



COBURG CITY COUNCIL ACTION/ISSUE ITEM

Topic: Alley Update and Analysis Added to the Staff Work Plan

Meeting Date: August 10, 2021

Staff Contact: Anne Heath, City Administrator

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REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION

Add the alley analysis to the staff work plan

***Recommended Motion:** I move that the Council approve the alley analysis be added to the staff work plan*

POLICIES OR CITY COUNCIL GOAL(S)

- Livability, Health, and Vitality
 - Utilities & Infrastructure
 - Strategic Planning
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BACKGROUND

Over the last few months the Council and staff have heard complaints and concerns raised regarding alleys in the City limits. Numerous hours of staff, engineering, planning and legal time have been spent to try to resolve the issues.

The City has some alleys in which infrastructure is located and these alleys need to be retained and maintained. However, there are many alleys that were platted early in the City's history, and serve no viable purpose. In addition, there are structures in the alleys that may, **or may not** be encroaching, or permitted. Many of these structures have been in place for decades and may have been permitted decades ago but would not be permitted now. These would not be legal and would be considered encroaching with the City's current standards.

The task of addressing these alley issues individually as they come up takes valuable staff time, and is an unreasonable approach. Additionally, it can be expensive to engage legal, engineering, and surveyors for each instance.

SOLUTION

An overall analysis needs to be conducted of the alleys to determine:

1. Which alleys contain City infrastructure and need to be maintained
2. Which alleys serve no purpose and should be vacated and/or easements dissolved.
3. Determine private property encroaching in the alleys that need to be maintained by the City
4. Develop a policy for addressing encroachment in the alleys essential to the City as easements.

RECOMMENDATION AND ALTERNATIVES

Staff recommends that the Council add the Alley Analysis to the work plan to be conducted in Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023. Further, we recommend that that Mayor appoint a Councilor (s) to work with the staff on this issue. The following should be included in this discussion:

Public Works
Planning
City Recorder
City Attorney
City Engineer

This work will consider the mapped alleys, identify those that need to be maintained by the City, and make recommendations for vacation of easements. Finally, a list of properties illegally encroaching in the alleys will be developed, and a recommendation of action will be provided to the City Administrator.

Addition to the Staff Work Plan

In keeping with Council policy regarding work plan items, the Council need to vote to add this project to the Staff Work Plan.

Timing

Staff will need to work this in to the scheduled work plan items over the next fiscal year, but as soon as possible while considering other priority work plan tasks.

Alternative

The alternative is to continue to address the alley issues as they come up which is a cost to the City in staff time and professional fees, and can be very complicated as there are many different circumstances and concerns that are raised.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPACT

The budget impact will be legal fees, surveys, and location and identification of utilities

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

1. None during analysis period
 2. Public involvement may be needed at the end of the project if recommendations for use of alleys is determined by the committee
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NEXT STEPS

Form Staff Work Group

Schedule work

Make recommendations to City Administrator

Present to City Council

ATTACHMENTS

None.

REVIEWED THROUGH

Anne Heath, City Administrator

Sammy Egbert, City Recorder

Brian, Harmon, Public Works Director
