

It's Time to Review!

Every December I like to provide a review of the year and look forward a bit as well. While 2021 was dominated by the ongoing pandemic and economic recovery there were a lot of positive things going on in our town. Let's take some time to review!

Continued growth. If you have moved to Ely in the past 30 years you have been a part of this movement. Ely has experienced steady growth over the past three decades including 2021. The latest census numbers put Ely's population at 2328 residents. This is up from 1776 residents at the last census in 2010 or about a 31% increase. Ely will continue to grow in 2022 as Deer Valley (off of Banner Valley Road) continues to add homes, the Watts Development gets started along the south side of Rogers Creek Road and the Abode Development also gets started on the north end of town (east side of Ely Road). The Watts development will be housing similar to Deer Valley. Abode will start by developing a portion of their land as commercial property with residential properties to be added in the coming years. Also keep an eye out in the downtown area as Krobs start to make changes to their property which could begin as early as next year along with a few other parcels interested in adding buildings in 2022.

Projects completed and others ready to begin. The city wrapped up projects including the City Hall Parking Lot, paving the parking lot and adding sidewalks in Schulte Park, storm water improvements on Rowley Street and paving the shoulders along the north end of Ely Road. The sewer line project started this Fall along Hoosier Creek and will be completed in 2022. There was also significant work done in the planning stages of a water treatment facility for the city. This project will help to eliminate the yellow water issue. Public workshops will be held the first half of 2022 to present the project to the public.

Old Town District Project. Workshops were held this past year gathering input from residents on how to improve the downtown area, or as we like to refer to it, "The Old Town District". Based on the input received MSA created a draft plan that was presented to the public in December. You can view it by clicking [HERE](#). The next step will be for council to adopt the draft plan in early 2022. From there MSA and staff can start applying estimated costs, recommend funding sources and create a final plan for implementation. The goal of this project is to fix long overdue infrastructure issues including roads & sidewalks along with storm water management and other improvements. This project will be ongoing for years to come and we will keep you in the loop as updates are available.

New faces on our staff in 2021. The city added four new employees this past year so we can serve you better. They include:

Brennan Hall, *Public Works*

Jaymeson Westphal, *Parks & Rec*

Eva Spiekermeier, *Library*

Raelinn Spears, *Library*

Meet the new members and the entire staff by clicking [HERE](#).

2021 Awarded Grants. Staff continues to work on grant writing each year. In 2021 the city was awarded three grants for specific projects which are highlighted below:

- 1) *ARPA Grant for \$5,000.* This grant awarded to the library will support the story walk posted along the trail behind City Hall.
- 2) *Charging Station Grant for \$15,000.* This grant awarded to the city will support the installation of a Level 2 EV charging station in the downtown area next year.
- 3) *Rural Innovation Grant for \$20,000.* This grant awarded to the city will support a communication based GIS platform. This will allow residents to communicate infrastructure issues more efficiently and also helps the city to communicate capital improvement projects better.

2022 is Ely's Sesquicentennial Celebration. The city is planning a large event to celebrate our city's 150th birthday! This event will be held the weekend of August 12th-14th. The sesquicentennial will help celebrate past, present and future Ely. Expect a weekend full of fun games, live music and plenty of socializing. More information will be shared soon!

Thanks for helping make 2021 a memorable year and I look forward to serving you in 2022. I feel blessed every day to raise my family in this town and to be your mayor. Wishing you the best as we head into the New Year!

Eldy Miller

Mayor of Ely

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