

00:00:08:19 - 00:00:09:10

Hi, everybody.

00:00:09:10 - 00:00:11:05

I'm Ogden City Mayor Ben Nadolski.

00:00:11:05 - 00:00:16:16

And welcome to the Ogden Way podcast, the place where we talk Ogden stories by telling the stories of Ogden's people.

00:00:16:18 - 00:00:19:19

And today we have one of my favorite people. And I say that every time.

00:00:19:19 - 00:00:24:19

But genuinely, this guy, Todd Brenkman, golf pro, longtime Ogden City

00:00:24:19 - 00:00:29:23

resident, longtime Ogden City just advocate and spokesperson,

00:00:30:01 - 00:00:32:20

really is one of Ogden's greatest people.

00:00:32:20 - 00:00:36:16

You are known and loved by everybody.

00:00:36:16 - 00:00:39:04

I talk to you, Doug.

00:00:39:04 - 00:00:40:16

Oh. Thank you, I appreciate that.

00:00:40:16 - 00:00:47:00

It's an honor to be here because, I'm a viewer and I've seen who you've had sit in this chair, and I'm honored.

00:00:47:02 - 00:00:52:11

And we were joking before. Todd is the viewer that we've all been hearing about. So thank you.

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It's a good.

00:00:52:21 - 00:00:57:16

Podcast. We try, you know, we joke. We tell good stories. Absolutely.

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Todd, you are somebody that is.

00:01:00:08 - 00:01:01:21

You're all Ogden.

00:01:01:21 - 00:01:03:23

I mean, everywhere you go, you're.

00:01:03:23 - 00:01:05:07

You're talking about Ogden.

00:01:05:07 - 00:01:09:10

Even on your time off, you're recreating and wrapping Ogden.

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Absolutely right.

00:01:10:17 - 00:01:12:17

How many how many years have you been working for the city?

00:01:12:17 - 00:01:16:08

And so officially, as a full time employee.

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2002 to present.

00:01:18:04 - 00:01:23:05

But I started at El Monte as a, a voluntary cart kid

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in the early 80s because they didn't have a spot for me,
but the pro could tell I really wanted to be one.

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And so I kind of hanged around and hung around
and did the work of the paid employees.

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So honestly, I got my start there in about 1983 as a 13 year old.

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Back when kids did that kind of thing. Exactly.

00:01:40:07 - 00:01:42:00

Yeah. The rules are a little different. There, right?

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So, Todd so Todd's our golf pro.

00:01:46:06 - 00:01:51:01

You are responsible for teaching
and bringing a lot of people into the sport.

00:01:51:01 - 00:01:52:11

Yes. Right.

00:01:52:11 - 00:01:56:09

And so for you, it's been a lifelong thing ever since you were a kid.

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Yeah, it definitely your dad or. Absolutely.

00:01:58:06 - 00:01:59:15

You know, interesting story.

00:01:59:15 - 00:02:02:13

My parents still to this day don't play the game.

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They're tremendously hard workers. I played all the sports as a kid.

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Loved it.

00:02:09:16 - 00:02:10:13

A buddy of mine.

00:02:10:13 - 00:02:16:17

One summer, we were up in Logan and we found a seven iron in a trash can, and I said, hey, do you mind if I take that on with me?

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And just out of curiosity, I lived right down there, grew up right down the street from Hillcrest Elementary.

00:02:21:14 - 00:02:24:15

And so I went up and had a little makeshift golf course I made up there.

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When I tell the kids this story today, they just roll their eyes

00:02:26:22 - 00:02:32:08

because they can't imagine me popping Campbell soup cans down through the dirt by home plate.

00:02:32:08 - 00:02:37:02

So I had a place to putt, but I that was kind of my my start in golf.

00:02:37:02 - 00:02:42:02

And then, once my parents could see I had the interest, they made sure I had the avenue to get to the golf course,

00:02:42:02 - 00:02:46:08

and it all just took off from there.
The game got its hooks in me.

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When did the city get its hooks in you for for paid full time work.

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That was, 2002.

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So the professional that I grew up under, Steve-.

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And he was the head pro there at El Monte from 1981 till about 2002.

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And so I went to work for him, started my, PGA apprenticeship, working directly under him as a PGA member.

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And so I feel like I've actually worked for the city since the,

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the mid to late 80s, but officially I became a city employee and, the end of 2002.

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Okay.

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So right around right with the Olympics.

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Yeah, absolutely.

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A lot has changed since then. A lot has changed since then.

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Well, you've done a lot of really incredible work here.

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There was a lot of periods where you had to do a lot with very little.

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Yes. Right. Yes.

This has been an operation in our city budget and our city

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operation as a whole.

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That hasn't always penciled right. Correct.

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So, where are we at today compared to then?

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Well, it's

it's like being on a different planet, to be quite honest with you.

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It's when I took over, responsibility for Mount Ogden.

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We were in the middle of a the start of a pretty good little, downturn

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in rounds of golf being played nationwide,
and it really peaked in about 2009.

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So I've really kind of seen both sides of the spectrum. I've seen.

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I've seen it at its worst in participation numbers, and this year
at its best, and so it's been exciting for me to watch that

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growth over time, because there was a there was a long period
where the city looked at maybe selling that property.

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Oh, yeah.

00:04:26:14 - 00:04:28:13

And those were turbulent times.

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Those were turbulent times.

00:04:29:22 - 00:04:34:15

And you went to work every day
and just rolled up your sleeves and worked as hard as you could.

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With the idea that we knew
one day we were going to be in a better financial position.

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And I'm proud to say that we are there.

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Yes we are.

00:04:44:00 - 00:04:47:11

But back then, the whole operation was running in the red.

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Yes, correct. For a number of years.

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And when we say run in the red, let's talk about
let's talk about the Golf Enterprise Fund for a second. Yes.

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Because some there's always a lot of discussion about it.

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But let's talk about how the enterprise Fund works within the broader
city budget and how it's different from a general fund.

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And yeah, so an enterprise fund like the golf fund.

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Our budget is set up based on the revenues,
the user fees we collect in green fees, cart fees,

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all the different revenue sources we have, and we set that budget up,

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relative to, that revenue expectation for the year.

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But obviously, if you own a facility like a golf course,
you've got to make improvements.

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And so over time, there were improvements made that would have
a bigger impact on a bottom line where the revenues couldn't cover it.

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So there were a number of years where we were in a subsidy.

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Yep. And I and I, I remember when I was on the council, we were looking
at the operation and some of those investments are one time. Yes.

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So that would be like a capital improvement project,

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whereas we're looking at ongoing expenses.

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When you look at all of the personal services
that are going into it, right.

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And it's the ongoing expenses that are the hardest. Yes.

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Sometimes because we don't want to have to keep going
back to the taxpayers asking for more money.

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Correct. To pay for ongoing expenses.

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That's just not a very sustainable.

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So the individual CIP projects capital, private projects were intended
to improve the experience and the condition of the course.

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Right? Yes.

00:06:20:19 - 00:06:26:12

Make it more playable, perhaps to encourage more rounds of golf
that would then help make the operation pencil.

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Right. And then give relief to the taxpayers. Right. Correct.

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So the more relief we can give the taxpayers
by having a successful operation here on its own,

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the less we have to go back and take food,
take money out of people's pockets and throw it off people's tables.

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Correct. Right. So that's the bigger picture. Yes. For me in particular.

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So what are some of the improvements
that we made to help improve the course and increase participation?

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Well, I you know, it's it's been an exciting run.

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So, you know,
the El Monte clubhouse is on the National Historical Register.

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There's one that's only one of 13.

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And Merion and Oakmont are on that same list.

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And those names may not mean a lot to a lot of people,
but those are two of the premier golf courses in the country

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where many of golf's greatest championships have been played.

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And we have a plaque that displays that in the clubhouse,
so that that projects always been

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a labor of love to try to, invest in that clubhouse.

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So I kind of started there, some of it with my own resources and, and,
and my dad and people that were willing to chip in.

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But, we've replaced the irrigation system at El Monte fully.

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We used to drag until about five years ago.

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We were still dragging hoses during the wee hours to,
get water to the golf course.

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And so that is one of those things
when it's all said and done, getting that done,

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those big items like that, I'm really proud of being able to do that.

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We built that beautiful deck out in front of the clubhouse at El Monte,
where people can enjoy that backdrop.

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Yeah, there's not another backdrop like that.

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I mean, when Johnny Miller came and did that clinic

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for our 75th anniversary, he's played golf all over the world,
he says, I've never seen a backdrop like that.

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It's true.

00:08:10:09 - 00:08:11:11

So we've done that.

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And then, you know, we've put a tremendous amount of money into both golf

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courses recently in some tee box renovation.

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Obviously, the more rounds you play, we take a few more divots, tee boxes, get beat up,

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put a lot of, effort into improving the curb appeal around the buildings in general.

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When you pull into these parking lots now, I'm proud to say these are Ogden City facilities.

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And there was a time when we were a little bit rundown, and maybe we weren't as proud of that, but I sure am now.

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You know, and part of that

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renovation and that curb appeal.

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So it's kind of like our first impression.

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Yes. Right.

00:08:58:02 - 00:09:02:07

We used to do things where because we have a streets division.

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Right. Yes.

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And Streets Division goes and does a lot of asphalt.

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And we've had a lot of equipment and knowhow and capability, but it used to be

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that the golf division had to go completely on its own and find a private contractor that did the same thing.

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We would pay private contractor fees instead of just leaning on the resources and the expertise of our own.

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Yes, staff.

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So we're changing that, and that's helping us

get better outcomes for you and for everybody else.

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Absolutely better outcomes for for our division.

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And I, I really enjoy, working with our other departments in the city.

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I mean, I've gotten to to really appreciate the level of talent we have in this city.

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I mean, especially this last winter with the streets.

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Division coming in and helping me renovate two of the hardest holes at Mount Ogden.

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And it's like I told a couple of those guys.

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I mean, I've had friends that have worked in the in the golf course, design and construction business.

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And I told him, I says, you guys have a bright future doing that the way you know how to shape dirt.

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Yeah. And the job they did on those holes up there on 11 and 17 are just amazing.

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I know I enjoy playing them and we're not even fully done.

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We've still got to get the irrigation through there and then we'll we'll get good quality turf in there.

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And those two of those holes that just used to beat me over the head a little bit now, or at least a little more playable.

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So what you just mentioned is significant.

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We had a pretty mild snowplow year. Correct. Right.

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So our our crews had a little bit of extra time when there was an opening or a break rather than waiting.

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Yes. For snow, we put them to work at the golf course.

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Yes. So that was using existing resources and making sure that we have the collaboration, that they're maximized.

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Absolutely right.

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And that's the point is we're not going to just have all this equipment, asphalt, for example, and not use it.

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Absolutely right.

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Yeah. To benefit tax payers. Like it saves so much money.

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It it saves a tremendous amount of money.

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And from what I've seen I mean these, men and women that work for us in these areas, from water utility to operations,

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not only do we have a lot of talented people, but the quality of their work, I would rate at higher

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than what I've gotten from the private sector when we've had to go outside for those jobs.

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But we are currently using all of those resources.

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As soon as the ground firms up enough, they're going to help me dredge the ponds at El Monte and clean

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those up and improve the drainage and so I really appreciate we couldn't do business without them.

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It's awesome.

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Well, it's it's all part of a broader effort to make sure that we're being efficient, effective with the resources that taxpayers give us.

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Absolutely. And

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but the

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the extra benefit here is that by improving the quality and the condition and the,

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you know, the front door for our city, etc., we're clearly seeing those investments

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yield more participation. Absolutely.

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The Browns are trending up every year.

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I mean, each month when I redo, when I look at the numbers,
I told Justin,

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my executive director, I said, sometimes I have to do them 2 or 3 times
to make sure I don't make a mistake because I keep thinking,

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how did we grow the business from last year,
when last year was the high water mark over the last 20 years?

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And but that is where we're headed right now. It's exciting.

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I know, so when you say the last 20 years,
that's kind of where our really strong data set is. Yes.

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Right before that there's some anecdotal accounts. Yes. Right.

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But we do know that there was periods of high years. Absolutely.

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There were periods of high use back
when Mount Ogden would have first been opened into the early 90s,

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because you had roughly five fewer 18 hole golf courses in the area.

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And so the supply and demand was a lot different back then.

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And then we went into a long period
where everybody was struggling a little bit.

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We'd all get together and figure out,
hey, what can we do to attract more people to play?

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Ever since the Covid boom, it drove people to outdoor activities.

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It's just trending up year after year after year.

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I used to I in my prior career in wildlife, we saw the same thing
Covid hit and everybody, most everyone was struggling,

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but we were selling more hunting and fishing licenses
and seeing more participation and more use of our open lands than ever.

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Yeah, I mean, it was almost unmanageable. There was so much spike.

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And then we all wondered, well,
what's going to happen to that spike in participation after Covid?

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And it it largely stayed. Yeah, right.

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We were all we were all concerned, those of us
who operate, golf courses were a little concerned that when,

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you know, people, when the restrictions eased and people
started to go back to work, maybe we'd see a little flattening.

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I haven't seen anything at my place that just continues to grow.

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Right? Yeah. Which is a great thing
because it means people are getting out, getting active.

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Yeah. Being involved, connecting with each other. Right.
Meaningful connections.

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I think people are starting to realize all the social benefits
of the game of golf and what it provides, and the fitness benefits.

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Right. And let's I mean, let's not gloss over that.

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But I do think that there's a tendency for people that don't golf,

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not that I golf.

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Well, you've seen that is that you're.

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You're one of my you're one of my improving trending students as well.

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Well, when you start that bad with, you know, I mean.

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It's a hard game for all of us.

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To to be clear, I suck.

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But I'm about half as embarrassing as I was.

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So I remember the first time I asked for your help, you're like, oh, you're like, what's your goal?

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And I'm like, just to be less embarrassed.

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I think we all feel that way.

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Yeah. But, I have enjoyed

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investing in the game and learning that, learning the game. So I really appreciate me.

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I can't help but

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it has opened my eyes to the the camaraderie.

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The number one round of the of the year for me was with my two daughters and my wife.

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Absolutely.

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The we were late into the into the evening coming in at the end of the round online came out.

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No I didn't. Yeah.

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And the alpenglow was the most beautiful moment.

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I shot my best score 68 and nine holes.

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I think I shot a 44 that day.

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Yeah. Which sucks for a lot of people, but it was really good. Good scoring.

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Not all good.

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Best nine holes that amount on.

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And, but we were all just like on cloud nine. Yeah.

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Right. I'm.

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And that's the,
the immeasurable of being outdoors, being active in the outdoors.

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And it's part of the beauty and the gift of being in outdoor city.

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Absolutely.

00:15:31:21 - 00:15:37:09

Golf was always my quality time with my family time,
you know, working in the golf business,

00:15:37:09 - 00:15:43:04

I mean, you work six and seven day weeks and holidays,
but that's the one time, you know, when the kids were growing up,

00:15:43:04 - 00:15:45:00

and even now that I look forward to the most,

00:15:45:00 - 00:15:51:01

is just that quality family experience out there,
while we're all enjoying a game that kicks the daylights out of us.

00:15:51:01 - 00:15:52:12

But we love it, right?

00:15:52:12 - 00:15:55:16

I don't know why we love it, but you do, right? Yeah, absolutely.

00:15:55:16 - 00:15:57:14

Well, I've always loved outdoor recreation.

00:15:57:14 - 00:16:04:19

I my entire life has been built around my career was around it,
being out in the woods, hunting, fishing, hiking, even, you name it.

00:16:04:21 - 00:16:06:09

I spent a lot of time.

00:16:06:09 - 00:16:10:01

In fact, the reason we bought our house
where we did is because of the trails for. Yes.

00:16:10:01 - 00:16:15:02

All that recreation they're having a couple playgrounds
there at the at the parks.

00:16:15:04 - 00:16:16:10

I mean, it's just a beautiful place.

00:16:16:10 - 00:16:20:13

It's a place where Ogden really recreates. Absolutely.

00:16:20:15 - 00:16:23:05

And I think that we've lost

00:16:23:05 - 00:16:28:10

sight of the fact
that golf is a form of outdoor recreation for a lot of people, for.

00:16:28:10 - 00:16:31:08

A lot of people, a lot. More people than you might realize. Absolutely.

00:16:31:08 - 00:16:34:03

If you don't golf, it's kind of like the airport.

00:16:34:03 - 00:16:39:21

The airport's got its own community in and of itself
that the entire city just doesn't really know unless participant.

00:16:40:01 - 00:16:46:20

But it's a really big and broad and expert community
that you would be really surprised if you get engaged in the airport.

00:16:46:22 - 00:16:48:08

Absolutely.

00:16:48:08 - 00:16:50:20

This is an even bigger, much, much bigger community.

00:16:50:20 - 00:16:54:03

Yeah. The golf community's massive
I mean, I was raised by the golf community.

00:16:54:03 - 00:16:59:13

I always tell people all the time,
I probably learned more growing up from the people I hung around

00:16:59:13 - 00:17:05:17

with at the golf course than I did in, in school,
because you really learned how to behave.

00:17:05:19 - 00:17:10:19

And if you didn't from a very young age when I first started,
I mean, most of my rounds of golf were played

00:17:10:21 - 00:17:13:01

with people my parents or my grandparents age.

00:17:13:01 - 00:17:19:18

And I mean, I always I've joked with some of these, families
a little bit when some of my friends have passed along.

00:17:19:18 - 00:17:21:11

I says, it never occurred to me when I was in high school,

00:17:21:11 - 00:17:28:00

I should probably make a few more friends my own age versus
my grandparents age, that it's just it's such a neat thing

00:17:28:00 - 00:17:34:07

because I learned so much about the values
that are core to being a good citizen, right?

00:17:34:09 - 00:17:38:16

And it kind of gets back to the etiquette of the game.
It's super interesting culture.

00:17:38:16 - 00:17:39:15

Very interesting. Culture.

00:17:39:15 - 00:17:43:06

There's a there is an expectation of how you behave
when you're on that course. Absolutely.

00:17:43:06 - 00:17:44:13

When you misbehave, people see it.

00:17:44:13 - 00:17:46:03

They call you out for it.

00:17:46:03 - 00:17:49:21

Some people get pretty nitpicky, all right. Oh, yeah.

00:17:49:21 - 00:17:51:04

That's out there, too. It is.

00:17:51:04 - 00:17:53:23

But but roughly speaking, when you're there, you're part

00:17:53:23 - 00:17:59:17

of, of a community, and there's order to that
and that you're mindful of one another, right? Yes.

00:17:59:19 - 00:18:02:14

It's pretty it's pretty fun to be a part of it.

00:18:02:14 - 00:18:06:11

Well, and you grow up at a place like that, and you get to know

00:18:06:11 - 00:18:12:01

so many different people from every walk of life in the community,
and you get to know a little bit about their families.

00:18:12:01 - 00:18:16:22

And, yeah, I wouldn't trade my career for anything. It's been amazing.

00:18:16:22 - 00:18:19:14

And I there's a reason why I bought my first home in Ogden.

00:18:19:14 - 00:18:23:14

There's, you know, I'm a proud graduate of the Ogden School district.

00:18:23:14 - 00:18:27:06

I wanted my kids to go through that same school district.

00:18:27:06 - 00:18:29:19

Made sure I bought a home right there in Ogden.

00:18:29:19 - 00:18:35:16

I wanted my back door to the trails because I was an avid
biker and trail runner when I wasn't swinging a golf club.

00:18:35:16 - 00:18:38:03

This community just has so much to offer.

00:18:38:03 - 00:18:41:04

I'm just very fortunate to to spend my career.

00:18:41:04 - 00:18:44:19

I actually found. So in 2020, getting back to Covid,

00:18:44:21 - 00:18:46:14

I was coaching little league football,

00:18:46:14 - 00:18:51:20

flag football, teaching them how to do like this
break down drill on how to tackle and stave off.

00:18:52:00 - 00:18:53:20

And I ruptured my Achilles.

00:18:53:20 - 00:18:55:19

Worst injury I've ever had,

00:18:55:19 - 00:19:01:20

which then turned into a blood clot, which then turned into permanent
nerve damage, which then turned into a year long recovery.

00:19:01:20 - 00:19:09:05

That put me in more pain that I've ever experience in my life
to where today I've got, like, a dead leg.

00:19:09:07 - 00:19:12:12

It slowed me down big time. Before that, I was

00:19:12:12 - 00:19:14:00

I mean, I was trail running all the time.

00:19:14:00 - 00:19:20:13

I'd run up to Lookout Point, hit push ups every time I was there,
then make my way all the way to Marlins Weekly.

00:19:20:13 - 00:19:22:22

I was just all over those trails. Yes.

00:19:22:22 - 00:19:29:06

And when I had that injury and now I can't, I mean, I'm
it really set me back in terms of my ability, of what I'm able to do.

00:19:29:08 - 00:19:32:19

It's been nice having golf as a form of active recreation.

00:19:32:19 - 00:19:33:13

Absolutely.

00:19:33:13 - 00:19:37:17

Because I don't have to have that, like, power as much.

00:19:37:17 - 00:19:42:00

But as boy, it it's exhausting. It is. Right? Yeah, absolutely.

00:19:42:00 - 00:19:45:09

I mean, you're tired after a round of golf

and you know, I can relate with you.

00:19:45:09 - 00:19:47:14

I mean, I was an avid diehard trail runner for years.

00:19:47:14 - 00:19:50:14

Matter of fact, I had to have a a back surgery three years ago.

00:19:50:14 - 00:19:53:05

I've got a fusion at my side joint.

00:19:53:05 - 00:19:59:19

And when I was going through the process
with all the different doctors that, you know,

00:19:59:19 - 00:20:05:12

obviously I've hit a lot of golf balls in my life,
but they thought that the impact from all the running

00:20:05:14 - 00:20:11:11

on the trails over the years, jumping rocks
and things like that, had really been the responsible party.

00:20:11:11 - 00:20:14:01

Not anything to do with swinging a golf club. Gotcha.

00:20:14:01 - 00:20:17:05

But it I had to I had to modify my ways.

00:20:17:05 - 00:20:20:20

And now I enjoy the hike in the walk more than the rest.

00:20:20:20 - 00:20:22:06

I guess we all hit that point.

00:20:22:06 - 00:20:23:12

Yeah, we just hit that point.

00:20:23:12 - 00:20:28:17

I know I hit mine a little sooner than I thought
I would, but yeah, but it, you know, to to go from like

00:20:28:17 - 00:20:36:20

I raised a mountain bikes
I did off road triathlon, Ironman triathlon and so I, I definitely

00:20:36:22 - 00:20:40:08

benefited from the trails and the outdoor recreation of this town
greatly.

00:20:40:08 - 00:20:41:00

Yes. Me too.

00:20:41:00 - 00:20:42:11

And I still do.

00:20:42:11 - 00:20:46:14

Just not as competitively, maybe you might say, as I used to.

00:20:46:14 - 00:20:50:10

And so it's been nice to have a mix of that recreational type and that.

00:20:50:10 - 00:20:52:21

And that's kind of where I was coming from when, when it came time

00:20:52:21 - 00:20:58:08

to, to talk about how do we manage the use of the golf course
and the uses of recreation and trails around it?

00:20:58:12 - 00:21:06:20

Yes. To me, it's a really challenging thing
because I know deep down and personally how valuable the trails are,

00:21:06:22 - 00:21:11:11

and I'm finding out just how deep down and valuable
that golf course is to so many people

00:21:11:11 - 00:21:17:19

and what I've personally experienced, and both to me,
they give me the same benefits and it just makes me realize it.

00:21:17:19 - 00:21:21:19

Especially when you see how vibrant
and how big the community is at the golf course too.

00:21:21:19 - 00:21:23:22

Yes, it's all the same.

00:21:23:22 - 00:21:25:18

It's outdoor recreation. Under recreation.

00:21:25:18 - 00:21:27:05

Active and healthy lifestyles.

00:21:27:05 - 00:21:30:22

It's meaningful social connections with each other,
which are all pillars within the United Way.

00:21:30:22 - 00:21:33:13

Absolutely. And those are the things we're trying to promote and create.

00:21:33:13 - 00:21:36:15

The more aware of for everybody, all users.

00:21:36:15 - 00:21:37:22

Right, absolutely.

00:21:37:22 - 00:21:44:14

So how do we manage our trails to have more participation,
to have good quality experience

00:21:44:16 - 00:21:48:00

while making sure we manage our golf course
for the same? For the same, right.

00:21:48:00 - 00:21:50:10

Is that a fair goal? Absolutely. It's a great goal.

00:21:50:10 - 00:21:56:07

So I know there was a little bit
some consternation over the summer, spring when we did that,

00:21:56:09 - 00:22:01:15

but it was all in a goal to make sure that we're providing access and opportunity for all, for all, for all.

00:22:01:16 - 00:22:04:22

Right. So what let's talk about numbers.

00:22:04:22 - 00:22:09:18

We've talked a little bit about numbers. Terms of participation. Yeah historic trends and rates.

00:22:09:20 - 00:22:14:14

We saw a big nationwide dip in the industry as a whole in participation through the 90s.

00:22:14:14 - 00:22:15:21

Yep. Early 2000.

00:22:15:21 - 00:22:20:10

Yep. All the way to the tens and all the way up to 2020 until we get to the pandemic.

00:22:20:10 - 00:22:20:23

Right.

00:22:20:23 - 00:22:25:03

And that was a sudden pivot. Yes. Big time pivot.

00:22:25:03 - 00:22:27:01

Nationwide. Nationwide okay.

00:22:27:01 - 00:22:32:17

Yeah I think all the numbers would be relative regardless of where you go in the country.

00:22:32:17 - 00:22:41:06

Everybody saw you know, initially we saw as much as a 60% spike in rounds played because people were limited in what they could do.

00:22:41:06 - 00:22:46:11

And then once they got out there and said, hey, this golf thing is pretty fun.

00:22:46:13 - 00:22:51:09

It got its hooks in them and they've continued to stay in the game, and and the game has grown.

00:22:51:09 - 00:22:54:11

I mean, I've never seen it's it's so wonderful.

00:22:54:11 - 00:22:56:20

So many, so much family golf for a long time.

00:22:56:20 - 00:23:00:08

I grew up in a landscape of the golf course where it was the guys playing.

00:23:00:08 - 00:23:05:04

Yeah, you'd have Ladies Association Day, but it was primarily, you know, a male

00:23:05:04 - 00:23:10:07

game and now it's families and couples are on the rise big time.

00:23:10:09 - 00:23:12:13

They've realized it's good quality time.

00:23:12:13 - 00:23:17:18

And so this growth trend is it's been a lot of fun to be a part of.

00:23:17:18 - 00:23:20:02

Yeah. It's nice to see nice to see that happen.

00:23:20:02 - 00:23:22:20

And and we're seeing the same kind of growth in our courses.

00:23:22:20 - 00:23:25:03

Can you talk a little bit about participation.

00:23:25:03 - 00:23:25:13

Yeah.

00:23:25:13 - 00:23:34:08

So so we had dropped at Mount Ogden during the real lean years about the time when the economy started to struggle.

00:23:34:08 - 00:23:39:14

2010, 2011, we'd seen rounds drop rounds of golf

00:23:39:14 - 00:23:44:15

played, drop to as low as 26,000, nine whole rounds a year.

00:23:44:17 - 00:23:50:16

We are now going to eclipse that 54,000.

00:23:50:20 - 00:23:55:00

Wow. Number, so we've doubled it over that time.

00:23:55:00 - 00:23:58:10

And obviously the pandemic was a huge part of it.

00:23:58:10 - 00:24:03:05

It brought more people to the game,
but I would like to think a lot of it has been

00:24:03:05 - 00:24:08:01

the significant amount of investment
we've made as a city to our property.

00:24:08:06 - 00:24:10:07

And,

00:24:10:09 - 00:24:12:10

we will finish this year.

00:24:12:10 - 00:24:18:00

We back we're back
open again today after a little brief, pause for snow last week.

00:24:18:00 - 00:24:24:17

But I anticipate by the end of December I'll be showing you roughly

00:24:24:19 - 00:24:28:23

9000 more rounds of golf, played just at Mount Ogden

00:24:28:23 - 00:24:34:22

for the calendar year of 2025, and 5000 more played at El Monte.

00:24:34:22 - 00:24:41:13

So 14,000 rounds of growth in comparison to 2024 and 2024

00:24:41:13 - 00:24:48:13

was the high watermark over a 25 year
period at El Monte and 20 at Mount Ogden.

00:24:48:16 - 00:24:53:02

Nice. So what kind of increase to be seeing last year.

00:24:53:02 - 00:25:00:15

20 2424 over 23 saw about half of that amount.

00:25:00:17 - 00:25:03:07

And so yeah, it just it's continued to trend up.

00:25:03:07 - 00:25:07:22

I mean, I never thought I'd see a time
when you would fill every tee time

00:25:07:22 - 00:25:12:17

at 630 in the morning at El Monte,
when the canyon winds blowing 25 to 30 miles an hour.

00:25:12:18 - 00:25:16:06

Right. But were there on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

00:25:16:06 - 00:25:21:23

And there's only X amount of start times
available in in the northern Utah area.

00:25:21:23 - 00:25:24:23

And we're not building any more new golf courses up this way.

00:25:24:23 - 00:25:32:12

So I look to see it continue to grow,
especially at Mount Ogden with some of the things we've done.

00:25:32:14 - 00:25:36:10

Yeah, that's those are phenomenal reports, great numbers.

00:25:36:10 - 00:25:40:05

Yeah. It's been. Fun. In getting back to the beginning of the podcast,

00:25:40:07 - 00:25:42:05

we're talking about,

00:25:42:05 - 00:25:46:19

we've talked about Browns played active recreation,
meaningful social connections.

00:25:46:19 - 00:25:49:18

Right? Yes. Active and healthy lifestyles.

00:25:49:18 - 00:25:52:20

At some point that translates into revenue to

00:25:52:20 - 00:25:58:06

and now we are in the black in the operation,
which means we're not asking taxpayers to help subsidize.

00:25:58:06 - 00:26:00:04

It's correct. Right? Yes.

00:26:00:04 - 00:26:05:21

Which means we can make those investments back into the golf course
with the revenues that we're generating.

00:26:05:23 - 00:26:09:09

So there'll be a self fulfilling operation.

00:26:09:09 - 00:26:12:11

Absolutely. Self-supporting.
So it's a. Self-supporting, self-sustaining.

00:26:12:11 - 00:26:19:14

And it's always been, my philosophy
that, this was my goal back during the lean years

00:26:19:14 - 00:26:24:22

that once we get to the break
even point, we'd want to create a little bit of a rainy day fund,

00:26:25:00 - 00:26:30:00

a little bit of a cash reserve and cash balance
for anything that may come up, but the rest of that money

00:26:30:00 - 00:26:37:03

would be reinvested back into the infrastructure of the golf courses,
because golf is a competitive market right now.

00:26:37:03 - 00:26:43:02

And in order to attract people,
to play your golf course, you've got to constantly be improving it.

00:26:43:02 - 00:26:47:17

And some of our competitors,
have done a tremendous job of that over the years.

00:26:47:17 - 00:26:51:17

We had a little bit of a
a lean period where we weren't able to do as much.

00:26:51:17 - 00:26:54:19

And now we are investing.

00:26:54:19 - 00:26:58:00

I never thought I'd see this day in my career.
It's just exciting. Really.

00:26:58:00 - 00:26:58:08

Yeah.

00:26:58:08 - 00:27:04:18

I just never thought I'd get to a point before
I was ready to retire that we would be able

00:27:04:18 - 00:27:11:01

to tackle irrigation systems and building
new cart sheds to store our city assets.

00:27:11:02 - 00:27:15:15

Well and build a new car shed.
I mean, that thing is about to fall over. It's World War. Two.

00:27:15:15 - 00:27:18:08

It was literally like, yep, tipping over.

00:27:18:08 - 00:27:22:17

Yeah, well, it's tipping the other way
toward away from the winter, right? That's correct.

00:27:22:17 - 00:27:22:23

Yeah.

00:27:22:23 - 00:27:25:17

So I just never thought I'd get to that point where I'd see that.

00:27:25:17 - 00:27:29:04

And it's so it's a lot of fun to actually manage projects.

00:27:29:04 - 00:27:33:16

And we have so many talented people in the city that I lean on to help.

00:27:33:16 - 00:27:37:07

Yeah, well, they're talented,
but they're really passionate. Do they carry on,

00:27:37:09 - 00:27:39:10

care about place people in this town care about this town?

00:27:39:10 - 00:27:40:01

They do.

00:27:40:01 - 00:27:44:15

So it's more than just investing themselves in the course
or in this project.

00:27:44:15 - 00:27:46:06

It's about this town.

00:27:46:06 - 00:27:47:18

Yes. People give a lot.

00:27:47:18 - 00:27:50:21

Absolutely. We get more out of people here because they care more.

00:27:50:21 - 00:27:52:18

We do. Right.

00:27:52:18 - 00:27:54:22

Well, I,

00:27:54:22 - 00:27:59:17

one thing I was just thinking about when you talked about irrigation improvements.

00:27:59:22 - 00:28:04:07

I mean, imagine how much water we're saving by not dragging hoses around.

00:28:04:07 - 00:28:10:00

Yeah, and then think about how much, staff salary we're saving.

00:28:10:00 - 00:28:12:02

Well, you're relying on the human element, too.

00:28:12:02 - 00:28:17:06

You're hoping that that guy out there is sets that water and then watches his time and you're.

00:28:17:09 - 00:28:20:03

There's no guarantees putting around the correct amount of water. Right.

00:28:20:03 - 00:28:23:07

Especially he doesn't put down enough. It'll show up right. Heat of the summer.

00:28:23:07 - 00:28:24:22

If he's putting down too much.

00:28:24:22 - 00:28:29:05

They're probably edging on the side of too much, which is just wasteful in water.

00:28:29:05 - 00:28:36:04

But then it's also that adds up in terms of hourly compensation for an employee to go out and move a move hose and move pipe.

00:28:36:04 - 00:28:41:11

And we got to a point where we couldn't even find people to do it, because being out there in the middle of the night is kind of scary.

00:28:41:11 - 00:28:43:15

And especially at Monte when the winds howling.

00:28:43:15 - 00:28:45:02

Yeah, and things like that.

00:28:45:02 - 00:28:49:21

But, you know, a lot of times these big ticket items sometimes are a hard sell

00:28:50:01 - 00:28:55:18

for golf professionals to take to their, their, their municipalities because they are big ticket.

00:28:55:18 - 00:28:59:19

But if you look at the conservation of water is such a big deal.

00:28:59:19 - 00:29:00:14

It's a huge deal.

00:29:00:14 - 00:29:09:00

And the more updates we make to our system, it pays off in the long run because now everything's on a timer.

00:29:09:05 - 00:29:11:18

If a leak popped, it can be immediately.

00:29:11:18 - 00:29:12:21

Checked and it's.

00:29:12:21 - 00:29:13:23

Detected and shut down.

00:29:13:23 - 00:29:21:10

And Mount Ogden currently right now, as you know, we'll be starting that one this spring, with the goal to finish that,

00:29:21:14 - 00:29:23:07

once we start this spring.

00:29:23:07 - 00:29:29:23

But right now, the current technology we have up there, if we break a leak on that hillside,

00:29:30:01 - 00:29:30:09

it's.

00:29:30:09 - 00:29:33:01

And it's happens at night. We don't find it until in the morning.

00:29:33:01 - 00:29:35:04

That's all. Waterways is a.

00:29:35:04 - 00:29:38:12

Lot of waste. And historically, unfortunately, that's happened quite a bit.

00:29:38:12 - 00:29:42:11

Yeah. Improving the infrastructure that won't happen going forward. That's great.

00:29:42:11 - 00:29:48:15

And then we also you know this because you're preparing on your end for all the information I requested for my budget.

00:29:48:15 - 00:29:50:11

Yes, budget retreats.

00:29:50:11 - 00:29:57:01

And going into my process in the budget where I'm receiving all the information and asking for projections and,

00:29:57:03 - 00:30:01:15

different costs and adjustments, etcetera, but also capital requests.

00:30:01:15 - 00:30:04:05

And so on.

00:30:04:05 - 00:30:09:21

These operational efficiencies are part of our considerations now for what we fund and what we don't fund.

00:30:09:23 - 00:30:14:15

So I wanted to know if we invest

00:30:14:15 - 00:30:19:02

X dollars into this capital project,
how much is that going to save us in efficiency?

00:30:19:02 - 00:30:21:08

How many hours saved will that mean?

00:30:21:08 - 00:30:26:13

How much how many man hours times their compensation does that equal to?

00:30:26:15 - 00:30:28:23

And then where will we take that time and apply it to?

00:30:28:23 - 00:30:36:06

Or what will we do if they have an FTE or a position
that's no longer needed because we're automating it? Yes.

00:30:36:06 - 00:30:39:05

Where do we apply it to for other needs in the city? Right, absolutely.

00:30:39:05 - 00:30:45:12

Those are now the considerations for our budget moving forward,
which you would think that those would be always be the thing.

00:30:45:12 - 00:30:49:05

But these are these are some of the what I call common sense.

00:30:49:05 - 00:30:54:11

But they're the more analytical things that we're doing
for our budget decisions, for what I propose for City Council

00:30:54:11 - 00:30:56:08

to consider in the future. Right, absolutely.

00:30:56:08 - 00:31:03:01

You know, and one of the things that, I've pointed out to Justin
Anderson a few times as we've been up overlooking,

00:31:03:01 - 00:31:12:01

some of our projects, is once we replace that system at Mount Ogden,
I mean, it's well beyond its useful life.

00:31:12:03 - 00:31:14:18

My superintendent and his

00:31:14:18 - 00:31:19:22

entire crew now have time during the summer to tackle more projects.

00:31:19:22 - 00:31:24:01

Because from the second we turn the water on to the second,
we turn it off.

00:31:24:01 - 00:31:25:17

When secondary goes off.

00:31:25:17 - 00:31:29:12

My team has a leak crew throughout the summer. Wow.

00:31:29:12 - 00:31:39:05

Once the infrastructure is replaced, all those talented hands free up to do tee box renovation and continue to haircut that entire property.

00:31:39:05 - 00:31:43:14

And I'm I've widened it over time. I'm not even close to being done.

00:31:43:14 - 00:31:45:11

We got a long ways to go.

00:31:45:11 - 00:31:49:13

Anything you could do to make it a little easier for guys like me would be for me as well.

00:31:49:13 - 00:31:53:10

I like. Well, you keep it in the fairway pretty well. I've golfed with you. You know.

00:31:53:10 - 00:31:55:08

I try. Yeah.

00:31:55:08 - 00:31:56:16

You're so.

00:31:56:16 - 00:32:02:04

Not all of us are golf pros, you know, but, But yeah, that's the point is that we're,

00:32:02:06 - 00:32:06:10

It's like, every investment is an investment in and of itself, you know what I mean?

00:32:06:10 - 00:32:09:13

It's like it catalyzes into more savings. Absolutely.

00:32:09:13 - 00:32:14:00

Which creates a change in our operation that allows us to achieve more savings and more.

00:32:14:00 - 00:32:18:07

And that's how you get kind of a this hockey stick. Of absolutely.

00:32:18:07 - 00:32:22:23

Of of savings and efficiencies and achievement results.

00:32:22:23 - 00:32:23:16

Absolutely.

00:32:23:16 - 00:32:28:22

And but it's not just the financial piece that all of that translates back into participation.

00:32:29:00 - 00:32:30:01

Translates back to it.

00:32:30:01 - 00:32:37:03

Because, you know, as that irrigation and for example, just at Mount Ogden, once we can really control irrigation

00:32:37:03 - 00:32:42:10

and put water where we need it and water
where we don't, that playing surface is going to change.

00:32:42:12 - 00:32:48:00

The fairways will be better,
the tees will be better, the greens will be better.

00:32:48:02 - 00:32:50:14

The golf course will play differently.

00:32:50:14 - 00:32:56:18

And I really look forward to seeing that
because I don't like to play a golf course that's too wet.

00:32:56:20 - 00:33:03:00

And the public who come and invest their their hard
earned money with us, they don't like to see it.

00:33:03:00 - 00:33:06:16

If it's too dry, you're always walking that balance.

00:33:06:16 - 00:33:07:01

Yeah.

00:33:07:01 - 00:33:12:00

When it comes to golf courses and how they should look.

00:33:12:02 - 00:33:15:02

Well, I'm really proud and impressed with the work you've done.

00:33:15:02 - 00:33:19:16

You just you
I mean, you with us your entire life, your your whole professional.

00:33:19:16 - 00:33:21:15

I'm a 24 seven golf.

00:33:21:15 - 00:33:22:06

You are heard.

00:33:22:06 - 00:33:27:00

I wish I had more hobbies outside of it, but it's it's a labor of love.

00:33:27:00 - 00:33:30:16

It is, it shows. Thank you. It really does. No. Thank you.

00:33:30:16 - 00:33:33:00

I think that,

00:33:33:02 - 00:33:38:06

Well, the given the time of year, I mean, this is where

00:33:38:08 - 00:33:42:05

I have spent before, like,

00:33:42:05 - 00:33:44:21

really becoming, I don't know, a golfer.

00:33:44:21 - 00:33:47:03

I really stretch to call myself that.

00:33:47:03 - 00:33:57:04

But the most time I have ever spent on the golf course was those early years in my kids lives when they were little duffers,

00:33:57:06 - 00:34:02:23

put them in their snow gear,
and there's some of the best snow hill snow sledding in the in the city.

00:34:03:01 - 00:34:05:16

Absolutely right. Yes.

00:34:05:16 - 00:34:11:02

And that's something that we're able to provide.

00:34:11:04 - 00:34:15:17

Now because of the revenues we've generated in this system.

00:34:15:17 - 00:34:16:09

Correct.

00:34:16:09 - 00:34:24:02

So all of the golf fund and the golf resources using the
the revenue generated from rounds and participation

00:34:24:04 - 00:34:28:23

are about to now go into the winter season
to provide outdoor recreation for the winter season.

00:34:29:01 - 00:34:29:19

Absolutely.

00:34:29:19 - 00:34:38:09

Once we get some snow on the ground and I can get,
you know, 4 to 6in, we'll start packing that base for for Nordic skiing.

00:34:38:11 - 00:34:41:03

And it's a it's a great workout.

00:34:41:03 - 00:34:43:17

I mean, I watch people do that every day up there.

00:34:43:17 - 00:34:48:15

And we, we love providing that service and it's free of charge.

00:34:48:15 - 00:34:54:23

It's that property is not just golf, you know, during the winter,
we've always opened our arms to, to win a recreation.

00:34:54:23 - 00:34:58:20

I mean, it's always been the great sledding hill and in Ogden's history.

00:34:58:20 - 00:35:05:01

But we've tried to take it one step further
and actually groom trails for those, Nordic enthusiasts.

00:35:05:01 - 00:35:07:23

Right. So we keep a a big cat.

00:35:07:23 - 00:35:08:19

Yeah, a groomer.

00:35:08:19 - 00:35:12:14

We've got a Polaris and a groomer up there, and my guys have studied the art.

00:35:12:14 - 00:35:18:14

Jeff McFarland, the previous superintendent, and had a lot of experience as a, as a cross-country

00:35:18:14 - 00:35:24:01

skier and spent time studying the art of grooming and passed it along now to to Matt Bain, the head superintendent.

00:35:24:01 - 00:35:27:01

And we look forward to providing that when conditions permit.

00:35:27:01 - 00:35:29:04

Yeah, I look forward to using it. Absolutely.

00:35:29:04 - 00:35:36:10

It is a good workout actually, which again, gets back to the outdoor recreation and yes, healthy lifestyles and yes, meaningful connections.

00:35:36:10 - 00:35:36:15

Right?

00:35:36:15 - 00:35:38:21

More than just golf, it's. Way more than golf.

00:35:38:21 - 00:35:41:23

And but providing that services and free.

00:35:41:23 - 00:35:46:06

No, I mean it's free to use for the public, but there's a cost behind it.

00:35:46:06 - 00:35:49:16

I know right now we're rewiring the agreement, right? Yeah.

00:35:49:16 - 00:35:51:00

Getting the groomer all ready to go.

00:35:51:00 - 00:35:55:16

We got it fired up, with the last snowstorm and realized we had a little bit of a wiring issue.

00:35:55:16 - 00:36:00:14

So they were up this last week working on it, and we're ready to go once conditions permit.

00:36:00:14 - 00:36:01:11

That's awesome.

00:36:01:11 - 00:36:07:13

Well, I think that now that we're at a point where we are, we've got participation rates where we do and then the back end,

00:36:07:13 - 00:36:14:01

the revenues, we could start talking about some investments we could make in the winter recreation using some of that fun, too.

00:36:14:05 - 00:36:16:09

Absolutely.

00:36:16:11 - 00:36:16:22

Maybe.

00:36:16:22 - 00:36:18:12

Do you have any ideas on what we could do?

00:36:18:12 - 00:36:26:22

Well, in the intent, back when we started, this was obviously golf was in the spotlight in this community and not in a positive way.

00:36:27:00 - 00:36:27:23

Right.

00:36:27:23 - 00:36:29:19

Mount Ogden for a while.

00:36:29:19 - 00:36:36:06

We labored under the idea of, is this thing staying or going?

00:36:36:08 - 00:36:39:07

And I'm proud to say that it is staying.

00:36:39:07 - 00:36:46:12

Yep. And, we are in fantastic, shape up there, but

00:36:46:14 - 00:36:50:15

one thing when we first started, it was, hey, we'll provide this service free of charge.

00:36:50:15 - 00:36:54:19

Obviously, we had to buy the equipment, but there wasn't much more thought.

00:36:54:19 - 00:36:57:06

Put into it other than just grooming a trail.

00:36:57:06 - 00:36:59:14

But where it's where we're getting now.

00:36:59:14 - 00:37:05:19

With the revenue growth of the golf fund, maybe we do look down the road

00:37:05:19 - 00:37:11:21

to actually renting some equipment where people could actually try that versus having to go up to the university to get it.

00:37:11:21 - 00:37:17:04

You know, one extra place to do to, to, to obtain those things if they want to give it a try.

00:37:17:05 - 00:37:21:00

Right? Yeah. It's fun to think about the possibilities. Yeah.

00:37:21:02 - 00:37:25:13

I take our foot off the pedal in terms of investing in the in the operation. Yes.

00:37:25:13 - 00:37:29:10

Because I think we're finally at a point where we're changing people's minds about the course.

00:37:29:10 - 00:37:32:22

I mean, it does have a reputation for being hard. Yes. Right.

00:37:32:22 - 00:37:34:22

It does, but it's changing.

00:37:34:22 - 00:37:37:04

It is. It's softening big time.

00:37:37:04 - 00:37:45:10

I mean, I've fought this reputation my entire career, and that's why we've done so much work with, you know, widening holes.

00:37:45:10 - 00:37:51:18

I mean, I ran into one of my old, junior golf friends, up at Mount Ogden recently.

00:37:51:18 - 00:37:55:15

We played a lot of high school golf together, and he played the golf course from day one like I did.

00:37:55:15 - 00:37:57:03

And he always likes to joke.

00:37:57:03 - 00:38:00:21

He says these people aren't playing the same golf course you and I grew up on.

00:38:00:21 - 00:38:09:05

He says a lot of people that may be newer to to the bone organ experience don't realize how tight and narrow that was, at one time.

00:38:09:05 - 00:38:17:18

So it's been fun to, to try to rid that, rid that shadow that's always kind of hung over us a little bit.

00:38:17:20 - 00:38:22:23

And the more people play it, they realize this is really one of the only golf courses in Utah

00:38:22:23 - 00:38:28:13

where there's only residential kind of on one hole that's disappearing across our landscape.

00:38:28:15 - 00:38:32:12

Mount Ogden rescue and nature. It's just the.

00:38:32:12 - 00:38:34:05

And it's unique. Yeah.

00:38:34:05 - 00:38:37:09

And the views, you can't find them anywhere else.

00:38:37:09 - 00:38:41:15

And so it's been fun to watch that reputation
get in the rearview mirror.

00:38:41:15 - 00:38:45:23

And I believe it is getting in the rearview.
I know. Well it's got other reputations too. Yes.

00:38:45:23 - 00:38:50:04

I remember one time I was on,

00:38:50:06 - 00:38:53:02

I don't know the whole numbers by heart very well,

00:38:53:02 - 00:38:57:21

but I chipped up on the green, which was a rarity in and of itself.

00:38:58:00 - 00:38:59:07

And, I was so excited.

00:38:59:07 - 00:39:03:02

I was like, yes, you know, and,

00:39:03:02 - 00:39:08:19

watched a dog run on to the green and it picked up my ball and ran off.

00:39:08:21 - 00:39:09:16

True story.

00:39:09:16 - 00:39:14:05

I'd like to say that's the only time that's happened,
but I get those stories right.

00:39:14:05 - 00:39:17:05

Everybody that's golf there has had those. Yes, yes.

00:39:17:05 - 00:39:23:17

And we made a difficult decision this year to, to manage access
to the course again like it's always been intended. Yes.

00:39:23:17 - 00:39:27:22

And that was not very popular.
But for some and I totally understand why.

00:39:27:22 - 00:39:32:00

I mean, the trails are exceedingly valuable around that, that area.

00:39:32:00 - 00:39:32:18

Absolutely.

00:39:32:18 - 00:39:38:19

But over time we when you're not kind of holding the line,
people kind of start making their way in and out.

00:39:38:19 - 00:39:40:01

Yes. Right.

00:39:40:01 - 00:39:42:17

And we just saw it over time, it really.

00:39:42:17 - 00:39:46:15

It really got I got. To roll.

00:39:46:17 - 00:39:51:01

You were telling me that we have seen less vandalism this year.

00:39:51:01 - 00:39:57:11

Yes. This is, I had a meeting with our golf course superintendent the other day, and he came in and gave me some figures.

00:39:57:11 - 00:39:59:11

That kind of

00:39:59:11 - 00:40:06:18

made me take pause for just a second, because I couldn't remember a season in the last 20 years that I've been responsible

00:40:06:18 - 00:40:12:10

for the operation of Mount on a golf course, that we didn't have significant damage to at least one of our putting greens.

00:40:12:15 - 00:40:17:06

I mean, I'm talking holes dug as big around as that table

00:40:17:06 - 00:40:22:09

in the green to ebikes spinning their wheels.

00:40:22:11 - 00:40:26:05

This was the first year we haven't experienced that.

00:40:26:05 - 00:40:30:01

This is the first year that we. Yeah,

00:40:30:01 - 00:40:38:09

this is also the first year that we didn't have any flagstick stolen when we were averaging about 12 per year.

00:40:38:11 - 00:40:42:00

That's about \$65 roughly a stick.

00:40:42:00 - 00:40:44:00

Yeah, but the end of the world. Not the end of the world.

00:40:44:00 - 00:40:46:13

But it's it's a hit to your budget.

00:40:46:13 - 00:40:49:08

Bunker rakes. We'd lose about 12 of those a year.

00:40:49:08 - 00:40:52:04

Those are \$150 a rake.

00:40:52:06 - 00:40:54:18

Tee markers, I mean, you name it about.

00:40:54:18 - 00:40:57:00

About the bathrooms.

00:40:57:00 - 00:41:00:13

This was a unique year for bathroom maintenance.

00:41:00:13 - 00:41:09:00

He reported to me that he thought that the manpower required to clean up

00:41:09:02 - 00:41:11:15

had dropped maybe 75%.

00:41:11:15 - 00:41:13:20

Unreal. Unreal.

00:41:13:20 - 00:41:18:15

In in restroom maintenance
and just the vandalism that occurs to the restroom.

00:41:18:16 - 00:41:23:05

And so it well so yeah, I this I've never seen anything like that.

00:41:23:05 - 00:41:31:10

And so I do have to attribute a lot of that to the steps
we took this year to kind of restrict access.

00:41:31:12 - 00:41:39:21

And I believe it really paid off in a significant uptick
in the rounds being played, based on the feedback from the customer.

00:41:39:23 - 00:41:44:03

So what is that?
What is that feedback I've got? I get feedback from both sides.

00:41:44:03 - 00:41:52:15

And we did a survey asking the public,
do you want us to maintain the closure, or do you want us to provide

00:41:52:17 - 00:42:03:00

a cut through access and sentiments were honestly roughly split
with a little bit more people saying don't provide that kind of access.

00:42:03:02 - 00:42:05:00

But roughly even

00:42:05:00 - 00:42:10:04

so that didn't help me get a good sense for one way or the other,

00:42:10:06 - 00:42:15:18

but just goes to show that there's
a, there's competing interest in recreation in the same area. Ish.

00:42:15:23 - 00:42:17:14

Yes. Right. Absolutely.

00:42:17:14 - 00:42:23:08

But it kind of did reinforce what the original architects came up with
was you have, of course,

00:42:23:10 - 00:42:28:13

it's such a tight mountainous terrain that there's not clear cut through
that are spacious.

00:42:28:13 - 00:42:29:02

Correct.

00:42:29:02 - 00:42:33:08

Have to have good, spacious separation.
But there are ways to get through it.

00:42:33:08 - 00:42:39:08

But you definitely will interact with each other,
which isn't quite the end of the world, but

00:42:39:10 - 00:42:42:20

but it kind of reinforced the original plan and design from our fourth.

00:42:42:20 - 00:42:43:14

Correct.

00:42:43:14 - 00:42:46:00

To have a loop called Gibbs Loop.

00:42:46:00 - 00:42:47:13

The company goes around it.

00:42:47:13 - 00:42:50:08

Yes, which we then that goes away.

00:42:50:08 - 00:42:53:13

They'll come this time of year and everybody can access.
Everybody can access it.

00:42:53:13 - 00:42:55:03

I did get a lot of feedback.

00:42:55:03 - 00:42:58:21

You know, one thing I used to run into from time to time
when I'd bump into,

00:42:58:21 - 00:43:04:20

you know, I get I take one day off a week to generally
go play another facility because I want to see how we match up.

00:43:05:01 - 00:43:07:22

And it's a big part of my business plan every year.

00:43:07:22 - 00:43:11:19

And where I come up, I never come up with any good ideas on my own.
I just steal them.

00:43:11:19 - 00:43:16:08

But industry experts but, I would run into a group of

00:43:16:08 - 00:43:21:06

guys that maybe I hadn't seen for a while and I'd say, hey,
how come you haven't been up to Mount Ogden?

00:43:21:06 - 00:43:30:17

All these great things we're doing and more often than not, I would get
the reply, I'll come back and play when you shut the dog park down.

00:43:30:19 - 00:43:32:04

Ouch. Ouch.

00:43:32:04 - 00:43:35:08

You know what? What defense do I have to that I mean, yes.

00:43:35:08 - 00:43:37:17

So that's that's our industry reputation.

00:43:37:17 - 00:43:42:12

That's that's an industry reputation. We've always fought.

00:43:42:13 - 00:43:50:00

And I don't see any of these other golf courses
that have trails around them on the exterior.

00:43:50:02 - 00:43:57:03

I don't the golf pros have shared a lot of information
back to us that people stay on the trail.

00:43:57:05 - 00:43:58:00

They don't want to

00:43:58:00 - 00:44:03:12

be in harm's way any more than I want to put
somebody in harm's way with my own golf shot.

00:44:03:12 - 00:44:06:11

And so a lot of these people are starting to come back.

00:44:06:11 - 00:44:09:18

I mean, the rounds bear that proof.

00:44:09:18 - 00:44:12:19

The participation in participation rates.

00:44:12:19 - 00:44:16:02

Like I said, almost pushing 9000 additional rounds.

00:44:16:02 - 00:44:21:10

I know for a fact based on feedback,
a lot of people are playing Mount Ogden more

00:44:21:10 - 00:44:27:06

frequently
because they aren't having to deal with some of those distractions.

00:44:27:08 - 00:44:29:11

Right.

00:44:29:11 - 00:44:30:17

It's hard to blame them.

00:44:30:17 - 00:44:32:17

Yeah. I mean, nobody nobody wants to.

00:44:32:17 - 00:44:37:22

I mean, golf is you're always feel like you're on defense
when you're playing golf, right?

00:44:37:22 - 00:44:40:22

I mean, I never fully feel like I'm in offense.

00:44:40:22 - 00:44:46:12

You're always in a little bit of a defensive mode because you never know for sure where your golf ball's going.

00:44:46:14 - 00:44:48:09

It's you got to be okay for sure.

00:44:48:09 - 00:44:58:08

But when you're out there on the golf course and you've got non golf coming through there in many different forms, that's that's dangerous.

00:44:58:08 - 00:44:59:07

That's a distraction.

00:44:59:07 - 00:44:59:17

Right.

00:44:59:17 - 00:45:05:21

The well then the locations of the crossovers were like right where the ball would land for your team.

00:45:05:21 - 00:45:10:10

Yeah. They're in landing zones or right in front of tee areas. You know just like dangerous spots.

00:45:10:10 - 00:45:13:12

Very dangerous. But just to

00:45:13:14 - 00:45:18:10

my personal experience, I you're sitting in the tee box waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting.

00:45:18:10 - 00:45:22:03

And then people are backing up behind you, waiting, waiting, waiting in.

00:45:22:03 - 00:45:29:04

All we're waiting for is this old lady to finish walking the length of a par five hole. Yes.

00:45:29:06 - 00:45:34:01

And you're like, why am I waiting for someone that didn't pay a fee to be here?

00:45:34:01 - 00:45:34:19

You can see you.

00:45:34:19 - 00:45:36:04

You can see the frustration.

00:45:36:04 - 00:45:40:00

That's the frustration I see from the customer all the time. Right? User.

00:45:40:00 - 00:45:43:04

And if there's other places to go, why wouldn't you? Correct.

00:45:43:04 - 00:45:48:18

And it's one thing to have a reputation for being a hard course, but it's a whole nother thing to have a reputation for being the dog park.

00:45:48:20 - 00:45:53:02

That's interesting. On dog parks, we use, we use the brand new dog park

00:45:53:04 - 00:45:54:09

pretty close to the other golf, right.

00:45:54:09 - 00:45:57:06

Next to the right, next to the practice range. Absolutely.

00:45:57:06 - 00:46:01:00

My wife loves that place. It's been great.
Our new dog, Boomer owner. Oh, it's amazing.

00:46:01:00 - 00:46:02:06

It's amazing.

00:46:02:06 - 00:46:05:21

Yeah, she raves about it, but, but that's that's there.

00:46:05:21 - 00:46:07:14

And this is for golf.

00:46:07:14 - 00:46:09:07

Yes. It's it's.

00:46:09:07 - 00:46:12:04

Anyway,
I think what we're talking about is not picking one over the other.

00:46:12:04 - 00:46:16:21

It's about choosing balance and access and opportunity for all.

00:46:16:21 - 00:46:17:14

Absolutely.

00:46:17:14 - 00:46:24:17

And in my professional experience,
I've had 23 years of public public lands management for this.

00:46:24:19 - 00:46:30:19

If you don't manage, use and users and provide for it,
you end up with conflict.

00:46:30:19 - 00:46:33:16

And that's kind of where we were. We had. A lot of conflict, you know.

00:46:33:16 - 00:46:40:07

And there was a time when we were doing 26, 27,000 rounds a year where

00:46:40:09 - 00:46:48:14

maybe that, that citizen walking, running or biking through
there wasn't interacting with a golfer because we weren't as busy.

00:46:48:16 - 00:46:49:19

As big a deal with.

00:46:49:19 - 00:46:54:11

The participation at the level
it is now. It's a completely different story.

00:46:54:11 - 00:46:59:18

And one thing I've heard kind of through

this process is I've heard a lot of the the folks

00:46:59:18 - 00:47:04:23

that like to cross through the golf course say, well,
I always stop and look and make sure it's clear.

00:47:04:23 - 00:47:12:00

And I'm here to tell you as a player on that golf course
during my entire from day one,

00:47:12:02 - 00:47:18:14

any time it's happened with me getting ready to hit a shot,
they come right out in front and sometimes it's too late.

00:47:18:14 - 00:47:23:16

You're already on the downswing, right?
You hope for the best. You know which

00:47:23:18 - 00:47:24:21

this is not okay.

00:47:24:21 - 00:47:28:12

No, but you know and I know, I know we're sitting with a golf pro.

00:47:28:12 - 00:47:30:03

Obviously we're talking about golf.

00:47:30:03 - 00:47:37:14

It doesn't mean that we're choosing golf over trails,
but I bet if we had a trail pro and we do, you know, with Marty.

00:47:37:14 - 00:47:39:06

And yes.

00:47:39:06 - 00:47:43:19

He would say a lot of the same thing,
because that is a lot of the pressure he's under is there's more

00:47:43:19 - 00:47:49:14

and more use of trails to, the same trend,
the same spikes that happened during Covid happened in trails.

00:47:49:16 - 00:47:50:20

I could agree with that.

00:47:50:20 - 00:47:54:23

I've never seen so many people on the trails
as there were during Covid as a trail user.

00:47:54:23 - 00:47:56:03

Yep. Me too.

00:47:56:03 - 00:47:57:21

Yeah, I didn't golf at all then.

00:47:57:21 - 00:48:01:11

I was that embarrassing back then, but me and my wife and kids would.

00:48:01:11 - 00:48:02:22

That was what we did.

00:48:02:22 - 00:48:06:08

And I remember we were both working at home.
The kids were studying at home.

00:48:06:08 - 00:48:08:12

We all took a break at the same time.

00:48:08:12 - 00:48:09:20

And where do we go?

00:48:09:20 - 00:48:12:10

Trails? Yes. Every time. Every day.

00:48:12:10 - 00:48:16:15

It's probably some of the healthiest days we had amongst the

00:48:16:17 - 00:48:20:02

crisis of health around the world, right? Yep.

00:48:20:02 - 00:48:24:17

But but really, what we're dealing with
is we are an outdoor recreation down.

00:48:24:17 - 00:48:26:09

Yes, we value it.

00:48:26:09 - 00:48:31:01

We invest in it. Just last night,
the city council approved the proposal.

00:48:31:01 - 00:48:38:05

I asked for, a budget transfer and a budget
opening to put an additional \$100,000 into trails.

00:48:38:07 - 00:48:43:15

And that's in addition to a 30,000 additional
that we did during the budget cycle,

00:48:43:17 - 00:48:45:17

during a previous budget opening.

00:48:45:17 - 00:48:48:05

And so \$130,000 total.

00:48:48:05 - 00:48:54:04

But what we're doing with our money is we're now
we're partnering with the Trails Foundation of Northern Utah to venue

00:48:54:06 - 00:49:01:20

firmlly we're pathways and with OTN Ogden Trail Network
to leverage that money with other grants

00:49:01:22 - 00:49:06:20

to to double it over
and know we'll put twice as much money back into our trails and.

00:49:06:21 - 00:49:07:16

Our fan test.

00:49:07:16 - 00:49:12:05

And so we're putting we're making investments in golf,
but we're also making investments in trails.

00:49:12:05 - 00:49:16:16

We're doing the golf thing on our own operation,
but we're doing the trails with our partners.

00:49:16:16 - 00:49:21:03

And so it's it's all an effort for everybody
to have access to good quality opportunity.

00:49:21:03 - 00:49:21:22

Right.

00:49:21:22 - 00:49:23:20

And it's not picking one or the other. It's not.

00:49:23:20 - 00:49:25:10

It's all the above. It's all the above.

00:49:25:10 - 00:49:31:12

And I can't tell you how much I appreciate that as a trail user,
because it has been a very important part

00:49:31:12 - 00:49:37:12

of my life, matter of fact, to the point
my wife has said we should become trail volunteers

00:49:37:14 - 00:49:42:21

when when you retire
because you've spent as much time up there as anybody do.

00:49:42:23 - 00:49:47:10

Yeah, if you can handle it by then. Yeah, exactly.
But I can enjoy the walk now. I just can't run.

00:49:47:10 - 00:49:52:19

And that feels, you know, it's not quite the same,
but it's wonderful to be up there.

00:49:52:21 - 00:49:56:07

I can still ride,
I still run, I just can't run and ride as hard and as fast as I, you.

00:49:56:07 - 00:49:57:19

Know, got to just do it differently.

00:49:57:19 - 00:50:02:19

I know, but I know intimately where that money needs to go
because I see those areas sloughing.

00:50:02:21 - 00:50:05:21

Yes, there's erosion. And cut, cut through is all over the place.

00:50:05:21 - 00:50:08:01

There's things that have been attached to for a long time.

00:50:08:01 - 00:50:11:04

So it's exciting to to have the council support last night to.

00:50:11:04 - 00:50:13:17

Absolutely. Make that budget move.

00:50:13:17 - 00:50:18:12

And now we can start leveraging partnerships for next spring
and so we can spend this next winter season

00:50:18:17 - 00:50:23:12

planning projects for the upcoming spring
and the trail season through the summer.

00:50:23:17 - 00:50:28:08

And to make all those improvements
and we'll see the same trend, you know, absent

00:50:28:08 - 00:50:32:17

absent the the revenue piece,
but the participation rates, what we're after.

00:50:32:17 - 00:50:34:07

Absolutely. We want to give people access.

00:50:34:07 - 00:50:38:16

But the more people we give access to that
can sometimes hit on the experience.

00:50:38:16 - 00:50:41:20

So we're trying to balance that same experience with the trails
too. Fantastic.

00:50:41:20 - 00:50:44:11

I appreciate all those efforts. It's an exciting time.

00:50:44:11 - 00:50:46:17

Yeah it is. Well, thanks for all of your effort.

00:50:46:17 - 00:50:52:09

Thanks for everything you've invested as a as a man
and as an employee for your whole career and your whole life.

00:50:52:11 - 00:50:53:14

Oh, it's been my pleasure.

00:50:53:14 - 00:50:57:16

I mean, I'm, I'm just Ogden all the way.
I mean, I've never wanted to leave here.

00:50:57:16 - 00:51:00:20

I wanted to make sure that I've spent my career here.

00:51:00:20 - 00:51:06:09

Got a son now that's working for Ogden City as well as you do for dad.

00:51:06:11 - 00:51:10:04

And, Yeah, we love this community.

00:51:10:04 - 00:51:12:02

Your son, Craig, he works in our police department.

00:51:12:02 - 00:51:16:21

Sent me some, crime statistics and analytics last night
that were super helpful in the city council.

00:51:16:21 - 00:51:20:20

As well. Nice. Yeah, it's a family effort.

00:51:20:22 - 00:51:22:08

But Ogden's a family town.

00:51:22:08 - 00:51:23:08

Yes, it is.

00:51:23:08 - 00:51:24:03

Good town for families.

00:51:24:03 - 00:51:25:08

Well, thanks for everything you've done, Todd.

00:51:25:08 - 00:51:29:07

We try to wrap up every episode with a call to action.

00:51:29:07 - 00:51:31:10

I can't imagine

00:51:31:10 - 00:51:39:05

not ending today's episode by challenging the viewers
and our listeners to to get out and recreate the mom.

00:51:39:05 - 00:51:40:02

I did.

00:51:40:02 - 00:51:48:07

Yes. Obviously, we're kind of in the final days of the season,
if not the final day, but that doesn't mean you can't find a way.

00:51:48:09 - 00:51:49:01

Absolutely.

00:51:49:01 - 00:51:56:20

If you want to go out and run in the snow trail,
run them through the snow and through the trails, cross-country ski.

00:51:56:22 - 00:51:59:18

Walk your dog through the prop dog.

00:51:59:18 - 00:52:01:05

Go snow sledding.

00:52:01:05 - 00:52:04:20

Right? Absolutely. Whatever it is, get out there and get active.

00:52:04:20 - 00:52:05:14

That's the goal.

00:52:05:14 - 00:52:06:02

That's the goal.

00:52:06:02 - 00:52:07:10

If we all get out there, we get active.

00:52:07:10 - 00:52:11:03

We can get it be more healthy and be more connected as a as a community.

00:52:11:03 - 00:52:16:10

And the more we can do that together, the the even stronger
we can become as families and his friends and as a as a community as.

00:52:16:10 - 00:52:19:11

All right. Absolutely. I'm just glad to be a part of all of it.

00:52:19:11 - 00:52:20:15

There you go. So there's a challenge.

00:52:20:15 - 00:52:22:18

Get out there and get in Ogden's trails.

00:52:22:18 - 00:52:26:10

Go use Ogden Mount Ogden golf course. Go use our golf course.

00:52:26:10 - 00:52:31:16

Whether it's for golfer, for recreation,
those assets and a manager there for you.

00:52:31:18 - 00:52:32:21

And they're not there by accident.

00:52:32:21 - 00:52:33:18

They're made to happen.

00:52:33:18 - 00:52:37:21

Made to happen by people like Todd Brenkman. Todd,
thanks for being here with us today.

00:52:37:21 - 00:52:40:04

Thank you. Thanks. Pleasure. Thanks for being on our team.

00:52:40:04 - 00:52:45:02

I wouldn't want any other golf pro in the world, in our city
and on my team than, you.

00:52:45:04 - 00:52:47:10

Know, I sure appreciate that. Thank you very much.

00:52:47:10 - 00:52:47:22

Thank you.

00:52:47:22 - 00:52:49:11

Okay, until next time. That's a wrap.

00:52:49:11 - 00:52:54:06

This is the Ogden Way podcast
telling the story of Todd Brenkman and the story of Ogden.

00:52:54:06 - 00:52:55:10

Thanks, everybody for joining us.

00:52:55:10 - 00:52:57:19

And until next time, stay good.

00:52:57:19 - 00:53:01:01

Stay true. Do good things and, do it for the right reasons.

