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English 470 – Business and Professional Writing

11 March 2019

Scenario 1: Request to fix potholes

You are a citizen writing your local councilor to complain about dangerous potholes on your street. These are so bad that potentially seriously accidents have occurred. Using the facts from the exercise and making up any other details you need to make you letter persuasive, use AIDA

(Attention/ “yikes!”, Interest details, Desire, and Action) in a well-formatted, well-written letter making a case to the councilor that the potholes need to be repaired *now.*

"I have neither given nor received help on this work, nor am I aware of any infraction of the Honor Code.

Persuasive Letter

March 11, 2019

Dear local councilor, Jerry Flynn:

Subject: Accident leading potholes on Clearview street.

In the past year, these potholes have caused 45 accidents and lead to five fatalities. Many of the occurred during the night due to the lack of visibility. As a result, many citizens of our neighborhood are scared to drive on Clearview street.

Potholes are caused by water from melting snow and ice seeps into the pavement and softens it. During repeated cold fronts, the water in the pavement then refreezes and expands. This breaks up the pavement, on and below the surface. Then when the ices melts, it leaves gaps inside the pavement, like a pocket of air underneath a screen protector for your phone, and then the moisture further softens it. This soft, flawed asphalt then cannot support the weight of passing vehicles. The asphalt then begins to break up, creating the holes on our streets, routes, and interstates.

This crisis began in 2018 when, Charlie Mander, got in an accident at 10:32 pm coming home from college on Spring break. Unfortunately, Charlie was speeding and when he hit the pothole he over corrected and crashed into a telephone pole. When this happened he was not wearing his seatbelt. This caused damage to the telephone pole, his car, and he broke four ribs and smashed his head into the windshield. Charlie luckily did not have anybody in the car with him but he was only two minutes away from home. Due to him being so close to home, Charlie did not have to call his parents because they heard the crash and came running outside. Charlie Mandar was the first of many accidents.

Over the year, these victims kept reporting to the Fredericksburg, Police Department, that this accident was caused by these potholes. At first, it was just on the right side of Clearview street but eventually they started to appear on the left side of the street. The police department did not believe them and said that it was their fault for these accidents. But, when one of their own men got into an accident, they started to believe the citizens and started writing it in their reports. The police also printed out all the posts from the neighborhood Facebook page called, “The Hood of Chancellor West” to provide support to our case. These tragedies have even made it to the local news because of how strange the cause of these accidents and fatalities are.

I could not find exactly how much it is to repair potholes but, I did find how much it is for the average cost per square foot for asphalt is. The average cost per square foot for asphalt is between $3.50 and $4.50. Therefore, to purchase the asphalt needed to fix the street is fairly inexpensive.

We would not be making this complaint if it was just a few potholes in the road because it is very typical for this occur. But, since these potholes became dangerous to the point of causing accidents and fatalities is where we believe we need to take action and have our voices heard. We should feel safe in our neighborhood but due to these potholes it is causing the citizens to be scared. We know that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is very busy but people’s lives are at stake. We know that if VDOT would take care of this situation they would get noticed. They will most likely be on local news for saving the day and will be known as heroes by the people of Chancellor West.

Please, we ask for the Virginia Department of Transportation to come out and be heroes. To come and fix the potholes so these accidents will stop occurring before the cold fronts happen again. I have enclosed my address and pictures of the street and our Facebook page so you can take a look and hear the stories from those who were in these accidents.

On behalf of the people of Chancellor West, we thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Adams

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