

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

It's great to see you all, and thanks for all the great work you've been doing. I don't think anyone had any idea just how much would land on your plate right off the bat, but I'm grateful that you're demonstrating being up to the task.

I'm also grateful to Nicci McNeff for her efforts to address communication issues in our city, but I wanted to share a different viewpoint tonight.

I don't think the heart of the communication problem involves worrying about getting all the information out to all the citizens. A lot of people truly don't care and they're fine.

The problem is that the information a lot of people want and need is not being put out there and finding it is both difficult and time consuming. Here's where I believe the real problems lie and how they could easily be addressed:

–**Earlier Agenda Postings:** When something controversial comes up, people don't have much time to talk to their neighbors about it or contact others they know might be affected, because the meeting agendas are posted just before the weekend, only a few days before meetings (or sometimes even the day before...). To restore public trust, agenda postings need to be made earlier.

–**Better Public Notices:** When public notices are required, it's often really difficult to determine what's being considered and whether it deserves attention. "We're considering a change" with no details of what the change actually is isn't very helpful. If public notices were worded so that it was easy to see what was going on and why (with maps—when applicable—that would make it easy for residents to know where things were happening), many resident concerns would be alleviated.

–**Reaching Out with Meeting Summaries:** Some of the Council Members and a past Planning Commission Member have been great at posting meeting summaries on social media that have been extremely valuable and welcomed by residents. These summaries have already done a lot to ease the disconnect many residents have felt in the past. Thanks to all those who have made these important efforts! And if each council member would post their own interpretation on the city's social media or wherever they choose so that people could come to look for it, that would be even better.

–**Devote Some Newsletter Space to What's Been Happening/Coming Up in the Council:** The Mayor has done a great job moving in this direction, giving a deeper look into what's ahead for the city. But there could also be sort of a "Council Corner" section, where meeting summaries could be made, along with notes on dissenting votes in matters not decided unanimously, with Council Members briefly explaining their positions. This would help residents see the complexity of many decisions, and recognize all the hard work Council Members do for our community.

–**Make the City Code User Friendly:** Have you ever tried to find something specific in the City Code? The search function is inadequate, bringing up way too many hits, instead of narrowing where someone might look for the info they need. A more user friendly code experience would help residents search for the information they need and help everyone be better informed as to the laws in our city.

–**Use the Assemble App:** Several cities in the county use this very inexpensive app in order to poll residents occasionally when hearing resident opinions would help the Council to make better, more informed decisions. Sure, everyone won't participate, but those who care a lot certainly will and their input can be useful and easy to obtain.

–Jody Reid, Dave Reid, Jessica Mitchell, Melonie Smith, Leroy Kinder, Nell Morgan