

Kelli Prader (00:00:03):

Hi. Good evening everybody. Welcome to the Carmel Neighborhood Association Network meeting our first of 2024. We are glad to have you here this evening. If you didn't get an agenda, please, I can grab one for you and be sure before you leave to sign your name on the signup sheet. And that allows for us to have continued communication via your email address. So thank you again. Just a couple of things I wanted to mention. Chief John Moriarty, thank you, community relations, Carmel Fire Department for always giving us your table and information and just providing whatever we need as a community by setting up your table. So thank you so much. Thank you again. You're welcome. We have, oh, agendas. Yes. Thanks, Josh. All right, well, let's go ahead and get started. We mentioned at our noon small business event that there seems to be a buzz in the air in Carmel. It's an exciting time and we're glad that you're here so we can tell you some of the exciting things that we as city employees have been working on. And, and of course, the new mayor. So without further ado, mayor Finkam.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:01:22):

Hi everybody. Thanks for coming out. Appreciate it. so honored to be with you as your, as your new mayor. I've come to these meetings many times as a city counselor. so it's, it is nice to be on this side of the, these tables, right? So seeing you, so thank you for what you do to serve your community. I say that you guys are the, the smallest form of government, right? Maybe a lot of people say it's city government. It's really HOA 'cause self-governing your neighborhood. So thank you for what you do. People are like, how could you run it for mayor? Why would you ever wanna do that? I'm like, I would never wanna be an HOA board <laugh>, because that's so much harder. So thank you for, for doing that. Taking the arrows and keeping our community so desirable, right? 'cause it's a lot of the rules that you put in place as far as landscaping and home maintenance and fencing and all that stuff that makes our community really special. So thank you for that. before we do anything else, I wanna just kind of go around and have everyone introduce themselves and what neighborhood you're representing, if that's okay. And city staff will rep will introduce themselves as well. But hey Brenda we'll start with you in the very back.

(00:02:26):

<Introductions take place>

(00:06:39):

Awesome. I live in Legacy, by the way, at Overlook. So I'm probably the furthest East <laugh> right, that we have here. almost in the river, but not in Fishers and not in Noblesville. So I'll start. so anyway, thanks for doing that. It helps me put names and faces together and see who, what neighborhoods are represented. And it helps everybody else get to know you. thank you all for doing the survey that we did about these meetings and what you wanna, you would like to see in those. So if you contribute to that, thank you. I think we're gonna try what I would really like to know, and well, I'll ask a question later about other things you would like to see at these meetings. So be thinking about that as we talk about the fun stuff we have on the agenda tonight.

(00:07:21):

but I just wanna give you a quick overview. we hit the ground running January one. you know, I think I visited every fire station water sewer. I think that was it on January one. 'cause it was important to me to be out and about. And just trying to get to, you know, interact with all of our departments. We've got 675 incredible individuals who serve the community. And it's an honor to be part of that team. We've hired quite a few new faces. You met Drake, you'll hear from him here a little bit. You met Rebecca here. Rebecca joined us in January. and Rebecca comes from both healthcare and higher education with her marketing. So we're, you know, really honored to have that experience on board coming up soon. we've just hired Nick Weber as our Executive Director of Economic Development.

(00:08:07):

That is a new position for the city of Carmel. It's been embedded in economic development function has been embedded in community relations. And we wanted to separate that clearly. it's, it's not like it was 10 years ago where we were the sh only shiny thing in Hamilton County. you know, Westfield Fishers and Noblesville all have economic development functions. They're very aggressive looking at businesses and trying to attract residents. And so we wanna make sure that what we are well represented in our county continue to be a national leader. And if you missed it, we're we're named yesterday by niche.com as a number two, best place to live in the country, which is an incredible honor. Once again, partly 'cause of what you do, partly 'cause what we do and partly what everyone has done for the 20, 30 years in front of us.

(00:08:57):

So we've also hired a new attorney. She starts April 9th. She comes from the city of Indianapolis, the University of Indianapolis and Ascension. She's gonna be a tremendous leader to join our team. And we hired a CFO That is also a new position for the city of Carmel. We've always had a controller, well, didn't always have a controller, if you remember for a while it was a clerk treasurer and it was elect, the financial position was just purely elected so you could get elected that role and not have any financial understanding. so that when we went to a class two city that became an appointed position, we had someone with great municipal experience. Ann Bingman, she remains with us. and she's an outstanding accounting person, but we now, I've hired a CFO to be a strategist with her. So we hired the state budget director away from the state of Indiana, which is fun to do.

(00:09:50):

And he's used to deal with a lot more zeros in this budget than we have. But he'll bring a bigger, broader mindset to this role. He starts April 8th. It'll probably remote that day given the eclipse that we have going on. and I'm trying to think who we missed. we obviously have Drake. I'm missing somebody, but we've had hired a lot of new talent to, to join our other outstanding talent. It's been, it's been fun and exciting. I'll be really happy when the whole team is together, April 9th, and we can really start building, you know, team building, leadership development strategic planning and those kind of things for our community. 'cause if, if you paid any attention to the campaign, and it's okay if you didn't. We talked about community engagement. We talked about fiscal responsibility first and foremost. We talked about public safety and a variety of other things that were super important to this community.

(00:10:41):

So we've been busy since January one, knocking off things of that 57 item list that I said was gonna be what I wanted to work on first for elevating caramel. We've just been knocking 'em off. So well into it. Almost add our a hundred day mark, even though we didn't do a hundred day plan since I had an elevate caramel plan. we're just really busy. so I'm excited that, but I think we're, we're well on track where we wanted to be. Team's been great. so it's just pedal down more the same, putting your hard earned dollars to work from the taxpayer standpoint in the city of Carmel. So the other thing we're hiring too is a, a purchasing analyst. We've never had centralized purchasing in the city of Carmel. we don't have centralized facilities. We don't have centralized fleet management.

(00:11:26):

There's a lot of opportunity for us to manage our dollars, maybe a little tighter, a little better. And so those are some of the things we're talking about. Who knows where we'll land. But those are good conversations and healthy conversations to have. What I keep saying to the team is, if you woke up today and someone said, you get to be x, y, z director for a city that's got 106,000 people who are committed to excellence. The city's been recognized nationally, everywhere, and now it's yours. But you get to set up the city government. How would you do it? And if it's different than what it looks today, how we gotta, how do we, how should we get there? blank slate, right? So those are, those are, those conversations will be ongoing all year. I wanna get to the program because we wanna talk about Eclipse.

(00:12:10):

It's super important for you guys to understand what the city has been working on with public safety. and then also we're gonna talk a little bit about road updates, which everyone's always concerned about. And then I'm gonna ask you about HOAs and what you wanna see from your city government to better serve you. Sound good? And then any open QQ and A after that, you know, ask me anything session, which I love those. So without further ado, I wanna introduce Brenda Meyers from Hamilton County Tourism or visit Hamilton County. And then after that, it's gonna be Jim Gross and Joel Hevner from police and Fire. I'm not necessarily in that order but Brenda, y'all set?

Brenda Myers (00:12:46):

Sure am. I think I need to finish something.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:12:50):

You got it

Brenda Myers (00:12:51):

How about that? Okay, great. Well, first of all, my husband's on RHOA. so I fully understand what you do <laugh> and I understand all the challenges that you have. And I appreciate you because it, what you do is really important in communities. And I wanted to thank you for welcoming the over 5 million visitors that you do in Hamilton County every year because you know, they, they're outsiders and they come in and they take up your space and they take up your tables. And we just really appreciate that you always provide them with amazing hospitality. Hamilton County Tourism is your county tourism agency. We're funded by a lodging tax. And we have also invested over \$50 million back in the community in investment programs. So we really, we really believe that community is the most important thing in tourism.

(00:13:41):

And then all those nice visitors, they come spend almost a billion dollars. And we like them too. So thank you. Well, about two years ago, we started talking with our communities about the eclipse and said, Hey, from what we hear from our counterparts these can be really big deals. And we first started talking to Hopkinsville, Kentucky, which if you remember was the epicenter of the 2017 total eclipse. this eclipse eclipses that eclipse, by the way, <laugh>, I love it when I get to say that. it is a much bigger deal. It's a much more, when I talk about totality, it is a much deeper eclipse and it's longer. and you can see up here, there's a also a copy of these that were provided. you can see up here that Carmel is one of the longer venues.

(00:14:28):

it is, I we've learned over the last couple years that it's a big deal to be over three minutes. And that literally seconds matter in people trying to chase the eclipse. And they are called chase eclipse chasers, by the way. That's just a thing. Just like tornado chasers. There are eclipse chasers and there are people that have come from all over the world to come here or come some part of the United States, when we started convening people some of the first people to step up were our public safety representatives from our communities. And I just really wanna thank you because they have put a lot of work in, and they're gonna talk to you a little bit about that. Thinking about how to make sure that you are safe and our visitors are safe, and that everybody has a really good time.

(00:15:12):

And there are no stresses. I went to Tennessee 'cause that's where I'm from to see the eclipse last time and the eight hour, the four hour trip home took eight hours. That's mostly because there's not enough bridges over the Ohio River. I don't know if you've noticed that. Okay, <laugh>, I'm saying it's really, really a

challenge. So we have been convening groups talking about this, researching this 'cause we love data at Hamilton County Tourism. And this is the path of the eclipse. I'm sure all of you have seen this. There's a, there's a indicator that you can go and look at your region to see what the approximate based on past eclipses, what the approximate visitation is. And that visitation is somewhere between four and 600,000 new people in the state of Indiana. I just wanna tell you that on a regular basis, we host 10, 20,000 people in Hamilton County.

(00:16:05):

when Graham park's up and Roff is up running, or when the FFA comes to town, we, we, we, we welcome 70,000 people. I'm sure you've seen those blue coats. so it's not unusual that we would have this many people. Well, this might be a little bit more than, okay, I lied. This is gonna be a lot more people. But the problem is the, the challenge is, and the opportunity is they're gonna stay in our hotels. They're gonna stay in vacation rentals, which I don't even want to get into. 'cause I know that's a whole other conversation in this room. and then they, I, they also will come visiting friends and relatives, and there's gonna be a lot of people that come in for the day. So when you add all of those people up, that's what these people are worried about.

(00:16:45):

And so are we you probably are, these are hotel numbers that are already, we, we think our hotels will be full or near capacity. We are often full. We, like, we were two weekends ago, we were at 98% occupancy. So we are often full. But we have almost also every home stay has been rented. So that just tells you a little bit about the volume of visitor that's gonna come. And we, we track this carefully. there's a, a few things here. we have done some marketing. We admit it. We've gone out there and told the world this is the place to come. Actually, we've only told people in the Chicago and the northwest part of the state that this is the place to come because that's where our visitor tends to come from. someone was mentioned earlier, about 10% of our visitors come from Chicago.

(00:17:31):

And about 10% of our visitors come from the Fort Wayne area. About only about 30% of our overnight visitors are from Indiana and the other 70% are from out of area. there's a, you, you can't read all this. There is a in, in the back of the room, there's the eclipse guide that we've produced, and then they're also going to talk more detail about safety. we do, I saw the city of Carmel has glasses and we brought some glasses. So there's plenty. If there's glasses, eclipse glasses, please take them home. if you, if you know an older neighbor who might not be thinking about getting glasses, if you could bring them a pair, I think that would be really important too. The other thing that they're talking a lot about are dogs pondering this in my head, but apparently it's very unsettling for dogs during the eclipse.

(00:18:21):

And so you'll want to keep them, you'll wanna keep them safe and secure if you are going to be coming out about the community, they're gonna talk to you a little bit about that. the Carmel viewing locations. What, what we decided as a community was to lift up six major locations, and hopefully that's where a lot of the visitors will go, and we'll make it really easy for them. And then each community would do major viewing locations, but also second, you're going to go, you're going to probably go to a park that's nearby, right? So we wanted to make, they're making sure that they've identified where they think people will go. And we've done that as a county as a whole as well. a Connor Prairie Grand Park, a lot of places are doing ticketed events, and then there's free ones. But what we're really worried about, they're gonna talk about it, are just people who stop and stare.

(00:19:09):

I mean, they just stop in the middle of the road and stare. And apparently this happens all over. Well, I'm going to let them tell you all the good, meaty stuff, but if you do have any questions, let me know. Carmel has a website. We have a website. They linked our website. We linked to their website. ours is visit

hamilton county.com/eclipse and yours is carmel eclipse.com, I think. And so there's lots of information out there. I mentioned earlier this morning that a major city in the state called us today and said, what are you doing about the eclipse? And we're like, I don't know. We've been planning on it for 18 months. So I hope that, I hope good luck, good luck with that. I will tell you what city not to go to, but that would not be nice. stay here. That's my tip. Stay here. But anyhow, if you have any questions, let us know. But thank you so much for being so receptive and so hospitable to our residents. I mean our visitors. We really appreciate you. Thank you.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:20:10):

Well, everybody, how many people have guests coming to their homes to watch the, it's about half. I'm not advertising it to my team. Great question. Thank you, Sue. I'll say that. <laugh>. Thank you. I was just curious. Yeah, that, that's a very important question.

Joel Heavner (00:20:27):

Alright, thank you Brenda. I'm Joel Hevner. my, my position is the division chief of planning and communication. So this is right up my alley. We plan for all the events with the fire department work, haa, ham with the, with police. Brenda doesn't get enough credit with her team. really they initiated a lot of these conversations. They initiated a lot of this planning and all the data. We're getting all the after action reports. All the lessons learned from across the country. They're starting with Hamilton County Tourism. So thank you again for the information that they all provide for us so that we can make the plans appropriate for our community. I really wanna hit two things for us today is, one, how is this going to affect you? How is this going to affect your neighborhood? And then talk about how we have planned around it, what we have done to prepare for it.

(00:21:11):

So I'm gonna hit those two highlights. Then. Jim, Jim Gross from police will talk about the police activity and what they're planning on doing. but we have a wonderful facility here in Carmel. We have a, an emergency operation center, and that's where we'll be located. We have had events in the past. We have the 4th of July festival, the Carmel Marathon. And typically we have Carmel Police, Carmel Fire, and the spattering of a couple other departments. We have had every single Carmel department represented in our emergency operation center over the last year in planning for this. So we really have taken it seriously. It's not just a police and fire, public safety. This affects the entire city and affects a lot of our departments. we've had some great interactions with our department members. so we we're thankful to have that partnership and that working together.

(00:21:57):

The two things, how it's going to affect you, Brenda mentioned that as well. There's gonna be a lot of people. There's gonna be a lot of people not from here. There's gonna be a lot of people who are here for the day. And there's gonna be people who just don't, they don't know their way around Carmel. They don't know where the festivals are. They don't know what communities are off limits or on limits and what's nearby. That's gonna be a big issue for traffic. this isn't a, an emergency event. This isn't a scary event. This isn't a traffic people event. And the number one thing we're gonna ask for our residents and for our businesses is just to have patients. A lot of visitors. We host a lot of visitors every single year. This is a little bit different because this is kind of a, a one and done.

(00:22:42):

We don't expect a ton of people coming in the whole weekend. And, and, and staying from Friday till Monday night. We expect the biggest crowds and the most exodus on Monday. They're gonna come in Monday, they're gonna leave Monday. Those are the ones that we're concerned about. The ones who come in on Monday morning and they leave at 4:30 PM on Monday, as soon as the eclipse is over. That's what causes the congestion. And really that's what causes some of the I shouldn't say confusion, but

where people just don't know where to go. Those who stay here for the weekend, they get to know the community, they get embedded in it. But those day trippers are the ones that're gonna give us a lot of angst and anxiety when it comes to making sure our roads are clear and available. So that's the number one is making sure we're patient with people, making sure we're giving people good directions, where to go, being helpful.

[\(00:23:27\):](#)

we also wanna make sure that you're making a plan internally with your family, with your friends, if you're part of the business. but passing this information onto your HOA in general, what to expect. We're, we're gonna see cars parked on streets, as Brenda mentioned. They will stop, they will park, they will look and in four minutes they will drive away. Yes, they, unfortunately, we see, we've heard it on highways, we've seen it on, you know, major roadways. But you may see it in your communities. You may see open spaces in your communities with just your parks and your fields. People just coming up, showing up for a few minutes and then going away peacefully again. Patience with all of this. The last part is, is having a plan for you and your family. What are you gonna do? Are you gonna walk to a location?

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we have a lot of locations that we identified. Brenda talked about at least six or seven of 'em on the list that she just had up there. We're really looking a lot bigger. There's six or seven that are dedicated and advertised. There's about 17 locations throughout the city that we're really gonna keep an eye on. That includes places like Coxall Gardens west Park, central Park, around the co, the Monan Community Center, just places where people might naturally congregate. So we're gonna keep an eye on all those locations in addition to the ones that are advertised in addition to the ones that are have programming attached to them. So keeping that in mind, we wanna make sure off Yes, thank you, thank you. We wanna make sure that you and your family know what you're gonna do. Are you gonna drive somewhere?

[\(00:24:52\):](#)

I would recommend you don't. I would recommend you find what's close to your house. You walk, you bike, you have a plan to come back. that's gonna be the most effective, the most peaceful for you in my opinion. but we, we welcome you to find the place that's closest to your house, your neighborhood, your parks some of the fantastic parks we have in our community, and use those locations throughout our area. So what have we done internally? I mentioned the departments working together, making sure that all the departments are represented in anticipation of the eclipse. We've talked to businesses and schools, we've talked to daycare centers and long-term care facilities and hospitals. We're, we're interacting with a lot of different agencies across the city to make sure they're prepared and to make sure they understand the extent to which the people are coming in.

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So that's a big part of it, is talking to our folks. The other part is preparing our public safety. So we're gonna put in more apparatus and more fire personnel. We're gonna put event personnel at these locations across the city to make sure that one, it's not because we're expecting a lot more crime or we're expecting a lot more injured people. We're expecting a slower response because of the congestion, because of the traffic. that's our biggest concern as far as public safety goes. We wanna make sure we can get to the people who need us in a timely manner, just like you're all used to having us there in four to six minutes. We wanna make sure we can provide that resource and we'll do that by adding more personnel. And Jim will talk about what the police are doing in specific. And the last thing for us as far as requesting city services.

[\(00:26:18\):](#)

How many of you are Republic trash customers? So Chief Habush and I have worked closely with the city utilities and we've talked with Republic Trash. So Monday morning, if you have Monday morning

trash, they're coming two to three hours earlier so they don't get stuck in the traffic. They don't cause traffic potentially by waiting behind the dump truck. so Monday morning, April 8th, take that back Sunday night, April 7th, put your trash out if you're Republic on Monday. That's one of the things we're trying to think about. And there'll be a few other things that come up that we'll, we will identify and try to make sure that it eases the congestions and the burdens impacted cellular services. We are expecting that. So busy tones not getting through with your calls right away. Home internet service, potentially slower, not 'cause of the end of the world, but because of the amount of people using the cell towers using this critical infrastructure, it's just gonna slow it down a little bit. Again, patience is the key. Understanding this is a temporary thing. People will start going home. The biggest picture for us, again, 4:30 PM that's when we're gonna do our reevaluation within the emergency operation center. There's the pre-event and then there's the mass exodus. And that's what we're gonna keep an eye on. Jim's gonna talk about the rest of it for police and what they're doing and how they're placing their folks in the community.

Officer Jim Grose (00:27:42):

Is this any better? Oh wow. That's a lot better. Okay. Alright. well again, thank you everyone coming out tonight. this next slide here is the locations in Carmel that Chief Hevner had mentioned. So as you can see, several locations throughout the city maybe a little bit of a, a heavier focus on them in the center of the city as well. So as you're traveling and selecting an event to go to, again that traffic congestion, just realize there might be some more of that in the central core as opposed to further out. So here's the important thing to remember. The world is not coming to an end. you know, as Chief Hener mentioned, this is a large crowd event traffic congestion event. That's what we're experiencing. just as the fire department is increasing their staffing, we're increasing our staffing as well. As he mentioned, we're not expecting more crime. We're just positioning ourselves to be able to respond to any calls for service that we may receive in a more timely and effective manner.

(00:28:56):

yeah, so again, it may impact the non-emergency response, but we're trying to address that as best we can by having our personnel spaced out appropriately. how can you prepare? Just as chief Heber had mentioned, you know, for the trash service, make sure you're putting that out ahead of time. just as if you're going to travel on the eighth, make sure that your vehicle is fueled or charged ahead of time. That way in case you do get stuck in some traffic ingestion, you won't be running out of gas or having your battery die, anything like that. if possible, just try to avoid any non-essential traffic or traveling during the eclipse. and after the eclipse. Also, if you are going to attend an event, you know, like Chief Hener mentioned, just try to walk or bike instead of having to drive somewhere further.

(00:29:48):

That way you're not contributing or potentially getting stuck in any of that congestion if it occurs. And be prepared to arrive early at any location that you might go to. And also be prepared to stay late in case you have to because of congestion there. So those were just a couple of the points. Chief Hebner did an excellent job mentioning how our public safety personnel throughout the city have prepared. And I can't say enough about the partnerships and cooperations that we have, not only amongst all city departments, but also the neighboring departments, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency. we've all worked together over time to prepare for this. So just feel comfort in knowing that our community is very well prepared for this event and we will manage it and help everybody have as safe a day as possible.

(00:30:34):

So that was everything that we had on the eclipse. just real briefly, I was gonna cover a little bit about Neighborhood Crime Watch. is that okay? Absolutely. Alright, very good. This will just be a couple brief slides here. So who here is involved in our Neighborhood Crime Watch program? Alright, we've seen a couple hands. Perfect. If you have any questions about it even after these slides, feel free to come up and

and talk with me afterwards. but our Neighborhood Crime Watch program is designed to help get information out to our community partners, our neighborhoods throughout the city regarding crime that may be occurring within the city. so traditionally it, it's been focused on some of the incidents that would be more likely to impact your neighborhood on a day-to-Day basis. So you can see the list on this slide of the types of crime that this program really focuses on.

(00:31:27):

So burglaries, criminal mischief, damage to property residential entry, which would be going into someone's home without permission to do so. Theft and theft of motor vehicles. we display this information on an occurred incident dashboard which I'll show you on the next slide here. and then there's also another resource, the City Protect map, and I have a slide about that as well. So on our website, carmel pd.com, or you can navigate it just from the city website as well from the police department. But we have a transparency and data sharing section on there. And you can see on this we have Crime watch mapping. So that map we'll lead you to this our occurred incident dashboard. So it is updated on a daily basis and it will display the information for those types of incidents that I described updated daily. And then you can filter through those as well. You can also filter through the timeframe. So if you're only curious about the last week or the last year you can go through and adjust those accordingly. And then select also by incident type to only display those as well to help visualize kind of what's going on, what's trending throughout the community.

(00:32:48):

The city Protect one is not there, but the City Protect website that link is also on the transparency and data sharing website. And it deals more with calls for service. So an occurred incident is something that generates a case report. So a theft, something's taken from your home, you call and speak with an officer to file a police report. an occurred, or I'm sorry, call for service could be something like a traffic stop or a alarm in a neighborhood at your home or a business. the City Protect website is a way to look at our calls for service. And you can also filter those. It's not only police calls for service, it's also fire calls for service. So there's a lot more data on that site. You can also set that up once you set your filters for the area. You can set it up to receive alerts. So if you want to <laugh>, if you wanna get an update for you know, daily, weekly, monthly you can adjust that as well. And then it will automatically send you that update flipped off there.

(00:34:04):

Okay. And as far as communication this is something that we are evaluating internally as well. like Mayor Fum said earlier in the meeting, we want to do what we can to best serve our residents, our citizens, our visitors. So internally we are evaluating how we can best communicate with you the information that you want to receive. So if you have any feedback on that, please feel free to come up to me afterwards as well. right now the focus social media, the digital age has changed a lot with how this program operates. So right now we're focusing on pushing out information through social media because it can reach everybody at the same time. You're all getting that same message instead of an email chain and to someone forward it to someone not, we don't know. So this is a way to get the information to everybody at the same time.

(00:34:57):

So our Facebook page is our primary source of communication at this point, but we also do have other social media accounts as well. And those are all up there. So obviously the website to start with. Facebook, Instagram neighbors nextdoor X formerly known as Twitter, as well as YouTube. So all our usernames are the same on our platforms. It's just Carmel pd. We try to keep that easy. so please, if you don't follow us, do that because we also put out information if there's maybe an incident, a road closure traffic crash, road closure for a gas leak, anything like that, we can post those things on social media as well. So that way you'll be familiar with it and can know what's going on. I think that's all I had on that. There we go. Hand it back to Mayor Ham.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:35:48):

Thank you. Hope, hopefully that presentation gives you one, some peace of mind and also some valuable information. our police department, our street department, our fire department, and lots of other departments have been working together on this eclipse for many, many months. So hopefully it's something that we have brilliantly blue sky so we can see the eclipse wonderfully and the traffic is lessons we impacted. But there's also lessons learned in this exercise. Even if the eclipse ends up being a super cloudy day, we don't see much of it in our, in no traffic because the, the efforts that they put forth through the last several months could apply to many other incidents that we could have in the community. So it's time well spent no matter what. And I'm proud of all the work that they put in. So next up I want you to hear from a new police chief. we went through a three month process to find the right guy, and I'm super excited about what he brings to the table. not only is what you, what some of his peers have said, like a cop cop, but he is also been a great leader who cares about people. So Drake, that's up to you.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:36:53):

Well, thank you. first I wanna take a real quick poll. And Jim, you can't answer this. Who has heard of Sir Robert Peel?

(00:37:01):

Couple, couple. Well, he is known as the modern father of policing. And what he said is the people are the police and the police are the people. And I say that, and I think that's comes from two, two pillars. The first one is accountability. We appreciate the feedback we get from you. We appreciate the, the commentary, the compliments, even the complaints 'cause they help us grow. The number number two thing I think of is the reason we're all here, which is, well, maybe the reason that we are here and we hope you're here, is to help comm keep your HOAs and your community safe. because you all know what doesn't fit, what doesn't look right, what cars don't belong in your neighborhood. when something's up, you know your neighbors, you know their tendencies. So when something's wrong, we require you to let us know because we just aren't gonna, aren't gonna be as intimately familiar with the details quite like you are.

(00:37:48):

And so that's why I say you guys are, are an extension of the police department and and we do need you to reach out to us when those issues come up. the other thing I thing I wanna say Jim Gross has been tasked with a lot of things over the years, and he's overt, tasked. And so we've recently assigned him, and this is as effective as what Friday to what we're creating as a real time crime center. It's opportunity for us to work with our drone first responder program to get resources out. when there are calls for service, we can, we can tap directly into our 9 1 1 calls and when an incident occurs, we can get cameras, license plate readers, body cams community cameras as well out where we can get eyes on the issues that you all are facing before police even get dispatched.

(00:38:34):

So Jim's our resident genius, and so he's been tasked with, with setting that, that 9 1 1 center up. Unfortunately, with that, he'll be stepping back from, from the role that he's playing now, which is in community relations. So while that I know is hard for him to do, he is been doing it for quite a while. It's actually a job description that he wrote however many years ago and created a position for himself that he's been very successful in. we have an opportunity now to have somebody else take that torch and, and carry it on. So it, it, hopefully we can get access to this email list or this list of participants we have here today. And pass that on to the next person and you'll be seeing a, a new face in front of you, and hopefully that'll allow more connections.

(00:39:16):

this Neighborhood Crime Watch program is important and we want to continue to promote that all the way down. So I say that just to say thank you, appreciate your attendance, appreciate how seriously you take safety. We take it seriously as well. There's, there's typically two reasons why people move to any city, Carmel or otherwise, and it's, it's schools and public safety and we take that very seriously. And so I know us in the fire department, we're trying to hold down the public safety lane and, and I know the schools have their, their lane under control. So hopefully we can continue to keep city of Carmel safe and, and a beautiful place to do business, live and, and play. Any questions?

Audience member (00:39:59):

You like your new job?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:40:00):

I love it. Believe it or not, on Friday, this will be one month that I've been in this position and it's flown by. I, it feels like I started last week. but I'm loving. It's, it's been very supportive, both the officers, the community, the contact I've made. It's, it's it's a special place. Good luck. Thank you. Yes. Quick

Audience member (00:40:19):

Question. You mentioned that license plate. So what is the department's view on flock for neighborhoods?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:40:28):

Yeah. Yeah. I have to walk within line there. We love them, but I can't be a, a salesman for flock. but, but they're definitely a force multiplier for us. We've had a lot of successes off of them. And so if it's something that, you know, financially makes sense for HOA, you know, it can help. I'll just say that. Yeah. So our flock license plate readers they, they came out what flock really, really grew up big in 2019, 2020. And we have over a hundred of 'em in the city now. What they do is they capture data as far as license plates and then also taillights on vehicles. And that's how they tell what vehicles are coming in, in and out of the whatever area it is. they don't take pictures of the, the person in the car or anything like that.

(00:41:14):

They keep data for 30 days. and then it's wiped from the system. And what it's done is it, it throws up immediate flags in terms of certain parameters. So if we have wanted subjects, stolen vehicles you know, maybe, maybe a suspect in a murder or something like that from around the country, we have access to a network that we can respond in real time and, and track them as they come in and outta the city. but also to assist us in investigations as well. I can't tell you how often we'll have a theft from a vehicle occurring in one of your neighborhoods. And maybe we get just one tip. Like I said, you know, those little things that you guys notice that maybe we wouldn't know about otherwise is Yeah, there was a car in my neighborhood, you know, last night, it didn't seem like it quite belonged. So we can go, then go back based on e without even a license plate, just off the taillights of that vehicle. You say it's a Buick RDA view, we can search that and flock and the time parameters that you think the theft took place, and then we can start to pair down who that might be and we can start formulate suspects. So it's been a huge force multiplier on the proactive side of patrol, but also on the more reactive side of investigations. Do

Speaker 5 (00:42:19):

Your neighborhoods purchase those or just police?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:42:21):

So typically the police department purchase 'em, purchases them. We have a, a pretty robust network throughout the city, but some neighborhoods have caught on and, and and purchased 'em as well. So, yes. Where

Audience member ([00:42:36](#)):

Would you find information on that?

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:42:40](#)):

Jim?

Officer Jim Grose ([00:42:41](#)):

If you wanna speak with Amber, we'd be happy to write some information.

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:42:46](#)):

Thank you. Yes. Have you

Audience member ([00:42:50](#)):

Moved into your renovated space

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:42:52](#)):

Yet? We have, yep. We have a punch list item still on the interior side. We have a couple little small things, a generator to, to drop in. And then our outside is hopefully gonna get some pavement here in the very near future. But we're, we're pretty close. June maybe? Yeah. June ribbon Cutting. Hopefully we will, we'll, we'll make sure we publicize that and advertise it. We want to make sure the community is welcome to come in and see it.

Audience member ([00:43:19](#)):

Where exactly is it?

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:43:20](#)):

Oh, it's just across the square here. Caddy corner from where we're at right now. Oh, same, same location as the old police department. Oh, just an expansion. Yep. Yes.

Audience member ([00:43:32](#)):

Are you gonna continue this Citizens Academy?

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:43:35](#)):

100%, yes. All right. Yes.

Audience member ([00:43:43](#)):

What's, what do you think is your biggest challenge?

Chief Drake Sterling ([00:43:47](#)):

The biggest challenge that I think we're facing is growth. And I know that's an easy answer, right? But I'm gonna tell you why. I, chief Barlow obviously was here for a long time. He saw a lot of growth and some

of his parting words as he left was the growth specifically in the downtown midtown area. And what we've done to combat that is here recently, within the last few months, we've developed a, a district that strictly consists of that, that downtown district. It's called the George District. We started to assign personnel there to be responsive to needs, especially during special events, Friday, Saturday nights when it's more busy down there. and, and those, those respond, those units, in my opinion, they should be, they shouldn't be in cars, right? They need to be on bikes, they need to be on foot patrol, UTVs were appropriate. so I think that's the biggest challenge is just that concentration of people within that area and and how we're gonna be responsive to that. But we're trying to combat that. Yes.

Audience member (00:44:44):

I think in the past you had officers that assigned on a shift basis or?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:44:59):

So our officers work 12 hour shifts. We have two rotations, an A rotation and B rotation. So five to 5:00 AM and five to 5:00 PM and so those change, and I, I don't, it's up to the shift lieutenants to where they assign personnel based on the shift. But we do, we, we have certain districts we had prior to George, we had A through F you know, Adam, boy, Charles, all those districts. And then we recently outta that George District as well.

Audience member (00:45:25):

Same officer?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:45:27):

No, no. They do switch. Yeah. Yes. Okay. Yes.

Audience member (00:45:36):

I was wondering if I could speak with unique challenges that we have right next to <inaudible> and some stuff that occurs on the Westfield side and side and back and forth maybe.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:45:52):

Absolutely. I know this wasn't supposed to be a q and a, so I apologize. We're Oh, okay. All yes.

Audience member (00:45:59):

So know you have a crosswalk at <inaudible> Range Line Road, right? Going to the police department. You have a button that you push that doesn't worked for like six weeks. Are you guys gonna fix that? when you get the, all the stuff, I'm assuming.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:46:19):

Okay. Can you talk to Jim afterwards? We'll get we'll get that addressed. Thank you. Yes.

Audience member (00:46:27):

Can you do something about bicycles? I live on a Oakridge road. Nice divided road. Yeah. Not, <inaudible>

Chief Drake Sterling (00:46:48):

Yeah, that's something I What's that?

Audience member (00:46:55):

Do they write the proof because it's <inaudible>

Chief Drake Sterling (00:46:57):

Safer? It is safer, yes. And I agree with that. But there are certain laws that they have to work within, you know, how many wide they can be and, and where their lane travel is. So that's something that we will pass on to the traffic unit for sure. They're ones that respond to those, you know, quality life issues, those, you know, specific issues. Yes.

Audience member (00:47:14):

On that point, when they come out of the bike shop on 106th Street, they don't, they do not pay attention to any traffic whatsoever. They just come out and everybody has to stop.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:47:27):

Jim, you got that. <laugh>

Audience member (00:47:30):

I've seen it numerous times.

Speaker 10 (00:47:34):

Yes. I used,

Audience member (00:47:38):

There's a reason why they stay together. They get strung out. Oh yeah. And they, it takes longer for traffic to pass them. They can break groups, which I think is better. And they usually try and do that. Stop. Not one will go through this. They'll take six or 10 turns.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:48:03):

Yeah. As long, as long as they're doing so responsibly. Yes. Yeah. Yes.

Audience member (00:48:11):

What do you see? We're all neighborhoods. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> versus business. So what do you see as the biggest crime problem we deal with and what is your advice to help prevent be proactive?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:48:24):

The biggest thing is common sense. And, and I, I've talked in front of a lot of neighborhood groups in the past and it, it almost, I don't want to talk down to you as though you're, you know, you don't know this, but lock your vehicles. I know Carmel is an extremely safe place and, and we love that, but at the same times you need to be a little bit vigilant, you know, as, as to the, the common sense things don't leave, you know, purses and valuables in, in plain view and lock. 'cause the majority of our theft from vehicles, they come from unlocked vehicles. nobody's looking to break glass. They're looking for easy targets. So the best you can try not to be an easy target. And that goes for vehicles as well as, you know, your homes. If you're leaving the area for a while, let a neighbor know you know, turn lights on. If you have systems that can, that can alter your lighting pattern, do that. but more than anything, you know, that's why I think the neighborhood watch the crime watch stuff is so important is because you can, you know, kind of police each other and help us, you know, let us know when something's not right.

Audience member (00:49:18):

Did you have a lot of problems in car neighborhoods with package stuff off porch? Not huge or not so much?

Chief Drake Sterling (00:49:28):

It's not huge. I, you know, I think it's, it's an issue everywhere, but it's not something that's coming across our desks every day. Like, Hey, we have this serial package theft gang or anything like that. It comes in waves, like a lot of things. It's cyclical. you'll have a lot of break-ins at the same time. You'll have a lot of package thefts at the same time. Right now we're dealing with a lot of people trying to steal vehicles, motor, motor vehicle thefts whether it's from a lot or from residence, that seems to be our biggest issue right now. It'll come, it'll be here for a little bit and then it'll go and then it'll be the next thing.

Audience member (00:49:56):

Thank you.

Chief Drake Sterling (00:50:01):

All right, well thank you very much and like I said, if you wanna stop in afterwards and speak with Jim or I, I appreciate it. Thanks

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:50:12):

Jim. We're still doing the Crime watch newsletter, right?

Officer Jim Grose (00:50:16):

Yes.

Speaker 2 (00:50:17):

For HOAs and stuff. Is there anybody who's not receiving that Crime Watch newsletter? Okay, we need to make sure that we get your information afterwards to Jim so we can, or Kelli, so we can get that captured and you get that. And then we encourage everyone, you get it. Don't just read it and delete it. Forward it to your, your neighborhood, your houses in your neighborhood, right? So they can read it. 'cause sometimes it's just seeing the statistics are sometimes eye-opening. also is there anyone who needs the police non-emergency dispatch number? Everyone's got that knows that we recommend you use it for non 9 1 1 type stuff, right? Okay, good. Do you need it? No.

Audience member (00:50:54):

how many neighborhoods are, <inaudible>

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:50:57):

I don't even know the, I don't even know the number of that. because there's some with HOAs, some that don't have hoa, so I don't even know the number. Jim, you have an idea?

Officer Jim Grose (00:51:04):

the last one I recall was over four sixty three, so I believe it would be more than that.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:51:10):

Lots <laugh>. That's the technical amount. great. So next up is Josh Kirsh. Josh is, oh yes, the number. You want the non emergency number. It's (317) 773-1282. And it'll feel a lot like you're calling 9 1 1 'cause they're gonna ask you a bunch of questions and that's to make sure they provide the officers as much information as possible. but it's just not treated with the same urgency as the other information. So again, just in case you get (317) 773-1282, put it in your phones. send it to your, your residents in your neighborhoods so they have it as well. Then it keeps the non-emergency stuff off or none urgent stuff off a 9 1 1. And also gives you a number to call at any time. Now officers may respond to something, it's a Sunday afternoon. On a Monday, they're gonna treat it differently or, you know, when they have personnel, but gives you all the good information that you need and that allows 'em to track and trend stuff too. Josh is a familiar face. Josh works in the city engineering department, but also, as he mentioned, does a lot of other stuff for us. So he's gonna give you a little bit of road update.

Josh Kirsh (00:52:19):

Thank you very much, mayor. it's always good to see friendly faces in the crowd. Hello again. I, as mayor pointed out, I have various roles and responsibilities. I'm standing in front of you as engineering administrator, Josh. they like to save me for last, I think, because that way if I get you real riled up with road construction, nobody has to follow this act. let's, let's start with, do you guys know how Republican Carmel is? Just say how Republican is it Josh? It's so Republican that we engineered all of our intersections that you can only go right <laugh>.

(00:52:53):

That's, that's a good one, doesn't it? That's not bad. okay, they told me to be short and sweet, so I'm, that is what I'm going to do. the big highlights right now Kelly's handing out are, I, I affectionately refer to this as the utility insert. when I first started doing this we, we didn't have like a one stop shop. There wasn't like one silver bullet to keep everybody informed. So I was, I, I started putting this in the utility bill. So if you get a utility bill for the City of Carmel, this shows up at your house at the beginning of the year. We post this a couple times a year. We put this on Nextdoor Facebook, blah blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. This is the worst document ever. It is so heady, it is so thick. but it is your one stop shop.

(00:53:37):

It really gives you the best screenshot of everything that we're attempting to do for the year. Does it give you all the details? No, it doesn't. But at the bottom, very conveniently, I've put my name and number so you feel free to use that as you need to. specifically if you see something that's not on here and you have a question, maybe that's not something we're doing. But feel free to reach out to me and getting enough head nods. So I will move on to the highlights. north College Avenue between 465 and a hundred sixth Street ish. that will, that is expected to start in, in about a week. this is just gonna sell it as what it is. This is gotta be 18 months worth of work. we're gonna be doing it kind of one half at a time.

(00:54:24):

so we'll, we will close down the southbound lane first, and then we will build one side of the road and then we will flip traffic and we will open up northbound only while we do the other side of the road. And I'm going keep giving you less details because you're not gonna remember most of it anyway. But just remember that this is 18 months worth of work. This is a complete rebuild of the road. This is, you know, a lot of utility work. This is beautiful stormwater work in an area that's definitely needed. if you're not familiar with the term stormwater, imagine the water that falls from the, the sky hits the ground. It needs to go somewhere. It tends to pool in places. We would like to gather it and put it where it is less painful for people. in the end, it's going to be a beautiful median with trees and pedestrian connectivity.

(00:55:15):

And I have used up three minutes already. So next I'm just gonna give you a quick detail about Midtown over here. Third Avenue. We originally sold this as 18 months worth of work. We certainly have if my

math is quick, maybe nine months worth of work left there. we, we knew we were gonna have to winter over the project. When you winter over a project, that means all work stops. like most projects, all of the kind of unsexy fun stuff happens below grade. Nobody sees anything going on. What's going on, what's going on, what's going on. And then boom, we have got a road. so that's what you're gonna kind of continue to not see out there, if you will, if you know, I think you know what I mean. You don't see any of this stuff happen below grade.

(00:55:59):

And then poof, there's a road. Meanwhile, simultaneously phase three of Midtown is coming south as well as Veterans' Way is moving north. So that's that whole block right there that is Monan Square. So that will continue to come out of the ground. Expect most of that to be substantially complete in 2025. Okay? I think that that's the best I can do in a short timeframe. So if you have any questions feel free to reach out to me. my name and number's there and I'm happy to be of assistance to you and your community. Thanks a lot for letting me talk.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:56:38):

Got a question.

Audience member (00:56:39):

I had a chance to follow up with you at the last meeting on a question. And I just wanna thank you. You were really helpful in your recommendations.

Josh Kirsh (00:56:50):

I'm so glad my checks are clearing. Thanks a lot,

Audience member (00:56:53):

<laugh>.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:56:55):

So the road work we have on Third Avenue Southwest, the road work we have extended on to Veterans Way, which is that roundabout that just went in, in front of Matt, the Miller and Hotel Carmichael. and one other project that hasn't started yet, and that's extension of Kinzer, which I'll start in a year or two. Those are things that we promised back in 2017. So if you remember, we had the, all the long conversations in our community about what are we going to do with all the traffic that's coming from Westfield and Noblesville as we grow, what's gonna happen to the fact that we're adding jobs in downtown Carmel? Well, it's gonna happen to the fact that now the fact that we have, we're taking this four-lane road called Rangeline Road and shrinking it down to two and putting this beautiful media in.

(00:57:39):

And some of the things that we said would help fix that is more North South connections, right? So improving the road on Third Avenue Southwest, adding veterans way, adding monon, which has been done and then eventually adding Kinser. Those are all things that we, that were all part of the same project, but we just had to phase them out. Some were, when we get federal dollars to match others, were just basically built around development. So we didn't have to build a road, tear up a road and then build the road back again. So that's good news. We, you know, we're adding this grid system, right? So we can get around better. so just wanted to let you know that this is still part of an ongoing conversation. Yeah, there was one

Josh Kirsh (00:58:13):

Other thing that I wanted. there was one other thing that's a mayor f Income's success story is the previous elected council committed to what I called filling the gaps. so this was a \$40 million bond that is going to holistically fix our path network. the path network kind of came outta the ground two ways. I would say. Like wholesale, like we built a path like along a whole corridor, and then your neighborhood was getting built. So that little section of path got built. So those are the two ways. What we are left with was a number of holes. so thank you mayor for committing to \$40 million. What you're noticing right now is a lot of crosswalks and the RF BS rapid flashing beacons. 'cause that was very low lying fruit for us to address. And we will continue to fill those gaps over the next couple of years as we continue to engineer those solutions. and, and I, one more point, I'm not the city engineer, in case you weren't sure. He is a much better looking guy. He doesn't have a silly beard and he wears matching socks more often. His name is Jeremy Kashman. but if you have a hard time getting ahold of him, feel free to reach out to me and I'll get, get your question answered by him. Sorry.

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:59:23):

You're, you're great. No, no issues. so one thing on that sheet, unless you corrected it from this morning, Jeremy had mentioned that the roundabout at AAA way and 116th Street would be a 2025 push.

Josh Kirsh (00:59:36):

That's, that's new. It hadn't changed since the

Mayor Sue Finkam (00:59:39):

Yeah. Wasn't sure. So that's gonna change. So I know I had a couple business owners actually ask about it. So it was like, good to know from Jeremy today. So that'll be 2025. so also these crosswalks and rectangular flashing be rapid rectangular flashing beeps. Yeah. Those flashy things. we're trying to, we're doing a study too on like, where do we need them? Where's the high traffic areas, where's the low visibility areas? and also we wanna get them at more and more roundabouts so that people have a, a unified experience in crossing, you know, the street at a roundabout, both as a driver and also person crossing the road. So lots of work to come up. there's some grants out there for safe pedestrian safety. We're gonna chase lower likelihood we get them because we're a more affluent community. A lot of our dollars coming outta Washington are going to communities that don't have as much money as we do frankly put. So but we're, that's an ongoing commitment to pedestrian safety that all of us believe is really important. Yeah, we have input

Audience member (01:00:41):

we have input where we like to see some of those.

Josh Kirsh (01:00:44):

Just send me an email and I'll get on the list. Okay.

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:00:48):

Love input. We don't always follow it because the engineer does his magic thing. He's got some guidelines that he follows, but we absolutely love input. So thank you for asking that question. so speaking of input, yeah, D

Audience member (01:01:06):

When I, <inaudible>

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:01:29):

So you, you are correct. It's like any other crossing that we have, the cars have right away, unless someone is in the street already and then cars have to yield to the person crossing at that point. but can you just make sure that there are signs on the Mona at that point that somehow didn't get taken away with some of the construction we've had around there. So thank you for that. And it's an ongoing education process for sure. ideally all of our crossings would be separated grade but that's so hard to do in so many of our areas because of slope and money and water and all those things. So, but thank you for that. thank you. I, I mentioned earlier the survey you did. Thank you for that input. you know, because of that, we will be moving this venue to the police station next time on June 6th. We'll have more place to more area to spread out tables in front, front of you. just a little bit more, maybe more comfortable experience. we also, people want a little more networking time. So we've purposely shortened these meetings to, and you know, to allow, maybe you come a little earlier next time and maybe say a little later tonight to talk to each other or us. yes, you have a question. Why do you

Audience member (01:02:39):

Why do you notified <inaudible> been on board for eight years <inaudible>?

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:02:45):

it's a challenge because HOA leaders come and go every day. and so we really do rely on you guys that let us know that there's a new president or new vice president or something like that. We push information on social, we put it in our newsletters. We try every, every channel we have to get that out. so we love it when these meetings and the crime watch kind of just become baked in as part of what you do and how you communicate with your neighborhood. Because then if someone leaves people notice because they're like, oh, I used to get that crime watch notice and whatever. So we do the best we can to get the information out. We'll continue to do that. It's very difficult though, as a city counselor, I always wanted the h the, the HOA leaders in my district when I was a city counselor. And I, it was very impossible. Even like, I'm, I'm trying to get a ahold of the guy that lives in the neighborhood next to me. And I, I can't get 'em to call me back. And it's just as me, it's just challenging people come and go into their community and come and go as a leadership in the HOA soer Exactly the worst volunteer job. Or maybe the best if I need to look at it. But it's very challenging for sure. Yes.

Audience member (01:03:50):

Could you reach out to people like <inaudible> and get that they, they obviously know who our officers

Speaker 2 (01:03:57):

Absolutely. Well, they're, they're on our list. Sometimes they want us to give us that information. Sometimes they don't. Depends on the HOA management company, not putting him on the spot. But sometimes I've, I've reached out to other groups and they're like, we don't give that information out. It's personal private information, sometimes cell phones. So we do, or sometimes what they're very good at is we push 'em as like, we will get it out to them for you. Yeah. so I wanna know, what can we do in addition to continuing to try to communicate with everybody that's on an HOA somewhere. What can we do to serve you better through these meetings as a city leader? What can we do to serve you better? I told you I was gonna pick your brain a little bit. Yes. Yeah.

Audience member (01:04:38):

I think when I, when I started with the HOA, it was quite lonely and bewildering. there wasn't a whole lot of passing the torch. And I think that a lot of the information that I needed is information that everyone who's on a board would need. So it feels like there could be some kind of, you know, like compliance

packet or something that we could put together that has, you know, the statute, the HOA statutes in it. And it says, okay, every decision you make needs to follow your covenants. And maybe it even says, here's how you do with a really grumpy resident. You know here's how to get a quorum at your annual meeting. So I think having some kind of a venue, maybe like a Facebook group or something where people can go and say, Hey, I'm really lonely and bewildered. How do I, how do I move forward on this, this thing that I'm going to do?

Mayor Sue Finkam ([01:05:43](#)):

Interesting feedback. Thank you for that. you're right. It is very hard and it's, and there's a lot of compliance. So we can look at how we can facilitate some of that. We have to walk a fine line, like chief Sterling said earlier as far as between, you know, recommending flock and not necessarily recommending a brand, we have to be careful that we're not your legal advisor. Very careful on that. Right? 'cause different HOA attorneys will, might give differing advice on some of these things. So to the extent that we can provide more information links to resources, whether it be HOA management firms HA attorneys and other things, I don't know, we'll have to look into that. But we'll provide as much information as we can. And maybe if nothing else, it's just the network that we can provide here. Maybe there can be some programming with that. Right?

Audience member ([01:06:30](#)):

So maybe we could have a spotlight

Mayor Sue Finkam ([01:06:33](#)):

Like a panel. One thing

Audience member ([01:06:34](#)):

I, there's one thing I had to go through this year and

Mayor Sue Finkam ([01:06:40](#)):

Absolutely sir,

Audience member ([01:06:41](#)):

There is an organization, international organization goes by the initial CAI community association institute that you can join and their sole focus is to educate board members.

Mayor Sue Finkam ([01:06:59](#)):

Did everyone hear that? CAI?

Audience member ([01:07:01](#)):

There is a local chapter.

Mayor Sue Finkam ([01:07:03](#)):

Fantastic. Thank you for that. I saw a hand over here to Yep. Oh

Audience member ([01:07:09](#)):

I could, I just got an email from that organization that they're having a half day seminar at the, whatever it's at Keystone Crossing at that hotel in April. And I could forward that email to somebody if you wanted to disseminate it to everybody else.

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:07:27):

That'd be fantastic. Do you have Kelly's information from the invite we got? If not, you can send it to me. Yeah, either one of us. And

Audience member (01:07:33):

Also does everybody aware that there are several law firms in town that just do HOA law?

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:07:44):

Thank you for that. Questions. Any, any other additional advice? Yes ma'am.

Audience member (01:07:51):

No, it would be idea. do you give us a schedule of what all HOAs need to know? What streets are gonna be plow by the city and what isn't? Previous HOAs, we filed some of the streets that didn't get plowed by the city. . I mean you guys would plow, but so it would be a good give that as a layout or what, I dunno. I know what... November, October, whatever, you know, to just coal so that we know because Right. People know and then they slowly figure it out. That be a good idea. I think it would be a good idea if we had a breakdown who our representatives are on the council. If you could just have that it's pink you here, here, whatever that is. It would be a really good idea because a lot people just know, you know,

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:08:53):

Great. We can do both. yes. Might

Audience member (01:08:56):

Wanna send another a reminder because we're coming into an election. It's primary and then the general November. It's important to understand when the signs can go out, when they're supposed to come down. How that works. It would be helpful to, to know that, right. People get angry on the right. Got some rules here.

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:09:15):

Yeah. We have statewide rules to follow as well. Exactly. So Kelli, maybe we can send that out. Make a note to send that out. I think we send a pretty broad message about that. We do anyway, but I think it's there. I think we were much more we have so many people moving in and moving out of our community than we ever did before. Many coming from other states where they do their elections differently. There are some are nonpartisan, some are open primaries, some are primaries in September. So it's so difficult to even explain that to people. So we'll get that information out. As far as the snowplowing, we can do that. for sure. It's a little challenging, right? Because they wait on the weather, see what the weather happens with, what happens with the weather. If it's over three inches, we do a city wide plow and do everything. (01:09:55):

If it's not, we don't. So or sometimes Yeah, do that. Yeah. Yeah. And we, we usually say that every year to try to remind people, but it's never enough. But we can absolutely bring it forward and have Matt come who's the street department commissioner and talk about that. So people can ask questions and you know, what happens when they hit your mailbox? Inevitably we have a snow that's super heavy, icy stuff. Mailboxes are taken out and our street department repairs 'em like that. So we can talk about all that. And

maybe in our September meeting we can, we can address that one. 'cause that's a good time. It's more relevant in the fall. Although if we have a big snow right after that, then we'll have jinxed it. but we'll, we'll absolutely address that. and so thank you for all that. Really appreciate it. I mean, these are the kind of things we want to hear so we can make these meetings more relevant for you. Yeah. I

Audience member (01:10:43):

Know you did your survey.

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:10:45):

Yes. I'm sure it's gonna

Audience member (01:10:46):

I'm sure it's gonna While together. how you share those results.

Mayor Sue Finkam (01:10:55):

So first of all, thank you for bringing that up 'cause I forgot to address it earlier. so we did do a community-wide survey separate from the survey we did with this group specifically. thank you to those of you who filled it out. We had over 7,500 responses. So if you think we're a hundred thousand people, minus the 25% that are roughly kids, that's a 10% response rate for a survey like that super high. So our survey people who put it together before us were, you know, incredibly impressed,

Audience member (01:11:24):

Kind <inaudible>

(01:11:27):

Yeah. Mayor Brainard said we did one in 1996, but again, either way, that's 28 years ago <laugh>. So it's overdue. so I'm excited to see the results. I haven't seen any yet, but they're tabulating 'em for us right now. we're given a few extra days to for anyone who had a written survey to maybe if it dribbles in, you know, after the close date, we're hand entering those. but we have a, we're we're talking what that plan looks like right now, but we're gonna use all those same channels that we try to push it out before. I don't know that we'll mail every household the results, like we mail the households, you know, but maybe we may be able to mail them a QR code to get the results online if they didn't see it through PR or social or text. So we're absolutely gonna try to push that all out. We'll we were talking about whether or not we wanna do some press conference. I'm like down on press conferences, so I don't know that we'll do that. But

Speaker 5 (01:12:21):

How, how will that data

Speaker 2 (01:12:25):

<inaudible> a couple different ways? Well, first of all, it's gonna give us just directional input, right? So it won't give you maybe specific stuff, but it'll give us directional that people are happy with this, not happy with that, wanna see change here, don't wanna see change there. And so we'll be able to look at everything that we're doing. second of all, we'll be able to drill down some questions are very specific to department issues. And so every department director will obviously have this information. we'll also be able to identify areas where we wanna do more focused studies. We figured this was the start and there may be something I don't know, something about roads. And so we're like, oh, we're not really sure what that's

telling us. Let's do a focus either focus groups, we're bringing groups of 10 at a time and do focus groups and studies and really we can talk more in depth 'cause that's a better medium for longer conversation.

(01:13:12):

Or we may wanna do just another study, smaller nature and talk specifically about what are road issues we had questions about. I think it'll also Yeah, yeah, absolutely. This is just kind of the, the opening conversation before the appetizer is served, right? And then as we continue to deliver up services continue to weigh in on that. and so it's like, it is an expensive endeavor. I think it cost us around \$45,000 to do, which actually for s si city was I thought incredibly reasonable. the last marketing research I did last year for of my clients, which we got 400 respondents, which is a great number too, very statistically significant, was \$23,000. So I thought we got a pretty good deal for all the outreach that they helped us do. that they didn't count the mailing cost, right? To mail out stuff, but to do the actual survey, to, to put it together, to push it out and then to get the tabulation done is like, it was 40 or \$45,000.

(01:14:11):

So I thought I was really happy with that. So, but that's money that we don't wanna spend every single year doing a survey because of the expense. But we do wanna do it regularly. Maybe every other, maybe every third year to see direction of stuff. But that's just a tip of the iceberg, right? That's just one way to ask for feedback. We ask for feedback in these meetings. We ask for feedback on social media by the way we ask about Halloween. 'cause we got a lot of questions from people in neighborhoods about, and parents, can we change the date of Halloween? Or we in the community to not do Halloween night, but maybe the Saturday before where it's always consistent. We're like, hmm, wonder what other people think about that. We had 1400 respond on social media, 865. Want to keep it on Halloween Day, by the way.

(01:14:53):

So that's what we're going to do. But that was a great way to get feedback that we haven't got that kind of engagement on any social hole that we had ever done before. So that tells us if we have a question that's meaningful to people and we get it in front of 'em, you know, we're gonna get good feedback. A lot of moms I think weighed in on that one, right? <laugh> moms and dad. So I have to rush home from work and Halloween to get their kids dressed up. but we'll, we'll also continue use those other channels to get feedback. we'll do focus groups. I'm starting some new commissions and advisory boards. we're gonna be starting a commission for small business. we're gonna do a commission and it probably won't be a formal commission, but a committee of young adults to identify kids who grew up in Carmel and went to Carmel schools. Whether it's Carmel High School, university homeschool, or Rio School, having get them back to live here after they've been gone 10 years or so. we're starting one on veterans and support for military families. we're starting one, a transportation advisory committee. So lots of those kind of things rolling out so we can continue to get feedback in other ways as well.

Speaker 5 (01:15:56):

You had explosion. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 2 (01:16:01):

Yep.

Speaker 5 (01:16:01):

How will you population focused on single family housing? I mean, I, I know in our HOA that there's a lot of squealing. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> about it. They dunno how it happened, why it happened. And of course that's right. Where did this come from? So rather than whining, my question is how did we measure the impact of <inaudible> then what did we do following that?

Speaker 2 ([01:16:37](#)):

There's like a hour talk on that. So I'm gonna summarize it super quickly. Okay. And if you want more information, I'll give you some resources on it too. First of all, we did it because we didn't have enough rental product. We had to have rental products because today's kid coming outta college is sitting with about a hundred thousand dollars of debt and they have to have now 20% down to buy a house. So they're, our students aren't buying houses till 32, 35 in many cases, unless they're, they, they just happen to have other resources that the average college student doesn't have. Well, that's a highly attractive worker for our major corporations that are sitting here. And why that matters is 'cause our major corporations pay a big chunk of our property taxes. So we as residents don't have to. So one of the ways we measure that impact is by how successful our businesses are here with their workforce development.

([01:17:24](#)):

so that's one way we measure the impact. We also look at crime statistics, right? To see if they're growing up. And you know, it, they were largely flat. We have more bicycle thefts and garages than we ever did before. We also have more people parking there that are residents riding their bikes and parking 'em in a garage to be covered too. Again, crime of opportunity 'cause they're parking their bike and not locking them up in many cases. we also look at traffic patterns, right? and our engineer just did some interesting studies and our rangeline traffic has actually gone down over the last few years, interestingly enough. So we're looking at traffic, we're looking at crime, we're looking at vitality. One of the things we hear more than anything is we want more independent restaurants. We want more small retailers. We want more local businesses.

([01:18:09](#)):

Guess what drives that? People. And so if we don't have people in a certain density of people, those will fail. And we become that. We have to go to keystone the crossing for everything we want, which was what we did 10 years ago, right? And now we're, we have our own community built up so we don't have to go south of 96th Street for much. and so it's finding that balance, right? What's the right density of people? What's the right density of traffic? But what's the right amount of people that create that vitality in that sense of community? And we'll tell you, it was, I think about a year ago, I can't remember exactly. We did a little bit of a study on our big three apartment buildings downtown, Carmel Rail Yard, Midtown Flats, and Sophia Square. and we were doing that because we were looking at the number of kids that were there.

([01:18:56](#)):

'cause there was a lot of communication about all the kids are overwhelming the schools. There was a total of 11 children. Those are three apartment buildings. one high schooler, six middle schools and four elementary or something like that. So apartments, especially one and two bedroom apartments bring very few children. So we also measured with the schools. and then lastly, over 36% of those residents were over 55. So I think a lot of people were surprised by that. They think they're mostly college kids or young adults living there. There are many of our residents who said, I can't find what I'm looking for here. I don't wanna be in my four bedroom, two and a half bath house on a half of an acre lot anymore. And I just can't manage the stairs. Or I just don't wanna, I don't need all that space anymore.

([01:19:39](#)):

I wanna downsize. I can't find, you know, a small house or a condo. So apartment was my other option. And many of them are actually really liking the lock and leave freedom and are staying in there. So the last thing I'll say is we started a housing task force. And we did that to have conversation about what is the data, what are the, what's the real information that's out there. We, we pulled studies from my board, which is a metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors. we pulled studies from our MPO, which is Metropolitan Metropolitan Planning Organization, which helps us with planning roads and quality of life around here. We're pulling other studies from around the area. We did our own study last fall, finish it the

spring. we're talking about build to rent. We're talking about apartments. We're talking about what houses do we need, how many do we have? Who is in them? So we've got two done. I think we have four more coming up. that information is on the Carmel City website. both the resources that are used and also the videos of those. So please go out and watch those. I think some things are pretty eye-opening. The stat of the last one was housing costs go at 38% in our area. Driven by,

Speaker 15 ([01:20:55](#)):

Driven by institutional.

Speaker 2 ([01:20:58](#)):

I think it's driven by a lot. It's also shortage. So the thing that would drive down our costs most is build more apartments and build more houses. People are like, I don't want as many people here. Right? So that's a balancing act. But I encourage you to look online and look at those resources. 'cause we have a lot of information out there and we're still learning. But we wanna try to basically build a framework for what is it we, what do we need here? What do we, what do we want here? We are missing a middle and people wanna move outta the apartments. There's, there's nothing there to go except there's a lot of maybe for a bigger family sized house. So that's the only thing we know. So that's a short and dirty thing. I know we wanted to wrap this up early. thank you for your feedback.

([01:21:37](#)):

If you have any other feedback on how we can improve these meetings, whether it be content, whether it be the, how the meetings are structured whether you want something that's, I don't know, more educational versus a city pushout, we always wanna leave time for q and A at every one. We're gonna leave a healthy amount of time at every one. 'cause that's one thing that came back on the survey. We want a more networking time, better place to sit more q and a. So we're gonna do all of that. But the q and a, you don't have to wait three months to get an answer to something, right? You got these incredible resources for our police and fire department. You got Kelly, you got me. So please send it, send it in if you have a question. if you want someone to come do a meet and greet, I will come to every neighborhood and do a meet and greet.

([01:22:18](#)):

I gave myself a little bit of a break after the <laugh>, the campaign but I'm starting 'em back up. I think my first one is April 4th or whatever that Sunday is. So if you wanna bring me out. So if you have an HA like an annual meeting and you want me to come answer questions, happy to be there. Just don't tell me a week before 'cause I won't be able to make it work. Tell plenty in advance so we can try to make it work. And if for some reason I can't or if you don't want me, you want Drake or you want Dave, our chiefs there, you know, happy to make them available as well. 'cause again, it's, you're representing your neighborhood. Whatever it is you want there. If you want someone from our planning group, someone from our util utilities group will happy to make them available and answer any questions. And they can answer a lot of questions better than me too. So they're experts in their field and just know that that's available at any time for all of the 30 you represent as well. Thank you so much. there's still more cookies and water, coffee we'll be here for a few minutes if you have any questions, but thank you so much for your feedback. Thanks so much, Kelly. Is there anything you wanna add? Just

Speaker 3 ([01:23:19](#)):

June 6th to show off our expansion of our cp.

Speaker 2 ([01:23:24](#)):

Yay. You'll get a sneak peek probably. I don't think we'll be, do a groundbreaking or ribbon cutting quite or early in June, so you'll get a sneak peek on that. So looking forward to that. Thank you so much. Have a great night.

Speaker 16 ([01:23:46](#)):

Yeah. Oh.