

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For the Planning Commission Meeting of March 3, 2026

**SUBJECT: John Street Street Vacation for City Council
Project Number SV25-0001**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the John Street Street Vacation.

SUMMARY

The University of Michigan has initiated a street vacation for the entirety of John Street, a one-block street extending between South 5th Avenue and South Division Street. The University owns all of the properties on John Street and wishes to remove the street to allow for future development.

BACKGROUND

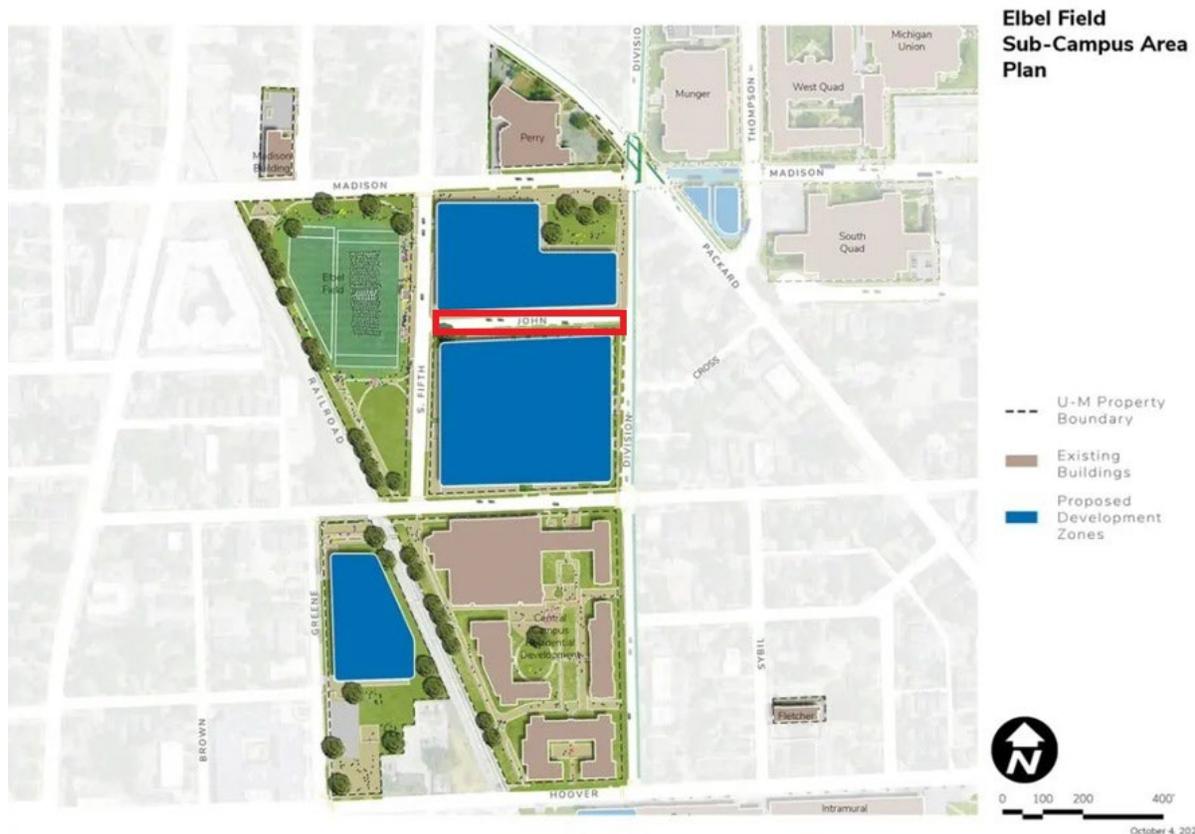


Figure 1: University of Michigan Elbel Field Plan (emphasis added to highlight John St.)

As part of ongoing and future development plans in the Elbel Field area, the University of Michigan solicited the vacation of the complete one-block length of John Street. Additionally, as part of related work, the University of Michigan completed the relocation of the historic Wallenburg House on November 22, 2025, where Raoul Wallenburg resided for a year while studying architecture at the University.



Figure 2: Relocation of the Wallenburg House, November 22, 2025 (photo by Connor Titsworth, Michigan Commons, The University Record, University of Michigan)

To vacate the street City Council must pass a resolution and the street is considered vacated at the time the resolution is recorded. If the City vacates the street, the land area of the street will be divided and added equitably to the parcels with frontage on either side of the alley – in this case, the University of Michigan.

There are public sanitary, water and storm water mains located in the street right-of-way that exclusively service University of Michigan owned parcels. Ownership of these mains shall be turned over from the city to the university. See Staff Comments below for details and other engineering requirements before City Council approval.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	University	R4C (Multiple-Family Dwelling District) and D2 (Downtown Interface District)
EAST	Single and Multiple-Family Residential	R4C (Multiple-Family Dwelling District)
SOUTH	University	R4C (Multiple-Family Dwelling District) and D2 (Downtown Interface District)
WEST	University	D2 (Downtown Interface District)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the street vacation be approved. All surrounding parcels are in the same ownership and public utilities will be transferred to the University of Michigan. The vacation will have no impacts on vehicular or pedestrian access. The vacation is in the public interest and will facilitate future land uses of the underlying parcels.

STAFF COMMENTS

City Engineering. The following items require no further action at this time:

1. The University of Michigan has provided confirmation to the City that notice of right-of-way vacation was provided to all utility/telecom companies, and that those franchise companies located within the John Street right-of-way are agreeable to their infrastructure being placed on private property. Private easements may be required.
2. The University of Michigan has acknowledged City stormwater concerns in their response memo uploaded to SV25-0001 in A2Stream on December 1, 2025.
3. Ownership of the existing inlets on the west end of the John Street right-of-way, their associated piping, and the 8" sanitary sewer beginning at a terminal manhole and continuing west to the 15" sanitary sewer at the existing public manhole in South Fifth Avenue shall be transferred from the City to The University of Michigan, as noted on the plan sheet. A utility transfer agreement must be executed and recorded prior to the approval of the John Street right-of-way vacation request. A condition shall be included in the utility transfer agreement stating that the University will be required to meet City stormwater design requirements if new connections are made to these existing catch basins and pipe.
4. The existing 8" sanitary sewer located on parcel address 8 Marshall Court, extending south onto parcel address 333 John Street, and continuing south to a manhole in the John Street right-of-way is proposed to be abandoned under project CVLP25-0017. The existing 6" public water main located within the John Street right-of-way is proposed to be abandoned under the same project.
5. There is a DTE-owned streetlight located within the John Street right-of-way. This streetlight will be removed from the City's street light asset management system.

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6. Any City-owned street signs shall be returned to Public Works.

Prepared by Joshua Shake, Senior Planner
Reviewed by Hank Kelley, Deputy Planning Manager

Attachments: Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
Site Survey
[Project File SV25-0001](#)

c: Owner – The Regents of the University of Michigan, Donald Uchman (duchman@umich.edu)