

# GUIDE TO RIGHT-OF-WAY VACATION



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT

This document is designed to assist individuals applying for a right-of-way vacation with the City. It is strongly recommended that you contact the Planning and Zoning Division before applying at [cityplanning@dearborn.gov](mailto:cityplanning@dearborn.gov)

The following steps outline the right-of-way vacation process:

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## SUBMIT APPLICATION TO THE PLANNING & ZONING DIVISION

The required application documents are:

1. \$900 right-of-way vacation fee
2. A signature page from all other adjacent/impacted property owners (if applicable), and
3. Alley Vacation Affidavit signed by the property owner and/or applicant.

The Planning & Zoning division will coordinate with other relevant City departments (as necessary), and gather additional information on how the right-of-way vacation will impact city business such as utility access, trash pickup, and public safety. This includes getting a recommendation from the **City Engineer** who will determine if it is necessary for the city to retain an easement for utility purposes.

*Planning & Zoning staff will contact you if they require additional information and will schedule the request for the next available Planning Commission meeting.*

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## PLANNING COMMISSION *(Makes a recommendation to City Council)*

- Right-of-way vacations are first required to go in front of the Planning Commission. As a part of this process, notifications will be sent to all properties within 300 feet of the subject property. In addition, all utility companies that provide service within the City of Dearborn will also be notified of the request. This allows the utility companies to provide their input and feedback which may be necessary if they have infrastructure that is located within that area. These notifications will include the time, date, and place of the public hearing as well as a description of the request.
- The Planning Commission is **a recommending body** to City Council, and may recommend Approval or Denial of the right-of-way vacation.
- The Planning Commission meets monthly (see page 2 of this document for the scheduled meeting dates and application deadlines).

*Note: the applicant and/or designer must be in attendance for the Planning Commission meeting.*

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## CITY COUNCIL *(makes the final determination on the alley vacation request)*

- A Right-of-Way vacation typically requires two (2) meetings (1 Committee of Whole Meeting + 1 City Council Meeting) before it can be formally approved; however, *City Council may hold additional hearings if it is considered necessary.*
- After the Planning Commission meeting, the proposed vacation will be reviewed by City Council who makes the final determination on the request.

*It is recommended that a representative be in attendance for all all City Council meetings*

The Planning Commission 2026 meeting schedule and application deadlines are as follows:

Planning Commission 2026 Meeting Schedule	Application Deadlines
Monday, January 26	Friday, December 19, 2025
Monday, February 9	Friday, January 16, 2026
Monday, March 9	Friday, February 13
Monday, April 13	Friday, March 20
Monday, May 11	Friday, April 17
Monday, June 8	Friday, May 15
Monday, July 13	Friday, June 18
Monday, August 10	Friday, July 17
Monday, September 14	Friday, August 21
Monday, October 12	Friday, September 18
Monday, November 9	Friday, October 23
Monday, December 7	Friday, November 13

## WHY CLOSE ALLEYS?

Closing an alley eliminates dirty, messy conditions and creates a more stable, cleaner neighborhood. It also prevents the possibility of criminals gaining access to your home from the alley.

## REUSE OF THE ALLEY

The extra land now used for alley, may be joined onto your lot to make a larger yard. In this extra space you may extend your lawn, enlarge your garden, or have extra play space for your children. You may move your fence to the new property line, or you may leave the space unfenced.

## EASEMENT

An easement is normally retained in the former alley for the City and utility companies to have access to sewers, utility poles, and overhead lines. You may not build any permanent structures such as a garage or a masonry wall in the easement.

## ALLEY CLOSING PROCEDURE:

- After your alley has been vacated, the Public Works Department will make the following improvements:
  1. A survey will be made of the alley to determine proper grade and if drainage is adequate.
  2. Cinder and gravel will be removed from the alley and, if additional drainage is necessary, it will be installed.
  3. Fill dirt will be brought in to replace the removed stone and cinder and will be properly graded.
  4. The centerline of the alley, normally the new property line, will be staked so that property owners may proceed with fencing.
- The additional land added to your lot will not change your City assessment or taxes.
- All work performed by the Public Works Department in converting the alley into an easement is done at no expense to the property owner.