



City Council

Approval of an Ordinance Adopting a Vacant Properties Registration Program

Agenda Date: 9/13/2022
Agenda Item Number: 4.E
File Number: 22-0780

Type: ordinance **Version:** 2 **Status:** Passed

Title

Approval of an Ordinance Adopting a Vacant Properties Registration Program

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Land Use & Environment Committee recommends approval of an Ordinance establishing a vacant properties registration program.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve an Ordinance establishing a vacant properties registration program.

Report

Issue:

Whether to adopt a vacant properties registration program.

Staff Contact:

John Mahone, Lead Code Enforcement Officer, Community Planning & Development, 360.753.8393

Presenter(s):

Leonard Bauer, Director, Community Planning & Development

John Mahone, Lead Code Enforcement Officer, Community Planning & Development

Background and Analysis:

Background and Analysis did not change from first to second reading.

Background

The Olympia Code Enforcement program plays an important role in the health, safety and welfare of the City of Olympia. Part of code enforcement officers' responsibilities are to enforce adopted property maintenance codes (OMC 16.06). The establishment of a vacant property registration program will assist with addressing issues that sometimes arise with vacant properties. Periodically Code Enforcement staff receive inquiries from the public about registering vacant properties.

Vacant properties can be challenging when they become attractive nuisances in our community. When issues occur, locating absentee property owners and ensuring that the actual property owner/s

are held responsible for the condition of their abandoned/vacant property is a difficult and time-consuming process.

Having a vacant property registration program can assist with locating absentee property owners and ensure there is an entity or person responsible for abandoned/vacant properties.

The goal of the registration program will be to have direct contact information for a property owner or representative; having vital information available to disseminate with other departments when needed and quicker response times to address abandoned/vacant property conditions.

The Cities of Bremerton and Auburn have abandoned/vacant property registration programs and Olympia staff have incorporated some of their 'lessons learned' into the proposed ordinance.

Summary of Ordinance

The Vacant Property Registration program will provide accurate information of property ownership of abandoned and vacant properties in our community by requiring registration annually when properties are:

- vacant for 90-180 Days
- lack utilities for 90-180 Days
- are in pre-, mid- or full foreclosure status
- are bank owned (REO)
- show indicators that the structure has not been occupied (e.g., no window covers, tall weeds/grass, junk/debris on the premises, etc.)
- or a combination of any of the above.

The ordinance requires a current, local representative or contact of the owner, property manager, agent or party who has a vested interest in the property. It also includes property maintenance standards that will assist with more prompt response at these abandoned/vacant properties on property maintenance issues, illicit or nuisance activity, or any other concerns.

This program will assist the Olympia Police Department, Olympia Fire Department as well as Community Planning & Development with pertinent and relevant ownership information.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Enforcement of civil codes and maintenance of private properties is of strong interest to the entire community.

Options:

1. Adopt the attached Ordinance establishing a vacant properties registration program.
2. Do not adopt the attached Ordinance establishing a vacant properties registration program.
3. Adopt the Ordinance with specific modifications.

Financial Impact:

A proposed registration fee will offset administrative costs for the program. Community Planning and Development's analysis of the number of properties likely to be required to register shows that the vacant property registration program, as proposed, can be administered within the existing City

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budget.

Attachments:
Ordinance