



Staff Report

TO: City Council
FROM: Steven D. Jones, Community Development Director
DATE: October 21, 2025
SUBJECT: Regulation of Vacant and/or Abandoned Property

Description: Discuss a potential amendment to Beaumont Municipal Code (BMC) Chapter 8.50, Regulation of Abandoned Residential Property to include commercial, industrial, and other non-residential properties identified as vacant and/or abandoned in the City's property registry.

Background and Analysis:

Beaumont Municipal Code (BMC) Chapter 8.50 – Registration of abandoned and foreclosed residential properties requires owners of vacant or abandoned *residential* properties to register with the City, designate a local contact, and pay an annual fee.

This program was intended to improve code enforcement/community enhancement efficiency and reduce neighborhood blight. However, staff encounters similar issues with commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties—illegal dumping, trespass, and fire hazards—all problems for which BMC 8.50 fails to provide codified modernized solutions. Identifying responsible parties for these properties is time-consuming and delays abatement and enforcement.

Currently, only abandoned or foreclosed residential properties are required to register pursuant to BMC Chapter 8.50. Enforcement relies on title searches and code inspections, which could delay enforcement action when dealing with non-residential parcels and different ownership structures. Staff is looking to revise the existing code provisions section to expand the registration requirements and accomplish the following:

- Streamline violation abatement and access control.
- Increase owner accountability and contact responsiveness.
- Discourage long-term vacancy and blight citywide.

Key Provisions of the Sample Draft Ordinance

- Expanded Scope – Amends BMC Chapter 8.50 to include all property types (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use), not just foreclosed or abandoned homes.
- New Definitions – Updates “property,” “vacant,” and “abandoned” to include any parcel or structure unoccupied for 90 days or showing neglect that creates a nuisance and has received a third citation with no action to abate.
- Mandatory Registration – Requires owners of vacant or abandoned properties to:
 - Register within 30 days of vacancy or City notice.
 - Provide owner and 24/7 local contact information, proof of liability insurance, and pay an annual registration fee.
- Maintenance Standards – Owners must keep properties free of weeds, trash, graffiti, and hazards, and secure buildings and fencing to prevent unauthorized access.
- City Inspections – Authorizes the City to inspect registered properties at reasonable times for compliance.
- Fees & Cost Recovery – Establishes an annual cost-recovery fee set by City Council under BMC Chapter 3.39 to fund administration and enforcement.
- Enforcement Tools – Non-compliance is a public nuisance subject to administrative citations, abatement cost recovery, and civil or criminal penalties under BMC Chapter 1.17.

Pros and Cons of Proposed Amendments

Pros: Faster abatement, improved owner accountability, citywide blight deterrence.

Cons: Added administrative workload, potential property owner concerns about fees.

Fiscal Impact:

The estimated cost of preparing this staff report is \$300.

The City may realize increased revenue through registration fees, which would offset additional administrative costs. Exact fiscal impacts will depend on the number of abandoned and/or foreclosed property types with the enforcement and implementation costs to be offset by a cost-recovery registration fee per BMC Chapter 3.39.

Recommended Action:

Direct staff to draft an ordinance amending BMC Chapter 8.50 and return with introduction and first reading and resolution for proposed fee schedule additions.

Attachments:

- A. Sample Draft Ordinance