

Commercial Vitality Ordinance

Study Session

City Council | October 7, 2025



Background & Purpose



Feedback: Council Priority Workshop, listening sessions



Concerns: vacant/neglected storefronts lead to

Urban decay
Reduced property values
Safety risks



Goal: preserve HMB's aesthetic, economic, and social vitality



What the ordinance does

Sets standards for **empty and neglected storefronts** and **all commercial property exteriors**.

Requires property owners to **notify** the City when storefronts become vacant.

Establishes **maintenance and display standards** to prevent blight.

Provides **enforcement tools** to address chronic neglect.



Balanced Approach



Balance accountability with **education and collaboration.**



Tailored to local scale and staffing capacity.



Focus on simple reporting and easy compliance.



Developed with input from stakeholders.



Key Policy Areas

Definitions – How specific should “empty” and “neglected” be? (e.g., time thresholds)

Maintenance Standards – Should storefront displays require City approval or support?

Notification – Owners notify City within 30 days, update every 90 days – is timing right?

Applicability – Should standards apply to all commercial properties or just vacant ones?

Enforcement – Education-first or proactive inspections?



Enforcement

- Compliance Officer administers through existing code provisions.
- Emphasis on cooperation and voluntary compliance.
- Tools available:
 - Education and assistance
 - Notices and correction opportunities
 - Fines or nuisance abatement when necessary



Anticipated Community Benefits

- Cleaner, more attractive commercial corridors.
- Encourage investment and tenant retention.
- Reduces nuisance complaints.
- Reinforces community pride and tourism appeal.



Next Steps

1

**Incorporate
Council direction
into the draft
ordinance.**

2

**Return for first
reading and
introduction.**

3

**Continue business
outreach and
implementation
planning.**



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