

**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF
STAFF SUMMARY REPORT**

To: The Honorable Mayor and Council
From: Bryce Doty, Real Estate Manager
Co-Submitter: Martin Ince
Date: 04/20/2021
Meeting Date: 04/27/2021



TITLE

Requests for Abandonment of Public Right-of-Way on Hoskins Ave. - FUTS and Parking Discussion

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discussion and inform.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

City has received requests from three (3) property owners to abandon public right-of-way (ROW) along Hoskins Avenue. The property owners desire to acquire the abandoned ROW and combine it with their existing lots. There are several properties along Hoskins Avenue.

If a roadway is no longer necessary for a public use as a roadway, it may be abandoned per state law A.R.S. Section 28-7201 et seq and City Code Section 11-20.160.

This prompted City Traffic Engineering Staff to analyze and determine if there are any future, potential City uses for the full width of Hoskins Avenue. Staff has identified a potential future use which requires retaining the full width. This future use would require denying abandonment requests in whole or in part. Staff brings this item before Council tonight to discuss the policy implications when considering upcoming public right-of-way abandonment requests along Hoskins Avenue.

INFORMATION:

General considerations

Planning for city traffic needs is necessarily on a long-time horizon. In projecting for future needs, we must make the best decision with the information available at the time. City Staff is reluctant to recommend abandoning right-of-way because there are multiple cases in the past where the City had to re-purchase right-of-way that had been abandoned to allow planned street improvements. Abandoning right-of-way does not prevent the City from re-purchasing it at a later date, but re-purchasing at a later date may be cumbersome or expensive. Abandoning public-right-of-way can be a net positive: abandonments reduce potential City maintenance costs and they return land to the tax rolls for better and higher uses. But these benefits come at the expense of introducing a degree of greater path dependency for City traffic and infrastructure needs.

Public Roadway Use

Along the north side of Hoskins Avenue, the City owns public right-of-way that is currently not improved,

and it is being used by more than one adjacent property owner.

The Regional Plan shows a planned pedestrian/bikeway trail from the NAU campus, ending at the west end of Hoskins Avenue, and then reconnecting on the east end of Hoskins Avenue, and continuing to Lone Tree Road. The Regional Plan does not identify how to connect the two trails, but Hoskins Avenue is an obvious link.

The draft Active Transportation Master Plan shows a planned pedestrian/bikeway connection on Hoskins Avenue.

City Staff has identified a potential future use for Hoskins Avenue which includes on-street parking, a parkway or furnishing strip, and a cycletrack/bikeway along the south edge of the roadway. This configuration: (a) Precludes abandoning any public right-of-way, (b) Requires removing existing private encroachments on public right-of-way, and (c) involves capital improvements to replace the existing sidewalk line, to extend the road-base (paving) north seven (7) feet, and to install a cycletrack and furnishing strip along the south side of Hoskins Avenue.

If the public right-of-way is abandoned, the City will need to either forfeit the cycletrack or on-street parking. Currently the street provides over 20 on-street parking spaces for the neighborhood. Staff does not recommend forfeiting either amenity.

Funding and Timing:

1. The FUTS connection on the east of Hoskins Ave. is not funded currently but could potentially be included as part of or shortly after the Lone Tree Overpass Project. Lone Tree corridor project is scheduled for completion by 2026
2. The FUTS connection to campus on the west of Hoskins Ave. is a funded City project. Several meetings have been held with NAU as part of pre-design.
3. Any improvements to connect the trails along Hoskins Ave. are not currently funded. The cycletrack connection will become more of a priority once the FUTS trail(s) are complete.

Abandonment Requests:

If the City Council determines the full width of Hoskins Avenue is no longer needed for a public roadway use, then the City Council may abandon such roadway. After abandonment, the adjacent property owner is given the opportunity to purchase the abandoned property. The current pending requests will be considering at an upcoming council meeting, and are previewed as follows:

1. Abandon approximately 1,400 square feet south and adjacent to 709 S O'Leary St. in order to:
 - a. Leave as open space adjacent to a future development and erect a sign memorializing the history and people of the Southside neighborhood
2. Abandon approximately 7,000 square feet south and adjacent to 631 Fontaine St.
 - a. NAU is the owner and would like to pursue some fashion of development in combination with 631 Fountain St.
3. Abandon approximately 2,080 square feet south and adjacent to 710 S. O'Leary St. in order to build a carport which meets current lot size standards.

Next Steps:

Staff brings this item before Council tonight to discuss the policy implications when considering upcoming public right-of-way abandonment requests. Staff will formally bring each abandonment request to Council, at the direction of the applicant. The first is scheduled for May 4, 2021.