

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE, BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS  
REPORT #1  
DATE: June 23, 1993

  
Secretary

**NUISANCE ALLEY CONVERSION PROJECT: PHASES I & II**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Phase I: Approve and forward this report with transmittals to the Mayor for referral to City Council with the request that the Board be authorized to implement a Nuisance Alley Conversion Program and to negotiate and execute a personal services contract with California State Polytechnic University at Pomona (Cal Poly) to identify nuisance alleys and design usage concepts in Council Districts Eight and Nine at a cost not to exceed \$20,000, to be expended from Capital Improvement Program, General Fund, Nuisance Alley Closure Account No. C279 (MIMIS No. 9228). This contract will be in effect for six months and applies to Phase I only.
2. That the Mayor and City Council authorize the use of Nuisance Alley Closure Account No. C279 (MIMIS No. 9228) of the Capital Improvement Program, General Fund, Fund 100, Department 54, for funding.
3. That the City enter into a contract with Cal Poly without issuing an RFP based on the following benefits:
  - (1) Period of contract - maximum 6 months to correspond with fall semester
  - (2) minimal costs - \$13,540
  - (3) familiarity with community - Cal Poly's Urban and Regional Planning Department has undertaken a series of related projects in South Central Los Angeles and has established a working relationship with community groups (see 4/6/93 correspondence from Cal Poly)
  - (4) enthusiasm of staff and student to participate, and
  - (5) the combined benefits the City derives from a working relationship with students as well as experience the students gain as a class project.
4. Find this project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 pursuant to Article VII, Class 5 (3) of the Los Angeles City Environmental Guidelines.
5. Upon authorization from the City Council, the President or two members of the Board of Public Works will execute the contract.
6. Phase II: Following identification of nuisance alleys and design of usage concepts, and subsequent to any nuisance alley conversion to community uses, issues of withdrawal from public use and closure; i.e., liability, right of entry, maintenance will be reviewed and resolved with appropriate City agencies. "Withdrawal" refers to the legal action taken by the City Council to formally restrict or deny the use of a public right-of-way by the general public leaving private rights of access of adjoining owners unaffected.

Whereas, the term "Closure" refers to the installation of barriers, gates or other closure devices, that limits the physical access to the right-of-way that has been withdrawn.

This report recommends:

- (1) That a new, separate withdrawal policy be established by Public Works to expedite the withdrawal process for nuisance alleys that are unpaved, twelve feet or less in width, not requiring vehicle access, not parallel to major highways, and not adjoining R-3 planning zones;
- (2) That when at all feasible, such withdrawals be processed collectively rather than individually in order to expedite and minimize staff time, costs and effort.
- (3) That the withdrawal process strictly adhere to the Council criteria for nuisance alleys established under CF 71-2971.
- (4) That pilot projects (two to three alleys each) be established in Council Districts Eight and Nine as demonstration projects. Funding for these projects could be

provided by a coalition of churches and private business, utilizing the project models designed by contractor.

- (5) That a model package, including site plans, specifications, and cost estimates be provided by contractor for community groups. The availability of this generic package would not only reduce cost to project participants in the community, but would facilitate marketing process.

This data would also provide a suggested development cost cap based on property values, income, etc.

## TRANSMITTALS

1. Memo to Anton Calleia and Mayor's note of approval and instructions, dated April 22, 1993.
2. CAO Report, dated April 22, 1993.
3. Nuisance Alley Conversion Project Proposal.
4. Correspondence from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly) outlining scope of work and Los Angeles area project experience, dated April 6, 1993.

## DISCUSSION

The Board of Public Works has identified some 1,026 alleys in Council Districts 8 and 9 that meet two basic requirements of a "nuisance" alley (12 feet or less in width and not parallel to a major highway). The number of such alleys that can eventually qualify for conversion to community use is unknown. In addition to the two basic requirements defined above, a determination must be made as to the number (1) "unpaved" and (2) requiring vehicle access.

The first phase of the project involves Cal Poly's Urban and Regional Planning Department identification of nuisance alleys meeting the criteria for conversion, and its Landscape Architecture Department designing concepts for conversion and closure.

After completion of Phase I, the Bureau of Engineering, Bureau of Street Maintenance, City Attorney's Office and Risk Management will review proposal and define proper procedure for withdrawing nuisance alleys for conversion.

CD 8 and CD 9 will be responsible for identifying those communities desiring to participate in the conversion project and assume withdrawal responsibilities as defined by the Department of Public Works.

Upon request from the community, such alleys will be processed for withdrawal. Whether such processing of "nuisance" alleys can be done in a block format and expedited, should be part of the withdrawal policy determination. Since these alleys currently serve little or no use except for illegal dumping and contribute to some \$4 million annually in Bureau of Street Maintenance alley cleaning costs, expeditious and innovative thought should go into the process.

### Scope of Services

#### **Phase I:**

Work will begin in the Summer quarter, through several existing classes. An initial inventory and identification of nuisance alleys will be carried out as part of classes in Planning Research Methods (URP 331) and Neighborhood Revitalization (URP 484), taught by Charles Loggins and David Bess, respectively. A data base will be created by a class studying computer applications (URP 486), taught by Felix Barreto. This phase of the project will be concluded by the end of Summer quarter.

In Fall quarter, 1993, two interdisciplinary (Landscape Architecture/Planning) studios will be conducted, focusing on the design of prototypes for alley re-use. Ideally, particular alleys would be identified, and design carried out with the participation of community or neighborhood organizations.

The salary for studio instructors (Professors) is based on the University's base salary level, or \$5,417 per studio x 2, for a total of \$10,834. An additional \$450.00 is estimated to cover mileage reimbursement for urban planning students (60 miles @ \$.30 per mile) per the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} 1,000 \text{ alleys} \times 1 \text{ trip} &= 1,000 \text{ trips} \\ 1,000 \text{ trips} \times 60 \text{ miles/trip} &= 60,000 \text{ miles;} \text{ and} \\ 60,000 \text{ miles} \times \$.30/\text{mile} &= \$18,000.00 \end{aligned}$$

Students will participate on a volunteer intern basis for study credit only, with their travel reimbursement remitted through the University.

The project cost equals \$11,284, with a 20 percent mark-up (=\$13,540) to allow for program improvement, upgrade, and research and development.

## **Phase II:**

It is anticipated that approximately 75-100 alleys in CD 8 and CD 9 will ultimately be identified as nuisance alleys suitable for community use conversion (15 feet or less in width, unpaved, not parallel to a major highway, not requiring vehicle access, occupant/neighborhood compatibility). Conversion of those alleys determined appropriate will be entirely at the discretion of homeowners.

Council staff will be responsible for: (1) coordinating program information, dissemination, (2) identifying participants, and (3) facilitating withdrawal process. Council and Public Works staffs will be responsible for developing a feasible withdrawal plan to insure minimum delays in the conversion process, i.e., possible block withdrawal processing and/or simplified withdrawal policy for nuisance alleys versus other alleys that require fire and police access.

Following implementation of a nuisance alley withdrawal policy (clarifying liability, maintenance, easement, etc.), homeowners' participation and Council staff coordination will determine the extent and urgency of the program.

With the City's Bureau of Street Maintenance spending some \$4 million annually on alley cleaning operations (greatly impacted by illegal dumping), community involvement and/or ownership sharing in nuisance alleys will enhance neighborhood environment, deter illegal dumping and criminal/drug activity while simultaneously reducing City clean up costs and requests for alleys involved in this program.

## **INDEMNIFICATION:**

Except for the active negligence or willful misconduct of CITY, CONTRACTOR undertakes and agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless CITY and any and all of CITY's Boards, Officers, Agents, Employees, Assigns and Successors in Interest from and against all suits and causes of actions, claims, losses, demands and expenses, including but not limited to, attorney's fees and costs of litigation, damage or liability of any nature whatsoever, for death or injury to any person, including CONTRACTOR's employees and agents, or damage of or destruction to any property of either party hereto or of third parties, arising in any manner by reason of the negligent acts, errors, omissions or willful misconduct incident to the performance of this Agreement on the part of CONTRACTOR or its subcontractors of any tier.

## **Funding:**

It is proposed that this contract be funded from the Capital Improvement Program, General Fund, Fund 100, Department 54, Nuisance Alley Closure Account No. C279 (MIMIS No. 9228).

## **Insurance Requirements:**

The insurance requirements have been established for this contract. When this contract is executed, the consultant will submit its insurance forms to the Board of Public works.

**Child Care Policy:**

The consultant will submit its Child Care Declaration Statement with the Personnel Department's Child Care Coordinator prior to the execution of this contract.

**South African Business Connections:**

Not applicable to Government Agencies.

**Compliance with Charter Section 126:**

The work involved in this program could be performed by City employees. However, considering the brief time frame involved, the related project costs, and the unique University/City benefits to be derived, the benefits of utilizing the University's facilities in times of budget restraints justifies the proposed program.

There is no intent to replace any City employee with students.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Robert L. Hayes*

Robert L. Hayes  
Public Information, Director  
Board of Public Works

*Craig V. Bloomquist*

Craig V. Bloomquist, Director  
Bureau of Accounting  
Department of Public Works

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

1993 APR 22 AM 10:40

ALGERIA

**DATE:** April 22, 1993

**TO:** Anton Calleia  
Mayor's Office

**FROM:** Bob Hayes, Public Information Director ~~BJ~~  
Board of Public Works

**SUBJECT: NUISANCE ALLEY CONVERSION PROJECT**

I spoke with John Harris (CAO's Office, x53504) regarding this project. He insists that he cannot release \$20,000 from Council Fund File #88604-Sub2 without notification of project support from the Mayor, and then Council approval.

Please advise if the Mayor will provide a memo of support, or if we can expedite this another way.

Thanks.

*MAYOR: SEE ATTACHED CAO REPORT.*

*support the project. Walk it  
through and be sure that clarification  
and appropriate Board action is taken*

*ac.  
Tom Bradley*

**TRANSMITTAL**

0610-03536

TO The Board of Public Works	DATE	COUNCIL FILE No.
FROM The Mayor	COUNCIL DISTRICT	

Your draft proposal for a transfer of funds to finance a pilot project entitled Alley Reclamation Program is returned without action. See City Administrative Officer report attached.

MAYOR



**REPORT** FROM

**CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

TO The Mayor	DATE 4-22-93	CAO FILE No. 0610-03536
REFERENCE  Undated draft proposal from the Board of Public Works; referred for report on April 8, 1993		COUNCIL FILE No.
SUBJECT  Proposed Alley Reclamation Pilot Program for Council Districts 8 and 9  <i>* REVISED PER ENGINEERING FOR "WITHDRAWAL</i>		COUNCIL DISTRICT

**SUMMARY** *& CLOSURE" - NOT "VACATION"*

The Board of Public Works proposes to fund a project with California State Polytechnic University at Pomona to develop alternate uses for vacated nuisance alleys in Council Districts 8 and 9. Such uses would include community gardens, play areas, communal picnic areas and green areas. Under this proposal, the University would conduct a pilot project to identify all alleys in the two council districts, identify those alleys that could be vacated and then work with the communities to develop appropriate landscaping plans for alternate uses. The proposed cost is approximately \$20,000. The Board proposes using funds in the Capital Improvement Program General Fund, Nuisance Alley Closure Account, to finance the project.

The Nuisance Alley Closure Account funds are used by the City Engineer to contract for the construction of gates at the ends of alleys that the Council has closed to public use. Adjacent property owners, as well as City maintenance and emergency Fire and Police personnel, retain the use of the alley through the issuance of keys to the gates. The use of Nuisance Alley Closure funds for purposes other than constructing gates would have to be approved by the Mayor and Council and should be officially requested by the Board of Public Works by preparation and adoption of a report.

Other issues appear unresolved. It is unclear whether the alleys are to be closed to public use or permanently vacated. Closure to public use usually retains the alley in its current state but restricts use to all except adjoining property owners and City emergency and maintenance personnel, as discussed above. If this procedure is used, but the alley is converted to alternate uses, then liability may still rest with the City. This should be investigated by the Department of Public Works with the City Risk Manager and the City Attorney.

If the alleys are to be vacated, as stated in the proposal, then the City permanently gives up the use of the property for roadway purposes and ownership of the underlying property reverts to the adjoining property owner. In such cases, the property owner usually moves his/her property line fences to the centerline of the alley. In this proposal, all of the property owners would have to agree to retain the alley space; but, since it would then become private property, the property owners would have to

(Summary continued)



CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

authorize right of entry onto the property and assume all liability and maintenance requirements. Additionally, the increased property size may impact the owner's property tax bill.

These issues, as well as any others, should be fully reviewed and developed by the Board of Public Works, with the assistance of the City Engineer and the Bureau of Street Maintenance prior to consideration by the Mayor and Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Draft Alley Reclamation Program be returned to the Board of Public Works for further review and submission of an official request to the Mayor and Council adopted by the Board.

JJH:ocm



3801 West Temple Avenue  
Pomona, California 91768-4048  
Telephone (714) 869-2688

**Urban and Regional Planning**  
College of Environmental Design

April 27, 1993

Mr. Bob Hayes, Public Information Director  
Board of Public Works  
Room 363, City Hall  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Bob:

Thanks very much for taking the time yesterday to give Dave Bess, Charles Loggins and me a tour of Council districts 8 and 9. It was very helpful to see the different types of alleys in those districts, and get a better understanding of the criteria you intend to use in the program.

As we discussed in your office, one added expense not itemized earlier would be students' transportation cost to and from City Hall (assuming that students would use City vehicles to inspect the alleys). The following estimate of that expense assumes that 1) there are 1000 alleys, 2) a team of students can survey 40 alleys on a trip, 3) a round trip from Cal Poly to City Hall is 60 miles, and 4) reimbursement is at 30 cents per mile. Mileage costs would then be:

$1000 \text{ alleys} \times 1 \text{ trip}/40 \text{ alleys} = 25 \text{ trips};$

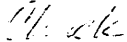
$25 \text{ trips} \times 60 \text{ miles}/\text{trip} = 1500 \text{ miles}; \text{ and}$

$1500 \text{ miles} \times .30 \text{ dollars}/\text{mile} = \$450.00.$

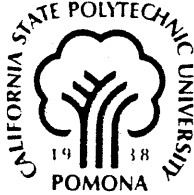
One other question that occurred to the three of us is difficulties posed by utility easements, water and sewer lines, and other infrastructure running through the alleys. We don't know whether such considerations pose any problems, but we want to get clarification before proceeding.

Our department remains very excited about the project, and looks forward to working on it with the City. Please let me know if we can provide any additional information or other assistance. I will be in touch soon with a draft data collection form to be used in an inventory of the alleys.

Sincerely,



Charles M. Hotchkiss, Chair  
Urban & Regional Planning



3801 West Temple Avenue  
Pomona, California 91768-4048  
Telephone (714) 869-2688

**Urban and Regional Planning**  
College of Environmental Design

April 6, 1993

Bob Hayes  
Public Information Director  
Board of Public Works  
Room 363, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Bob:

This is in response to your recent inquiry regarding our College's previous work in the City of Los Angeles. Each of the three professional programs has conducted projects and field work in Los Angeles. The following paragraphs focus on Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning, the two departments most likely to be involved with the nuisance alley project.

Urban and Regional Planning has undertaken two major projects in Los Angeles in the last two years. One, centered on Leimert Park, involved four of our faculty (Hersh Farberow, Richard Lloyd, Charles Loggins, and Sid Sen) and students from three different classes. Those classes worked with the South-Central Task Force, the Leimert Neighborhood Coalition, and a group of local businesspeople to develop a revitalization plan for the Leimert Park area. Its major components were housing and commercial building revitalization, intended to improve the Leimert Plaza retail district and emphasize its status as a center of cultural arts and entertainment. Students carried out tasks including demographic research, interviews, a building conditions survey, and the preparation of design proposals. They presented their work to the Task Force, the Planning Department and the Neighborhood Coalition. Incidentally, that work began in January, 1992, before the uprising.

More recently, a General Plan studio under Jerry Mitchell has been working with the Dunbar Economic Development Corporation on projects pertaining to the Vernon-Central neighborhood. Our department views this studio, conducted during Fall Quarter, 1992, and Winter Quarter, 1993, as the beginning of long-term involvement with the Vernon-Central community. Dr. Mitchell's eventual goal is the development of a full community plan created and supported by groups in the Vernon Central community. Thus far, groups of students in the studio have drafted an initial policy plan, housing element, land use maps, a community facilities inventory, and a strategy for economic development.

Landscape Architecture projects in Los Angeles include a recent study of the Los Angeles River, carried out by a third-year design studio under Takeo Uesugi. An earlier class under Hersh Farberow and Craig Sutton developed design proposals for the Fairfax district, taking into account both the older Jewish residential community and the nearby commercial activity. Proposals for re-use of alleys were included.

There have been other projects in Los Angeles, including a planning studio studying Mount Washington, a Landscape Architecture studio in the Caballero Canyon area of Woodland Hills, and numerous individual projects at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. You might also be interested to know that Cal Poly students and faculty have worked in a wide range of settings in Southern California. Recent sites include Bakersfield (a study of the Baker Street commercial corridor), Calabasas (a general plan study, with particular attention to environmental issues), and Westminster (a general plan with a focus on cultural considerations). We would be happy to provide you with a more extended list of our past projects if that would be useful.

I hope that this information will be helpful. Please keep us informed of progress on the nuisance alley project. Several of our spring quarter instructors are waiting for the signal to begin work, and fall classes already are being scheduled. We look forward to hearing from you soon, and working with you in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

*Charles M. Hotchkiss*

Charles M. Hotchkiss, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor & Chair  
Urban and Regional Planning



3801 West Temple Avenue  
Pomona, California 91768-4048  
Telephone (714) 869-2688

**Urban and Regional Planning**  
College of Environmental Design

Mr. Bob Hayes, Public Information Director  
Board of Public Works  
Room 363, City Hall  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Bob:

Thank you very much for taking the time to come and meet with us last week. The proposed project on nuisance alleys is very interesting, and would fit in well with our College's programs in planning and landscape architecture. We believe that the necessary work can be carried out within a one-year period beginning March 29 (the first day of our Spring quarter), using an interdisciplinary approach. The remainder of this letter describes our proposal and its associated costs.

Work would begin in the Spring quarter, through several existing classes. An initial inventory and identification of nuisance alleys would be carried out as part of our classes in Planning Research Methods (URP 331) and Neighborhood Revitalization (URP 484), taught by Charles Loggins and David Bess, respectively. A data base would be created by a class studying computer applications (URP 486), taught by Felix Barreto. We hope to conclude this phase of the project by early June (the end of Spring quarter). No work is proposed during the summer (although the possibility of such work exists, depending on your requirements).

In Fall quarter, 1993, and Winter quarter, 1994, two interdisciplinary (Landscape Architecture/Planning) studios would be conducted, focusing on the design of prototypes for alley re-use. Ideally, particular alleys would be identified, and design carried out with the participation of community or neighborhood organizations. If time permitted, studio classes could help carry the prototype projects through to implementation. Specific instructors for those studios have not been identified, but likely candidates include

Herschel Farberow and Craig Sutton, two long-time faculty members here. Each of the two instructors has taught in both the Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning programs; together, they also have experience with alleys, having worked on an alley project in the Fairfax District a few years ago.

The only significant expense we foresee is the salary for the studio instructors for the two studio courses. Assuming that each involves one hour of lecture and nine hours of studio, and using the University's base salary level, the cost would be \$5,417 per studio, for a total of \$10,834. This figure assumes that other expenses (photocopying and reproduction, transportation to the site, etc.) are covered by in-kind contributions from your agency. If not, we can modify the budget accordingly.

Naturally, many details remain to be arranged. In fact, several issues occurred to us as we discussed this proposal:

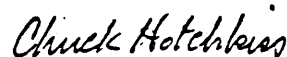
- 1) Do you conduct much of your business by Fax? If so, we would need to amend our budget to include a Fax machine, as access to the College's is limited and expensive.
- 2) Are there air photos available that could be used for reconnaissance?
- 3) Given that we hope to have neighborhood and community groups serve as clients, what assistance can your office provide (appropriate introductions, meeting space, publicity, etc.)?
- 4) Could we arrange for the relevant instructors to tour Council districts 8 and 9 early in April, in order to become better acquainted with the area and anticipate students' problems and concerns?

We hope that these and other questions can be answered quickly, as we are excited about this project and anxious to see it get underway. Please contact us (909/869-2713 for Ken, -2688 for Chuck) if we can offer any additional information or assistance. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Kenneth S. Nakaba, Chair  
Landscape Architecture



Charles M. Hotchkiss, Chair  
Urban & Regional Planning



# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



TOM BRADLEY  
MAYOR

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## OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

ROOM 353, CITY HALL  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

JAMES A. GIBSON  
SECRETARY

GENERAL INFORMATION  
485-3381

June 23, 1993

#1 PIO

City Council  
Room No. 395  
City Hall

Attn: Anton Calleia

Subject: NUISANCE ALLEY CONVERSION PROJECT: PHASES I & II

As recommended in the accompanying report of the Director of the Board of Public Works' Public Information Office, the Board of Public Works requests authorization to implement a Nuisance Alley Conversion Program and to negotiate and execute a personal services contract with California State Polytechnic University, at Pomona, to identify nuisance alleys and design usage concepts in Council Districts Eight and Nine at a cost not to exceed \$20,000. It is further requested that the Board be authorized to use the Nuisance Alley Closure Account No. C279 (MIMIS No. 9228) of the Capital Improvement Program, General Fund, Fund 100, Department 54 to fund the cost of the project.

It is further recommended that the project be found to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 pursuant to Article VII, Class 5(3) of the Los Angeles City Environmental Guidelines, and that the President or two Members of this Board be authorized to execute the said contract.

Respectfully yours,

James A. Gibson  
Secretary  
Board of Public Works

JAG:cg

cc: Bob Hayes, PIO