

## City of McPherson

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### PRESS RELEASE

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## City addresses issue in downtown alleyway

For many years, access to the alleyway between the 300 block of North Main and North Ash Streets in McPherson has been an issue.

After spending nearly the last year unsuccessfully exploring options with neighboring property owners to resolve the situation, the City of McPherson Commission this week took the first step in a condemnation process. The intent is to create more permanent safe public access that was eliminated years ago by the railroad track location.

Ingress and egress from the alley is extremely difficult with the only access coming at Euclid Street. Business deliveries, trash pickup and emergency access through the alley is tedious. Vehicles utilizing the alleyway are forced to either dangerously back out or turn around with limited space. At times, business deliveries are forced to be made on more heavily-trafficked roadways, creating more safety concerns and inconveniences in parking and right of way.

Up until recently, City of McPherson Mayor Tom Brown had an informal arrangement with property owners on Ash Street that vehicles could exit the alley to the east — between the two properties. When one of the properties changed hands, that option no longer existed.

In January of this year, one business owner affected by the change in access brought forth a petition signed by numerous neighboring property owners and tenants affected, prompting further exploration by officials.

Although the City attempted to purchase the property at a fair market value, negotiations broke down. The commission then made the difficult decision to pursue the condemnation of roughly 15-foot wide paths off two properties to create access from Ash Street and ensure public ingress and egress.

With safety as its top priority, the commission on Nov. 8, 2022, unanimously accepted Resolution No. 22-21, which commences the process of condemnation.

The next step in the process would be the presentation of an ordinance that if accepted authorizes the city attorney to file a condemnation action with the district court. In a condemnation, the Court will award the landowners fair market value of the property and the City a public right of way.

Mayor

*Thomas A. Brown*

Commissioner of Public Facilities

*Gary L. Mehl*

Commissioner of Streets & Utilities

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