

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUANCE SYSTEM**

**DEPARTMENTAL ORDER NO. 3-2012 DATE: June 29, 2012**

**SUBJECT: DDOT Policy for Closing Public Alleys**

**I. PURPOSE**

This policy is established to provide for the consistent review of alley closure applications. DDOT's policy is to develop and maintain alleys for their traditional purposes as preferred access to off-street parking, loading facilities for individual properties and utility corridors that support off-street public services such as water, sewer and electricity, as well as solid waste and recycling collection.

In addition to their traditional purposes, alleys shall also be preserved for their value as public amenities, such as for established pedestrian and bicycle circulation within commercial centers and residential neighborhoods and for their current or potential value as green alleys which help retain storm water runoff.

**II. AUTHORITY**

This policy is authorized by the District Department of Transportation Establishment Act of 2002, effective May 21, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-137; D.C. Official Code § 50-921.01 *et seq.* (2010)) which, *inter alia*, charges DDOT with the responsibility to improve quality of life by planning and coordinating the transportation infrastructure, managing and maintaining the transportation infrastructure to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods along public rights-of-way and disposing of real property no longer needed for the transportation system.

**III. POLICY**

**A. GENERALLY:**

In general, DDOT policy shall be to preserve existing alleys, unless one of the following conditions is satisfied:

1. Steep topography or other environmental factors prevent the development and use of an unimproved alley;
2. Alley dead ends from a block face to the block interior;

3. Alley dead ends off an alley network into the block interior;
4. Real property is to be dedicated to the District for an alley to serve a similar purpose as did the alley which is to be closed; or
5. The District or the United States applies to close an alley or any part thereof where the District or the United States holds title to all the property abutting the entire alley.

**B. RESIDENTIAL ZONES:**

In addition to the general conditions stated above, the following criteria shall be considered when determining whether DDOT will support a proposed alley closing in a residential zone:

1. The alley is no longer needed for storm water management, drainage or sewer and water facilities, or alternative facilities acceptable to the Agency have been provided;
2. The alley closing will not cause a decrease in the District's pervious to impervious surface area ratio within the right-of-way, which the District determines is significant, and as such will be incompatible with the goals and objectives of the District;
3. The number of curb cuts on the block will not increase as a result of the alley closing; and
4. The alley closing shall not cause either one of the following:
  - a) An interruption of an established pattern in movement through the neighborhood and vicinity, such as the continuity of an alley through a number of blocks; or
  - b) Eliminate a bicycle or pedestrian corridor between two (2) streets that is important to those living in the community.

**C. COMMERCIAL ZONES:**

In addition to the general conditions to be considered stated above, the following criteria shall be considered when determining whether DDOT will support a proposed alley closing within a commercial zone:

1. The pedestrian environment along the commercial frontage is improved by the closing due to a reduction in the number of curb cuts;
2. The alley is replaced by a 20 foot wide or wider private driveway that shall serve as a vehicular access easement leading from a public street to the side or rear of two or more properties on the block;

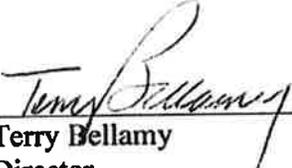
3. The closing provides for the contiguous parcel of land needed to provide a long-term public benefit, such as a park-like open space intended for public use and which may be shared by any number of properties for the purpose of on-site or off-site storm water management; and
4. The alley is not part of an established pedestrian circulation system, such as in the Green Court, NW area, or comparable pedestrian access is to be provided for public use in its place.

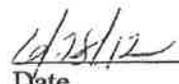
**IV. Issuance Applicability**

This Order is to be given to each DDOT employee for his or her review based on the applicability of this policy to his or her job.

**V. Effective Date**

This policy shall become effective immediately upon the execution of this Order.

  
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Terry Bellamy  
Director

  
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Date