

**§ 136-96. Road or street not used within 15 years after dedication deemed abandoned; declaration of withdrawal recorded; joint tenants or tenants in common; defunct corporations.**

Every strip, piece, or parcel of land which shall have been at any time dedicated to public use as a road, highway, street, avenue, or for any other purpose whatsoever, by a deed, grant, map, plat, or other means, which shall not have been actually opened and used by the public within 15 years from and after the dedication thereof, shall be thereby conclusively presumed to have been abandoned by the public for the purposes for which same shall have been dedicated; and no person shall have any right, or cause of action thereafter, to enforce any public or private easement therein, except where such dedication was made less than 20 years prior to April 28, 1953, such right may be asserted within one year from and after April 28, 1953; provided, that no abandonment of any such public or private right or easement shall be presumed until the dedicator or some one or more of those claiming under him shall file and cause to be recorded in the register's office of the county where such land lies a declaration withdrawing such strip, piece or parcel of land from the public or private use to which it shall have theretofore been dedicated in the manner aforesaid; provided further, that where the fee simple title is vested in tenants in common or joint tenants of any land embraced within the boundaries of any such road, highway, street, avenue or other land dedicated for public purpose whatsoever, as described in this section, any one or more of such tenants, on his own or their behalf and on the behalf of the others of such tenants, may execute and cause to be registered in the office of the register of deeds of the county where such land is situated the declaration of withdrawal provided for in this section, and, under Chapter 46 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, entitled "Partition," and Chapter 1, Article 29A of the General Statutes of North Carolina, known as the "Judicial Sales Act," and on petition of any one or more of such tenants such land thereafter may be partitioned by sale only as between or among such tenants, and irrespective of who may be in actual possession of such land, provided further, that in such partition proceedings any such tenants in common or joint tenants may object to such withdrawal certificate and the court shall thereupon order the same cancelled of record; that where any corporation has dedicated any strip, piece or parcel of land in the manner herein set out, and said dedicating corporation is not now in existence, it shall be conclusively presumed that the said corporation has no further right, title or interest in said strip, piece, or parcel of land, regardless of the provisions of conveyances from said corporation, or those holding under said corporation, retaining title and interest in said strip, piece, or parcel of land so dedicated; the right, title and interest in said strip, piece, or parcel of land shall be conclusively presumed to be vested in those persons, firms or corporations owning lots or parcels of land adjacent thereto, subject to the provisions set out herein before in this section.

The provisions of this section shall have no application in any case where the continued use of any strip of land dedicated for street or highway purposes shall be necessary to afford convenient ingress or egress to any lot or parcel of land sold and conveyed by the dedicator of such street or highway. This section shall apply to dedications made after as well as before April 28, 1953.

The provisions of this section shall not apply when the public dedication is part of a future street shown on the street plan adopted pursuant to G.S. 136-66.2. Upon request, a city shall adopt a resolution indicating that the dedication described in the proposed declaration of withdrawal is or is not part of the street plan adopted under G.S. 136-66.2. This resolution shall be attached to the declaration of withdrawal and shall be registered in the office of the register of deeds of the county where the land is situated. (1921, c. 174; C.S., ss. 3846(rr), 3846(ss), 3846(tt); 1939, c. 406; 1953, c. 1091; 1957, c. 517; 1987, c. 428.)