CITY OF

Ypsilanti

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Alley Closures & Vacations

Chapter 94

This Fact Sheet is not a substitute for the ordinance, but addresses common questions about City ordinances. For further information, please call the Building Department.

All permit applications are available from the Building Department and at cityofypsilanti.com/permits.

Completed applications may be dropped off at the Building Department.

City Hall

One South Huron
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Building
3rd Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 482-1025
cityofypsilanti.com/building

Planning
4th Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 483-9646
cityofypsilanti.com/planning

Historic District
4th Floor, City Hall
Phone: (734) 483-9646
cityofypsilanti.com/hdc

All permits, fees, and factsheets can be found at cityofypsilanti.com/permits.

An alley is a public right-of-way, much like a street or sidewalk. It is a secondary means of access to adjoining properties, meant for occasional or light use. It is not intended to function as a road or a primary means of access. These alleys are usually dedicated when an area is platted initially. Due to changes in traffic or other circumstances, owners of adjoining property may wish for the alleys to be closed or vacated.

Alley Closure: closes the alley to vehicle through traffic with the placement of a barrier, usually located about halfway through the alley. The alley remains open to pedestrians and bicyclists, and can be used by adjoining property owners for access. Alley remains the property of the city and is the City's responsibility to maintain.

Alley Vacation: When an alley is vacated, the City gives up ownership of the alley to the neighbors. The alley is "split down the middle" among the adjoining properties, and becomes the responsibility of the neighbors to maintain and/or obstruct, as they so choose. If utilities are located in the alley (electric, gas, telephone, other), the City will require that easements remain in place for the respective authorities to access and maintain. Once the City has passed an ordinance vacating its interest in the alley, the applicant must pursue the matter in district court for a full vacation.

Applying for an Alley Closure or Vacation

Anyone may petition to close or vacate an alley using the attached application. Generally, text amendments are considered justifiable if they meet a list of criteria provided in Chapter 94 of the Code of Ordinances. Those criteria include:

- Whether the closing will create an undue burden on traffic.
- Whether the closing is necessary to address safety concerns.
- The wishes and desires of the majority of the neighborhood.
- The present and future interests of the City.

Review Process and Timeline

Once your application is received, staff will schedule a public hearing. If your application is complete and received by 4:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month, it will be heard in front of Planning Commission at their regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the following month. During the intervening time, staff will review the application, notify neighbors within 300' by first-class mail, and place a notice in the Washtenaw Legal News.

At their meeting, Planning Commission will hold a public meeting, where the public is invited to address them about the proposed vacation or closure. They also hear a staff report about the vacation or closure's appropriateness, and invite the applicant to speak. With the information they gather at this meeting, they make a recommendation to City Council.

City Council will generally hear the request and the Planning Commission recommendation at their regularly scheduled meeting on the second Tuesday of the following month. For a petition to vacate, this is heard as an ordinance amendment; for a petition to close, this is heard simply as a resolution.

City of Ypsilanti
Planning & Development Department

One South Huron • Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Phone: (734) 483-9646 • Fax: (734) 483-7260
www.cityofypsilanti.com

Non-refundable Planning Fee: $750
Escrow for barrier installation: $1000 (refundable)

ALLEY INDEFINITE CLOSURE APPLICATION

§94-271

Petition Circulated By

Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone	Fax	
E-mail		
Signature		Date

To the Honorable City Council of the City of Ypsilanti, Michigan:

We, the undersigned, being persons having an interest in property abutting on the public right-of-way, more particularly described as: *(insert description alley in question)*

_____

_____

do hereby respectfully petition the City Council to indefinitely close said public-right-of-way, pursuant to the authority given to you by the City Charter. We, the undersigned, believe that the public would benefit from this action for the following reason(s):

_____

_____

_____

Petition to Close the Alley at:

Petition summary and background	

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Comment	Date

Sketch of Alley Location:

(GOOGLE MAPS PRINTOUTS ARE ACCEPTABLE)