

Grant Creek Neighborhood Council General Meeting
March 13, 7 to 9 p.m., the Hub, 5055 Expressway

Attending: Ten neighborhood council members from the Canyon Creek subdivision; city council members Mirtha Becerra and Gwen Jones; Jane Kelly, Office of Neighborhoods; Jeremy Keene, public works director; Brian Hensel, deputy public works director—streets; Donna Gaukler, director of parks and recreation; Gordy Hughes, assistant fire chief; Mike Brady, chief of Missoula Police Department

Jeremy Keene: Keene discussed the different services provided by the public works department-- sewer, storm water management, drinking water, street maintenance, traffic services, traffic signals, and communication in city vehicles.

Brian Hensel: Hensel said narrow streets make snowplowing a big challenge in Canyon Creek. The city has a plow mounted on a pickup truck that can negotiate the narrow streets, but there's always the question of which side should the snow be moved to, Hensel said. The streets department should be able to improve the level of service next year. In addition, Hensel plans to chip seal Expressway. He will also try to improve the settlement that has affected areas of the streets because of the clay soils that expand when they're wet and contract when they're dry. He would appreciate help from the homeowners association in getting cars to park on one side of the street when the city needs to sweep the streets or perform other maintenance. He will fix potholes and settlement in the alleys, but won't be plowing them. He also plans to pour asphalt into settled areas in the concrete approaches to the alleys.

Donna Gaukler: Gaukler said that once the snow clears, the Parks and Recreation Department would conduct a full assessment of the park in Canyon Creek. She would like to see a full neighborhood parks master plan to figure out what residents want for parks. Gaukler also said that all boulevard trees (and spaces where there could be boulevard trees) would be inventoried. One resident complained about the trail down Expressway, which has overhanging vegetation making it difficult to use. Jeremy Keene said that it might be possible to stripe a bike lane on Expressway when it's chip sealed.

Gordy Hughes: Now that Canyon Creek is in the city, fireworks are prohibited. While open burning is not allowed, that doesn't prevent cooking fires using clean fuel. Narrow streets present a problem for emergency vehicles. Some "No Parking" zones might be needed. One resident suggested that streets with angle parking could be changed to parallel parking to provide more room on the roadway.

Mike Brady: The city's police department has been increasing staffing over the past two years, Brady said. With increased staffing, the city has been able to address problems that might not have had full follow-through in the past, such as tagging and then towing, if necessary, abandoned motor homes and campers. If people are living in the campers, the city works something out, Brady said. Residents discussed a recent incident in which a SWAT team responded to a home nearby in the county. Police had made 28 calls to that address and the final response was high risk, Brady said.

Mirtha Becarra: Becarra welcomed the Canyon Creek residents to the city. A resident said that he had received calls from a number of neighbors who were upset at being annexed into the city and having their taxes raised. They want to know what they can do to get out of the city, he said. Becarra said that as far as she knew, once you're in the city, you're in the city. Gwen Jones said that 15 years ago the developer set up the process under which the residents were annexed. The city extended sewer and water service to the residents at that time. Homeowners were required to waive their right to protest when they bought their homes.