# Policy Briefing Summary
City Council

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| **Regarding:** | **Public Hearing and Ordinance regarding Petition to Vacate a Portion of the Swift Lane Right-of-Way adjacent to 1210 Smith Street (Tax Map and Parcel 490139100)** |
| **Staff Contact(s):** | Deborah D Willard, Paralegal |
| **Presenter:** | **Steven Hicks, Director of Public Works** |
| **Date of Proposed Action:** | November 16, 2026 |

**Issue**
Stewart Lawrence ("Mr. Lawrence"), a City of Charlottesville, Virginia ("City"), resident, has requested that a 42x46 foot portion of Swift Lane in the City be vacated and closed.

**Background / Rule**
The requested portion of Swift Lane is an unimproved right-of-way ("ROW") adjacent to Mr. Lawrence's residence at 1210 Smith Street, being forty-two (42) feet in width and beginning at its intersection with Smith Street and extending south-west forty-six (46) feet, adjacent to TMP#49013900 and 490139100. If approved, Mr. Lawrence plans on planting trees for shade, extending garden space, and installing outdoor patio space.

**Analysis**
Property owners along Swift Lane have been duly notified of the proposed partial street closing and a Public Hearing Notice has been published pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-1813. The subject property currently is not a through street and Mr. Lawrence will only be taking a portion of the platted street. Easements must be granted for any existing utilities, and access must be maintained to 1037 Smith Street, located behind 1210 Smith Street. The addition of the subject property to the existing 1210 Smith Street property could open the possibility of development of the property, with additional units and should be considered when establishing the purchase price.

Revocation of ownership does remove property that the City could use at some point in the future for utility needs, stormwater facilities, or other unknown public infrastructure. The City could retain the ability in the future via easement or some other form of covenant to be worked out during the negotiations.

**Financial Impact**
The subject property has monetary value that should be established through negotiation. Upon transfer of ownership, yearly tax revenue could be collected.

**Recommendation**
Following conducting the Public Hearing legally required by Virginia Code § 15.2-1800(B) to dispose of publicly-owned property, City Staff recommends that City Council direct the City Attorney to enter negotiations with Mr. Lawrence over the value of the subject property.

**Recommended Motion (if Applicable)**
"I make a Motion to direct the City Attorney to enter negotiations with Mr. Lawrence over the value of the subject property to be potentially disposed of by the City. If the City Attorney and Mr. Lawrence

can reach a agreeable amount to be paid to the City for the disposal of the subject property, the City Attorney is further directed to place this matter on a future City Council Agenda for potential vacation/closure of the subject property and sale of the same to Mr. Lawrence."

**Attachments**

1. ORDINANCE - Partial Closure of Swift Ln. 2026 (1).docxjvhedits (1)
2. PETITION TO VACATE A STREET OR ALLEY_Lawrence Dec 2025_
3. Lawrence_Response_to_Engineering_Memo_Swift_Lane_FINAL
4. SWIFT LANE VACATION Exhibit