



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

August 5, 2025

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**SUBJECT: COST OF GRAVELING ALLEYWAYS IN THE CITY**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide an estimate of the cost to install gravel in unimproved alleys in Fort Worth and consider the feasibility of graveling. This exercise showed that graveling is significantly more expensive than the current mowing program and would not eliminate the need for ongoing maintenance.

**Cost Estimate**

The Park & Recreation Department (PARD), in collaboration with the Transportation & Public Works Department (TPW), developed a cost estimate to purchase, deliver, and install six inches of gravel by a contractor. For this analysis, a unit price of \$3.90 per square foot was used.

An average alley size of 12 feet wide by 536 feet long was used for following estimated costs.

Item	Estimated Cost
Gravel one alley block	\$ 25,085
Gravel 1,235 alleys in the unimproved alley program	\$30,979,975
Gravel all 2,300 unimproved alley blocks	\$57,695,500

**Budget Context**

For comparison, the FY2025 annual budget for the Unimproved Alley Mowing Program (U-AMP) is \$806,318. Of this, \$741,599 is allocated for mowing services. The remaining funds support a contract compliance technician responsible for inspecting alleys and responding to resident concerns. The current budget provides resources to mow approximately ½ half of the unimproved alleys in the city.

**Ongoing Maintenance Needs**

While graveling alleys may reduce the frequency or need for mowing, it would not eliminate ongoing maintenance requirements. Regular upkeep would still be necessary, including:

- Gravel replenishment over time
- Weed control (spraying/mowing)
- Illegal dumping removal
- Tree trimming

Graveled surfaces increase impervious areas, potentially worsening stormwater runoff. Over time, traffic can cause ruts and potholes that retain water, leading to mosquito breeding and drainage issues. Because of these concerns, TPW only maintains paved alleys, and the City's Subdivision Ordinance requires concrete paving for alleys.

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**SUBJECT: COST OF GRAVELING ALLEYWAYS IN THE CITY****PARD Pilot Program 2023**

In FY2023, PARD tested graveling on one alley block. Despite full-length gravel installation, the material subsided quickly, and ruts, potholes, and vegetation returned within months.

**Need for Flex Base and Engineering**

To improve durability, a compacted flex base is necessary beneath the gravel. Proper engineering is also needed to design effective stormwater drainage and prevent runoff from affecting nearby properties. These requirements would add costs beyond the graveling estimates provided.

Residents may report alley-related concerns through any of the following methods:

- **MyFW App**
- **Email:** 1234@fortworthtexas.gov
- **Phone:** (817) 392-1234

Once a report is submitted, a work order is generated by the City Call Center and routed to the appropriate staff for follow-up and resolution.

For additional information regarding alley mowing, see IR 25-0076 or contact Dave Lewis, Director, Park & Recreation Department, at (817) 392-5717.

**Jesus "Jay" Chapa**  
**City Manager**