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Have you ever noticed how many abandoned and run-down buildings there are in the city of Reading? How about the deteriorating state of the sidewalks? What about how adults are always encouraging kids to get involved in extra curricular activities, such as sports, so they stay out of trouble? The thing is some kids can't afford to get involved in any extra curricular activities, even though they want to. I love this city, I lived here almost my whole life, but I think that if some things were improved, including these three things, Reading could be a much better and safer place to live.

I've found myself counting how many abandoned and run-down buildings I see on a block. These buildings make our city look ugly and provide a place for crime. These buildings attract drug dealers, drug users, and other criminals. I think we should tear down or repair these buildings. There are a few things we could use this space for. The city could make apartments that go by income in the abandoned buildings they fix. This will help people who are trying to work and afford a place to live, but are having financial problems. In the space we tear down buildings, we could make public parking lots. It's hard to find a parking space a lot of the time and if we had public parking lots it would make it a lot easier. In other places the city should make parks. There are a few parks already, but they are not supervised and have become a very unsafe environment for children. It would be nice to have parks where parents could send their children and not have to worry.

When I walk down the sidewalk I can't help but notice how deteriorated some sidewalks look. There's trash everywhere and the sidewalks are very uneven. I think the community should get involved and clean them up. Also I think the city should get funds

to fix the sidewalks. They're dangerous because people can fall and get hurt. Once the sidewalks are fixed they should put trashcans and recycling bins in many places around the city so the sidewalks stay clean.

Adults are always encouraging kids to get involved in extra curricular activities, such as sports. Some kids want to join sports teams and other activities, but don't because they cannot afford it. I think the city should organize free activities, within walking distance. They should do the same thing as sports teams that cost money, but the people participating won't have to pay. If there are free programs kids will be more likely to join, and less likely to get in trouble. Free extra curricular activities could make a big difference in our community.

Even though my suggestions cost money, they could help in a lot of good ways too. Tearing down the abandoned buildings, fixing the sidewalks, and free extra curricular activities are three things that I think could help make our community better.