



August 30, 2021

Dear Safeway management and security personnel,

The Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND) negotiated a Good Neighbor Agreement (also known as a “Good Neighbor Communications Plan”) with your Hawthorne store a decade ago, convening city leadership, Safeway management, and your neighbors and customers to establish expectations for how the business would operate. The result has been a fruitful partnership that has endured through a succession of managers and the neighborhood’s ongoing transition.

This summer, the neighborhood has faced an unprecedented string of issues related to criminal behavior along the store’s perimeter. Two RVs set up along the south side of the store and ran a criminal fencing operation for several weeks. Campers living in tents in your parking strip amassed piles of garbage and waste, lit campfires near fuel cans, discarded bottles and drug paraphernalia, showed signs of intoxication, and got into frequent altercations. Several campers threatened neighbors; one had a multiday mental health crisis.

With the help of the city, and ongoing support from Safeway, we addressed these issues. The police encouraged the RVs to move along and city personnel ultimately found help for the people in crises. A biohazard team cleaned up the site.

Unfortunately, after a brief respite, the problems appear to be growing worse.

As you are well aware, there was a shooting in front of your store in broad daylight this month, alarming employees, customers and neighbors.

Now a bicycle chop shop has been set up along Safeway’s property on Southeast Clay street. Those running the operation have threatened, harassed and bullied neighbors and Safeway customers as they aim to establish a territory for their operation. Meanwhile, graffiti seems to re-appear nightly and Safeway is looking run-down from the back. Multiple neighbors have expressed that they no longer feel safe walking to, or shopping at, Safeway in these deteriorating conditions.

Neighbors and HAND seek your immediate assistance in addressing these issues, and a renewed commitment from Safeway to implement the provisions of the original Good Neighbor Agreement to ensure the safety of the store’s customers and its neighbors.

We’re attaching a copy of our Good Neighbor Agreement with Safeway; The agreement specifically commits the store:

- “to maintain Safeway’s landscaping and other exterior features on its residential, south-facing side to be aesthetically pleasing and to discourage transients from loitering and overnight camping”;
- “to patrol the property daily to remove litter, look for graffiti, monitor the property for signs of trespassing or vagrancy, and otherwise assure the exterior of the premises and surrounding area is free of litter or other garbage”; and
- “to respond promptly to complaints by neighbors about excessive noise, graffiti, refuse, or other problems affecting the residents”

In accordance with those parameters, here are a few steps we ask Safeway to take immediately, and on an ongoing basis, to secure its property:

- Be in daily communication with the police to express Safeway’s displeasure with criminal behavior happening at Safeway in the city’s right of way. For example, people are occupying the entire sidewalk and using Safeway’s wall and garden area for storage and equipment. It’s entirely within Safeway’s purview to ask that the city enforce public right-of-way rules so that pedestrians – including children and people with mobility difficulties – can safely pass.
- Run the sprinklers in your garden area to keep the landscaping green and to discourage people from using it as a camp and toilet.
- When the chop shop leaves, move promptly to install landscaping in the parking median that will discourage camping, litter, and overtly illegal activity.
- For years, Safeway personnel have walked the store’s property every day and cleaned up litter and hazardous waste from its boundary. That practice has been intermittent this summer. By being proactive, and keeping the property clean, we believe Safeway can help prevent problems from developing.

HAND is grateful for all Safeway has done in the 10 years since we signed the original Good Neighbor Agreement with your store. Working to address the issues on the property will show your employees, customers and neighbors that you are honoring the agreement and care about them.

We understand that these problems are difficult and impact Safeway as well as your neighbors. Neighbors living in the impacted area are eager to meet with you to strategize over how to address the current challenges and prevent them from becoming ongoing issues. I would be happy to help arrange such a meeting.

Sincerely,

Chris Eykamp
Chair, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND)