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City Manager's Report

January 13, 2026, City Council Meeting

Prepared by: Jay Roberts, Code Enforcement Official

Carole Kendrick, Director of Development Services

Item #: 10.2

Subject: Consideration of a Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) 25-04 adding a vacant parcel/building registration program

Recommendation: Introduce and waive the first reading of an Ordinance adding the Vacant Parcel/Building Registration Program as presented (with no registration fees) for an initial 12-month period and direct staff to implement the program and report back in one year.

Purpose: The creation of a Vacant Parcel/Building Registration Program would assist the City's Code Enforcement Official in maintaining an accurate record of all vacant properties (whether undeveloped lots or vacant structures) within City limits and ensure they are properly maintained and secured.

Strategic Plan Strategy: Maintain/Improve Quality of Life: Strategy 6 Develop a comprehensive Code Enforcement Program.

- a. Design and implement a proactive Code Enforcement Program to streamline the process and develop cost recovery.
- b. Provide Code Enforcement Customer Service to educate and gain cooperation on complaints.

Background: On October 28, 2025, Development Services staff brought forward a discussion item seeking City Council direction to prepare an ordinance addressing poorly maintained properties, including vacant buildings and parcels. At the December 9, 2025, City Council meeting, the Council provided additional direction on the draft ordinance, resulting in the revised program presented tonight.

Discussion:

Vacant parcels and/or structures are often unmaintained by the property owner(s) or responsible person(s), leading to blight, security issues with break-ins, solid waste issues, and safety issues of public access when these properties are not properly monitored and secured.

Goals: The program is intended to maintain an accurate registry of applicable vacant properties and responsible parties or their designated local contact agents (if desired), to receive simple annual self-certifications that the property continues to be maintained and ensure that vacant properties remain secure.

Program Requirements. Owners of vacant parcels or buildings shall:

- Register the property online with the Code Enforcement Department within 10 calendar days of it becoming vacant using the form provided by the City (see Attachment B).
- Submit a simple annual self-certification (no fee) confirming that the property continues to meet minimum maintenance and security standards. The self-certification shall be due no later than October 15th each year the property remains vacant. Photographs are preferred (though not required) to demonstrate compliance.
- Continuously maintain the property to minimum standards, including:
 - Securing all structures.
 - Clearing vegetation and maintaining landscaping visible from the street.
 - Removing trash, debris, and graffiti.
 - Posting visible “No Trespassing” signs and providing a No Trespassing letter to the Placerville Police Department upon request.
- Optionally designate a local contact (individual or company) on behalf of the owner.

Code Enforcement staff may perform periodic inspections and document conditions to verify compliance.

Pilot Program/Sunset Provision. The draft ordinance establishes this Vacant Parcel and Building Registration Program as a 12-month pilot. The chapter will automatically expire on December 31, 2026, unless the City Council takes affirmative action to extend or make it permanent. No later than November 1, 2026, staff will return to the City Council with a comprehensive report that includes participation numbers, compliance rates, staff resource impacts, effectiveness in reducing blight and safety issues, and recommendations regarding continuation, modification, or termination of the program.

In accordance with California Government Code § 36933 and Placerville Municipal Code § 2-16-010, the required notice of public hearing for the proposed ordinance adding Chapter 8-12 (Vacant Parcel and Building Registration Program) to the Placerville Municipal Code was published in the Mountain Democrat, a newspaper of general circulation within the City of Placerville, on November 12, 2025.

Options:

1. Approve the Program as Presented

Introduce and waive the first reading for the Vacant Parcel/Building Registration Program ordinance (see Attachment A) with no registration fees for an initial 12-month period; direct staff to implement the program and return in one year with a report on participation, compliance, and resource impacts.

2. Introduce and waive the first reading for with Modifications

Adopt the program with specific changes directed tonight, examples include but are not limited to:

- a. Extend the registration deadline beyond 10 days.
- b. Limit the program to only commercial buildings or only residential structures.

- c. Remove or add specific maintenance requirements (e.g., exclude landscaping/aesthetics, require quarterly owner self-certification, etc.).
 - d. Shorten or eliminate the 12-month sunset/review clause.
3. Direct staff to:
- a. Abandon the registration program and continue addressing vacant property issues solely through existing nuisance abatement and code enforcement processes, or
 - b. Return with a revised program that incorporates different elements (e.g., voluntary registration, focus only on hazardous structures, partnership with the County, etc.), or
 - c. Take no action at this time and defer the item.

Environmental: Staff have determined that this request is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Cost: If approved, there will be ongoing program administration costs—including receiving and filing quarterly self-certifications, record-keeping, and inspections—is expected to require modest additional staff time (estimated 4–6 hours per month) and will be absorbed within the existing departmental budget.

Budget Impact: The additional staff time mentioned above would be absorbed by the Operating Budget.



Dave Warren, City Manager



Carole Kendrick, Director of Development Services

Attachments:

Attachment A: Draft Ordinance

Attachment B: Vacant Parcel/Building Registration Application Form