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LTC# 427-2022

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Honorable Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager

DATE: October 10, 2022

SUBJECT: **POTENTIAL USE OF ALTON COURT ALLEYWAY AS AN ALTERNATIVE PATH FOR PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES, AND MICROMOBILITY DEVICES**

The purpose of this Letter to Commission is to provide an update regarding the potential use of the Alton Court alleyway as an alternative mobility corridor for pedestrians, bicycles, and micromobility devices (i.e. stand-up scooters) in lieu of Alton Road and West Avenue, and in light of the upcoming reconstruction of the West Avenue corridor.

At the March 9, 2022 City Commission meeting, Vice-Mayor Alex Fernandez sponsored a resolution directing the Administration to study and identify the costs and methods to transform the Alton Court and Meridian Court alleyways into safe alternative mobility routes for pedestrians, bicycles, and micromobility devices. Pursuant to this resolution, the Transportation and Mobility Department and the Public Works Department jointly conducted walk-throughs, observations, and prepared a preliminary feasibility analysis of both alleyways. The attached presentation includes staff's findings and recommendations. This item will be discussed at the upcoming October 19 Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee meeting.

Alton Court is a service alley located between Alton Road to the east and West Avenue to the west and operates one-way northbound. The alleyway extends between 8 Street and 17 Street and serves primarily for "back of the house operations" for businesses and also provides access to private parking for residential and commercial buildings. The alleyway connects to both Alton Road and West Avenue at each east-west cross street and to the existing green bike lanes on 16 Street. Alton Court ranges between 16 feet and 18 feet in width, has no sidewalks, and experiences a high level of truck activity often blocking safe passage and limiting visibility. Staff's assessment identified several existing pavement, pavement markings, and signage deficiencies that would need to be addressed in order to provide a safe and comfortable walking, cycling, and riding environment for users. The preliminary estimated cost of the recommended improvements on Alton Court is approximately $300,000 and does not include any street lighting (if needed). Funding for the implementation of these improvements would need to be identified.

Should the City Commission wish to pursue the use of Alton Court as an alternative mobility path for pedestrians, bicycles, and micromobility devices, the Administration would recommend moving forward with a pilot program to evaluate the effectiveness of the alleyway as a mobility corridor and garner community and user feedback. The pilot would commence only after securing funding and completing the necessary infrastructure and signage, including wayfinding, improvements along the alleyway.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Attachment: Feasibility Analysis for Alton Court and Meridian Court Alleyways

MT/JRG/MM/DF

DS MM DS JRG DS MT



Pedestrian-Bicycle-Micromobility Alleyways

Feasibility Analysis For:

Alton Court

Meridian Court

Alton Court Alleyway



- Service alley located between West Avenue and Alton Road
- It operates one-way northbound and primarily serves "back of house" functions for businesses and provides access to private parking for businesses and residential properties
- There are various utilities along the alley
- Some bicyclists use Alton Ct as an alternate to Alton Road or West Avenue; however, the primary use of the alley is currently vehicular
- There are no sidewalks along the alley


8th Street
9th St.
10th St.
11th St.
12th St.
13th St.
14th St.
West Ave
14th Pl.
15th St.
16th St.
Lincoln Road
17th Street
Alton Ct
Alton Rd
N














8th Street
9th St.
10th St.
11th St.
12th St.
13th St.
14th St.
14th Pl.
15th St.
15th Ter.
16th St.
Lincoln Road
17th Street
West Ave
Alton Ct
Alton Rd
N







Existing Conditions – Alton Ct

- Alley ranges between 16’ to 18’ in effective width
- Utility poles, manholes, grates, and other public utilities are serviced from the alley
- There are various pavement deficiencies in the alleyway and sidewalk approaches which create hazards for users
- Lighting appears adequate on most blocks with 2-3 LED FPL fixtures per block and City maintained-LED fixtures at most alley entrances









Observations and Findings – Alton Ct

- Deliveries often block the alley which may result in inadequate clear space for bicycles to pass
- Whole Foods (10th Street) has significantly high truck and vehicular activity which frequently blocks alleyway
- Trash collection occurs from the alley
- Most businesses do not have customer back door entrances and will require alleyway users to use cross streets or the main road to access businesses









Observations and Findings – Alton Ct (cont.)

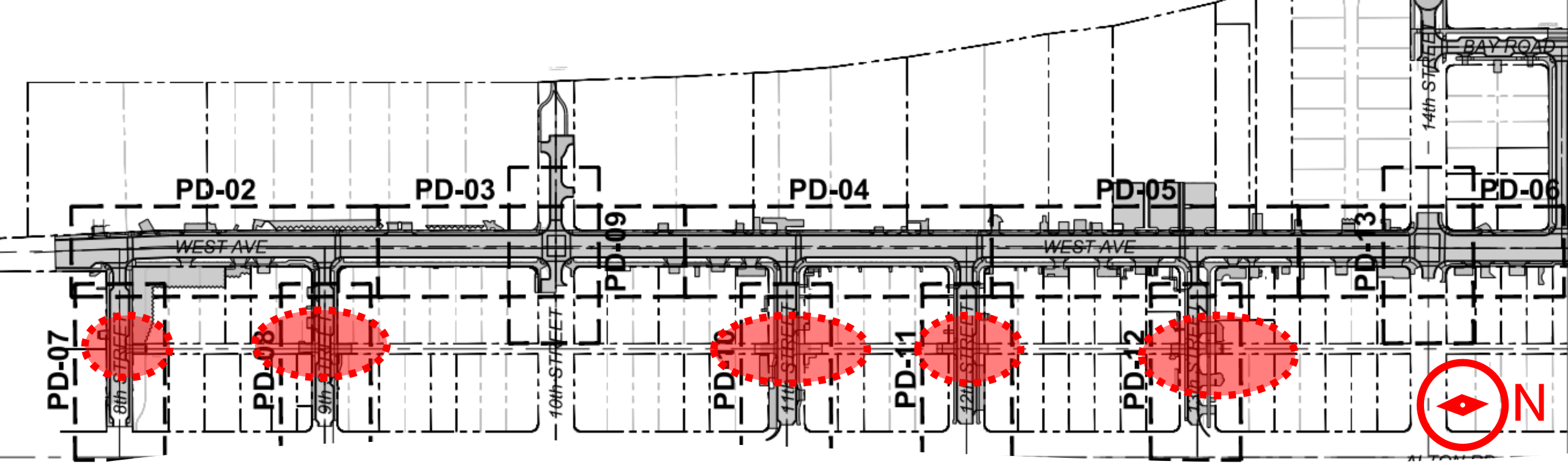
- Alley has high truck activity including trash collection which makes it inconvenient for cyclists
- Some private parking areas will require modifications to ensure sight visibility is adequate
- Given alley functions as a controlled side-street, as well as the limited sight visibility at intersections, cyclists and micromobility devices will need to frequently slow down or stop to cross a street



Observations and Findings – Alton Ct (cont.)

- Milling, resurfacing, and sidewalk repairs must be performed to address potholes and cracks that could affect safety and ride-ability
  - Cost - $250,000
- Striping and signage must be installed to advise motorists of the potential presence of pedestrians, cyclists, and micromobility devices traveling in both directions along a one-way alley and across the street
  - Cost - $50,000
- Wayfinding signage would help guide cyclists to/from the alley





Alton Court Construction

- There will be construction at all alley approaches as part of the West Avenue Neighborhood Improvement Project
- Connectivity and final elevation of the alley should be considered to ensure cyclist comfort

SUMMARY – ALTON COURT

- Pros:
  - Alternative pedestrian, bike, and micro-mobility facility during years-long construction of West Avenue project and for future
  - Connectivity to existing 16 Street bike lanes, Lincoln Road, and future 17 Street bike lanes
  - Potential to serve as catalyst for future alleyway revitalization and activation
- Cons:
  - High truck activity, often blocking safe passage for all modes
  - Limited visibility due to private parking spaces
  - Lack of direct access to businesses (few back door entrances)
  - Does not extend south of 8 Street, thus no direct connectivity to park at 600 Alton or existing 5th Street bike lanes
  - Once West Avenue project is completed, utility of alleyway as an alternative transportation facility is expected to decrease
- Preliminary Cost: $300,000 for resurfacing, sidewalk repairs, restriping, and signage (excludes lighting if needed)
- **Recommendation: Potentially pursue a pilot contingent upon funding**



- Meridian Court is the service alley located between Meridian Avenue and Jefferson Avenue
- Operates one-way northbound
- Lies within the Flamingo Park Slow Streets Pilot network and the South Beach Pedestrian Priority Zone
- Alley has significantly less commercial activity than Alton Court
- There are no sidewalks along the alley


5th Street
6th Street
7th Street
Jefferson Ave
Meridian Ct
8th Street
9th Street
Meridian Ave
10th Street
11th Street
N



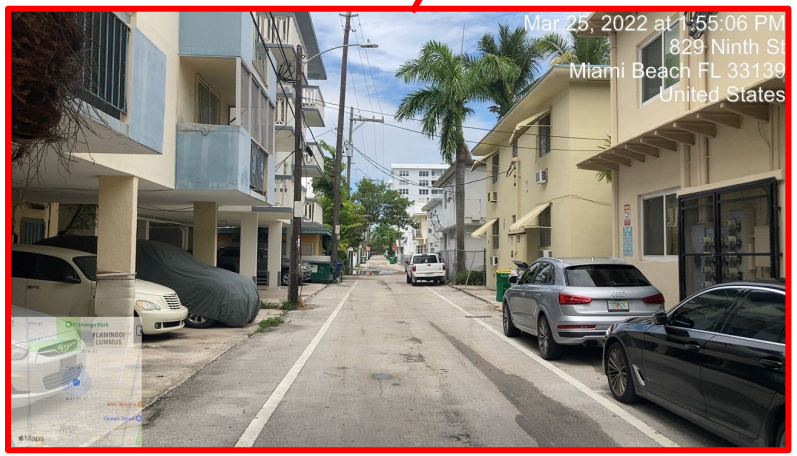

626 Meridian Ave
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States


Mar 25, 2022 at 1:51:06 PM
650 Meridian Ave
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States


704 Meridian Ave
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States


805 Eighth St
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States


7th Street
Jefferson Ave
9th Street
Meridian Ct
5th Street
6th Street
Meridian Ave
8th Street
10th Street
11th Street
N


Mar 25, 2022 at 1:55:06 PM
829 Ninth St
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States


Mar 25, 2022 at 1:55:57 PM
830 Tenth St
Miami Beach FL 33139
United States
STOP

Existing Conditions – Meridian Ct

- Entrance is from Meridian Avenue through the South Shore Community Center parking lot which is the future site for Fire Station # 1
- Alley effective width is 12' so there is little to no room for a pedestrian or bicyclist to navigate around any large truck servicing the alley, including garbage trucks
- Little to no commercial activity which significantly reduces heavy vehicle traffic; however, many of the multi-family buildings have parking accessible only through the alley









Existing Conditions – Meridian Ct (cont.)

- Pavement is poor and there is spot flooding which typically affects bicyclists' comfort
- Most private parking is only accessible through the alley and most exits from parking facilities have limited sight visibility
- Lighting appears adequate on most blocks with 2-3 FPL-maintained LED fixtures per block and City-maintained LED fixtures at most alley entrances



Findings and Observations – Meridian Ct

- Trash collection vehicles completely block the alley which can be a safety issue for alleyway users
- Wayfinding signage is needed to guide alleyway users to/from the alley and across the streets
- The cost of upgrading this alleyway with new pavement, signage, and pavement markings would cost $113,000
- Located within Flamingo Park Slow Streets 2.0 and South Beach Pedestrian Priority Zone (funded capital project)
- City is pursuing buffered bike lanes on Jefferson Avenue



SUMMARY – MERIDIAN COURT

- Pros:
  - Primarily residential with low vehicle/truck activity, other than trash collection
  - Low stress facility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and micromobility
- Cons:
  - This neighborhood is already very walkable and bikeable; thus, the investment is not expected to result in significant benefits to mobility
- Preliminary Cost:
  - $113,000 for repaving, sidewalk repairs, signage, and striping (excludes lighting improvements if needed)
- **Recommendation: Not recommended**



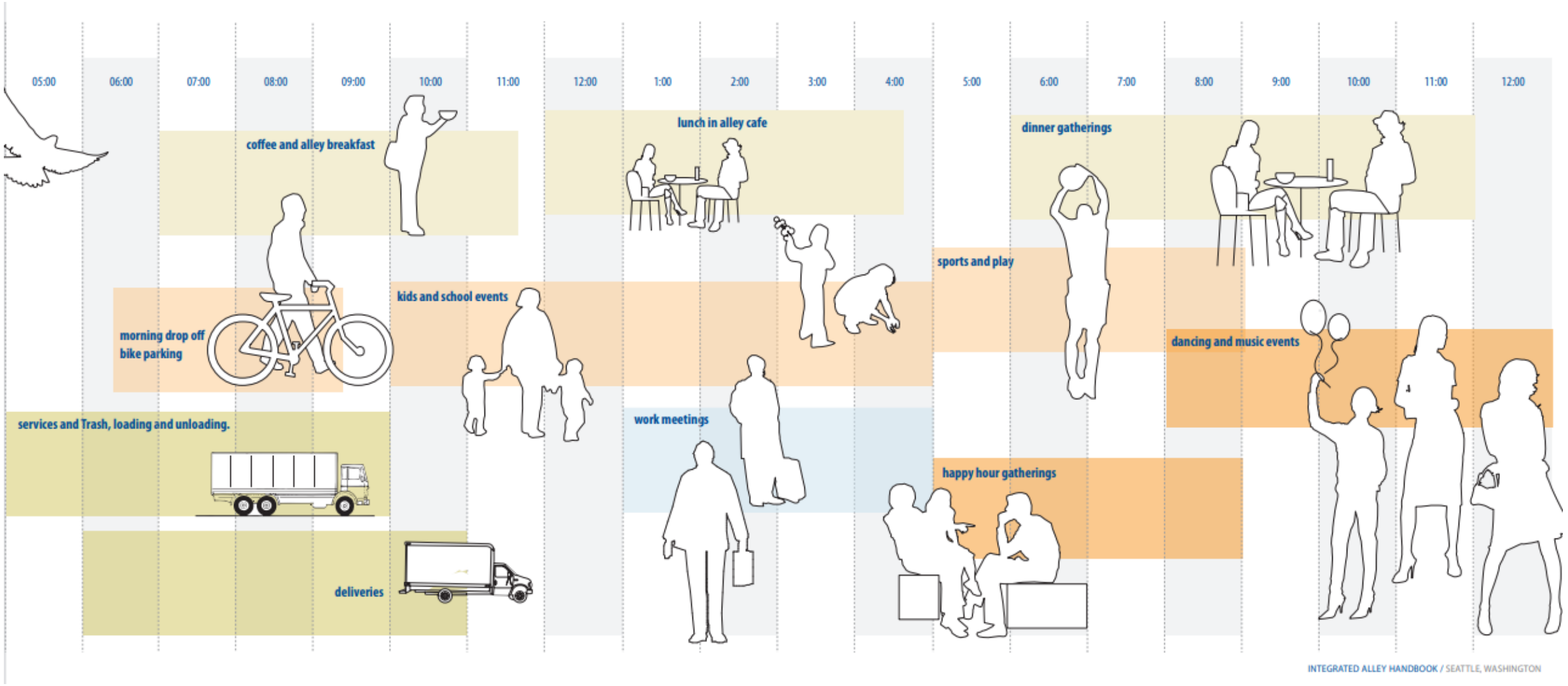
Alleyway Handbook/Seattle


Lincoln Road Master Plan – Lincoln Lane


Linden Alley – San Francisco

Livable Alleys Best Practices

- Several national and international cities have recognized alleys as quality underutilized space that could promote:
  - Walkability
  - Bikeability
  - Places for green infrastructure
  - Additional store frontage for greater economic impact to businesses
- Most cities are considering livable alley policies concentrated on:
  - Establishing hours for delivery/service operations
  - Modifying the type of delivery vehicles
  - Developing building policy which promotes alley livability depending on surrounding land-use
  - Creating a sense of place, including branding, murals, entrance features, and community events



Day in the Life of a Livable Alley

City of Miami District 5 Alleyway Improvements

- City of Miami has explored the implementation of traffic calming and shared-lane markings on City alleys to promote bicycling and provide connectivity to parks
- Many of the improved alleys were unpaved alleys and lighting is still a concern for some users (based on feedback on social media)







