

What is the 'broken window' theory and, why should you care?

Several years ago, that phrase was coined to describe certain neighborhood characteristics and trends. When neighborhood problems like broken windows or graffiti remain unfixed, it sends a message that nobody cares. Law abiding citizens may take less interest in their neighborhoods. Then, criminal offenders may commit small crimes such as vandalism. After that, other criminals may perceive the neighborhood as a place to commit more serious crimes. Then, neighborhoods decay.

On the other hand, promptly fixing problems sends the message that neighborhoods are involved and care. Citizens will take more interest in their neighborhoods. Criminal activity is less likely to start.

What does this mean and what can you do? In short, fix neighborhood problems right away.

Here are some specific things you can do.

Graffiti. Report graffiti as soon as you see it. You can report it by phone at 407-254-4723 or at http://cityoforlando.net/public_works/graffiti/Graffiti.aspx.

Burned out street lights. Street lights need to be working to help keep neighborhoods safe. They should not be burned out or flickering. Call 407-737-4222 or report online at <http://www.ouc.com/home/streetlight.htm> if you are served by Orlando Utilities Commission. If you are served by Progress Energy call 407-629-1010 or report online at <https://secure.progress-energy.com/sid/custservice/fla/selfservice/electric/streetlight?page=resif>.

Overgrown trees and shrubbery. On many streets, trees and shrubs have grown so that they now block the view of street signs, street lights or traffic signals. You can report them at 407-246-2281 or email at traffic.studies@Cityoforlando.net.

Code Enforcement Issues. The City's Code Enforcement department helps deal with problems like abandoned cars, deteriorated buildings, illegally dumped items and broken commercial signs. You can make Code Enforcement aware of neighborhood problems by calling 407-246-2686 or report online at <http://iwrorlando.cityoforlando.net/WebLiens/EnterIncident.aspx>.

So, support your neighborhood, fight crime and fix those 'broken windows'!

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

As many of you know, the City is updating its parks and recreation master plan. This plan will help guide decisions about future city parks and recreational facilities. One part of this process is to get public input. You can go online to

<http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/html/survey.asp> to complete a survey. Or, if you do not have online access you can contact my office to get a survey. The deadline to complete a survey is July 31st.

Other Information

If you have any other questions, comments or concerns, please call me at 407-246-2001 or email me at phil.diamond@cityoforlando.net. My aide, Jeanne Rosenthal, can be reached at 407-246-3011 or email at jeanne.rosenthal@cityoforlando.net and Police Officer Edgar Malave can be reached at 407-246-2513 or email at edgar.malave@cityoforlando.net.

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