

CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

2008 OCT 30 PM 3:40

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Dan Lindheim
FROM: Community and Economic Development Agency
DATE: November 12, 2008

RE: **A Report And Two Ordinances**

- **Amending The Oakland Municipal Code To Add A New Chapter 8.54 Requiring The Registration Of Vacant Residential and Non-Residential Buildings, And**
- **Amending Ordinance No. 12880 C.M.S. (Master Fee Schedule) To Add New Fees For Registering Vacant Buildings**

SUMMARY

The proposed ordinances will

- add a new chapter in the Oakland Municipal Code (OMC) requiring owners and others who may have control of vacant residential and non-residential buildings to register properties which have been vacant for more than 45 days, and will
- add new registration fees to the Master Fee Schedule which will rise with the increasing duration of vacancy, and will
- provide a one-year fee waiver for active leasing, rental, repair, or demolition efforts and a two-year fee exemption for non-profit owners, and will
- authorize the Building Official to assess OMC penalties for failure to comply with the proposed registration program and to collect unpaid fees, penalties, and interest through liens, property taxes, and court actions.

Requiring the early identification of vacant buildings will incentivize owners to maintain their properties and will allow Code Enforcement to pro-actively monitor residential neighborhoods and business and industrial districts before the accumulated effects of trespassers, blight, pollutants, and vectors devastate these areas. A situational data base will also assist Police and Fire when responding to emergency calls for service.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff costs for administering the registration program will be covered by the proposed new registration fees and will not require an additional appropriation. Revenue will be deposited in the special revenue Development Service Fund (2415), Code Enforcement Organization (88454), Miscellaneous Fines Account (43115), Development Permit and Inspection Program (PS31).

Item: _____

Community and Economic Development Committee
November 12, 2008

BACKGROUND

The magnitude and acceleration of the nationwide financial crises has resulted in an explosion of mortgage foreclosures across the country. For example, the number of vacant residences in Oakland has doubled in the past six (6) months to more than 3,000. Lending institutions have foregone their responsibility for maintaining foreclosed properties, and Oakland's residential neighborhoods and business districts are being overwhelmed with the revival of crime and blight resulting from the absence of responsible occupants and owners. There is no consolidated federal, state, county, or industry data base which identifies these properties. Consequently, police, fire, and code enforcement resources in Oakland have not been able to respond proactively to stabilize deteriorating conditions in target areas.

Cities across the country have reacted to this crisis by implementing vacant building programs which have created minimum maintenance standards, required owners to register properties, initiated fees to administer the programs, and established security deposits or penalties:

CITY	REGISTER TIME	REGISTER FEE	PENALTY	COMPANION REGULATIONS			BOND
				BLIGHT	BOARD	INSURANCE	
Fresno, CA	10 days	pending res. bldgs	\$1,000	yes	yes	no	no
Riverside Co., CA	10 days	pending res. bldgs	\$100	yes	yes	no	no
Stockton, CA	n.a.	n.a.	\$1,000 / day	yes	yes	no	no
Boston, MA	7 days	\$100 annually res. bldgs	\$300 / day	yes	yes	no	no
Chicago, IL	30 days	\$500+ annually all bldgs	\$1,000 / day	yes	yes	yes	no
Dallas, TX	45 days	\$75 annually comm. bldgs	\$2,000	yes	yes	yes	no
St Paul, MN	30 days	\$426 annually res. bldgs	no	yes	yes	yes	\$5,000
St Louis, MO	pending	pending	no	yes	yes	yes	no
Washington DC	30 days	\$20 annually all bldgs	10x tax rate	yes	yes	no	no

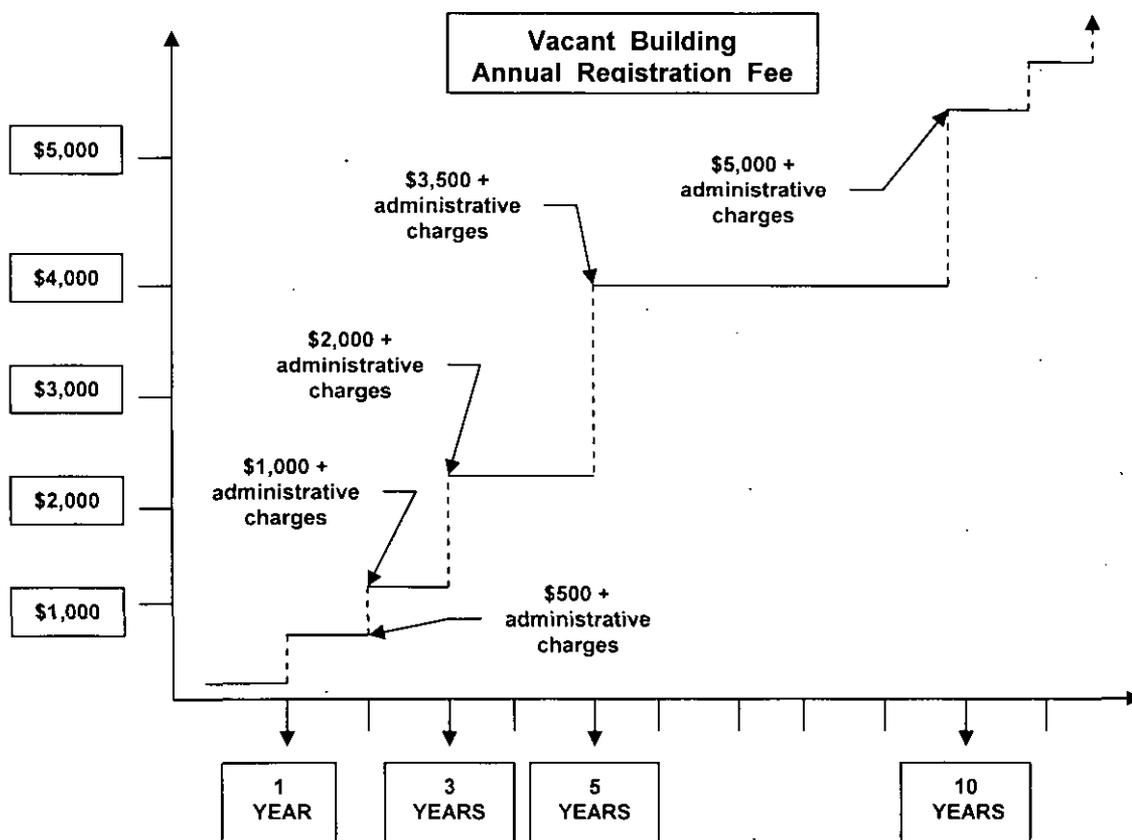
Unlike many other cities and counties in California, Oakland has had effective property maintenance, building maintenance, and demolition regulations for 50 years. Oakland has a common need, however, for a registration program which will incentivize owners and other entities who may have transitory control of a property to notify the City when their buildings become vacant. This in turn will enable the City to marshal its resources and effectively invest time in target areas with comprehensive Code Enforcement monitoring and abatement actions.

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KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Fees

Owners and other entities will have 45 days to register a vacant building. The initial registration fee (\$175) will be less than the minimum fee which is charged for a building permit (\$221 total). An annual re-registration fee will be due on May 1 of each succeeding year. The fee will increase incrementally so long as the building remains vacant to cover the increasing costs of managing the program, monitoring individual properties, and interacting with Police, Fire, SDS districts, neighbors, potential purchasers, etc.



Owners and other entities having transitory interest in a property may request a one-year fee waiver when they demonstrate that they are actively marketing their property for lease, rent, or sale or have applied for a permit to repair or demolish the building. Non-profit organizations may also apply for a two-year fee exemption without conditions.

Penalties

The Building Official is authorized to assess OMC administrative penalties (\$5,000 total) and

Item: _____

civil penalties (\$350,000 total) for failure to register a vacant building. Penalties assessments may be appealed to a Hearing Examiner.

OMC penalties (Chapters 1.08 and 1.12) will be used in lieu of \$1,000 per day civil fines recently authorized by Senate Bill 1137 (California Civil Code Section 2924.8). The Civil Code fines apply to failure to maintain property. OMC penalties will apply both to failure maintain and failure to register a property.

Collection

Fees, penalties, and interest may be collected against owners and other entities having transitory interest in a property in the same manner as other Code Enforcement assessments through property liens, property taxes, and court actions.

Applicability

The ordinance will apply to vacant residential and non-residential buildings. Buildings owned or leased by the federal government, State of California, City of Oakland, Oakland Redevelopment Agency, Port of Oakland, and other political subdivisions of the state (Oakland Housing Authority, Oakland Unified School District, etc.) would be exempt from this legislation.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The proposed ordinance will retard the deterioration of property values and will support future development and assist the economic growth and revitalization of the City.

Environmental: The proposed ordinance will reduce the occurrences of blighting conditions, including accumulations of garbage, dispersal of pollutants and target-organ toxins, and uncontrolled growth of vector populations.

Social Equity: The proposed ordinance will encourage the infusion and recurrence of diverse multi-cultural activities, businesses, and events.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

This ordinance will not directly impact access for disabled or senior citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Committee accept this report and forward it to the City Council for adoption of the proposed ordinance.

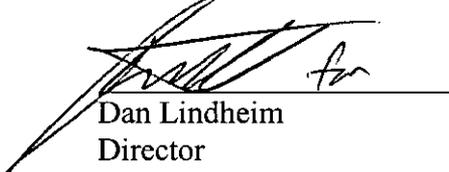
ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this report and adopt the proposed ordinance

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this report and adopt the proposed ordinance creating a new chapter in the Oakland Municipal Code for a vacant building registration program and creating new fees in the Master Fee Schedule to implement and sustain the program.

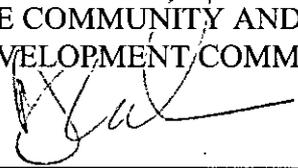
Respectfully submitted,



Dan Lindheim
Director
Community and Economic Development Agency

Prepared by:
Raymond M. Derania
Interim Building Official
Building Services Division

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE
THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

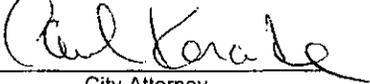
Introduced by

Councilmember

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

2008 OCT 30 PM 4: 35

Approved for Form and Legality



City Attorney

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Ordinance No. _____ C.M.S.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OAKLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD A NEW CHAPTER 8.54 REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF VACANT BUILDINGS

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City of Oakland have been and continue to be significant and unnecessary attractors for blighting conditions that create severe health hazards in residential and non-residential neighborhoods, including explosions of vector populations, accumulations and dispersals of pollutants and target-organ toxins, and degradation of air quality, and that adversely impact the quality of life in neighborhoods and deny residents the enjoyment of their properties; and

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City also have been and continue to be significant and unnecessary attractors for trespassers and transient occupants that foster and enable criminal activities, including theft, vandalism, prostitution, and the sale and use of narcotics and other controlled substances; and

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City also have been and continue to be a significant and unnecessary discouragers to economic development and contributors to the decline of property values in residential and non-residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City has expended and continues to expend vast amounts of limited resources and scarce funds investigating vacant and unmaintained buildings, mitigating the detrimental effects of neglected maintenance, curtailing associated criminal activity, and monitoring the recurrence of nuisance activities; and

WHEREAS, a critical and immediate need therefore exists to safeguard life and limb, health, property, and public welfare and to reduce the substantial and unnecessary economic toll on the business community and the citizens of Oakland resulting from the effects of vacant and unmaintained buildings by implementing a program for identifying and monitoring these properties; and

WHEREAS, the costs to the City for implementing and sustaining such a program for vacant buildings should be borne by the property owners and those mortgagees, vendees, assignees, trustees, lessees, agents, firms, companies, corporations, partnerships, and similar entities who

otherwise have direct or indirect control of or financial interest in the property, rather than the citizens of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, said costs may be recovered from the property owners and others having control of or financial interest in the properties by imposing and collecting necessary and equitable fees and interest; and

WHEREAS, historically, the resource requirements for monitoring vacant buildings increases with the time that the building is vacant by involving an escalating commitment from Code Enforcement administrative, fiscal, and supervisory staff, and involving a proliferating interaction with other departments and agencies, including Real Estate, Finance, City Attorney, Fire, and Police and by City officers and officials; and

WHEREAS, historically, Code Enforcement has tracked its costs, through its computerized accounting system, for processing complaints of vacant buildings, for field monitoring of vacant buildings, and for interacting with property owners and the public concerning vacant buildings; and

WHEREAS, there are fees for the registration of vacant buildings as set forth in the Master Fee Schedule; and

WHEREAS, the initial fee set forth in the Master Fee Schedule reflects the amounts for the code enforcement costs pertaining to vacant building; and

WHEREAS, historically, said Code Enforcement costs have increased with each successive year that a building remains vacant at a rate not less than three (3) times the costs associated with the initial processing and field inspection for a vacant building; and

WHEREAS, the increase in the fees as set forth in the Master Fee Schedule for additional years of vacancy reflect this three (3) times the costs of the initial processing and field inspection for a vacant building; and

WHEREAS, historically, there are additional citywide costs of said resource requirements in areas of real estate divesture and acquisition, fire prevention and suppression, neighborhood revitalization, nuisance and criminal activities, hazardous material identification and disposal, litigation, liens and collections, degradation of the general tax levy, and public notification and hearings; and

WHEREAS, vacant buildings impose an additional financial burdens on neighbors, prospective purchasers, and the business community in the City of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Government Code section 50076, setting the initial fee and applying said rate-of-increase to the initial implementation costs of a registration program in order to establish fees to sustain such a program as set forth in the Master Fee Schedule is a reasonable, fair, and equitable methodology, the results of which would be proportionately representative and would not exceed the estimated direct costs incurred for services provided by

Code Enforcement nor the estimated indirect costs incurred by other city departments, agencies, officers, and officials; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Guidelines as prescribed by the Secretary of Resources, and the provisions of the Statement of Objectives, Criteria and Procedures for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act: City of Oakland, have been satisfied, and that in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (existing facilities) this project is categorically exempted; now, therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1.

- A. The Council of the City of Oakland finds and determines that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and hereby incorporates them as part of this ordinance.
- B. The Council of the City of Oakland further finds and determines that the adoption of an ordinance requiring the registration with the City of vacant buildings by owners and others with a financial interest in a property complies with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Section 2. Chapter 8.54, entitled Vacant Building Registration, is hereby added to Title 8 – Health and Safety of the Municipal Code of the City of Oakland as follows:

Chapter 8.54 - Vacant Building Registration

8.54. 010 - Title

This chapter and these regulations shall be known as the “Vacant Building Registration Program” and may be cited as such, and will be referred to herein as “this Chapter”.

8.54. 020 - Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Oakland and the economic stability and viability of businesses, industries, and residential neighborhoods in the City by requiring the monitoring of vacant residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and structures which will protect and preserve the livability, appearance, and social fabric of the City and which will also protect the public from the health and safety hazards and the impairment of property values resulting from the neglect and deterioration of property.

8.54. 030 - Scope

The requirements of this Chapter shall be applicable to all residential and non-residential buildings or portions thereof that have remained unoccupied for their intended and authorized use for more than forty-five (45) consecutive calendar days.

8.54. 040 - Definitions

For the purposes of this Chapter, certain words and phrases are defined, and certain provisions shall be construed, as set forth herein unless it shall be apparent from the context that they have different meaning:

Boarded shall mean the partial or full covering, securing, or reinforcing with plywood, lumber, or comparable materials of windows, skylights, exterior doors/ sidelights/ transoms, and similar openings in buildings or portions thereof which is intended to dissuade, mitigate, and prevent vandalism and unauthorized entry.

Building shall mean an unattached roofed structure that exceeds one-hundred twenty (120) square feet in floor area (orthogonal planer projection) for which the Building Official is authorized to determine and assign an occupant classification (group and division) in accordance with the provisions of the California Building Code and Chapter 15.04 of the Oakland Municipal Code.

Building Department shall have the same meaning as defined in Chapter 15.04 of the Oakland Municipal Code.

Building Official shall have the same meaning as defined in Chapter 15.04 of the Oakland Municipal Code.

Occupied shall mean both the

- physical occupancy on a continuing and non-transient basis within a building or portion thereof by one or more individuals who are the legal or equitable owner(s), occupant(s), or tenant(s), and the
- physical operation on a continuous and non-transient basis within a building or portion thereof of an authorized, licensed, and otherwise certified business, occupation, or related activity by one or more individuals, firms, corporations, limited liability companies, limited partnerships, or similar entities, whether as an owner or tenant.

Acceptable evidence may be provided to substantiate that a building or portion thereof is occupied for residential purposes or a business, occupation, or related activity is operating for non-residential purposes and shall include, but is not limited to, the regular delivery and receipt of mail by the US Postal Service; continuous payment of utility bills for telephone, electric, natural gas, potable water, garbage, sanitary sewer, and cable television subscriber services; a valid City business tax certificate; and the continuous payment of federal and state income taxes.

Occupancy shall mean occupied.

Open shall mean a window, skylight, exterior door/ sidelight/ transom that is broken; or cannot be fully closed; or has an improperly functioning, unapproved, or missing securing device; or is partially or fully missing from its exterior opening; or any combination of these conditions.

Owner shall mean the freeholder of the premises or any lesser estate therein; and a mortgagee, vendee in possession, assignee of rents, receiver, executor, trustee, lessee, agent or another

person, firm, limited liability company, limited partnership, corporation, and other type of organization that directly or indirectly controls a building or portion thereof.

Ownership shall mean owner.

Vacant shall mean the physical absence of an approved occupancy by the legal or equitable owner or a legally authorized occupant or tenant in a building or portion thereof for more than forty-five (45) consecutive calendar days.

8.54.050 - General Requirements

A. Registration

The owner of a vacant building shall file a Statement of Registration with the City on an approved form within thirty (30) calendar days following the date that the building becomes vacant. A separate filing shall be required for each vacant building. A new filing shall be required within thirty (30) calendar days following a change of ownership.

The following information shall be provided with a Statement of Registration:

1. Street address of the vacant building as designated by the City and parcel number of the real property as designated by the Alameda County Assessor.
2. Name(s), mailing address(es), and telephone number(s) of the owner of the vacant building including, but not limited to, the agent of the owner; the executor of an estate; the trustee(s), grantor(s), and beneficiary(ies); the partner(s) with a financial interest exceeding ten percent (10%) of the assessed value of the building; the principal(s) of an unincorporated association; an individual person(s); and the agent for service of process on file with the California Secretary of State for a firm, corporation, limited liability company, or limited partnership.
3. Other relevant information that the City may determine is necessary for the identification of a property or an owner or for the enforcement of this Chapter.

B. Compliance

The owner of a vacant building shall comply fully and in all instances with the provisions of this Chapter and with all other applicable requirements of ordinances of the City of Oakland, regulations of the Oakland Municipal Code, statutes of the State of California, regulations of the United States Code of Regulations, and decisions, rulings, and orders of courts of competent jurisdiction.

C. Status

The owner shall immediately advise the City in writing of a material change in the status of a vacant building including, but not limited to, becoming open, boarded, or occupied, as defined in this Chapter; becoming blighted, as defined in Chapter 8.24 of the Oakland Municipal Code; becoming inhabitable, as defined in Chapter 15.08 of the Oakland Municipal Code; becoming

fire damaged; and becoming hazardous, as defined in Chapter 15.12 of the Oakland Municipal Code.

D. Violation and Enforcement

1. General

The failure of an owner to comply fully with a provision of this Chapter shall be a separate violation which shall be immediately subject to enforcement, penalty, and collection actions provided herein. Each and every day a violation of any provision of this Chapter exists shall constitute a separate and distinct offense. The owner shall remain liable for any violation of this Chapter even though the owner, by agreement, has imposed such duties on another individual, group, or entity.

2. Authority

The Building Official and his or her designees are authorized to enforce the provisions of this Chapter. For such purposes, they shall have the powers of a law enforcement officer.

3. Remedies

Remedies provided in this Chapter for violations are in addition to and do not supersede or limit any and all other remedies, civil or criminal. The remedies provided for herein shall be cumulative and not exclusive.

8.54.060 - Assessments

A. Fees

Fees for filing and processing a Statement of Registration shall be as established in the Master Fee Schedule. Fees for an initial Statement of Registration shall be fully paid at the time of filing. Fees for an annual renewal of a Statement of Registration shall be fully paid not later than the first day of May of the calendar year following the year of the initial filing and on each succeeding first day of May thereafter.

B. Penalties

The assessment of civil and administrative citations as provided in Chapters 1.08 and 1.12 of the Oakland Municipal Code shall apply to the enforcement of this Chapter.

C. Interest

Unpaid amounts shall be subject to the assessment of accruing interest as established in the Master Fee Schedule.

D. Collection

The City may serve a Demand to the owner for payment of fees, costs, penalties, and accruing interest by mailing with regular postage to the address identified on the Statement of

Registration, or when such Statement has not been filed, to the address as it appears on the last equalized assessment roll of the Alameda County Tax Assessor, or as otherwise may be known to the City. Whenever such amounts are not fully paid on or before the day set forth in this Chapter and a waiver, extension, or exemption of payment has not been granted, the City may recover unpaid amounts by all available legal means including, but not limited to, civil and small claims court action, and may undertake collection by one or more of the following means:

1. Priority Lien

The City may file a Priority Lien with the Alameda County Clerk-Recorder for recordation on the property title which shall remain as a financial encumbrance until such unpaid amounts with accrued interest have been fully paid. The amount of such lien shall draw interest thereon at a rate as established in the Master Fee Schedule or such higher rate as may be established by the Alameda County Tax Assessor for collection of municipal and county taxes from and after the date of service of such Demand. The statute of limitations shall not run against the right of the City of Oakland to enforce payment.

2. Special Assessment of the General Levy

The City may transmit such unpaid amounts with accrued interest to the Alameda County Tax Assessor, who shall thereupon enter a Special Assessment of the General Tax Levy on the County Assessment Book opposite the description of the particular lot or parcel of land, and such Special Assessment shall be collected together with all other taxes levied against the property. Such Special Assessment shall be subject to the same penalties and interest and to the same procedure under foreclosure and sale, in the case of delinquency, as provided for all other municipal and county taxes against the property, and all laws applicable to the levy, collection, and enforcement of general property taxes are hereby made applicable to such special assessment.

3. Nuisance Abatement Lien

The City may file a Nuisance Abatement Lien with the Alameda County Clerk-Recorder for recordation on the property title which shall, from the date of recordation, have the force, effect, and priority of a Judgment Lien. Such Nuisance Abatement Lien may be foreclosed by an action brought by the City of Oakland for a money judgment.

The City may recover costs incurred for processing such Demands and liens and non-sufficient funds checks, recording such liens, transferring such special assessments, providing notice for court, collection or foreclosure actions, for other recovery actions, and for attorneys' fees.

8.54.070 - Fee Waivers and Waivers.

A. Waiver

A waiver of the processing fee for the Statement of Registration or the fee for its annual renewal may be granted when the owner provides the following:

1. written application for a waiver which is received by the City within thirty (30) calendar days from the date that said fee shall be paid; and

2. evidence of full payment of all unpaid fees, penalties, costs, and interest owed to the City which are associated with the maintenance of the property and with prior assessments for this Chapter; and
3. one of the following documentations:
 - a. application to the Building Department and payment of fees for a permit to demolish or repair the vacant building and a written estimation from a licensed design professional or contractor of the time duration required to complete the work; or
 - b. satisfactory evidence of active and substantive effort to sell, lease, or rent the vacant building when demolition or repair is not otherwise required by the Building Official.

B. Extension

An extension of ninety (90) calendar days may be granted for payment of the processing fee for the Statement of Registration or the annual renewal fee upon receipt by the City of a written application from the owner satisfactorily demonstrating exigent circumstances beyond the control of the owner.

C. Exemption

An exemption of the processing fee for the Statement of Registration and the fee for annual renewals up to two years of vacancy may be granted when the owner provides evidence that it meets the criteria set forth in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

8.54.080 - Appeal.

The owner may appeal the assessment of fees in accordance with the provisions for appealing Deteriorated Conditions and the assessment of penalties in accordance with the provisions for appealing Hazardous Conditions as set forth in Chapter 15.08 of the Oakland Municipal Code.

8.54.090 - Review of Appeal.

The limitation period provided pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6 shall apply to all petition filers seeking judicial review of administrative determinations made by a Hearing Examiner.

8.54.100 - Exclusions.

This Chapter shall not apply to any vacant building owned by the United States, the State of California, the County of Alameda, the City of Oakland, nor to any of their respective agencies or political subdivisions.

Section 3. Applicability

A. Construction and Separability

Should any article, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance or exhibit be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the offending portion shall be severed and shall not affect the validity of remaining portions which shall remain in full force and effect.

B. Authority

This ordinance is enacted by the Council of the City of Oakland pursuant to the police powers accorded to the City by and through section 106 of the Charter of the City of Oakland and Article XI of the Constitution of the State of California.

C. Effective Date

Upon final adoption or approval of a reconsideration by sufficient votes of the Council of the City of Oakland, this ordinance shall be effective on and after the day established in section 216 of the Charter of the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 2008

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: _____
LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
of the City of Oakland, California

DATE OF ATTESTATION: _____

NOTICE AND DIGEST

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OAKLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD A NEW CHAPTER 8.54 REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF VACANT BUILDINGS

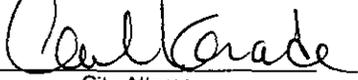
This ordinance will create a new chapter in the Oakland Municipal Code requiring the annual registration of residential and non-residential buildings within 45 of becoming vacant.

Introduced by

Councilmember

FILED
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND
2008 OCT 30 PM 3:42

Approved for Form and Legality



City Attorney

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Ordinance No. _____ C.M.S.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 12880 C.M.S. (MASTER FEE SCHEDULE) TO ADD NEW FEES FOR REGISTERING VACANT BUILDINGS

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City of Oakland have been and continue to be significant and unnecessary attractors for blighting conditions that create severe health hazards in residential and non-residential neighborhoods, including explosions of vector populations, accumulations and dispersals of pollutants and target-organ toxins, and degradation of air quality, and that adversely impact the quality of life in neighborhoods and deny residents their enjoyment of their properties; and

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City also have been and continue to be significant and unnecessary attractors for trespassers and transient occupants that foster and enable criminal activities, including theft, vandalism, prostitution, and the sale and use of narcotics and other controlled substances; and

WHEREAS, vacant and unmaintained buildings throughout the City also have been and continue to be a significant and unnecessary discouragers to economic development and contributors to the decline of property values in residential and non-residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City has expended and continues to expend vast and unnecessary amounts of limited resources and scarce funds investigating vacant and unmaintained buildings, mitigating the detrimental effects of neglected maintenance, curtailing associated criminal activity, and monitoring the recurrence of nuisance activities; and

WHEREAS, a critical and immediate need therefore exists to safeguard life and limb, health, property, and public welfare and to reduce the substantial and unnecessary economic toll on the business community and the citizens of Oakland resulting from the effects of vacant and unmaintained buildings by implementing a program for identifying and monitoring these properties; and

WHEREAS, the costs to the City for implementing and sustaining such a program for vacant buildings should be borne by the property owners and those mortgagees, vendees, assignees, trustees, lessees, agents, firms, companies, corporations, partnerships, and similar entities who otherwise have direct or indirect control of or financial interest in the property, rather than the citizens of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, said costs may be recovered from the property owners and others having control of or financial interest in the properties by imposing and collecting necessary and equitable fees and interest; and

WHEREAS, historically, the resource requirements for monitoring vacant buildings increases with the time that the building is vacant by involving an escalating commitment from Code Enforcement administrative, fiscal, and supervisory staff, and involving a proliferating interaction with other departments and agencies, including Real Estate, Finance, City Attorney, Fire, and Police and by City officers and officials; and

WHEREAS, historically, Code Enforcement has tracked its costs, through its computerized accounting system, for processing complaints of vacant buildings, for field monitoring of vacant buildings, and for interacting with property owners and the public concerning vacant buildings; and

WHEREAS, Oakland Municipal Code Chapter 8.54 requires the registration of vacant buildings; and

WHEREAS, the initial fee set by this Ordinance reflects the amounts for the code enforcement costs pertaining to vacant building; and

WHEREAS, historically, said Code Enforcement costs have increased with each successive year that a building remains vacant at a rate not less than three (3) times the costs associated with the initial processing and field inspection for a vacant building; and

WHEREAS, the increase in the fees for additional years of vacancy reflect this three (3) times the costs of the initial processing and field inspection for a vacant building; and

WHEREAS, historically, there are additional citywide costs of said resource requirements in areas of real estate divestiture and acquisition, fire prevention and suppression, neighborhood revitalization, nuisance and criminal activities, hazardous material identification and disposal, litigation, liens and collections, degradation of the general tax levy, and public notification and hearings; and

WHEREAS, vacant buildings impose an additional financial burdens on neighbors, prospective purchasers, and the business community in the City of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to California Government Code section 50076, setting the initial fee and applying said rate-of-increase to the initial implementation costs of a registration program in order to establish fees to sustain such a program is a reasonable, fair, and equitable methodology, the results of which would be proportionately representative and would not exceed the estimated direct costs incurred for services provided by Code Enforcement nor the estimated indirect costs incurred by other city departments, agencies, officers, and officials; and

WHEREAS, the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Guidelines as prescribed by the Secretary of Resources, and the provisions of the Statement of Objectives, Criteria and Procedures for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality

Act: City of Oakland, have been satisfied, and that in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (existing facilities) this project is categorically exempted; now, therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1.

- A. The Council of the City of Oakland finds and determines that the foregoing recitals are true and correct and hereby incorporates them as part of this ordinance.
- B. The Council of the City of Oakland further finds and determines that the adoption of an ordinance requiring the registration with the City of vacant buildings by owners and others with a financial interest in a property complies with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Section 2. Master Fee Schedule

Ordinance No. 12880 C.M.S., referred to as the Master Fee Schedule of the City of Oakland, is hereby amended to establish new fees in the amounts set forth below for registering vacant buildings. Said fees may be increased, decreased, otherwise modified, or deleted by subsequent ordinance amending the Master Fee Schedule. Such amendments by ordinance of the Master Fee Schedule shall not also require amendments to this ordinance.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CODE ENFORCEMENT

FEE DESCRIPTION	FEE	UNIT
K. Vacant Building Registration		
1 filing	\$66.00	each
2 processing	\$89.00	each
3 annual renewal (May 1st)		
a. vacant less than one year	\$89.00	each
b. vacant between one and two years	\$500.00	each
c. vacant between two and three years	\$1,000.00	each
d. vacant between three and five years	\$2,000.00	each
e. vacant between five and ten years	\$3,500.00	each
f. vacant ten years or more	\$5,000.00	each
	plus \$500.00	each
	year over ten	

Section 3. Applicability

A. Construction and Separability

Should any article, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance or exhibit be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the offending portion shall be severed and shall not affect the validity of remaining portions which shall remain in full force and effect.

B. Authority

This ordinance is enacted by the Council of the City of Oakland pursuant to the police powers accorded to the City by and through section 106 of the Charter of the City of Oakland and Article XI of the Constitution of the State of California.

C. Effective Date

Upon final adoption or approval of a reconsideration by sufficient votes of the Council of the City of Oakland, this ordinance shall be effective on and after the day established in section 216 of the Charter of the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, _____, 2008

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, KERNIGHAN, NADEL, QUAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES -

ABSENT -

ABSTENTION -

ATTEST: _____
LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
of the City of Oakland, California

DATE OF ATTESTATION: _____

NOTICE AND DIGEST

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE No. 12880C.M.S. (MASTER FEE SCHEDULE) TO ADD NEW FEES FOR REGISTERING VACANT BUILDINGS

This ordinance will create new fees in the Master Fee Schedule to off-set the costs to the City for registering vacant residential and non-residential buildings.