



COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Brian Fullmer, Policy Analyst

DATE: May 6, 2025

RE: Alley Closure at Madsen Park (approximately 9 North Chicago Street)

Item Schedule:

Briefing: May 6, 2025

Set Date: May 20, 2025

Public Hearing: July 1, 2025

Potential Action: July 8, 2025

ISSUE AT-A-GLANCE

The Council will be briefed about a proposal from the Salt Lake City Department of Public Lands to close a portion of an alley within Madsen Park, between 1000 West and Chicago Street in City Council District Two. The alley is approximately 300 feet by 15.5 feet, or 1/10 acre. The alley segment does not appear to have been used as a public right-of-way for many years and has been incorporated into Madsen Park as part of a multi-purpose field and basketball court. The alley is unusable for access to any nearby properties.

The reason for the alley closure request is in preparation to consolidate various parcels that comprise Madsen Park into one to facilitate park improvements funded by the Parks, Trails, & Open Space General Obligation (GO) Bond.

Goal of the briefing: Review the alley closure and determine if the Council supports moving forward with the proposal.





Aerial image showing parcels comprising Madsen Park highlighted in yellow. The subject alley is shown with yellow dashes. Image courtesy of Salt Lake City Planning Division

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Madsen Park was selected as a Reimagine Nature Park to receive funding from the GO bond. Consolidating the parcels will allow building permits to be issued for park improvements that will be determined following a public engagement process. Building permits cannot be issued for projects that cross property lines or encroach into public rights-of-way.

City code outlines the process for vacating alleys, but not for closing them and the City retaining ownership. The proposed closure is following State code. Planning Commission review is not required under State code when an alley is closed and the City retains ownership of the property, provided it is converted to another public use. As noted in the project chronology below, a required 45-day public comment period was held. The Planning Commission did not review or make a recommendation to the Council regarding the subject alley closure.

State code (included at the end of this report) requires the City Council to hold a public hearing and adopt an ordinance to indefinitely close the alley. At least one of the following conditions must be met.

- A. The alley to be closed is not necessary for vehicular travel.
- B. The closure is necessary to correct or mitigate injury to private or public land resources on or near the portion of the alley to be closed, or
- C. The closure of the alley is necessary to mitigate unsafe conditions.

Planning staff noted that since the alley hasn't been used as a vehicular right-of-way for many years, no property relies on it for access, and the alley has never been paved, the Council may find the proposed closure is warranted under condition A.

PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

- November 14, 2024 –
 - Early notification notices mailed to all property owners and residents within 300 feet of the alley portion proposed to be closed.
 - Notice of the 45-day comment period provided to the Fairpark and Poplar Grove Community Councils.
- November 15, 2024 – Notice of the proposed alley closure posted at the property.
- November 26, 2024 – Online open house posted to the Planning Division's webpage. The open house will remain open until a City Council vote.
- April 24, 2025 – Transmittal received in City Council Office.

No comments have been received by the Planning Division or City Council Office as of the writing of this report.

ALLEY CLOSURE PROCESS

Title 72-5-105 (4), (5), and (7) (Rights of Way) in *Utah State Code* regulates closing an alley in the proposed manner.

72-5-105. Highways, streets, or roads once established continue until abandoned -- Temporary closure -- Notice.

- (4) To authorize a closure of a road under Subsection (3) or (7), a local highway authority shall pass an ordinance to temporarily or indefinitely close the road.
- (5) Before authorizing a temporary or indefinite closure as described in Subsection (4), a highway authority shall:
 - (a) hold a hearing on the proposed temporary or indefinite closure;
 - (b) provide notice of the hearing by mailing a notice to the Department of Transportation; and
 - (c) except for a closure under Subsection (3)(c)(iii), provide notice to the owners of the properties abutting the highway, as a class B notice under Section [63G-30-102](#), for at least four weeks before the day of the hearing.
- (7) (a) A local highway authority may close to vehicular travel and convert to another public use or purpose a highway, road, or street over which the local highway authority has jurisdiction, for an indefinite period of time, if the local highway authority makes a finding that:
 - (i) the closed highway, road, or street is not necessary for vehicular travel;
 - (ii) the closure of the highway, road, or street is necessary to correct or mitigate injury to private or public land resources on or near the highway, road, or street; or
 - (iii) the closure of the highway, road, or street is necessary to mitigate unsafe conditions.
- (b) If a local highway authority indefinitely closes all or part of a highway, road, or street under Subsection (7)(a)(iii), and the closed portion of road is the subject of a lease agreement between the local highway

authority and another entity, the local highway authority may not reopen the closed portion of the road until the lease agreement terminates.

(c) An indefinite closure authorized under this Subsection (7) is not an abandonment.