

AGENCY: Planning Commission
MEETING DATE: January 28, 2026
PREPARED BY: Alfredo Huerta
PRESENTED BY: Alfredo Huerta

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

APPLICATION NO.: Road Vacation (RV) 1-26

OWNER/APPLICANT: City of Fort Bragg

PROJECT: Vacation of a Portion of the Alley on Oak Street

REQUEST: City of Fort Bragg intends to vacate the remaining portion of a 20-foot-wide alley still considered public right-of-way. Before the City Council can act on the request, a determination of General Plan conformity must be made by the Planning Commission.

LOCATION: The North 48 feet of the east half of the 20-foot alley on the south side of Oak Street between Main Street and Franklin Street; (APN 008-163-RW). The site is not in the Coastal Zone.

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO.: 008-163-RW

ZONING: General Commercial (CG)

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The project is Categorically Exempt per §15061(b)(3) of the California Code of Regulations.

SURROUNDING LAND USE: North – CBD: Oak Street and Old Coast Hotel
South – CG: Lucy's Laundry Strip Mall
East – CG: Apartments
West – CG: Undeveloped Lot

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City has not utilized or maintained the 73-foot long dead-end alley on the south side of Oak Street between Franklin and Main Street in more than ten years. In fact, less than half of that alley is currently considered public right-of-way because of previous road vacations the

City completed. In 2013, the adjacent property owner at the south end of the alley requested the vacation of the southernmost 28 feet because he was seeking space for propane tanks and garbage dumpsters for his building (Lucy's Laundromat building). That vacation was processed successfully. And before that in 1990 the City had vacated the western half of the alley and it was deeded to the property owners to the west at the time.

Since most of the alley is now privately owned, the City intends to vacate the remaining portion that still considered public right-of-way. In order to complete this process of vacating the entire alley, the City would need to vacate the north 48' of the east half of the 20-foot alley. State Streets and Highways Code (S&H Code) requires municipalities to adhere to a specific process in order to vacate public streets and highways (includes alleys): Section 8313 S&H Code and Government Code 65402 specifically requires the Planning Agency (i.e., Planning Commission) to review the location, purpose, and extent of the vacation and report upon whether the proposed vacation is consistent with the General Plan prior to Council consideration of the vacation. The question before the Planning Commission is not a decision on the vacation itself, which will be taken up by the Council. The Planning Commission is tasked only to determine whether such a vacation conforms to the General Plan. Should the Planning Commission find the project consistent with the General Plan, Council will subsequently consider the vacation through a public hearing consistent with the requirement of Streets and Highways Code 8313.

The subject alleyway, located on the south side of the 100 block of East Oak, was deeded to the City by the lumber company as a part of the first deed to the City. The alleyway dead ends due to the presence of the Lucy's Laundry strip mall to the south and has not been utilized as a roadway or maintained by the City for many years. The dead end had been the subject of code enforcement activity in the past due to storage or abandonment of inoperable vehicles and discarded furniture. Since the vacation of the south end of the alley was processed in 2013, that has no longer been an issue. The property owners to the west are also in the process of obtaining building permits for construction of a restaurant and have expressed that maintaining their section of alley clean and orderly is a priority for the future restaurant. The subject area is not necessary for street or highway purposes.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN

The following 2012 Inland General Plan Goals and Policies are applicable to the proposed vacation of right-of-way:

Goal PF-1 Ensure that new development is served by adequate public services and infrastructure.

The property to the west of the alley is currently undeveloped. In the 2013 vacation proceedings, it was suggested that vehicular access to this property should occur from the subject alley as this would prevent an additional driveway encroachment onto Oak Street or Main Street to serve future development. For this reason, only 25 feet of the alley was proposed for vacation, while the remaining 48 feet of the alley was retained by the City.

Planning entitlements have since been granted to the property owners to the west for a new restaurant which includes a new driveway on Oak Street. Installing this new driveway was inevitable as the new driveway provided a safer entrance/exit for customers and maximized the amount of spaces that would be available in the proposed parking area at the east end of their property.

Consistency with the General Plan can be determined by the Planning Commission for this disposition since vehicular access for the parcel to the west of the alley has been worked into their project plans and thus full vacation of the alleyway will not affect access to their property. Additionally, during the review of the proposed project, public works staff determined that the project can be served with potable water from the alley and wastewater collection from Oak Street, ensuring the new development will be served by adequate public services.

Policy PF-1.2 All new development proposals shall be reviewed and conditioned to ensure that adequate public services and infrastructure can be provided to the development without substantially reducing services provided to existing residents and businesses.

Utility infrastructure is currently present in the alley, including a utility pole and underground water/sewer lines. A utility easement will be reserved to assure continued provision of utilities to nearby uses. During the 2013 proceedings, PG&E requested a four-foot-wide utility easement along the east side of the subject alley to be reserved for their anchor facilities, and that should continue. A similar easement will be needed for underground City utilities. Public Works additionally will require that no construction or structures be placed over existing valves, manholes, cleanouts or water meter boxes.

In order to assure consistency with the General Plan, a reservation of utility easements during the vacation process will assure continued utility service for nearby development. The reservation will be recorded against the vacated right of way as part of the vacation process. Specifically, a reservation will be included in the Resolution of Vacation or Abandonment for the easterly four feet of the proposed area to be abandoned in substantially similar form to the following:

RESERVING therefrom pursuant to the provisions of Section 8340 of the Streets and Highways Code and for the benefit of Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the permanent easement and the right any time and from time to time to construct, reconstruct, maintain, operate, replace, remove, repair, renew anchors, guy wires and cables, guy stubs, fixtures and appurtenances for the operation of electric and communication facilities, including access, and also the rights to trim and cut down trees and brush that may be a hazard to the facilities; said area shall be kept open and free of buildings, structures and wells of any kind.

In addition, a reservation will be inserted in the Resolution of Vacation or Abandonment for the property in substantial similar form as the following:

RESERVING therefrom pursuant to the provisions of Section 8340 of the Streets and Highways Code and for the benefit of the City of Fort Bragg, the permanent easement and the right any time and from time to time to construct, reconstruct, maintain, operate, replace, remove, repair infrastructure associated with provision of water and sewer utilities, including access, and also the rights to trim and cut down trees and brush that may be a hazard to the facilities. No construction or structures shall be placed over existing valves, manholes, cleanouts or water meter boxes.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

1. Adopt a resolution providing a determination of General Plan Consistency at this Planning Commission meeting.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION

2. Do not Adopt a resolution providing a determination of General Plan Consistency at this Planning Commission meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt a resolution finding that the proposed vacating of right-of-way is consistent with the General Plan, based on the findings and subject to conditions recommended in the resolution.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
2. Site Location Map