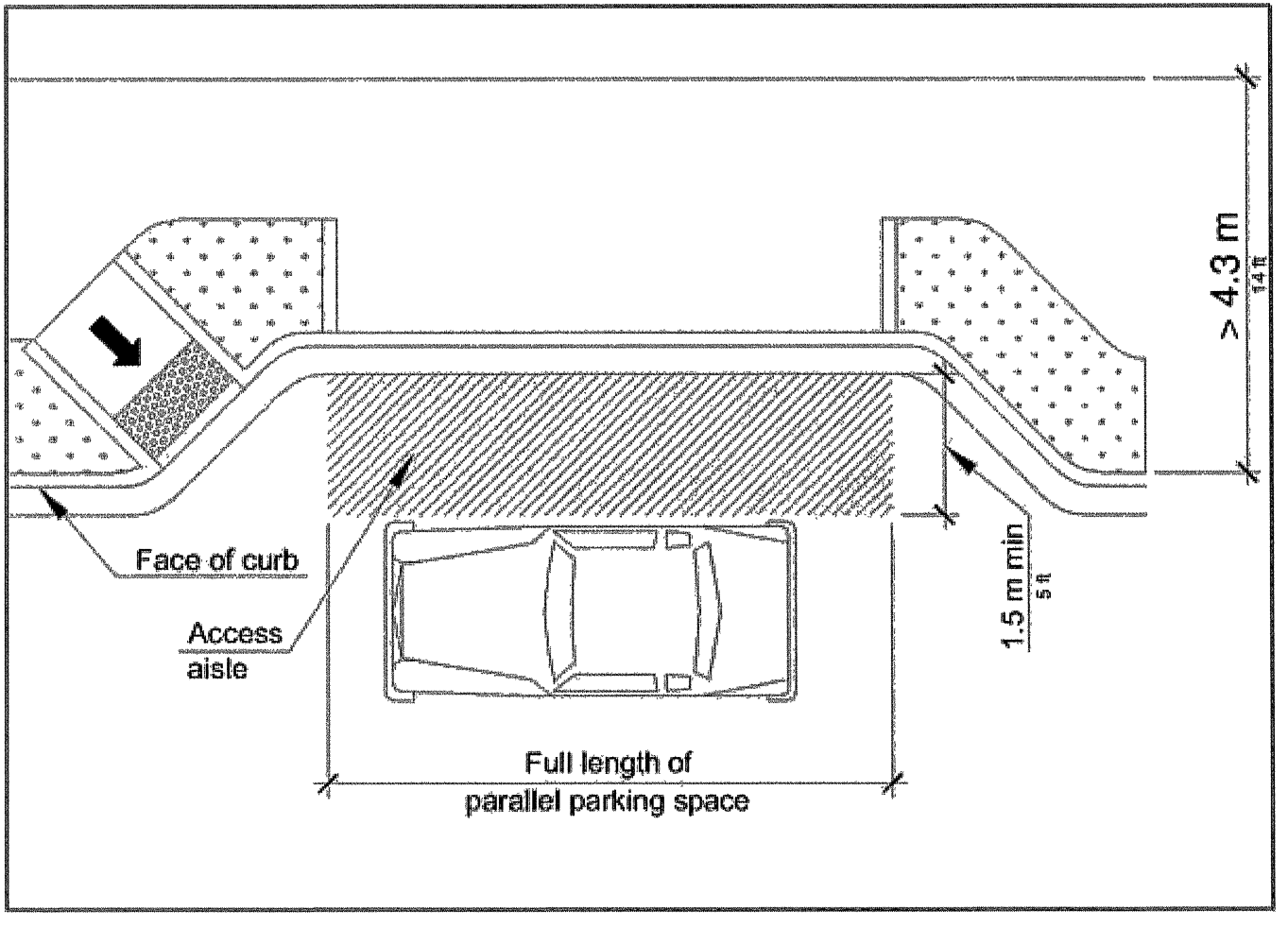
We are requesting that the parallel parking spot on the corner of Main Street and Ivy be turned into an unloading zone. The current stall has been used as an ADA spot, however, it does not meet the requirements as an ADA stall. Having an unloading zone here will serve several purposes. Delivery trucks can use the space instead of blocking Main Street. Emergency services that frequent this end of the block can utilize the space. All of the businesses in the area can utilize the space for unloading. As well as the guests of our hotel, event space, and gift shop. We would be happy to donate to the city in way of paying someone to paint the curb in an appealing aesthetic that matches the historic district- to say "unloading zone" with the time frame determined by the city council. Planning and Zoning voted unanimously for a positive recommendation for this change at the previous meeting. We would recommend mirroring the east side of the street where an ADA spot with an access aisle is adjacent to the traffic calmer. Creating a new space on the west side of the street adjacent to that traffic calmer to ensure that sufficient ADA parking stalls are available. There are a few more ADA spaces that could be created that were recommended in the Walkability Access Study conducted in 2022 as well.



Parallel spot in On corner of Main Street and Ivy, acted as an ADA spot however it does not meet the requirements as one. It does not have enough room for an access aisle.



Parallel spot in On corner of Main Street and Ivy, acted as an ADA spot however it does not meet the requirements as one. Does not have enough room for an access aisle.



ADA requirements for parallel parking spaces

Total Width: All accessible parking spaces must be a total of 16 feet wide 8 feet wide for the car and 8 feet wide for the access aisle.

Access Aisle must be at least 60 inches wide and extend the full length of the parking space

Slope can not exceed 2.08%

Surface must have firm non slip surface.

Marking: The parking space should be marked with the international symbol of accessibility both on the pavement and with a sign on a pole.

HELPER CITY, UTAH
WALKABILITY STUDY 2022
100 WEST SIDEWALK
IVY STREET TO
HILL STREET
HILL STREET
100 WEST
MAIN STREET
Newhouse
Hotel
Riverwalk Trail
IVY STREET
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS REQ'D
200 SQ FT OF CONCRETE REMOVAL REQ'D
360 LIN. FT OF 5' SIDEWALK REQ'D
35 LIN. FT OF SAWCUTTING REQ'D
200 SQ FT OF 6-INCH CONCRETE FLATWORK REQ'D
SLOPE TO MATCH EXISTING DRIVEWAY REQ'D
50 LIN. FT OF 5' SIDEWALK REQ'D
600 SQ FT OF CONCRETE REMOVAL REQ'D
50 LIN. FT OF 5' SIDEWALK REQ'D
7,050 SQ FT OF ASPHALT REMOVAL REQ'D
135 CU YDS OF EXCAVATION REQ'D
PAVEMENT MARKING PAINT
4,850 SQ FT OF 3-INCH HMA
115 LIN. FT OF ADA CONCRETE RAMP AND HANDRAIL REQ'D
450 SQ FT OF 6-INCH CONCRETE FLATWORK REQ'D
25 LIN. FT OF 5' SIDEWALK REQ'D
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS REQ'D
PAVEMENT MARKING PAINT REQ'D
EXISTING CONCRETE WATERWAY TO REMAIN
150 LIN. FT OF SAWCUTTING REQ'D
150 LIN. FT 3' CONCRETE WATERWAY REQ'D
RAISE MANHOLE REQ'D
1000 SQ FT OF 6-INCH CONCRETE FLATWORK REQ'D
ADA SIGN, POST AND BASE REQ'D
New ADA Spot
New ADA Spot
New ADA Spot
New ADA Spot
Traffic Calmer
crosswalk
Unloading zone
50
25
0
50
SHEET NO.
DESIGNED JJ 7-22
DRAWN MLB 7-22
CHECKED JJ 7-22
SURVEYED
CHECKED
PROJECT No.
Helper Walkability Study
Helper Main Street Flatwork Repair Walkability Study 2022
CHECKED JJ 7-22
P.O. Box 467 Cassie Dale, UT 84513
(435) 381-2523 Fax (435) 381-2522 e-mail jj@jbrx.net



East side of Main Street and Depot


THE AVALON HOUSE
AVALON



2016



2016


HANDY HART

STREET





Strategic Plan:

Chapter 1 Introductions: Work with private land owners on property improvements.Encourage property improvements on public and private properties.
-Engage Property Management and Development entities with possible development opportunities within the community.

Chapter 2 Land Use: Promote Redevelopment of abandoned and empty buildings.

Chapter 3 Transportation: Address parking concerns on Main Street

Chapter 4 Economic Development
-Economic Development is a vital part of the growth and prosperity of Helper City. The City is eager to promote economic activity throughout the community. Helper is a development friendly community that seeks to promote growth in the manufacturing, commercial and residential development industries.

-Encourage tourism in Helper and throughout Carbon County

-Encourage the development and redevelopment opportunities within Helper.

Exhibit D

Helper City Park Area Property Owners Petition for Properties Needing to Be Cleaned Up.

Name	Address	Phone No.
Gary Burnham	515 Cedar St	
Charlene Burnham	515 Cedar St.	
GLORIA YBARRA	108 S. 200 E	
Janis Fausett	122 So 200 E	
Scott Fausett	122 So. 200 E	
A/ Hughes	235 S 200 E	
L Giordano	273 1/2 S 2nd East	
M Haycock	435 630-4360 535 3a	
Lena J. Bergren	153 S 2nd East	
Leada Lee	30 S 200 E	
Michelle Goldsmith	235 S 2nd E	
Bob Campbell	80 S. 2nd E	
Sheila Hayes	138 So 200 E	

SUPPLYHOUSE TIMES
www.supplyht.com/articles/89868-adams-on-pvfsupply-the-broken-windows-theory

ADAMS ON PVFSUPPLY: The "Broken Windows" Theory

Joan Adams
July 1, 2006



In the early 1990s, Rudy Giuliani, then the newly elected Mayor of New York City, set out to prove that New York City - a city which for years had been assumed to be too big, too unruly, too diverse, too broke to be managed - was in fact, manageable. He had read a seminal article by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling (written in 1982), called "Broken Windows." Duly impressed with the concepts elucidated in the article, Rudy was the first big city mayor to put the theory into action.

The "Broken Windows" thesis posits that something as simple as a building with a broken window signals abandonment, a lax attitude toward property, and therefore an absence of respect for the law. The "broken window" is the first step in a neighborhood's slow decline and deterioration. In the neighborhood, over time, other evidence of decay would show up - for example: more broken windows, trash accumulation, graffiti and abandoned cars. The change is slow and for a time, imperceptible to the people who live in the neighborhood. The theory states that left unrepaired, the broken window slowly but surely turns into many broken windows. Pretty soon, this obviously abandoned building attracts people who have taken to hanging out there. Panhandling, prostitution, drug dealing - all become part of the regular activities in front of the building which then spreads out into the neighborhood. People who live in the area start to feel vulnerable and begin to withdraw. They become less willing to intervene to maintain public order (for example, they are afraid to break up the groups of toughs loitering on the stoop) or address physical signs of deterioration.

Sensing the withdrawal, the dealers, panhandlers, prostitutes and petty criminals become bolder and intensify their harassment and vandalism. Residents become yet more fearful and withdraw further from community involvement and upkeep. This atmosphere now attracts new offenders from outside the area, who sense that the neighborhood is a less risky site for crime. The cycle that started with one broken window has spiraled down, resulting in a broken neighborhood.

Following the lessons from "Broken Windows," Willie Bratton, the chief of police at the time, aggressively went after the graffiti artists, subway turnstile jumpers, panhandlers, loiterers, etc. The homeless were required to stay in shelters, graffiti was removed within 24 hours and yes, broken windows were identified and repaired. In the beginning, he took a lot of flak for going after the so-called "petty" criminals. The general sentiment was, "Who cares about panhandlers, hookers, graffitists? They don't hurt anyone." Wrong! The reality was and is - they do hurt people. They can take down entire neighborhoods.

People will break windows every day - if you let them

Most of us are capable of being "good" when nudged in that direction and by the same token, most of us are capable of being "bad" when no one seems to care. Much like the criminals of New York City, we take our cues from the society around us. If everyone is driving 10 to 15 miles over the speed limit, we have no problem speeding. People don't litter in a museum. Somehow they "know" this is not acceptable (the cue being there is no litter on the floor). But those very same people will litter without a second thought at the ballpark (there's already trash everywhere, so what's another piece matter?). In many cases, these aren't conscious decisions. We are simply reacting to our surrounding environment.

Letting the small infractions slip by with no consequences creates an atmosphere that encourages people into believing that those small infractions aren't a big deal. Pretty soon, bigger infractions are committed and these too are not considered to be a big deal. "Broken Windows" suggests that stopping the little things will prevent the escalation, the acceptance of bigger and bigger infractions.

(In 1994, at the beginning of the Giuliani administration, 2,801 murders were committed. In 2003, nine years later, 537 murders were committed in NYC, the lowest murder rate since 1963.)

"Broken Windows" can happen to your company

The "Broken Windows" syndrome happens in companies, too. Minor infractions, such as coming in late, dressing sloppily, and letting the work area become a mess, signal a lack of respect for the work place.

I have seen many warehouses that are just dumps. When I make any reference to the nasty conditions, often all I get is a shrug and "Yeah, I know, but you know guys - that's just how they are." That's how they are because you have let them get away with it. Your tolerance says, "Do whatever you want, I don't care, I am not going to stop you and there will be no consequences." Yet, these same managers are furious when workers trash equipment or damage material. And they are downright shocked when they find out that illegal activities are being conducted right there - in the warehouse.

The same goes for company vehicles. These are expensive assets that are frequently driven into the ground - and no one seems to care. Drivers aren't expected to perform simple maintenance.

Other bad behaviors such as showing up late, leaving early or racking up unnecessary overtime occur and there is no comment. Can anyone possibly be surprised that things are bad and getting worse? Over time, discipline and general good behavior are deteriorating. Those who used to care have withdrawn. Those who don't care are encouraged to care even less by the absence of consequences.

Companies are small, self-contained entities compared to New York City. You can take back control - and understanding the subtle messages that tolerating bad behavior is sending to your employees plays an important role in changing company culture.

Set the rules - keep the rules

In the beginning, your people will be surprised. They will want to know why things that used to be acceptable are suddenly punishable offences. Many will find the new zero tolerance policy arbitrary, over the top and extremely unfair. (Others, those who used to care, will quietly applaud these changes.) Don't be dissuaded. If some folks are unhappy, you are probably on the right track.

You should begin by setting down the rules for behavior in your company. Dress codes, responsibilities, warehouse cleanliness and vehicle maintenance should all be written down and distributed. The rules must be proactively broadcast to the entire company. No rule should be a surprise to anyone. And then adhere to the rules scrupulously, by which I mean, make the rules apply to everybody, every day. You can't tell the warehouse guys they must punch in at least five minutes before shift and then let your favorite sales guy roll in 30 to 45 minutes late on a regular basis. Similarly, you can't blow off the rules some days, because "we got busy." The rules are non-negotiable. They are part of everyone's job and responsibility - favorite sales guy or not - insanely busy day or not.

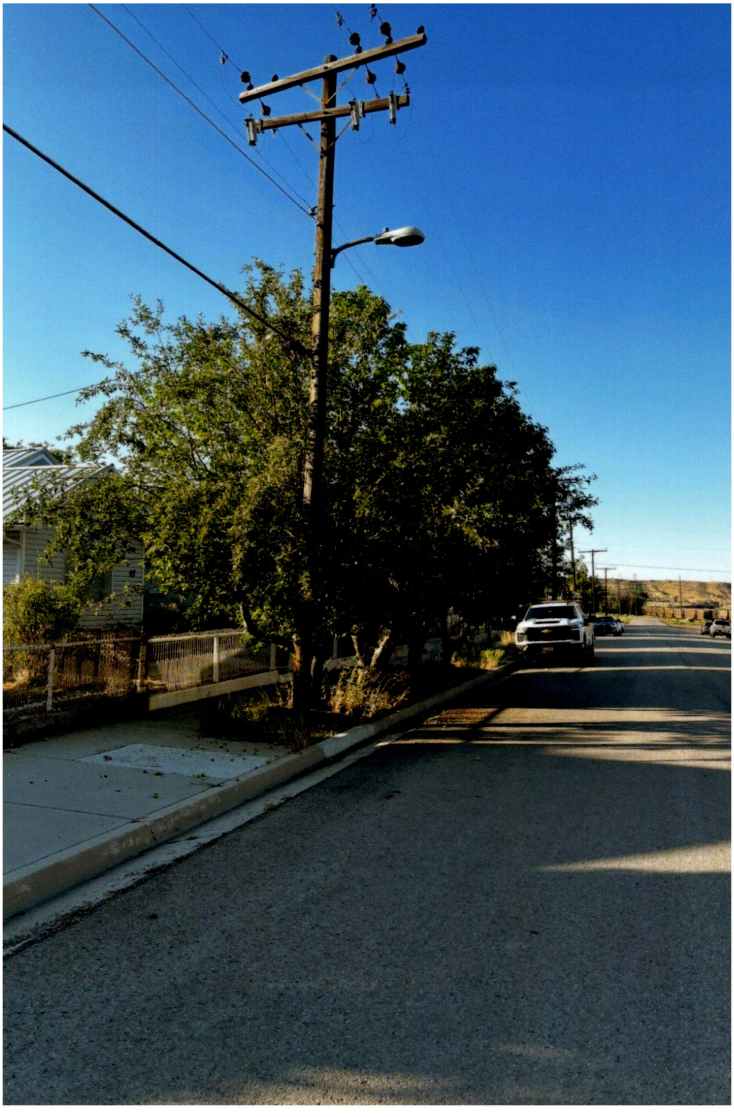
Learn from the lessons of "Broken Windows." Start sweating the small stuff now and I promise you that in the future, you will have a whole lot less big stuff to worry about.

Links

- Joan Adams

Joan S. Adams has consulted for industrial clients for more than 15 years. She headed DITT, the consultancy arm of the French National Utility, Electricité de France, and was a managing consultant at A.T. Kearney. Later, she started Pierian, a consultancy that brings sustained and measurable success through operational excellence, customer focus, and competitive market strategy. Joan Adams speaks French and Spanish. She has worked on projects in Europe, Central America, Africa, Asia as well as North America. She has engineering degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and MIT. She also has an MBA from the Wharton School. She can be reached at adams@pierian.net.

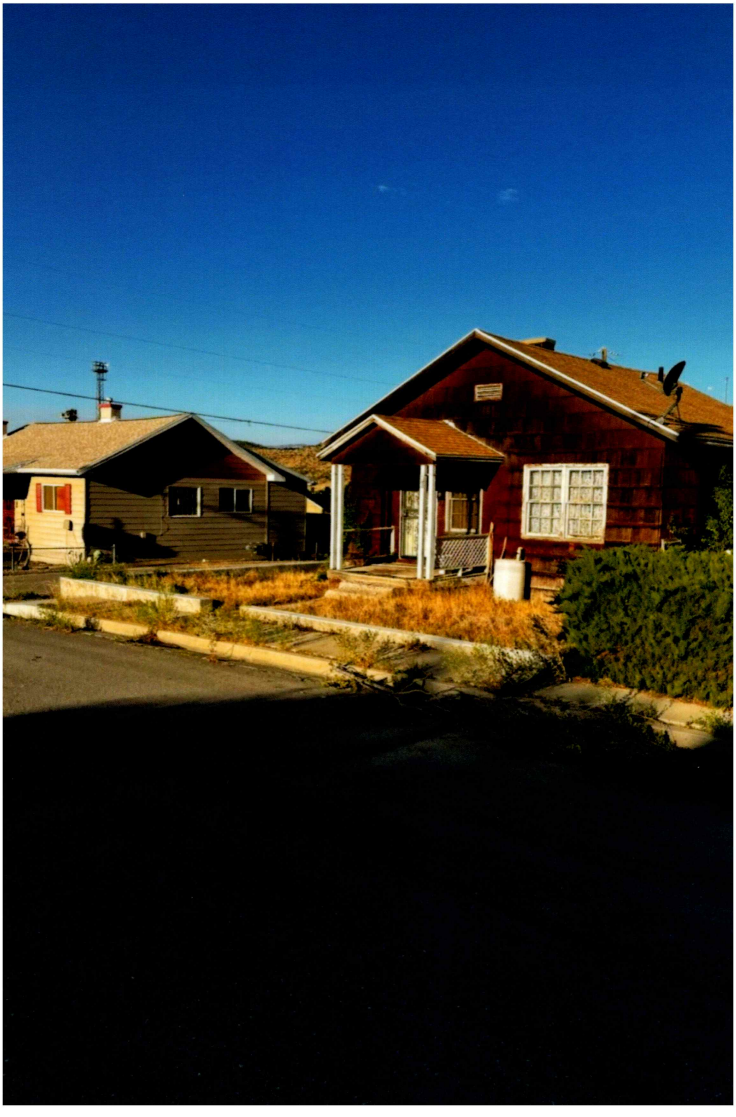




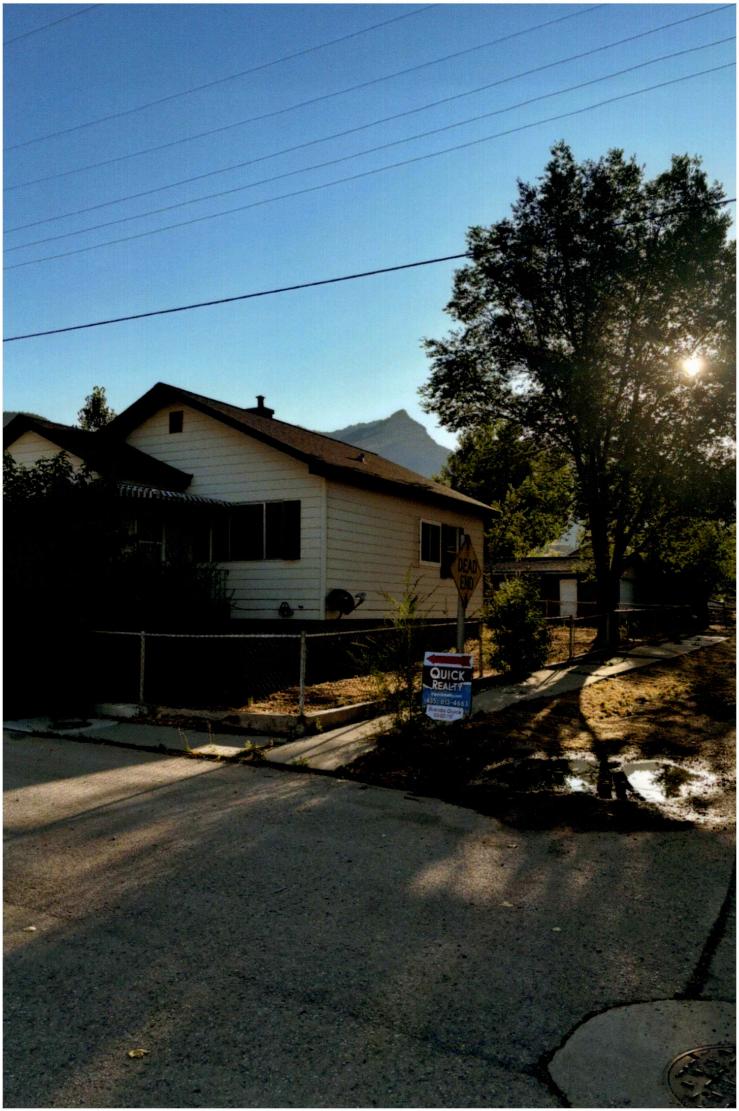


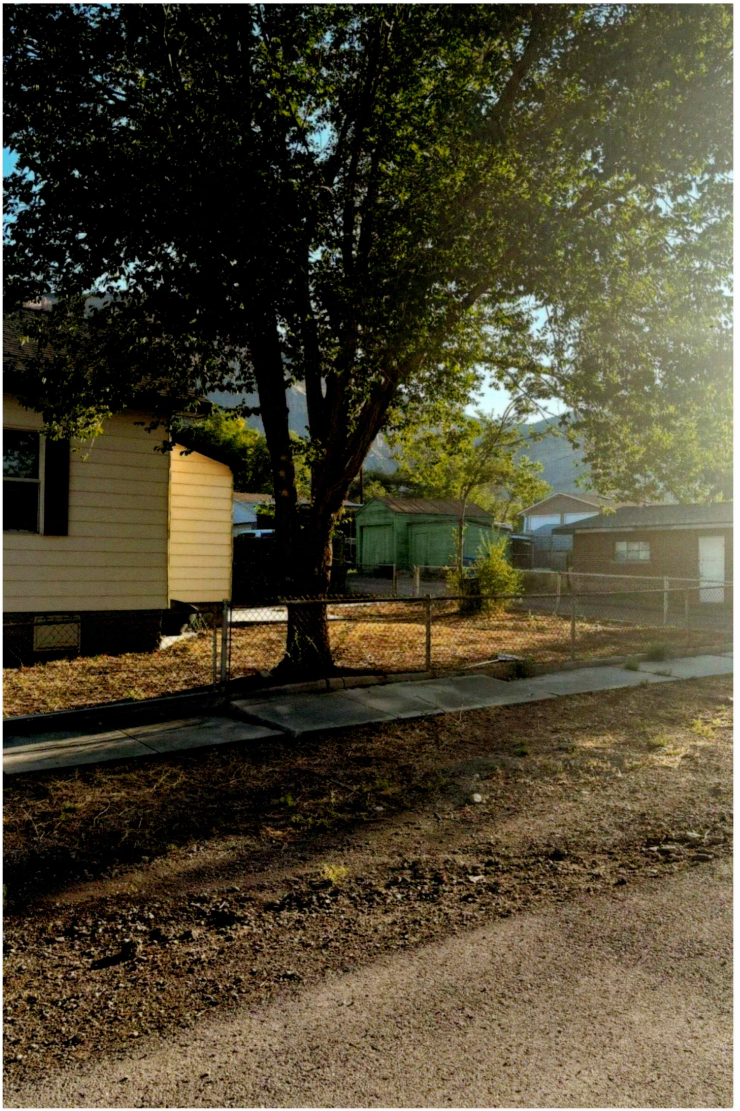

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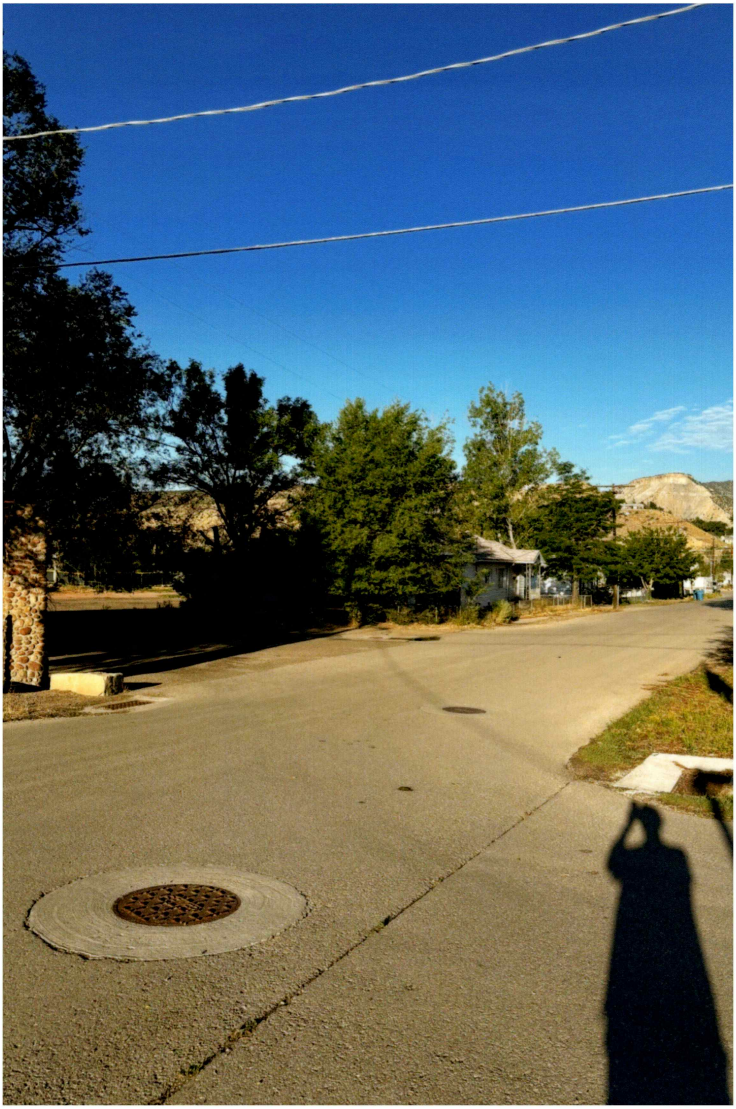

DEAD END
QUICK
REALTY
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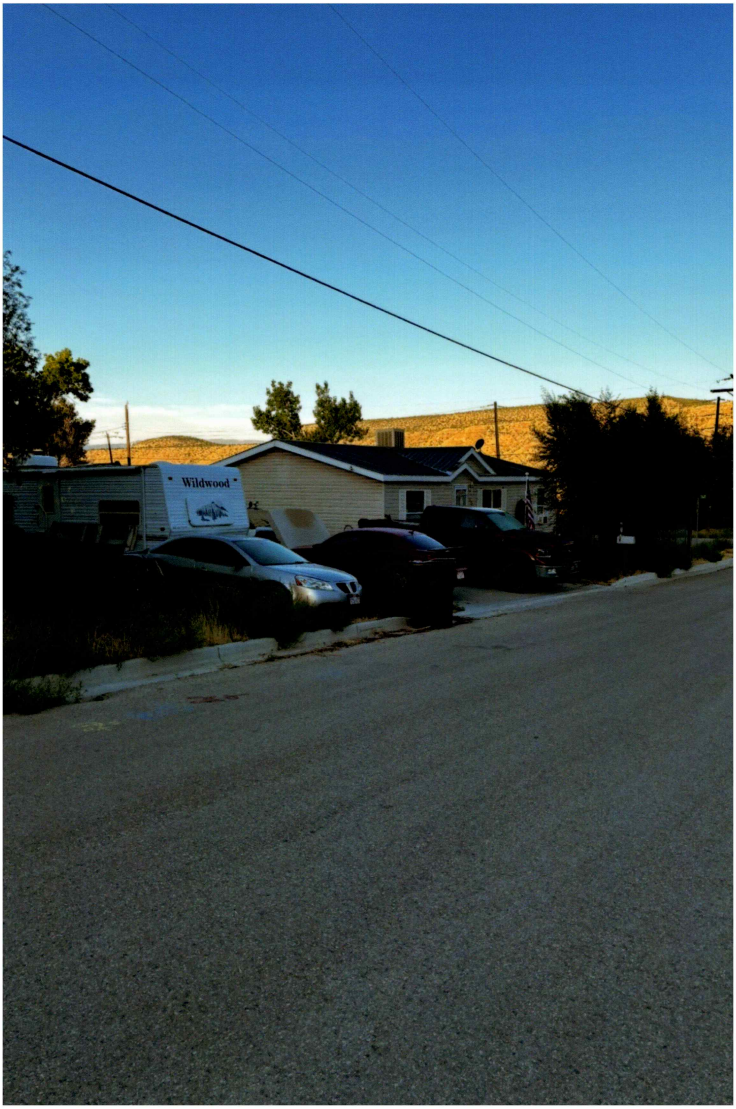











Wildwood

