

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

TRAFFIC CLOSURE PROGRAM
FOR CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENTS

ROWAP@cityofchicago.org

2 North LaSalle Street, Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602

Revised 12/6/2024

TRAFFIC CLOSURE PROGRAM FOR CITY DEPARTMENTS

A. PROGRAM INTENT

The Chicago Department of Transportation acts to facilitate the mission of other City Departments by closing portions of right-of-way that may more beneficially act in other capacities for the public good. Common reasons for closures are to improve adjacent City building security, increase traffic safety, or allow programming of little used portions of streets or alleys.

Closings do not convey ownership or change the legal status of the area as public right-of-way. Areas that are closed do not allow for building construction or the placement of any permanent structures on the site, which provide flexibility to reopen to public traffic at any time should needs change. For this reason, Traffic Closure ordinances and plats are not recorded after passage by City Council.

B. ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

The applicant must be a City of Chicago department abutting the section of public way to be closed to vehicular traffic. Note: external City agencies (ex: CHA, CPD, CTA) will be directed to use the Street/Alley Vacation Program for Intergovernmental purposes.

C. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

1. The proposed closure must not have a significant adverse effect on the security, accessibility, or operations of nearby land uses. Projects must meet basic configuration criteria; configurations that propose to dead-end an alley or street mid-block, reroute street traffic through an alley, vacate half the width of a street/alley, create an irregular right-of-way line or superlot, vacate air rights, or vacate right-of-way leading to a public amenity will not be granted. CDOT reserves the right to reject proposals that are not judged to be in the public's best interest, or that are deemed contrary to the Department's mission.
2. The petitioning City department must pay all fees necessary to complete any utility relocations, removals, or otherwise resolve the objections as requested by the Office of Underground Coordination (OUC) [member agencies](#). Alternatively, the petitioner may opt to leave utilities in place.
3. The petitioning City department must pay all fees associated with plat creation and review, survey work, title work, recording, and any other associated expenses necessary to ensure the success of the public way closure.

D. APPLICATIONS AND REVIEW

Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received. **Application materials should be submitted electronically to:** ROWAP@cityofchicago.org.

Please attach each submittal file as an individual PDF and include in subject line "New Application Submittal."

The applicant shall also mail or deliver (1) copy of the **full-sized plat** to:

CDOT - Project Development Division
Attn: Public Way Unit
2 N. LaSalle St, Suite 950
Chicago, IL 60602

If the file is opened and subsequently closed due to inactivity (i.e.: after three attempts by CDOT to complete the file), a reapplication fee will be assessed.

Projects are completed in four phases, as outlined below.

1. PHASE 1: INITIAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Initial review of application materials will be conducted by CDOT program managers to ensure that the proposed project qualifies under the program guidelines and meets basic configuration criteria. At this time, you will be assigned a CDOT manager and a CDOT file number. Please keep a copy of your submission in your files.

2. PHASE 2: AGENCY REVIEW

If the proposal is deemed acceptable by the CDOT manager, the project will be submitted to the Office of the Underground Coordination (OUC) for review by member entities with interest and/or facilities in the right-of-way. Once comments are received from the member entities, they will be provided to the petitioning City department. The petitioner will then have 90 days to coordinate, resolve, and submit proof of mutually satisfactory negotiations with any involved member entities, which may include allowing utilities to remain in place. Obligations shall be summarized in a Resolution Letter that will be used in the ordinance to effectuate the closure.

3. PHASE 3: LEGISLATION

In preparation for City Council review, CDOT will work with the petitioner to finalize the plat(s) and review and provide any comments on the draft ordinance. After initial introduction at City Council, the project will be referred to the Transportation and Public Way Committee for review. At this time, applicants must (re)familiarize the local Alderman with the project and

appear at the Transportation Committee to present the project. If passed by the Transportation Committee, the ordinance proceeds to full Council for the final vote and passage. 30 days after the ordinance is passed by City Council, the legislation is published by the City Council Journal, making it law. Recall that Closure ordinances and plats are not recorded. Applicants can expect approximately 10 months from CDOT's receipt of a complete application package to final processing of the project.

**APPLICATION FORM
TRAFFIC CLOSURE PROGRAM FOR CITY DEPARTMENTS**

Contact Info

Requesting Department: _____
Department Contact: _____
Phone/Fax: _____
Address (City, State, Zip): _____
Email: _____

Secondary Contact

Name: _____
Company: _____
Phone/Fax: _____
Address (City, State, Zip): _____
Email: _____

Note: Full contact information for two project representatives is required.

Project Location:

General location with boundaries (ex: "S. Smith St between W. Riley St & W. George St" or "the north-south alley in the block bounded by S. Smith St, W. Riley St, S. Jane St, and W. George St")

Zoning: _____ Ward: _____

Description of Intended Use:

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

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Note: All application materials should be submitted electronically, except for the full-sized plat(s). Original documents are not required.

Project Overview:

- Completed 1-Page Application Form for Traffic Closure program
- A memo from the head of the petitioning City department requesting the closure and explaining the need for the proposal

Ownership Documentation:

- Current title policy showing PINs, legal descriptions of land, and ownership to ALL lots contiguous to and involving the vacation. Title should be no more than 1 year old. Tract searches and pro-forma titles are not acceptable.
- If the land is held in trust, provide current certified copies of any land trusts naming the beneficiary.

Note: any changes in ownership that occur during the closure process must be reported to the CDOT Program Manager immediately or the ordinance will be nullified.

Design Proposal:

- Certified copy of a plat of closure that adheres to the [Plat Requirements](#) in three different sizes: 8.5x11, 11x17, and full-size (exact size of “full-size” to be determined by the surveyor to provide legibility)
- 8.5x11 fully dimensioned site plan depicting the intended use of the area. The plan should include all infrastructure and landscaping.
- If requested, traffic study