

**BLOOMINGTON TRAFFIC COMMISSION
AGENDA**

July 24, 2024

**4:30 P.M. –In-person and Virtual Hybrid meeting
City Hall, Council Chambers**

Online link: <https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/6359441221>

Meeting ID: 635 944 1221

Passcode: COBPT

Dial in: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Minutes**
- III. Communications from Commission**
- IV. Public Comment***
- V. Reports from Staff**
- VI. Old Business***
- VII. New Business***
 - A. TC-24-03: Limit Vehicular Access to a Portion of the Alley between E. Kirkwood Ave. and E. 4th St. – *Ryan Robling, Planning and Transportation Department*
 - B. TC-24-04: Advisory Transportation Commission Draft Review – *Ryan Robling, Planning and Transportation Department*
- VIII. Traffic Inquiries**
- IX. Adjournment**

Next meeting – August 28, 2024 – City Council Chambers

**Action Requested/Public comment prior to any vote (limited to five minutes per speaker)*

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**TRAFFIC COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Case #: TC-24-03
Date: July 24, 2024

FROM: Ryan Robling, Planning Services Manager, Planning and Transportation Department

REQUEST: Limit vehicular access to a portion of the Alley between E. Kirkwood Ave. and E.4th St.

Location: Alley-Between: E. Kirkwood Ave. and E. 4th St. from S. Walnut St. to 100' east of S. Walnut St.

Background: The Engineering and Planning & Transportation Departments received a traffic inquiry from the Uptown Cafe, a local business located along E. Kirkwood Ave. The inquiry addressed concerns regarding public safety and property damage along a portion of the alley. The inquiry aims to explore the possibility of closing a section of the alley to vehicular traffic, specifically from S. Walnut St to a point 100 feet east of S. Walnut St.

The inquirer has included some observations and analysis, summarized below. Additionally, the inquirer has included some pictures to help illustrate the concerns.

- **Safety Concerns:** The inquirer deemed the alley hazardous due to the excessive speeds of cars along the alley. Additionally, the inquirer identified the presence of business back doors opening directly onto the alley as a safety risk.
- **Inadequate Width:** The inquirer has concerns about the narrow width of the alley, which is especially unsuitable for larger vehicles, such as trucks. These larger vehicles frequently cause damage to adjacent structures, including buildings, exhaust fans, AC units, and lighting fixtures.
 - **Additional Hazards:** The installation of gas meters and high-power boxes further compounds the potential dangers associated with this alley.

Staff Response: Alleys are an important method of providing safe and efficient loading zones for businesses in the downtown. The portion of the alley in the petition is currently being utilized by the businesses along both Walnut St. and Kirkwood Ave. for this purpose. Restricting the vehicular use of this portion of the alley will remove almost 100 feet of loading zone from Walnut St., requiring additional deliveries to be made on Walnut St. While access to the alley is possible from the south through the City's 4th & Washington Lot, we have seen in other downtown locations that delivery drivers will default to the closest, safest delivery option when available. Utilization of alley delivery loading helps to decrease safety and traffic obstacles for both drivers and vulnerable road users.

Alleys, by definition, provide vehicular access to the side or rear of a property. The Bloomington Municipal Code has two definitions for alley:

Section 15.04.030 – Alley. "Alley" means a public way for vehicular travel located at the rear or side of residences or businesses.



Section 20.07.010 – Define Words. A right-of-way through or partially through a block, intended for secondary vehicular access to the rear or side of properties. However, where vehicle access from the street is not permitted or not possible, an alley may provide primary vehicle access.

The Comprehensive Plan, via the Transportation Plan, provides the following guidance:

When possible, loading zones should be relocated to alleyways to avoid conflicts between delivery trucks, motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians... Alleyways create a clear front and back to a building and provide access for services such as deliveries, trash, recycling, and more. As noted, alleys are important for removing loading zones and deliveries from streets...

As noted, this alley serves as the entrance to the City’s 4th & Washington Lot. Restricting vehicular access to this alley will limit the safety and ease of northbound traffic accessing the parking lot.

The City is currently in the process of completing a corridor study which will analyze this portion of Walnut St. for multimodal traffic as well as parking and delivery space. This proposed change to the alley could potentially impact future designs to the College and Walnut corridor.

Questions from Traffic Inquiry Process:

Have there been any instances of severe crashes in this alley? There have been no fatal or serious injury crashes in or directly adjacent to this alley in the last 20 years. The alley has not experienced any pedestrian or pedalcyclist crashes in the same period.

Is Duke Energy permitted to have installations within the alley? Duke Energy and other utility providers are allowed to install certain equipment within the right-of-way. However, property owners are not permitted to install equipment.

Title 15 Changes Required: There is no current method for closing an alley to vehicular traffic. To close the alley to vehicular traffic, Section 15.04.030 – Alley would need to be amended to change the definition to not strictly include vehicular travel. Additionally, a new section of Title 15 would need to be created to list alleyways that are closed to vehicular traffic. Potential changes would appear as follows:

15.04.030 – Alley. "Alley" means a public way for travel located at the rear or side of residences or business.

15.65 – STREETS AND ALLEYS CLOSED TO VEHICULAR TRAVEL.

SCHEDULE X

Restricted Alleys

Alley-Between	From	To
E Kirkwood Ave. and E 4 th St.	S Walnut St	~100' east of S Walnut St.

Recommendation:



Staff recommends that the Traffic Commission not act on the petition at this time, as it does not align with the Comprehensive Plan's goals for utilizing alleys for deliveries and vehicular access. Additionally, it is necessary to complete the College and Walnut Corridor Study and analyze further considerations before permanent changes are made to adjacent alleyways.



Alley looking west toward S. Walnut St. delivery vehicle parking in the alleyway.



Alley looking west toward S. Walnut St. delivery vehicle parking in the alleyway. (1/2)



Alley looking east toward S. Washington St. delivery vehicle parking in the alleyway. (2/2)



Alley looking west toward S. Walnut St. delivery vehicle parking in the alleyway.



Newly installed Duke power lines from 8/31/23



Newly installed Duke power box from 8/31/23



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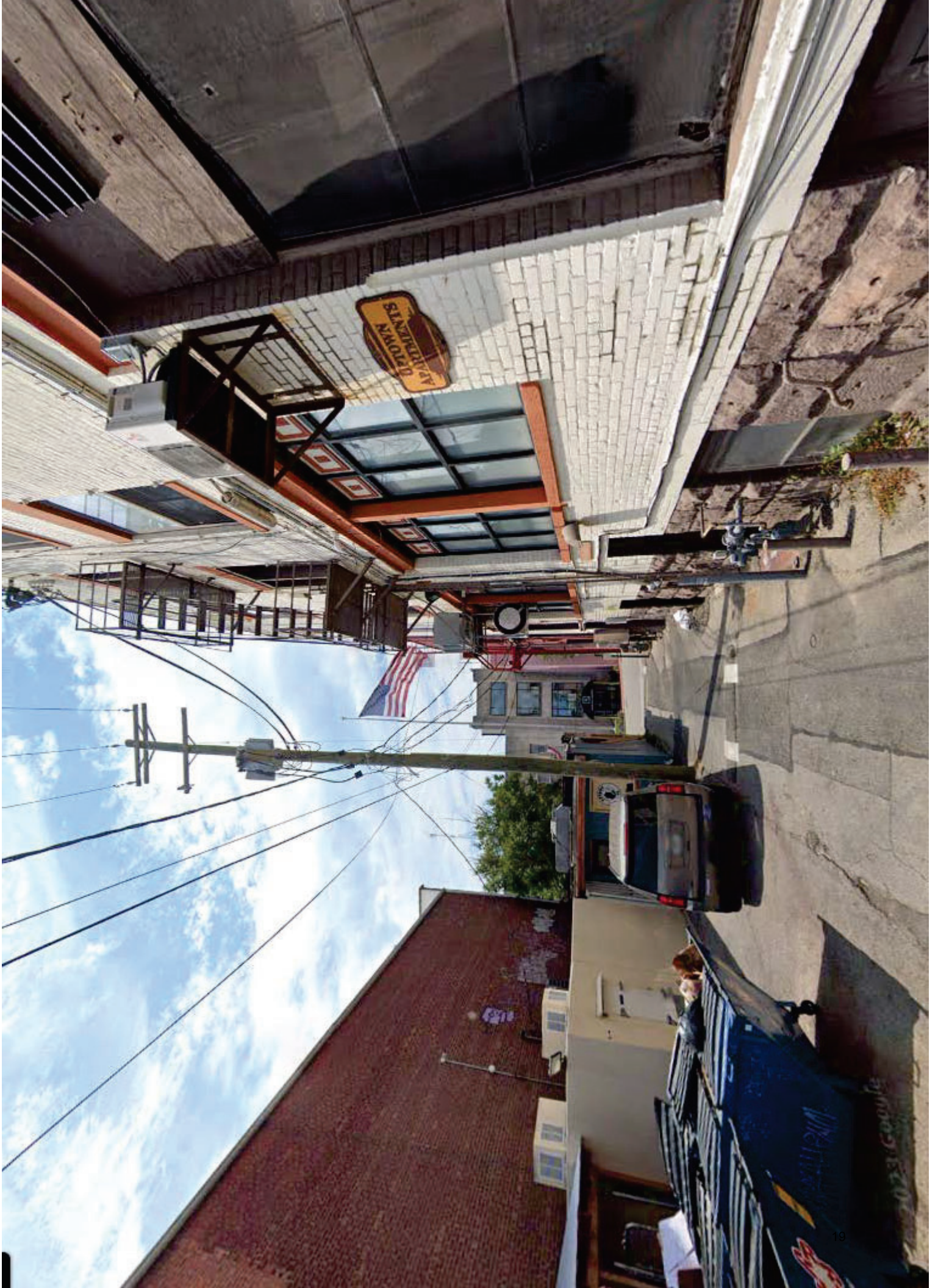


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ORDINANCE 2024-XX

TO AMEND TITLE 2 OF THE BLOOMINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE ENTITLED "ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL"

Section 2.12.070, entitled "Advisory Transportation Commission."

- (1) Purpose. The Advisory Transportation Commission (hereinafter referred to as "ATC") is established with the explicit purpose of guiding the city's transportation endeavors through a comprehensive and visionary framework which seeks to provide adequate and safe access to all right-of-way users. The ATC shall provide recommendations and guidance to the mayor and common council in the pursuit of developing and implementing a city-wide policy to eliminate all transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries to pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, motorists, and passengers; shall promote sustainable and multimodal transportation; shall foster equitable access; and shall promote deliberate integration of community-centric design. The ATC shall also serve as a standing steering committee for future transportation related studies and grant programs.
- (2) Appointments. The ATC shall consist of nine members appointed in the following manner
 - (a) One member appointed by the mayor shall be a member from the council for community accessibility or a designated representative;
 - (b) One member appointed by the mayor shall be a member of the board of public safety or a designated representative;
 - (c) One member appointed by the plan commission shall be a member or a designated representative;
 - (d) One member appointed by the board of public works shall be a member or a designated representative;
 - (e) One member appointed by the common council shall be from among its membership;
 - (f) Four members shall be appointed by the council, and shall be residents living within the city limits. Preference for appointments shall be given to persons belonging to the Bloomington/Monroe County human rights commission; board members or employees of Monroe County Community School Corporation; board members or employees of nonprofit organizations which operate at property that is owned or leased by the non-profit organization within city limits; and members of community organizations dedicated to serving marginalized groups.
- (3) Terms. Members appointed from the membership of the council for community accessibility, board of public safety, plan commission, board of public works, and common council shall serve a term coextensive with their terms on the body from which they were appointed or until that body appoints another at its

first regular meeting of the year. An appointee not serving on a body, but appointed as its representative shall serve a four-year term. Members appointed by common council not among its membership shall serve a two-year term.

- (4) Powers and Duties. The ATC powers and duties shall include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Coordinate, supervise, and, when necessary, approve transportation related studies, activities, programs, and projects, including acting as a standing steering committee for future transportation related studies and grant programs.
 - (b) Review all proposed changes to Title 15 - Vehicles and Traffic, as well as any relevant proposed changes to Title 12 - Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewers or other applicable changes to the Bloomington Municipal Code to determine if the proposed change:
 - (i) is consistent with the comprehensive plan;
 - (ii) is consistent with the best practices for eliminating all transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries within the city;
 - (iii) is consistent with promoting sustainable design, and equitable access to all transportation facility users; and
 - (iv) has provided for community-based solutions and allowed for adequate public input.
 - (c) Provide a forum for members of the public to submit transportation-related testimonials, inquires, and request;
 - (d) Conduct education activities in matters related to transportation safety in an effort to both eliminate all transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries, and promote multimodal transportation within the city.
 - (e) Make recommendations on public parking policy, including but not limited to: pricing, hours of operation, addition or removal of parking spaces, and changes when necessary to city code, enforcement procedures, or any other aspect of parking management policy;
 - (f) Applying for appropriations through the mayor, or researching and applying for grants, gifts, or other funds from public or private agencies, for the purpose of carrying out any of the provisions of this section.
- (5) Procedure and Scheduling. The ATC shall establish its own rules and procedures, subject to amendment by a majority vote. This shall include the ability to define its meeting schedule within the scope of the established rules and procedures.
- (6) Staff. The commission shall be primarily staffed by the engineering department. When serving as a steering committee the ATC shall be staffed by the planning and transportation department.