



MEMORANDUM

Date: September 10th, 2025

To: City of Madison Heights Planning Commission [September 16th, 2025 Meeting]

From: Matt Lonnerstater, AICP – City Planner

Subject: Alley Vacation Request # PEE 25-01 – Alley between 601 W. 12 Mile Road and 28767 Dartmouth Street

Note: This request was originally submitted in 2023 but was postponed and administratively closed due to lack of action. The applicant is requesting this alley vacation alongside Special Land Use request PSP #25-09 – Parking as a Principal Use - at 28767 Dartmouth.

Introduction

The Community & Economic Development Department has received a request to vacate a 17 ft.-wide improved public alley located between 601 W. 12 Mile Rd. and 28767 Dartmouth Rd. The alley also provides access to the property at 611 W. 12 Mile Road. All adjacent property owners have signed the petition.

The aerial image below depicts the location of the alley:



Background

Per Section 23-109 (*Vacation of Streets, Alleys, Etc.*) of Chapter 23 of the Code of Ordinances (*Streets and Sidewalks and Other Public Places*), City Council may consider petitions to vacate a street, alley, or right-of-way. When 100% of adjacent property owners sign the petition, City Council may consider the initial request and appoint a time not less than four weeks thereafter to establish a public hearing. If desired, City Council may, but is not required to, refer the matter to the Planning Commission for study and report back to Council.

At their September 8th, 2025 meeting, City Council set a public hearing date for the October 13th meeting, but referred the alley vacation request to the Planning Commission for study and a recommendation prior to the hearing.

The alley vacation request is associated with Special Land Use case PSP #25-05 for parking as a principal use at 28767 Dartmouth Street. If both the Special Land Use and the alley vacation are approved by City Council, the applicant intends to construct a commercial driveway and several parking spaces on the property at 28767 Dartmouth to serve the commercial property to the west.

Project Area and Utilities

The existing alley abuts three (3) properties:

- **601 W. 12 Mile Rd.** is improved with a gas station (zoned B-2, Community Business)
- **28767 Dartmouth Rd.** is improved with a single-family residence and detached garage (Zoned R-3, One-Family Residential)
- **611 W. 12 Mile Rd.** is vacant (zoned B-2, Community Business)

The alley first appears in historic aerial photographs in 1974, as shown below. Based on these photographs, the alley historically only appears to service the commercial property at 611 W. 12 Mile Road (formerly Marinelli's Restaurant).

Historic Aerial Imagery (1974)



An eight-inch (8") water line and a twelve-inch (12") sanitary sewer line are located within the existing alley right-of-way. The Department of Public Services (DPS) has reviewed the vacation request and requests the dedication of an easement. Therefore, if vacated, the City should retain a public utility easement over the full width of the vacated alley.

The alley vacation request has been sent to DTE Energy, Consumers Energy, AT&T, and Comcast for their input and approval. To date, the City has received responses from Consumers Energy, AT&T and DTE who have all indicated that they have facilities located within the easement:

Consumers Energy: Consumers Energy stated that they have underground natural gas facilities located within the alley. However, they do not object to the vacation if a 12-foot-wide easement is dedicated.

AT&T: AT&T does not object as long as a full-width easement is reserved. They have indicated that they have existing facilities within the alley, with the easement also allowing for future fiber projects.

DTE: DTE responded that they have utility equipment in the public alley in the form of overhead telephone poles/wires and does not object to the alley vacation as long as a full width easement is recorded over the vacated alley.

Staff is still awaiting a revised formal response from Comcast, who had the following comments on the previous alley vacation submittal from 2023:

Comcast: Comcast responded that they have aerial facilities within the alley, likely collocated on the DTE Energy overhead poles. Therefore, relocation of comcast facilities, if necessary, would likely be contingent upon the DTE's support of the alley vacation request.

Zoning

Per Section 3.03 of the Zoning Ordinance, whenever any street, alley or other public way within the City of Madison Heights shall be vacated, such street, alley or other public way or portion thereof shall automatically be classified in the same zoning district as the property to which it attaches. If vacated, the northern 8.5 feet of the vacated alley would attach to the gas station property and be zoned B-2, Community Business, while the southern 8.5 feet would attach to the residential property and be zoned R-3, One-Family Residential.

Next Step

Based on the Department of Public Service's comments and utility responses, planning staff does not object to the requested alley vacation. However, a full-width public utility easement will need to be recorded over the property for public utility installation, maintenance, and operation purposes including, but not limited to, water mains, sewers, conduits, storm drains, electric lines, poles, etc. Further, staff recommends the Planning Commission and City Council act upon Special Land Use case PSP 25-05 prior to taking final action on this alley vacation request, as the need for the alley vacation is directly tied to the applicant's desire to construct a private driveway/parking area on the residential parcel at 28767 Dartmouth. If the Special Land Use is denied, staff recommends that action on the alley vacation either be postponed or the application be withdrawn.

Therefore, staff advises that the Planning Commission recommend to City Council **approval of the requested alley vacation with the following conditions:**

- 1) A public utility easement shall be dedicated and recorded over the full width of the vacated alley benefitting the City of Madison Heights and utility companies for underground facilities such as water, sanitary sewer, and natural gas lines, and overhead facilities such as power lines and communication infrastructure.
- 2) Prior to formal approval of the alley vacation, the applicant shall coordinate with Comcast and any other remaining utility companies with facilities in the existing alley regarding necessary easements or facility relocation. Correspondence from such companies shall be provided to the City Planner prior to final City Council action.

Template Motion

Move that the Planning Commission hereby recommends that City Council approve alley vacation request # PEE 25-01 to vacate a 17 ft.-wide improved public alley between the properties located at 601 W. 12 Mile Rd. and 28767 Dartmouth Rd., in accordance with Section 23-109 of the Madison Heights Code of Ordinances, with the following conditions:

- 1) A public utility easement shall be dedicated and recorded over the full width of the vacated alley benefitting the City of Madison Heights and utility companies for underground facilities such as water, sanitary sewer, and natural gas lines, and overhead facilities such as power lines and communication infrastructure.
- 2) Prior to formal approval of the alley vacation, the applicant shall coordinate with Comcast and any other remaining utility companies with facilities in the existing alley regarding necessary easements or facility relocation. Correspondence from such companies shall be provided to the City Planner prior to final City Council action.