

Alley Inventory & Safety Improvements

October 2023

An alley is a thoroughway between buildings or parcels that provides access to the street network.

Two pedestrian crashes, resulting in serious injuries occurred near alleys in Arlington County in 2021.

To learn more about alley conditions, the County developed an inventory of alleys, established baseline guidance for alley intersections, and made improvements to increase safety.



Alley Inventory & Safety Improvements Methodology

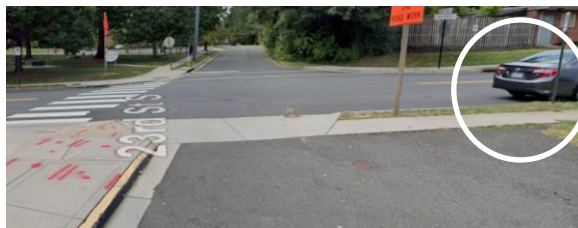
The first step in this process was creating an inventory of existing alleys throughout the County. This inventory included each alley's location, as well as details about its design and condition. Specifically, County staff reviewed data and conducted field visits to evaluate and document concerns with:

- **Crashes:** Staff researched crashes reported for each alley intersection location.
- **Sight distance and visibility:** Sight distance is the extent of the roadway visible to a driver. To assess sight distance, obstructions such as foliage, barriers, parked vehicles, or existing roadway characteristics were evaluated at alley access points.
- **Signage and pavement markings:** Staff checked for clarity, appropriateness, consistency, and condition of signage and pavement markings.
- **Roadway surface material:** The condition of the surface to identify severely-worn pavement or other deficiencies that could decrease safety was noted and forwarded for consideration in longer term maintenance planning.

Based on these evaluations, safety treatments at locations flagged for any of the criteria listed above were made.

Improvements Made

Sight distance concerns were identified at seven alleys and faded signs in one alley. Improvements were made at all eight of these alleys using some or all of these treatments: adjusting parking areas, installing "Watch for Pedestrians" signage, or adding stop bars. Upgrades to signs in other locations were made also.



Before: View of oncoming traffic obstructed by on-street parking on N Kenmore St



After: On-street parking on N Kenmore St was repurposed to clear sight lines

Moving Forward

The County has standardized recommendations for alley improvements so that these treatments will be systematically implemented during future alley improvement projects. This will enhance sight distance and safety for drivers and pedestrians at additional alley access points.

