ALLEY IMPROVEMENT
&
ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY PLAN

The Fan District
Richmond, Virginia

May 22, 2006
# Table of Contents

VISION ........................................................................................................... 2
INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................. 3
HISTORY .......................................................................................................... 4
BACKGROUND ............................................................................................... 5
PLANNING AREA .......................................................................................... 5
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INPUT .......................................................... 5
METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................. 5
EXISTING CONDITIONS .................................................................................. 7
MATERIALS AND CONDITION ................................................................. 7
ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS .............................................................. 8
FUNCTION AND USE ................................................................................... 9
ALLEY PARKS .............................................................................................. 10
CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION ....................................................... 10
RESIDENT PROFILE ................................................................................... 11
PUBLIC SAFETY .......................................................................................... 12
VAGRANCY .................................................................................................. 15
SUMMARY OF USES AND CONDITIONS .................................................. 15
POLICY ......................................................................................................... 15
SUMMARY .................................................................................................. 17
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ......................................................................... 19
GOAL ............................................................................................................. 19
OBJECTIVES ............................................................................................... 19
CASE STUDIES ............................................................................................. 21
IMPROVEMENT PLAN .................................................................................. 24
TARGET AREAS ........................................................................................... 24
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALLEYS ....................................... 25
ALLEY PARKS .............................................................................................. 27
ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS / LINEAR PARKS ........................................... 29
IMPLEMENTATION ......................................................................................... 33
IMPLEMENTATION TABLE ............................................................................ 34
APPENDIX .................................................................................................... 38
The Fan District is a vibrant residential and commercial neighborhood with a functional, safe and aesthetically pleasing alleyway system that provides improved traffic circulation, off-street parking and refuse collection. Linear parks utilizing alleyways and connecting alley parks provides an alternative pathway system for pedestrians and cyclists. Alley parks stimulate community interaction and enhance the overall quality of life for residents of the Fan District.
INTRODUCTION

Alleyways serve a vital function in a dense, urban environment. Traditional uses for alleys include the provision of access to off-street parking, service ways for utilities and location for refuse collection. These utilitarian functions are important to the health and vitality of neighborhoods served by alleys and require a certain level of maintenance for proper functionality. Poorly maintained alleys can lead to a number of environmental and social problems including poor storm drainage, erosion, overgrowth, rodent infestation, accumulations of trash and debris, and increased incidents of crime. As the condition of alleys declines, so can the quality of life of residents and business owners who utilize that alley.

Aside from the traditional uses of alleys, these interior corridors can also provide alternative pathways through neighborhoods connecting varying points of interest. In the Fan District, alleyways offer an opportunity to link existing public parks and open spaces with commercial centers, schools, and additional public parks. Improving the condition of targeted alleys with appropriate materials and maintenance can create an urban linear park system in places where open space is scarce and fragmented.

This plan will identify the existing deficiencies in the Fan District's alley system and provide a course of action to improve its functionality. Recommendations will be made regarding materials, maintenance, policy, and function to form a practical plan for implementation. Locations for new alley parks will also be identified.
Largely consisting of late nineteenth and early twentieth century houses, the Fan District in Richmond, Virginia is steeped in historic charm and reflective of gracious urban living from an earlier time. From its inception as a failed land promotion in 1817, the Fan District grew into a neighborhood as Richmonders moved west from the city center into the newly formed suburbs. Originally known as the ‘west end,’ the Fan – deriving the name from the way certain streets ‘fan out’ – the area witnessed a decline during the 1930’s and 1940’s, only to return in popularity during the 1950’s.

Comprised of single- and multi-family residences, vibrant commercial areas, educational institutions, numerous churches, cultural sites, and historic Monument Avenue, the Fan District offers a unique experience to residents and visitors not easily found in other parts of the city.

In 1958, The Richmond Planning Commission recommended a garden treatment for targeted alleyways in the eastern portion of the Fan District (See Map, page 4A). The two southern linear parks stretched eastward from Meadow Street to Cherry Street while the other linear parks terminated farther west in the Fan. Of course, the plan was never implemented, but the idea remains a viable concept today.
BACKGROUND

PLANNING AREA
The planning area for the Fan District Improvement Plan includes all the blocks bounded by the Boulevard to the west, Broad Street to the north, Harrison Street to the east, and Cary Street to the south. The blocks between Harrison Street and Belvidere Street normally contained within the Fan District have been excluded from this plan. These blocks are largely occupied by Virginia Commonwealth University and related retail establishments.

This particular planning area was selected because the Fan District alleyways serve multiple uses (residential, commercial, institutional) and provide the most logical area for an alternative pathway system due to the presence of neighborhood parks and the large amount of pedestrian activity. Since alleyways throughout the city serve similar functions, recommendations for improvements and alternative pathways contained in this plan will be applicable to other neighborhoods in the city.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INPUT
Residents were solicited to provide input on the condition of the alleyways at two meetings of the Fan District Association and in articles published in the Association's monthly newsletter. Comments and suggestions were received in person and by email. When possible, residents were also solicited for comments and input during the site assessment phase of the plan. Numerous residents offered suggestions for improvements in safety, appearance and functionality and have been included in the plan where appropriate.

METHODOLOGY
Visual site assessments were conducted for each alley in the planning area over an eight week period. A total of 104 alleyways were surveyed. Some blocks in the planning area contain more than one alley or branch off within the block. This plan treats them as distinct alleyways depending on their connectivity to other alleyways or drastic difference in condition or use than other alleyways within that block. The assessments occurred during the months of January and February 2006, typically on weekends between the hours of 10:00am and 4:00pm, and in varying types of weather. Results of the assessments have been summarized and converted to percentages where applicable (See appendix for summary of needs assessment).

The condition of the surface materials (predominate surface and apron) was rated on a scale of 1 to 4 with one (1) representing 'sound
condition' and four (4) representing 'severe deficiencies.' The scale was developed originally by the Urban Institute for trained observer ratings of street conditions. It has been modified slightly to correlate to alleys instead of streets. The ratings scale is as follows:

CONDITION RATINGS SCALE
1) Surface is smooth with no potholes or large cracks. Material is at an appropriate grade. Little or no ponding. Patches are of the same material as the original surface.
2) Slightly rough surface. Patches are of a different material than original surface. Minor ponding or erosion. No potholes.
4) Very rough surface. Large potholes. Severe ponding and/or erosion. Numerous surface materials.

Environmental conditions such as accumulations of trash or debris, overgrowth, ponding, and erosion were rated on a similar scale ranging from 'none' to 'severe.'

The following ratings scale was used to characterize the environmental conditions in the alleys:

Observer Ratings for Alleys
1) None - alley completely clean - no more than two pieces of litter or broken glass
2) Minimum - alley largely clean – a few pieces of litter and broken glass observable, but only in the form of isolated discarded items; A single accumulation less than or approximately equal to the volume of a grocery sack should be rated as a 2.
3) Moderate - lightly scattered litter – litter or broken glass along all or most of the alley, or one heavy pile of litter but no accumulations of litter large enough to indicate dumping. A single accumulation greater than the volume of a grocery sack but less than the volume of garbage can should be rated a 3.
4) Severe - heavily scattered litter – Heavily scattered alleys with litter and broken glass; litter accumulation in piles or heavy litter distributed down all or nearly all the block; Indications of dumping: A single accumulation greater than the volume of a garbage can should be rated a 4.

Other observable conditions noted in the assessment include the presence of abandoned vehicles, rodent infestation, lighting, parking and garages.
EXISTING CONDITIONS

MATERIALS AND CONDITION

The predominate surface for alleys in the planning area is cobblestone (36.0%). Other surface materials include asphalt (25.0%), gravel (21.0%), concrete (12.0%), agate stone (3.0%), and dirt (3.0%). On a scale of 1 to 4, the average condition of the surface material is 2.2 (dirt surface was always ranked a three (3) or four (4) since it is incompatible with the primary function of the alleys in an urban setting. Overall, the alley surfacing is in moderate condition (See map, page 7A).

Pot-holes are the foremost problem with alley surface conditions. They are present on nearly all the alleys in the neighborhood. Pot-holes disrupt the movement of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists through the alley and create poor environmental conditions such as ponding, erosion and potential breeding grounds for West Nile virus.

Pot-holes are also the greatest problem with the alley aprons. Poorly maintained aprons pose an immediate threat to pedestrians who traverse the aprons along the sidewalks and vehicles that enter the alley. Surface materials most likely to form pot-holes include dirt, gravel and cobblestone. Concrete and asphalt are impermeable and less susceptible to form pot-holes.

The predominate surface for the alley aprons is brick (69.4%). Other materials include concrete (25.6%), asphalt (3.9%), and cobblestone (1.1%). The average condition of the alley aprons is two (2). Compared to the alley surface material, the aprons are in poorer condition overall.

Repair materials for both the main alley surface and the aprons typically differ from the original materials. Asphalt and gravel serve as the primary repair materials for cobblestone and brick surfaces and, when poorly...
repaired, create new problems such as disrupted storm drainage flow, ponding, and rough surface. The patchwork appearance also detracts from any potential aesthetic quality. The City’s Department of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance of the alley and apron surfaces and currently has no requirement for using 'like' materials for repair work. In most cases, the material used for repairs is whatever is available and most cost effective at the time of the maintenance call.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Poor environmental conditions, such as overgrowth, affect 53.5% of the alleys. Of the alleys with these environmental conditions, 30.4% have minor overgrowth mainly consisting of weeds and vines/ivy. Moderate overgrowth is present on 22.8% of the alleys while the same percentage exhibits no overgrowth at all. Only 1.6% of the alleys have a severe overgrowth problem. Since environmental conditions vary according to the season, these figures will likely change during the spring and summer months. They still reveal the relative environmental condition of the alleys and that severe overgrowth is not a major problem, but can be improved.

Nearly a third of the alleys exhibit minimum accumulations of trash and debris (32.7%). Moderate amounts of trash are present on 20.8% of the alleys. More than a third of the alleys (37.6%) exhibit no scattered trash or debris while 8.9% of the alleys show severe amounts of scattered trash. In alleys where trash and debris are present, nearly half of the time (42.6%) the trash is scattered through the alley. 37.6% of the time, trash is located around trash cans.

Refuse collection is a primary function of the alley system in the Fan District. As a result, trash receptacles are present throughout the alleys. In most cases, property owners place the trash cans in the alley at the edge of their property to facilitate expedited trash collection. This causes visual clutter and leads to piles of trash forming in the alleys. A notable exception includes certain properties on West Avenue that have incorporated trash can 'bays' into the fencing that abuts the alley. This design allows both the resident and garbage collector to access the garbage can while keeping it out of general view.

Soil erosion is not a major problem with the alleys since very few alleys have dirt or gravel surfaces. Most instances of erosion observed
during the site assessment occurred in areas utilized as off-street parking. This includes unpaved areas at the rear of residential properties as well as parking areas assigned to neighborhood businesses. The constant use of these areas, when unpaved, has led to a deterioration of the space that detracts from a suitable environmental condition or pleasing aesthetic quality.

A total of eight abandoned vehicles have been identified on six blocks in the planning area. In each case, the vehicle has been observed to be inoperable and without current registration. While not a severe problem, abandoned vehicles pose a safety threat to the neighborhood. Oftentimes, criminal activity occurs in and around such vehicles and they present a safety hazard to curious children and pets.

FUNCTION AND USE

Alleys serve two main functions in the Fan: 1) access to off-street parking and 2) service corridors for refuse pick-up and utilities. Intensity of use and maintenance requirements depends on the primary use of the alley. During the site assessments, each block was characterized as one of three types of primary use based on the types of structures on the block: residential, commercial, or institutional. On blocks with significant multiple uses, the higher intensity use has been designated the primary use and the next higher intensity use has been designated the secondary use. The levels of intensity of use are:

Low Intensity Use - Institutional (churches, schools, hospitals, etc) Few deliveries and possible access to off-street parking.

Moderate Intensity Use - Residential. Accessed daily by residents for off-street parking and trash receptacles.

High Intensity Use - Commercial. Daily access of large delivery trucks, large volumes of trash, garage access, loading and unloading.

Of the 122 alleys surveyed, 70.6% primarily serve a residential use, 23.5% serve a commercial use, and 5.9% serve an institutional use. In sum, 74.1% of the alleys in the Fan experience moderate to high intensity use (See map, page 9A). This level of use places a higher demand on maintenance than residential use and promotes increased incidences of environmental deficiencies such as accumulations of debris and trash.
ALLEY PARKS

Three city-maintained alley parks currently exist in the Fan District (See map, page 10A).

Federal Park (2100 W. Main Street) — landscaped with park furniture and greenery; approximately 30’ x 20’.

Paradise Park (1700 Grove Avenue) — landscaped with greenery and public art; approximately 50’ x 60’.

Scuffletown Park (2300 block between Stuart and Park Avenues) — landscaped with park furniture, community garden, fenced seating area with grassy open space; approximately 40’ x 70’.

All three alley parks serve more than the immediately surrounding residents; they also draw pedestrians from around the neighborhood. On several occasions, business people were observed having lunch in Scuffletown Park alongside mothers with small children and college students.

Three additional blocks have been identified as potential sites for new alley parks. These locations offer connectivity with other alleyways, parks and residential areas and can serve as focal points for any future linear park or alternative pathway system.

CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION

Nearly all the alleys in the Fan (89.1%) connect directly or mid-block with other alleys. The modified grid pattern of the neighborhood easily lends itself to the connectivity of alleyways. This provides an ease of flow for municipal and service vehicles as well as pedestrian traffic. Traffic volume is minor and sporadic on residential and institutional blocks; however, commercial blocks (primarily between
Broad and Grace Streets exhibit a higher level of activity with delivery and service vehicles, parking lot access and garbage removal.

During the site assessments, pedestrians and cyclists were observed passing through the alleys on their way to existing alley parks and commercial establishments or accessing vehicles in alley parking lots. Primary nodes of activity in the alleys have been identified along Robinson Street, Broad Street near the Boulevard and Grove Avenue between Shields and Allen Streets. In these areas, the alleys have already developed into an informal alternative pathway system.

The greatest problem associated with this informal pathway system is the safety of the users. Alleys connect to each other most often at mid-block where vehicles are passing. The lack of signage or other identifying features such as raised or painted crosswalks alerting motorists to pedestrians or cyclists crossing mid-block leads to a serious safety hazard. By formalizing the concept of alternative pathways and linear parks in the alleys, the City and neighborhood can create a safe, pleasing environment for all residents and visitors.

RESIDENT PROFILE

The primary users and beneficiaries of an improved alley system will be the residents of the Fan District. The benefits derived from an improved alley system and additional alley parks will affect all residents regardless of age, sex, income or residency status; however, different age groups (and their associated lifestyles) require different types of amenities for park and alternative pathway construction.

![Age Cohorts as a Percentage of Total Population](image)


The Fan District is comprised of four Census tracts (404, 405, 410, 411). See map, page 11A. Tract 411 includes several blocks south of
the accepted boundary for the Fan District, but the following information should be representative of the Fan District as a whole.

As the chart above reveals, a little over half of the Fan District population is aged 20 to 34 (51.3%). This number is twice the percentage of residents in this age range for the city as a whole (25.9%). The large student population from neighboring Virginia Commonwealth University accounts for a portion of this demographic; however, the large number of residents in the 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 age ranges (typically past college age) suggests that the Fan District appeals to young adults in general.

Children under fifteen account for only 5.5% of the total Fan District population compared with 18.7% for the city. Likewise, only 8.7% of the Fan population is of retirement age compared with 13.2% for the city. The lack of amenities in the Fan geared towards these populations may account for this disparity.

Homeownership information also reveals certain characteristics about a community. The Fan District has a relatively low rate of homeownership compared with the rest of the city. This is due to the large student and young adult population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Fan District</th>
<th>City of Richmond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
<td>7,848 (100%)</td>
<td>92,282 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>620 (7.9%)</td>
<td>7,733 (8.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>7,228 (92.1%)</td>
<td>84,549 (91.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>1,934 (27.0%)</td>
<td>39,008 (46.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter</td>
<td>5,274 (73.0%)</td>
<td>45,541 (53.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2000

Homeowners tend to have a greater stake in their neighborhoods since they are more permanent members of the community. Renters tend to be more transient and have little financial incentive to improve their surroundings. Quality of life issues such as infrastructure maintenance and environmental conditions have a greater long term affect on homeowners in terms of real estate values and future living conditions. Any action to improve the alley system and develop additional alley parks will rely heavily on property owner participation in an Alley Improvement Program.

PUBLIC SAFETY

A successful alley system that connects alley parks can only be successful if residents believe it is safe to enter these areas. Creating a
linear park system in a relatively safe neighborhood increases the chance that residents will use and maintain the system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incidents of Crime – Fan District (1/1/04 – 1/1/06)</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offense</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>+23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>-2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1952</strong></td>
<td><strong>1744</strong></td>
<td><strong>-10.7%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Richmond Police Department, March 2006

According to crime statistics supplied by the Richmond Police Department, the Fan District is a relatively safe neighborhood with a decreasing crime rate. The following chart represents the number and type of crimes committed in the Fan District from January 1, 2004 to January 1, 2006.

The incidence of crime in the Fan District has decreased by nearly 11% over the last two years. Most crime in the Fan District is non-violent (burglary, vice, theft, vehicle theft) accounting for 86.1% of all crimes committed in the neighborhood during this period. Increased police patrols and vigilance on the part of the residents can continue this trend.

Compared with the city as a whole, the Fan District has lower crime rates in all categories except burglary and theft. Violent crimes such as assault, sexual offense and homicide occur at rates less than half the city’s rates. In sum, the Fan District is one of the safer neighborhoods in the city, and when crime occurs, it tends to be crime against property instead of against persons.

NOTE: The Police department does not aggregate crime statistics according to specific location, so crime statistics are not available for occurrences in alleyways.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fan District</th>
<th>City of Richmond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Offense</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>11.40</td>
<td>24.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td>10.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>12.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>35.24</td>
<td>33.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Theft</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>9.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>57.72</td>
<td>73.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overhead lighting is an excellent deterrent to crime. Public lighting is present on 100% of the alleys in the Fan District. Each alley averages 2.8 public lights. All alley site assessments occurred during daylight hours so the percentage of working versus non-working overhead lights is unknown; however, casual observations during numerous evening hours revealed most alley lights to be in working order. Nearly all of the overhead lights are the gooseneck style (92.3%). The longer alleys between Broad and Grace Streets typically have four to five gooseneck lights per block. Very few private lights at the rear of properties or attached to garages were observed. The inclusion of private lighting (preferably motion sensing lights) would enhance the alleys and provide additional safety measures.

Vehicle speed in the alleys is another safety concern for residents. Although a well-maintained surface without pot-holes or uneven repairs is the ideal surface condition, it also promotes increased vehicle speed through the alley. The introduction of traffic calming measures such as speed bumps may be necessary to keep vehicles at low speeds when traveling through the alleys.
VAGRANCY

Vagrants were observed on seven alleyways (all between Grace and Broad Streets) during the needs assessment phase. In each instance, the vagrants appeared to utilizing the alleyways for shelter, oftentimes in alcoves at the rear of commercial buildings. The areas of likely habitation exhibited excessive amounts of litter and appeared to be environmentally unhealthy.

The continued presence of vagrants in the alleys poses a unique set of issues: excessive litter from habitation, environmental conditions that present potential health problems, and the possibility of unsafe conditions for other users of the alley system.

SUMMARY OF USES AND CONDITIONS

A majority of the alleys in the Fan District serve a residential use with the associated functions of off-street parking, rear access to property, and service corridors for utility and refuse collection vehicles. The alleys are in moderate condition overall, with the most deficient alleys typically servicing the mixed-use corridors of Broad, Main and Robinson Streets. The most common deficiencies are pot-holes, poor repair work, ponding, overgrowth and accumulations of garbage. Many of these issues can be corrected by simply modifying current City policy regarding the maintenance of alleys. New uses can be added to the alley system by significantly altering the way we think about alleys and how they can best be utilized.

POLICY

The Code of Richmond outlines the general function and design for alleys in Sections 94-141 to 94-145. The City Code references the type of use for alleys as merely utilitarian in nature and does not set forth any parameters for alternative uses:

For a subdivision, alleys shall be provided in business, commercial, industrial and transitional districts... whenever they are necessary to provide access to property in such districts and to enable vehicles to be loaded or unloaded.1

---

1 Code of Richmond, Section 94-141.
The Richmond Department of Public Works is responsible for the condition and maintenance of the alleys. While proactive in maintaining streets and alleys, the department also directs maintenance activity based on citizen requests. Response time to requests for alley maintenance vary depending on the nature of the repair and the department's current workload (typical response time can be from four to eight weeks). Although alleys are public rights-of-way and surface maintenance is the responsibility of the Public Works Department, the City mandates that residents who are serviced by an alley are responsible for the general upkeep of that alley including weed, overgrowth, and litter removal. The policy is similar to resident responsibilities for day-to-day sidewalk maintenance. The department currently has no policy regarding the type of patch materials to be used in repair work.

Abandoned vehicles, accumulations of debris, and overgrowth present on private property are also factors that affect the overall quality and viability of alleyways. The Department of Property Maintenance is responsible for notifying property owners of violations.

Recently, the City has given Property Maintenance field inspectors the power to issue a summons directly to a property owner for Code violations such as overgrowth, accumulations of garbage, and abandoned vehicles. Previously, inspectors had to obtain a warrant from the local magistrate and then wait for the summons to be served by the Sheriff's Department. This new streamlined process will expedite court hearings for Code violations by up to thirty days. Class 1 misdemeanors (high grass, excessive trash, abandoned vehicles) carry fines up to $2,500 and one year in prison. Most other Code violations are unclassified misdemeanors carrying a fine up to $2,500 and no jail

---

1 Phone interview, Richmond Public Works, April 4, 2006.
2 Press release, Office of the Press Secretary to the Mayor, April 6, 2006
time. This policy change allows the City to address property maintenance issues on a much faster timetable.

The Richmond Master Plan (2000-2020) devotes significant planning effort to the development of pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly pathways throughout the city. The Near West Neighborhood Plan (which includes the Fan District), states the following policies and strategies:

- Construct new roadway segments that include bikeways and sidewalks
- Develop a comprehensive bike routing system that includes plans for the long-term maintenance of bicycle route designators (signage, bicycle lane street striping, etc.)
- Create pedestrian-oriented environments with proper land-use planning

While the plan references existing roadways and sidewalks as places for bike and pedestrian pathway development, alleyways offer additional locations for the development of these amenities. In many regards, the alleys are a safer location for bike lanes since cyclists would not have to share space with parked vehicles and heavy traffic. Alleys are often overlooked as an alternative pathway system but they suit the function quite well. Alleys are connected to each other and form a linear pathway that is not obstructed by parked vehicles.

At this time, the City does not offer residents, business or property owners the opportunity to financially participate in the upgrade of an alley surface. The upgrading of surface material or repair material is at the Department of Public Work’s discretion.

**SUMMARY**

The Fan District is comprised of a varied mix of households from single college students to elderly married couples. They live in an urban neighborhood that is moderately dense and completely built out. Residential use is the dominant land use, but commercial and institutional uses are also present.

On average, the alley system that serves the neighborhood is in moderate condition, typically exhibiting deficiencies in

---

surface material, apron condition, storm drainage, and litter. While serious conditions with erosion, accumulations of debris, and abandoned vehicles exist, they are isolated instances and do not reflect the Fan District alley as a whole.

The site assessment of each alley in the Fan focused mainly on the current deficiencies with the alley system; however, during this process, numerous examples of clean, functional and aesthetically pleasing alleys were identified. The alleys that serve West Avenue (eastern portion of the Fan District) and Grove Avenue between Shields and Vine Streets offer excellent examples of how alleys can serve a utilitarian function and still be visually appealing.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

If this Improvement Plan is to be useful, its stated goals must be known, understood and ultimately supported by the property owners and residents of the Fan District. The following narrative outlines the goals and objectives of this plan.

Goal – General policy statements of what the Fan District alley system will become over the next ten years.

Objective – Measurable benchmarks of progress that serve to support a respective goal.

GOAL

Provide a functional and safe alleyway system for property owners, residents, visitors and business owners in the Fan District.

OBJECTIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- Maintain alleyway surface materials at a level that reduces potholes, ponding, erosion, and overgrowth.
- Repair alleyway surfaces with ‘like’ materials to improve storm drainage and ease of movement.
- Inform residents and business owners of their responsibilities regarding upkeep of alleyways.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

- Require all alleyways to have durable surfaces such as cobblestone, asphalt, or concrete and disallow dirt surfacing.
- Install asphalt or concrete paving on alleyways frequently used by commercial vehicles to minimize maintenance.

OFF-STREET PARKING

- Require off-street parking areas accessed by alleyways to be surfaced with cobblestone, brick, concrete, asphalt, or gravel to reduce erosion.

REFUSE COLLECTION

- Establish design guidelines for fencing and landscaping along alleyways that provides for screening of trash receptacles.
- Provide additional trash cans to properties that consistently produce large volumes of refuse.
SAFETY
• Incorporate traffic calming measures such as speed bumps on alleys with high volumes of traffic.
• Increase lighting in alleyways with fewer than three (3) public overhead lights.
• Encourage home and business owners to install exterior lights on garages, fences and light poles to illuminate dark areas.

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY / LINEAR PARK
• Develop a linear park system that connects existing and future hidden parks through designated alleyways.
• Install crosswalks with appropriate lighting and signage where designated alleys intersect with streets.
• Create bike and pedestrian lanes in designated alleys to separate from vehicular uses.
• Encourage private property owners to landscape areas of their property along the alley and provide additional lighting on garages, fences and light poles.
Other localities in various parts of the country have instituted alleyway programs that achieve two main goals:

1) the upgrade and overall improvement of alleys; and 2) the promotion of pedestrian and bicycle use of the alleyways as an alternative pathway system.

This plan includes descriptions of alley programs from St. Louis, Missouri and Seattle, Washington to illustrate how alleys can be improved with innovative thinking and creative partnerships.

St. Louis, Missouri

The City of St. Louis has established a program for alleyway improvements that offers incentives to property owners to participate in the cost of the upgrades. The City requires the submission of a petition supporting alley improvements that is signed by a minimum of sixty-seven percent (67%) of owners of property that abut the alley to be improved. The cost to each property owner is determined by dividing one-third of the total cost of the project ratably by the linear footage of each parcel abutting the alley. If more than one side of a parcel abuts the alley to be improved, the cost to the property owner shall not be more than the cost attributable to the narrowest side of the parcel abutting the alley. The remaining balance of the cost of the improvements is paid with City funds.

The Alley Improvement Program and St. Louis has resulted in the upgrade of numerous alleys in the downtown area. The typical improvements made to the alleys include uniform surface repair (either asphalt or concrete), garbage and debris removal, increased public and private lighting, and landscaping (in residential areas). The financial participation of property owners has created a sense of ownership and the improved alleys remain in good condition.

In St. Louis, the City has taken a practical approach to alleyways and developed a creative solution to cover the ever-increasing costs to upgrade the alley system. The program is voluntary and the alley improvements must be sought after by the property owners, not
mandated by the City. Adoption of this model by the City of Richmond would enable property owners to have greater control over the condition of the alleyways.

Seattle, Washington

Planners in Seattle, Washington have taken a broader approach to alleys. While redeveloping the area around what is now Pike Place Market, City officials decided to upgrade the surrounding alley system as well. Over time, the alleys around the market have been transformed into alternative pathways that simultaneously handle three functions:

1. Provide pedestrian entry into offices, residences, and retail shops.
2. Allow access for service deliveries, trash and recycling storage and collection, utilities, and maintenance.
3. Function as a pedestrian walkway connecting downtown streets.

The most famous of these alleys is Post Alley, which became more of a restoration than an upgrade. The original concrete surface was repaired and graffiti was removed from the alley. Lighting was upgraded and trash receptacles were hidden or removed. By simply cleaning up the alleys, The City of Seattle has maintained the urban feel of the alleys while introducing the new pedestrian-oriented use.

Post Alley now offers commercial establishments and residential units accessible only through the alley. The alley improvements have even made previously unusable space functional now that access has been provided through the alleys. Seattle's downtown alley system serves as an excellent example of how to add additional functions to the traditional uses of alleys.7

Property owners have several options available to them if they wish to improve their alley. They can undertake the responsibility themselves and have the work done privately (but must meet City standards) or they can petition the City to institute a Local Improvement District (LID). The LID requires financial participation of the property owners in the upgrade of the alley. The amount of financial participation depends on the nature of the improvements. The City also provides design services and future spot maintenance.8

---

8 City of Seattle, WA website – www.ci.seattle.wa.us/transportation/alleys.htm
Several other localities such as Encinitas, California, Denver, Colorado and North Miami Beach, Florida have instituted alley improvement programs. Grand Junction, Colorado allows for the establishment of an Alley Improvement District (AID) that places special assessments on property abutting an alley in need of repair. The AID is put in place at the request of the property owners. The City provides all necessary services needed to improve the alley including design, bidding, contracting and inspection. While all of these localities utilize improvement programs, none of them propose upgrading alleyways to include linear parks or other uses.

\footnote{City of Grand Junction, CO website - www.gjc.org}
Improvement Plan

Alleyways are a vital element within the urban landscape. Their condition and functionality directly affect the quality of life of residents. Recommendations for improvements to the alley system fall into two categories: physical enhancements and functional improvements.

Target Areas

Before any meaningful alley improvement program can be implemented, the most severely deficient alleys must be corrected. Their current condition is environmentally unsound and dangerous to pedestrians and vehicles.

The alleys in the poorest condition have been identified as target areas for immediate improvement. The extent of the deficiencies requires immediate action by the property owners and the city. The daily use of these alleys by large vehicles for deliveries, service calls, parking, and refuse collection place added strain on the infrastructure and cause more wear and tear than passenger vehicles utilizing residential alleys. Garbage volumes are higher and vagrancy is prevalent. For these reasons, two target areas have been identified: 1) the alleys that span from Boulevard to Ryland Street between Grace and Broad Streets; and 2) the alleys north and south of Main Street between Boulevard and Randolph Street. These alleys require immediate, focused attention to rectify the deficiencies:

1. Resurface deficient alleyways with either asphalt or concrete. These materials can be repaired more cost effectively than cobblestone.

2. Investigate the possibility of using street cleaners in the target alleyways to remove the excessive amounts of litter.

3. Add additional lighting to improve safety in the alleys.

4. Install gates or other secure means over alcoves at the rear of commercial buildings to discourage vagrant habitation.
5. Dedicate a bike lane in the alley south of Broad Street from Lombardy to Ryland. The alley is at least 20 feet wide and will allow for the simultaneous use of bicycles and vehicles. This pathway will facilitate the movement of students to and from the VCU campus.

6. Provide additional refuse containers to targeted residences and businesses that consistently produce large amounts of garbage.

7. Install a police call box at the midpoint of each target alley.

Figure 14. Bike lanes can be added to alleys

GENERAL
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL ALLEYS

All alleyways, regardless of use, can be improved by using consistent surface materials and removal of accumulations of debris. In most cases, environmental conditions can be rectified by individual property owners. The following recommendations apply to all alleyways in the city:

SURFACING

1. Utilize appropriate surface materials that relate to the type of primary use of the alley: Commercial – most durable surface materials that can withstand heavy vehicles and constant use; Residential – durable surface material that is aesthetically pleasing and complements the 'look' of the block.

Figure 15. Patches should be of 'like' material.
2. Surface all alleys with durable materials. Dirt alleys should not be allowed because they erode easily and require frequent repair.

3. Require that patch material be the same as the original surface material to minimize roughness and ponding and improve aesthetic appeal.

APRONS
1. Construct aprons with a highly durable material to minimize repair and provide safe pedestrian transition across the alley opening.

2. Require that patch material be the same as the original surface material. Different patch materials cause ponding and uneven surfaces that are challenging to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

LANDSCAPING
1. Encourage residents to landscape along the alleys at the rear property line with shrubbery, flowering plants or other greenery. Large trees should be discouraged since they may interfere with utility lines and vehicular circulation.

2. Partner with local garden clubs or other non-profit group to beautify the alleys with landscaping.

Figure 16. Shrubbery adds texture and color.
3. Develop and Adopt-an-Alley Program that assigns certain groups with the general upkeep of a particular alleyway.

REFUSE CONTAINERS / ACCUMULATIONS OF DEBRIS
1. Place refuse containers in easily accessible locations for collection but out of the right-of-way.
2. Supply commercial or institutional enterprises that continually produce amounts of garbage that exceed the capacity of their existing refuse containers with additional containers. Dumpsters should be required for those businesses that produce the largest volumes of refuse and they should be located in easily accessible areas that do not impede the flow of traffic in the alley.

ALLEY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AIP)
1. Implement an Alley Improvement Program (AIP) that will expedite repair requests and allow residents to financially participate in any requested upgrade to the alley.
2. Require financial participation of property owners in any upgrading of an alleyway.

ALLEY PARKS
Alley parks provide residents and visitors a respite from the noise and activity associated with the typical urban landscape. Successful alley parks are small areas with park furniture and landscaping. The Fan District has three alley parks with park furniture and landscaping.

EXISTING PARKS
The three Fan District alley parks are currently maintained by both the City Parks and Recreation Department and residents. All three parks are clean and well managed. The City and residents should continue to provide the existing level of maintenance.
PROPOSED PARKS
Three locations have been identified for additional alley park construction. See map, page 27A. These locations are the blocks
bounded by:

1. Main-Cary-Lombardy-Plum
2. Main-Cary-Davis-Stafford
3. Grove-Floyd-Shields-Rowland

The first two locations require the acquisition of at least one interior parcel by the City and the demolition of derelict warehouses. The third
location is currently vacant. All three blocks have alleys that serve a residential use and would benefit from the construction of an alley park.

1. Acquire the necessary interior parcels to construct the alley parks. The City could acquire the parcels either fee simple or through eminent
   domain since the future use as a public park serves the public good. By acquiring the parcels, the City also will remove blighting influences in
   the neighborhood.

2. Hold a competition for the design of the park with residents, property owners and landscape architects as judges of the final design.
   Design competitions can elicit some very unique and creative designs at little cost to the community.

3. Include park furniture, landscaping, and other amenities deemed desirable by the property owners on the block. Such amenities may include
   public art, a dog run, or fountain.

4. Cooperate with the residents of the block as well as with the Fan District Association on the design of the park.

5. Create community gardens in the new alley parks where appropriate. They promote the active involvement of residents in the upkeep of the
   park and can serve as a community gathering point.

Other locations suitable for the construction of additional alley parks exist in the Fan. These specific locations were selected because several goals can be accomplished with the construction of new parks at these locations: the removal of blighting influences (i.e. derelict warehouses), the rectification of severely deficient alleyways, and the introduction of public open space to areas that currently do not have sufficient access.
ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS / LINEAR PARKS

The Richmond Planning Commission's recommendation in 1958 to treat alleyways like parks is still a viable idea today. With the proper design, alleyways can serve as alternative pathways and linear parks that connect alley parks and other points of activity. These pathways will provide additional public open space and beautify the neighborhood.

The following alleys have been identified as suitable for use as alternative pathways and/or linear parks (See map, 27A):

1. Federal Park eastward to Binford Elementary School and the proposed Rain Garden.
2. Proposed alley park bounded by Grove-Floyd-Shields-Rowland eastward to Paradise Park.

SURFACE MATERIALS

1. Install durable surface materials on alleys designated as alternative pathways/linear parks. Use materials appropriate for the type of use for that alley. For example, use cobblestone on residential use alleys and asphalt or concrete on commercial use alleys.

2. Install 'sidewalks' on one side of the alley to designate a separation of spaces for different uses. The alleyway will remain the space dedicated for use by vehicles and the sidewalk becomes the space dedicated to pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the linear park. The condition of the sidewalk should be maintained to a level that provides a smooth, even surface that is amenable to pedestrians, cyclists, baby strollers, scooters, and skateboards. Suitable materials for sidewalk construction include brick, concrete, or asphalt.

3. Ensure an appropriate grade that promotes adequate storm drainage and minimizes ponding.

4. Use original surface material when conducting repair work. Prohibit the use of differing materials for repair work.
5. Remove cobblestone from alleys that are resurfaced with asphalt or concrete. Re-use the cobblestone to repair alleys that will retain a cobblestone surface.

**LANDSCAPING**

Appropriate landscaping is crucial to the successful implementation of alternative pathways and linear parks. It transforms the rather mundane appearance of traditional-use alleyways into scenic pathways attractive to pedestrians and cyclists.

1. Solicit local gardening clubs or community service groups to ‘adopt’ blocks of the linear park system for the installation and maintenance of appropriate landscaping. The linear park system could be connected with the proposed rain garden to be installed at Binford Middle School.

2. Offset the cost of the plantings by partnering with local businesses (i.e. nurseries, florists, home improvement centers, etc.).

3. Develop sufficient landscaping to create a park-like setting without encroaching on the public right-of-way or interfering with the daily use of the alley.

**TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES**

Encouraging pedestrians and cyclists to share alleys presents a unique set of challenges. Alleys are traditionally used for vehicle access and utility service calls. When transforming alleys into alternative pathways, one must take measures to minimize the interaction between the two uses.

1. Install speed bumps at appropriate distances on all alleyways designated as alternative pathways or linear parks.

2. Install designated bike lanes on one side of the alley to separate vehicle and bicycle traffic.

3. Construct elevated crosswalks where the linear parks cross the streets. Where alleys do not directly connect, painted crosswalks should connect the alleys across streets.
SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS

The greatest challenge to creating a successful alternative pathway system is ensuring the safety of all users. Every effort should be made to include safety measures that alert people to the presence of pedestrians and cyclists in the alleys.

1. Install appropriate signage on surface streets to warn drivers of the possible presence of cyclists and pedestrians crossing mid-block. The best location is at every corner of each block served by the pathway system.

2. Post speed-limit signs at easily visible locations on surface streets and in the alleyways.

3. Install lighted signs or warning lights at every street crossing.

4. Place directional signs for users of the pathway system at the entrances and exits of the alleyways.

5. Install police call boxes with appropriate lighting at key points along the pathway system. Each block should have a minimum of one call box.

LIGHTING

Overhead lighting is essential to the safety of the alleyways. Poorly lit alleyways encourage criminal behavior and discourage the regular use of an alternative pathway system.

1. Install public lights every thirty feet to provide complete coverage in the evening hours.

2. Encourage residents to install lights on the exterior of garages and sheds to supplement the public lighting. Motion sensing lights provide additional safety.
REFUSE CONTAINERS

1. Encourage property owners to keep trash cans in the back yard until pick-up day.

2. Schedule regular 'Alley Clean-up' days to remove litter.

3. Require trash receptacles to be kept out of the alley right-of-way. Creative fence designs can allow for access to garbage cans from both the alley and the property while screening the cans from the visual corridor of the alleyway.

Figure 24. Altered photo shows how garbage receptacles can be screened yet accessible.
IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this plan will require the cooperative effort between the City of Richmond, the Fan District Association, residents and property owners. A single entity cannot accomplish all the goals contained in this plan. The residents and property owners will play a large role in the implementation of this plan since it requires their initiative, enthusiasm, and in some cases, financial contributions. Every effort should be made to educate the residents and property owners of the benefits of this plan so that participation in making this plan a reality is maximized.

This plan offers the neighborhood an opportunity to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Fan District. The following chart outlines the necessary steps for achieving the goals of the plan.

NOTE: The estimated costs presented in the chart are representational of the project costs if outside financial assistance such as grant funding, in-kind labor, volunteer assistance, force account work, or donations are not utilized to off-set project costs. It is highly recommended that partnerships be established between the FDA, the City, civic groups, and material suppliers (such as home improvement stores) so that material and labor costs can be greatly reduced.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>TIMEFRAME</th>
<th>INITIATE</th>
<th>PERFORM</th>
<th>POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES</th>
<th>EST. COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modify current city policy to require the use of original materials when repairing alley surfaces.</td>
<td>1-5 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt a formal Alley Improvement Program that allows for the creation of Alley Improvement Districts</td>
<td>1-5 YRS.</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain signatures of residents, property owners, and business owners on petition to City for alley repair</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form Alley Improvement Assessment District</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>Residents</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request resurfacing/repair of target alleys</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Use recycled cobblestone</td>
<td>$18,000/alley - asphalt $15,000/alley - concrete $25,000/alley - cobblestone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicit partnerships with local businesses, civic groups, non-profits, VCU, City, etc.</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create linear park on designated alleys</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Residents, FDA, City</td>
<td>$5,000/alley - landscaping $10,000/alley - concrete sidewalk $23,000/alley - brick sidewalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage residents to add landscaping at rear property line abutting alleyway</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>residents</td>
<td>residents, FDA, non-profits, garden clubs, etc.</td>
<td>$100-200 per property owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage residents to keep refuse containers out of right-of-way</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>residents</td>
<td>residents, FDA, City</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage residents to install lighting on garages, sheds, or other out-buildings accessing an alley</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>residents</td>
<td>residents</td>
<td>$100-200 per property owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold competition for new alley and linear park design</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA, City</td>
<td>$2,000 for advertising/promotional costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish judging committee with residents, city officials, FDA members, business owners, landscape architects</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select winning design</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure funding for alley and linear park construction</td>
<td>6-10 YRS.</td>
<td>FDA</td>
<td>City, FDA</td>
<td>FDA, City</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ALEY IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT DISTRICT**

The following steps outline how upgrades to an alley can occur utilizing an Alley Improvement District. The City of Richmond currently does not utilize this type of special assessment district for alley repairs and upgrades. The adoption of such a special district is recommended for the City. This model is used in Denver, Colorado.

**Step 1** Property owner or interested party contacts the Department of Public Works concerning improvements to the alley.

**Step 2** The City sends a petition package to the party interested in the proposed improvements.

**Step 3** Once the petition is signed by property owners representing two-thirds of the acreage of the target area, the petition is returned to the City. NOTE: Other localities require a certain percentage of property owners (67%-100%) abutting the alley to sign the petition.

**Step 4** After receiving the signed petition, the City conducts a study of the alley in question. Each affected property owner is notified by mail as the estimated project cost and an estimate of their prorated share. Each mailing will have a City-addressed postcard where the property owner can indicate whether they support or oppose the project. The property owner mails the postcard back to the City for tabulation.

**Step 5** If the postcard survey indicates that property owners representing two-thirds of the affected acreage still support
the project, the proposed project is submitted to City Council for authorization to create and Engineer's Report.

Step 6 As directed by City Council, the Assessment Engineer prepares an Engineer's Report that describes the scope of work and the estimated assessment for each property.

Step 7 City Council adopts the Engineer's Report, adopts a resolution of intent to form an assessment district and sets a public hearing date.

Step 8 Each affected property owner is notified by mail of the public hearing and provided with a ballot. The notice is also published in the newspaper.

Step 9 City Council conducts the public hearing. At the public hearing, the ballots are tabulated. If property owners representing more than 50% of the ballots received vote for the district, the project may go forward. Each ballot is weighted in accordance with the relative financial obligation of the respective property.

Step 10 City Council may approve the assessment district at which point the assessments are confirmed and recorded. Each affected property owner is notified by mail and given the option to pay off the assessment or to finance the assessment over a period of several years. Financed amounts are collected annually as part of property tax bills.

NOTE: Localities use different means to determine how much the property owner must financially contribute to an alley improvement project. In most cases, the City contributes design, engineering, bidding, contracting and inspection costs as well as base costs for the repairs. The property owners are typically responsible for the remaining amount, ratably scaled according to the number of linear feet that abuts the alleyway.

Grand Junction, CO utilizes the following assessment rates based on the number of linear feet abutting the alley:

- Single-family residential properties - $8.00 per linear foot
- Multi-family residential properties - $15.00 per linear foot
- Non-residential properties - $31.50 per linear foot
- Properties with frontage on two or more sides is assessed for only the longest side.

PARK DESIGN CONTEST

Design contests offer an excellent opportunity to receive interesting and creative park designs without having to spend large amounts of money. If structured correctly, a design contest can produce
numerous quality submissions for consideration. The following example offers a model for structuring a design contest.

1) Establish who is eligible to submit designs – residents of the neighborhood, professional landscape architects, students, etc.

2) Select a jury who will rank the submissions and select a winner.

3) Advertise the contest in local newspapers and newsletters and on radio programs and websites.

4) Offer a small monetary prize for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

5) Create guidelines for the park design to include
   i. A detailed description of the space identified for park construction including location, size and topography.
   ii. The types of landscaping desired for the park (i.e. native plants, low maintenance vegetation, sunlight requirements, etc.)
   iii. The types of amenities desired for the park such as playground equipment, public art, open space, park furniture, lighting, water features, theme (i.e. Asian garden, tropical retreat, etc.).
   iv. An estimated budget for the park construction.

6) Compile a Design Contest packet that includes an application form, eligibility requirements, photographs of the target site, and general contest information (i.e. prizes, timetable, submission format).

7) Select the winners and begin construction on the new park.

Design contests can be structured in any way that best suits the project and budget. Most successful contests encourage residents of the community to submit their own designs.

Implementing this Alley Improvement and Alternative Pathway Plan will enhance the quality of life for Fan District residents by transforming the mundane and utilitarian alley system into an clean, safe and functional public open space that facilitates the movement of pedestrians and cyclists through the neighborhood without interfering with the day-to-day functions of the alleyways.
APPENDIX

Site Assessment Survey
Site Assessment Tabulation
Trained Observer Ratings
# FAN DISTRICT ALLEY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## Site Assessment Survey Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLOCK:</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| DATE / TIME: | | | | PHOTOS? | YES | NO |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|

### Primary Service:
- Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Other

### Secondary Service:
- Residential
- Commercial
- Main Entrance
- Institutional
- Other

### PHYSICAL CONDITION

#### Predominate Surface:
- Cobble
- Asphalt
- Brick
- Concrete
- Gravel
- Dirt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Secondary Surface:
- Cobble
- Asphalt
- Brick
- Concrete
- Gravel
- Dirt

**Nature of Secondary Surface:**
- Patch
- Resurface
- Original
- Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Apron:
- Cobble
- Asphalt
- Brick
- Concrete
- Gravel
- Dirt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

#### Overgrowth:
- None
- Minor
- Moderate
- Severe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type:</th>
<th>Weeds</th>
<th>Trees</th>
<th>Vine/Ivy</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Trash / Debris:
- None
- Minor
- Moderate
- Severe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descr:</th>
<th>Around supercan/dumpster</th>
<th>Scattered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Abandoned Vehicles?
- YES
- NO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY:</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Ponding?
- YES
- NO

#### Erosion?
- YES
- NO

#### Vagrants?
- YES
- NOT VISIBLE

#### Stray Animals?
- YES
- NOT VISIBLE

#### Infeestation?
- YES
- NOT VISIBLE

### LIGHTING & SAFETY

#### In place?
- YES
- NO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY</th>
<th>LOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Working?
- YES
- NO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>QTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Type:
- Public
- Private

#### Style:
- Gooseneck
- Lamp
- Security
- Other
PARKING / TRAFFIC CIRCULATION
Garages: QTY __________ # of Spaces __________

Lots (Res): QTY __________ # of Spaces __________

Lots (Comm): Qty __________ # of Spaces __________

Lots (Inst): Qty __________ # of Spaces __________

Lots (Other): Qty __________ # of Spaces __________

Alley Width: 1 1.5 2
Connectivity with other alleys? YES NO
Pedestrian / Bicycle Activity? YES NO

PARKS & RECREATION
Name: __________ Approx. Size __________
Amenities: ______________________________________________
Condition: 1 2 3 4

If no existing park, is one viable in this location? YES NO
Approximately what size? __________

NOTES: ________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Label Ctrl</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Control Ctrl</th>
<th>Recording</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Strawberry Shrub</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>dirt 3 gravel 4 brick 2</td>
<td>run weeds</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>craw/dirt y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Shrub Rowland</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 1</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>run</td>
<td>track n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Meadow Shrub</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>run</td>
<td>weeds n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Meadow Shrub</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>gravel 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Shrub Rowland</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Shrub Rowland</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Shrub Rowland</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Shrub Rowland</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 3</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Harvey Grove</td>
<td>Plum Shrub</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Boulevard Mulberry</td>
<td>2/11/65 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 3</td>
<td>dirt 3</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>mod w w</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>2/11/65 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 2</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>weeds n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 3</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>weeds</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 4</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 3</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 2</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 1</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>weed n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>asphalt 3</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>w w</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 3</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>w w</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>weeds</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 2</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 1</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
<td>Roberson Lawn</td>
<td>10/25/66 res</td>
<td>complete</td>
<td>cobble 2</td>
<td>brick 1</td>
<td>n n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Soil Type</td>
<td>Land Type</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>Watercourse</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Road Name</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>Watercourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trained Observer Ratings

by Jake Cowan, Harry P. Hatry, Katharine Mark, Ritu Nayyar-Stone.

adapted from "Developing A Performance Management System for Local Governments: An Operational Guideline" by Ritu Nayyar-Stone, Katharine Mark, Jake Cowan and Harry P. Hatry, June 2002, and Performance Measurement: Getting Results

What are they used to measure?

Trained Observer Ratings are used to measure outcomes that can be perceived by the eyes or other physical senses of an observer. Individual trained observers, or a team of trained observers assess outcome conditions using predefined rating scales. This can be a highly accurate and reliable procedure with a clearly-defined rating system, adequate training of the observers, adequate supervision of the rating process, and a procedure for periodically checking the quality of the ratings. If properly done, the ratings can provide measurements that can be compared over time.

Examples of conditions that can be measured using Trained Observer Ratings include:

- cleanliness of streets and alleys;
- condition of trash receptacles in public areas;
- presence of offensive odors from solid waste;
- condition of roads (potholes, sidewalks, paved area, etc.);
- condition of facilities such as school buildings;
- condition and visibility of street signs;
- ability of elderly or persons with handicaps to undertake normal activities of daily living;
- safety conditions (e.g. condition of safety equipment in buildings such fire extinguishers, hoses, sprinklers);
- condition of safety equipment in buildings (fire extinguisher, hose, sprinklers); and
- cleanliness of public baths.

How do they work?

Trained observers use three major types of rating systems:
• written descriptions,
• photographs, and
• other visual scales such as drawings or videos.

**Written descriptions.** This is the simplest and most familiar type of rating system. It depends on specific written descriptions of each grade used in the rating scale. Below is an example of a written set of grades for street litter. These ratings can be made from a car, or by observers on foot.

Rating scale for street litter accumulation

1. Street completely clean—No more than two pieces of litter or broken glass.
2. Street largely clean—A few pieces of litter and broken glass observable, but only in the form of isolated discarded items; A single accumulation less than or approximately equal to the volume of a grocery sack should be rated as 2.
3. Lightly scattered litter—Litter or broken glass along all or most of the street, or one heavy pile of litter, but no accumulations of litter large enough to indicate dumping; A single accumulation greater than the volume of a grocery sack but less than the volume of a garbage can should be rated as 3.
4. Heavily scattered litter—Heavily scattered streets with litter and broken glass; litter accumulation in piles; or heavy litter distributed down all or nearly all the block; A single accumulation greater than the volume of a garbage can should be rated as 4.

**Photographic rating scales.** Photographic scales can be more precise than written scales in providing clear definitions of each ratings grade, and make ratings easier to understand. Photos are used to represent each of the grades on the rating scale. Observers are given (and trained in the use of) the set of photos, with several representing each grade on the rating scale. Below is a sample photographic rating scale for street surface rideability.

Sample photographic rating scale: Street Surface Rideability
Other visual scales. Visual rating scales can also use drawings or sketches that represent each grade on a rating scale. An example of this is sketches representing conditions of school buildings, or classroom walls. This kind of rating scale was used by the New York City school system to track the physical condition of its schools and to help make decisions about building repairs.

Research examples

*Public Use of Urban Parks: A Methods Manual for Park Managers and Community Leaders*

*Performance Measurement: Getting Results*

*How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Measuring Their Quality*

"Albania: Performance Measurement: Improving Municipal Service Delivery and Strengthening Local Autonomy"

"Thailand: Performance Measurement for the Government of Thailand"