



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: December 9, 2025
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: December 10, 2025
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services
FROM: Chief Building Official
SUBJECT: Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law (AVBB)

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, the new *Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law* attached as Appendix A and described in this Report;
- FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services bring forward for enactment the *Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law* generally in accordance with the by-law attached as Appendix A.
- B. THAT, subject to the approval of recommendation A, Council approves, in principle, amendments to the Ticket Offences By-law to add offences under the proposed *Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law* as described in this Report and attached as Appendix B;
- FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services bring forward for enactment the necessary amendments to the Ticket Offences By-law, generally in accordance with Appendix B.

Recommendation A includes a delegation and requires an affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of all Council members pursuant to section 161 of the Vancouver Charter.

Purpose and Executive Summary

On December 18, 2024, in response to the [Declaration of Dangerous Building at 500 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver Report](#), Council directed staff to consider a building inventory, monitoring process, taxation options and a standards of maintenance by-law for vacant buildings. This report responds to this Council direction and seeks Council approval for a new Abandoned and Vacated

Buildings By-law (AVBB), as well as related amendments to the Ticket Offences By-law. Staff undertook a review of current by-laws, policies and operations related to vacated buildings in Vancouver and identified opportunities to clarify, consolidate and strengthen existing regulations. The proposed AVBB aims to enhance and streamline the City's regulatory approach to vacated buildings by creating one by-law to address the safety, health and fire risks in vacated buildings. These standards will be specific to unoccupied buildings, and less onerous than those established for buildings intended for occupancy.

The proposed AVBB enables the Chief Building Official (CBO) to issue orders to secure vacated buildings, and authorize demolition in circumstances where a building is determined to be unsafe. The proposed AVBB also clarifies responsibilities for both property owners and owners' agents such as property managers. With the aim of preventing vacated buildings from becoming fire hazards, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health, the proposed AVBB will require buildings to be maintained to minimum standards and secured against unauthorized entry. These measures are intended to have property owners bring vacated buildings into compliance with safety standards. Staff recommend escalating penalties for non-compliance and new administration fees to discourage reliance on the City as a de facto property manager to promote accountability and long-term compliance.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- On December 18, 2024, Council approved the resolution "Declaration of Dangerous Building at 500 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver" ordering demolition of that building.
- The authority for Council to adopt this by-law is based in the Vancouver Charter, including in sections 161 [Delegation of powers], 199 [Added powers of Council], 199.01 [City fees], 306 [By-laws respecting building regulation], and Part XVII [Penalties].

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

While some vacated buildings are responsibly maintained, others pose risks to public health and safety, contribute to neighbourhood decline and nuisances, which results in increased enforcement costs for the City, including for Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS) and Vancouver Police Department. The proposed AVBB establishes specific requirements for property owners, and their agents who manage the buildings (such as a property management company), to maintain vacated buildings in a condition that is structurally safe, not a menace to health, not a fire hazard, and does not pose a risk to public safety.

The case of the 500 Dunsmuir Street property highlighted several critical issues associated with vacated properties in Vancouver. Some of these buildings pose substantial risks to public safety and health, including infestations, compromised structural integrity, faulty electrical and plumbing systems, increased fire hazards, and the potential to attract illegal activity or unauthorized occupancy. When left unmanaged, they also place a significant burden on City resources while removing housing stock and delaying redevelopment. The purpose of the proposed AVBB is to

put standards in place to prevent buildings from deteriorating to such an advanced state of disrepair.

Staff undertook a review of internal processes when responding to vacated premises concerns, as well as 3-1-1 complaints data and records for boarded up properties, identifying 15 case studies with the objective to inform regulatory policy development and potential opportunities to strengthen enforcement. Staff also identified at least 50 problematic properties that would benefit from a coordinated response.

Issues with abandoned and vacated buildings are not unique to Vancouver and other jurisdictions have implemented various approaches to regulating and managing these concerns. Staff reviewed how other municipalities in Canada and the United States address abandoned and vacated buildings to identify opportunities and solutions to inform policy development in Vancouver (See Appendix C).

In B.C., Victoria and Surrey have adopted Abandoned Properties by-laws that regulate standards, access, inspection authority, fees and outline their enforcement approach. Toronto, Ottawa and Seattle regulate vacant buildings by establishing standards of maintenance for unoccupied buildings in their municipal by-laws and ordinances. These by-laws provide a comprehensive regulatory framework and have been used to inform the development of the proposed AVBB in Vancouver. Other municipalities such as Port Alberni, Penticton, and Winnipeg in Canada and Detroit, Boston, and Chicago in the U.S.A. have additional regulatory requirements such as a vacant property permit, registration or board up permit in addition to regulated standards of maintenance for abandoned and vacated buildings.

Discussion

The Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law, as outlined in Appendix A, sets out specific standards for vacated buildings so they remain structurally sound and do not pose risk to public health, safety and are not a fire risk. These standards focus on issues that are specific to abandoned and unoccupied buildings such as minimum standards for structural integrity, prevention of unauthorised access and requirements that lowers the risk of fire in the absence of a legal occupier. The proposed AVBB aims to mitigate safety risks and reduce fire hazards, as well as address consequential nuisance concerns, affecting both vacated buildings and adjacent structures. The proposed AVBB will not replace existing by-laws such as the Standards of Maintenance By-law or Untidy Premises By-law but will focus on minimum safety standards and enforcement tools specific to vacated buildings.

The proposed AVBB applies to all buildings vacated by the owner or lawful occupant and which are in a derelict state or a state of disuse and includes any land.

To address some of the key concerns related to vacated buildings in Vancouver, the proposed AVBB requires property owners to:

- **Maintain roof and building envelope:** including exterior walls, foundations, exterior doors and windows, basements/cellars, fire escapes, stairs, balconies, porches, and exterior features which, if not maintained, may become a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health.

- **Keep property free of pests and clean**, free of rubbish or materials except for materials for immediate use in the construction or repair of a building.
- **Maintain fire alarm and sprinkler systems** in good working order to address the risk of fire due to activities including unauthorized entry and faulty electrical systems. Owners of vacated buildings will be required to maintain their existing fire safety system, and inspect it regularly. Structural fire protection elements, such as floors, roofs, and exterior walls must be maintained to preserve their fire-resistant building design to prevent fire spread to adjacent buildings.
- **Secure vacated buildings against unauthorized entry**: either by closing and locking all access points and/or installing structural barriers, including covering/boarding up entrance points and/or fencing. Schedule A of the proposed AVBB sets out specific requirements for boarding up a property to prevent unauthorized access. These board up standards have been used by VFRS and Development, Buildings and Licensing since 2018 and now will be part of the proposed AVBB to enable enforcement and facilitate compliance standards.
- **Maintain address visibility**: One of the challenges with vacated buildings is the deterioration of the property's appearance, including the lack of visibility of the address (e.g. street number) on the property, and, as a result, first responders identifying the property when called to respond to an incident, slowing down the response time and the public have difficulty reporting concerns about the property without the address.
- **Disconnect utilities** except where the water supply is required for a fire suppression system and/or the gas and electrical system is used for heating or maintaining fire or life safety systems, active fire monitoring system and/or security lighting. The purpose of this is to address potential flooding and electrical issues related to lack of maintenance.

The proposed AVBB also:

- **Clarifies the responsibilities of both property owners and property managers** in maintaining and managing vacated buildings. Owners are primarily accountable for ensuring compliance with all AVBB requirements. When the City is unable to contact the owner after reasonable efforts, a property manager may also be made responsible to comply with the AVBB. However, the owner carries the financial responsibility for work completed by the City or City contractor and any associated administrative fees. This approach allows the City to add these costs to the property tax roll, if unpaid by the owner.
- **Grants the Chief Building Official the authority** to certify that a vacated property is a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to public health and issue an order to bring it into compliance, including issuing an order for demolition. The intent of granting this authority to demolish a building is that it will only be exercised in extraordinary circumstances with sufficient evidence of risks. The proposed AVBB also includes the authority to inspect vacated buildings and allows the Chief Building Official and City Inspectors to enter such buildings for this purpose.
- **Outlines a reconsideration process** where owners can request reconsideration of orders requiring demolition, removal, or amendment of a building. Owners may submit a written request for reconsideration of the order to the City Clerk, and may make submissions to Council. After hearing all the submissions, Council may confirm, amend, or cancel the original order. The reconsideration section of the proposed AVBB is aimed at fairness and transparency of the decision-making process.

Enforcement Tools

Vacated and abandoned properties present ongoing challenges for municipalities, including increased risks of fire, vandalism, unauthorized access and occupancy, and general deterioration. These properties can become focal points for community complaints requiring repeated interventions by staff. In some cases, achieving compliance requires the City to take the lead to resolve issues. This positions the City as a de facto property manager, absorbing costs and responsibilities that should rest with the property owner. Penalties and fees serve as a deterrent against neglect and non-compliance and may incentivize owners to take timely action and uphold their responsibilities.

The City's intended enforcement strategy for vacated buildings aims to encourage compliance with the proposed AVBB to reduce risks to public health and safety, which will also help prevent neighbourhood decline, rather than immediately pursuing legal action. Enforcement tools include warning letters, compliance orders, violation notices, tickets and court-imposed fines. As part of the AVBB and Ticket Offences By-law, staff propose:

- **Municipal Ticket Informations (MTI)** as an immediate enforcement mechanism in cases involving more serious or repeat violations. These tickets are enforceable in Provincial Court and carry fines up to \$3,000. Although MTIs must be served in person to the owner or a representative of a corporation, which can be logistically challenging, they support escalated enforcement actions, including when warning letters are not complied with. AVBB ticket offences and fines will be set out in the Ticket Offences By-law (see the proposed Ticket Offences By-law amendment in Appendix C);
- **By-law Violation Notice (BVN)** where it is difficult to serve the property owner directly. BVNs can be delivered by mail, thereby avoiding logistical challenges associated with serving the ticket in person; both MTIs and BVNs will have escalating penalties of \$1,000 for a first offence, \$2,000 for a second, and \$3,000 for subsequent violations with the aim to strengthen compliance, deter repeat offences, and highlight the seriousness of ongoing neglect; and,
- **Court imposed fines** to range from \$500 to \$50,000 to align with the Standards of Maintenance and Untidy Premises by-laws when higher penalties are sought. Imposition of these fines may occur if the City is successful in prosecuting an offender under the AVBB.

This approach allows the City to respond proportionally to different types of violations, ensuring that enforcement remains fair, efficient, and effective.

Administrative Fees

The City currently does not recover administrative costs for managing external contractors to address non-compliant properties (beyond invoicing for the contractor's costs), and conducting re-inspections when properties remain non-compliant. To address this gap, staff propose introducing two new fees:

- **City Staff Administrative Service Fee** When the City undertakes enforcement action, it may hire external contractors to carry out necessary work. An invoice of the costs of these services is sent to the property owner for payment and if not paid, the City seeks to recover costs and may add them to the property's tax roll. In these situations, the City bears the financial and operational burden to bring the property into compliance. Introducing an administrative fee aims to deter owners from using the City as the de facto property manager, with the City absorbing costs and responsibilities of the property owner.

Staff reviewed practices in nearby municipalities and found that some charge fees to recover administrative costs related to billing and cost recovery. Richmond applies a 20% fee, Penticton charges 18%, and Surrey adds 10% with minimum and maximum thresholds. To develop a fee structure, several fee models were considered, including flat rates, percentage-based fees, and thresholds with minimum and maximum charges. Staff recommend a 20% administrative fee per invoice when the City has to charge back costs to a property owner, limited to a maximum fee amount of \$5,000, as it is straightforward to administer, recovers about 50% of associated costs, and applies fairly to both high and low-value invoices.

- **City Staff Return Inspection Service Fee** In egregious cases involving ongoing non-compliance, City staff are often required to conduct multiple site visits and inspections. These visits typically involve information gathering and documentation, communication with property owners or their representatives or enforcement actions. Staff propose a Return Inspection Service fee intended to offset expenses incurred when properties remain non-compliant after initial enforcement efforts.

Staff recommend introducing a \$270 return inspection administrative fee. For more complex casefiles that require additional site visits, staff propose a fee of \$455 per re-inspection. The proposed administration fees are based on estimated staff time required for re-inspection activities. The calculations reflect the budgeted salaries and expected workload of involved personnel. No fee will be charged for initial inspection or re-inspections where the violation has been corrected. The fee could be applied to each re-inspection related to the same offence and to repeat inspections of the same property for separate offences under the by-law over time. The proposed fee aims to recover costs for the City while encouraging timely compliance from property owners.

Operational Considerations

The Abandoned and Vacated Buildings Strategy aims to establish a comprehensive process that integrates risk monitoring, regulatory updates, proactive compliance, and enforcement. The overarching goal is to enhance public safety, reduce the negative impacts of vacated buildings on neighbourhoods, and alleviate operational pressures on City resources. In response to Council's direction, staff have reviewed key operational areas including building inventory, monitoring, and taxation to identify opportunities for improved coordination and policy alignment. While the primary focus of this report is the proposed AVBB, the following sections provide a summary of findings and detail the next steps being considered for these operational components.

Building Inventory and Monitoring Process

To strengthen oversight and support a more targeted approach to managing vacated buildings, staff reviewed existing data sources and developed an inventory of vacated buildings. This inventory will continue to be developed and maintained by a dedicated resource within Development, Buildings and Licensing, using existing staff and systems.

Coordination continues to be strengthened through the Vacated Buildings Task Force, which includes representatives from Development, Buildings and Licensing; Vancouver Fire Rescue Services; Vancouver Police Department; Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability; Facilities, Real Estate and Capital Management; Legal Services; and Arts, Culture and Community Services (Housing and Homelessness Services). This cross-departmental collaboration is central to improving information sharing, aligning enforcement efforts, and ensuring timely responses to both ongoing and emerging issues.

In parallel, staff are implementing a cohesive and coordinated approach to monitoring vacated buildings in partnership with Vancouver Fire Rescue Services and the Vancouver Police Department. The objective is to strengthen interdepartmental communication and encourage collaboration. When any team identifies a high-risk vacated building, staff will work collaboratively to address safety, nuisance, and enforcement issues. This coordinated approach is supported by the new tools proposed through the proposed AVBB, as well as regular Task Force meetings that improve cross-departmental communication, and operational improvements designed to increase the City's ability to respond to buildings with persistent non-compliance.

Implementation efforts are underway to strengthen inspection procedures and to formalize a standardized notification protocol for timely interdepartmental communication when vacated or high-risk buildings are identified. Regular reviews of high-risk vacated buildings are now conducted to coordinate joint responses and monitor enforcement progress. Enforcement pathways have also been integrated with existing operational processes, including joint site visits and coordinated communication with property owners, to promote consistent messaging and accountability. These coordinated efforts provide more consistent decision-making, improved internal cost tracking, and stronger compliance outcomes.

Taxation Options

As directed by Council, staff explored taxation-related options as part of a broader review of strategies to address vacated buildings. Residential vacancies are currently addressed through the City's Empty Homes Tax (EHT), a municipal tax introduced to encourage property owners to occupy or rent out their homes. The EHT applies exclusively to residential buildings that are deemed vacant for more than six months in a calendar year. The tax aims to increase housing supply by discouraging owners from leaving homes empty. According to the City's 2024 Empty Homes Tax Annual Report, reflecting outcomes from 2017 to 2023, the program has led to a 58% reduction in vacant residential buildings and has generated nearly \$170 million to support affordable housing initiatives, including land acquisition, non-profit housing grants, and capital investments aligned with Vancouver's long-term housing strategy.

The EHT includes several exemptions, such as for buildings with active development or building permit applications, the death of the registered owner, when the owner is in hospital or supportive care, or when the property is used as a secondary residence for medical reasons. Commercial buildings are not subject to the EHT. Staff do not recommend any additional taxation options for vacated buildings at this time as it is the mandate of the EHT program to address this objective.

Financial Implications

The City does not currently recover the costs of managing contractors or conducting follow-up inspections when properties remain non-compliant. The proposed fees would help recover some of these costs and act as a deterrent for non-compliant properties. While the exact revenue is uncertain, these fees are expected to recover a significant portion of expenses related to enforcement.

Legal Implications

Under the Vancouver Charter, Council may, by by-law, grant the CBO certain authority to address unsafe buildings. In addition to doing so, the proposed AVBB identifies minimum standards that

the CBO will look to in assessing whether a vacated building meets the threshold to be certified as a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health.

The proposed AVBB does not amend or take away from any of the existing authority of the City, including the CBO and VFRS, to address unsafe buildings under existing by-laws, including the Vancouver Building By-law and the Fire By-law.

The by-laws are proposed to come into force and effect on the date of enactment except for section 6 of the Ticket Offences By-law amendment, which is delayed to accommodate the temporary provisions proposed as part of the FIFA by-law amendments.

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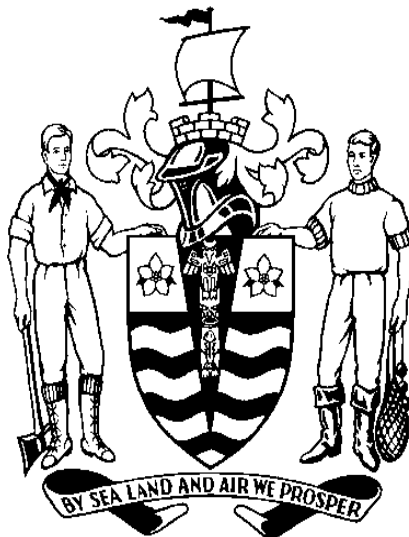
APPENDIX A

Draft Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

BY-LAW NO. _____

CITY OF VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA



ABANDONED AND VACATED BUILDINGS

BY-LAW NO. _____

This By-law is printed under and

by authority of the Council of

the City of Vancouver

_____, 2025

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

**A by-law prescribing standards for vacated properties within the
City of Vancouver to prevent such properties from becoming a fire
hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

**SECTION 1
INTERPRETATION**

1. This by-law may be cited as the “Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law”.

**SECTION 2
DEFINITIONS AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 2.1 In this by-law, unless the context otherwise requires:

“building” includes a building, structure, or improvement;

“Building By-law” means the *Building By-law* of the City;

“City” means the City of Vancouver;

“City Building Inspector” means the City Building Inspector appointed by Council pursuant to section 305 of the *Vancouver Charter*;

“City Clerk” means the City Clerk appointed by Council pursuant to section 220 of the *Vancouver Charter*;

“Inspector” means all persons authorized to act on behalf of the City Building Inspector for the purpose of enforcing this By-law, and includes persons authorized to act on behalf of the City Building Inspector to conduct inspections to enforce this By-law;

“land” means any parcel of Land on which a building is situated and also includes vacant parcels of land, a strata lot, or any portion thereof, but excludes streets;

“owner” means the registered owner, as the same appears on the records of the Vancouver Land Title Office, or if there is registered an agreement for sale and purchase, “owner” shall mean the person registered as the last holder either directly or by assignment of such agreement for sale and in the case of Crown-owned lands, “owner” shall mean the occupier;

“owner’s agent” means:

- (a) any person authorized by the owner to act as agent for the owner, if the owner has notified the Chief Building Inspector or Inspector in writing of the same, or

- (b) any person identified by the City Building Inspector or Inspector, after reasonable due diligence, as acting for the owner as the party responsible for managing the building or site comprising the vacated property;

“Standards of Maintenance By-law” means the Standards of Maintenance By-law of the City;

“Untidy Premises By-law” means the Untidy Premises By-law of the City;

“vacated property” means any building that is vacated and left in a derelict state or state of disuse by the owner or any occupier lawfully entitled to occupy the building, and includes any land.

- 2.2 Schedules A and B attached to this by-law form part of this by-law.
- 2.3 A decision by a court that any part of this by-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this by-law, and is not to affect the balance of the by-law.

SECTION 3 DUTY OF THE OWNER AND OWNER’S AGENT

- 3.1 The owner of a vacated property must ensure that the vacated property complies with the requirements of this by-law.
- 3.2 If, after making reasonable efforts, the City is unsuccessful in contacting the owner, the owner’s agent must also ensure that a vacated property complies with the requirements of this by-law, effective from the date that written notice of the same is given to the owner’s agent in accordance with **sections 7.8(a)-7.8(c)**.
- 3.3 Where the owner’s agent must comply with this by-law in accordance with **section 3.2**, reference in this by-law to the owner is deemed to include the owner’s agent, except that this provision does not apply to **section 7.7**.

SECTION 4 MAINTENANCE OF VACATED PROPERTIES

- 4. A vacated property must:
 - (a) not be a fire hazard;
 - (b) be structurally safe;
 - (c) be maintained in a condition that is not injurious to health;
 - (d) not pose a risk to public safety; and
 - (e) not otherwise endanger the health of the public.

SECTION 5 PROPERTY STANDARDS AND SECURING BUILDINGS

5.1 A vacated property must:

- (a) identify their civic address by the posting of an address that is easily visible from the street and complies with the requirements of the Building By-law;
- (b) be kept clean and free from rubbish or debris, objects, and materials, except for materials for immediate use in the construction, alteration, or repair of a building on the land; and
- (c) be kept free of pests and must be kept in such condition that it will not afford harbourage for or become infested with pests.

5.2 A vacated property must be made secure against unauthorized entry or occupation, vandalism or other intentional damage, or fire hazards by one or more of the following methods:

- (a) closing and locking all access points, including doors, windows, and other points of ingress;
- (b) affixing structural barriers to windows, points of ingress, and other hazards using materials and installation effective to preclude easy entry in accordance with the requirements in Schedule A to this by-law;
- (c) installing security fencing or other perimeter barriers;
- (d) installing a security lighting system that complies with the requirements of the Untidy Premises By-law;
- (e) installing a security alarm system in accordance with the City's by-laws;
- (f) employing security or guard patrols who attend the vacated property on a frequent and periodic basis; or
- (g) using or installing such other security measures or devices as may be satisfactory to the City Building Inspector.

5.3 If a vacated property has been subject to:

- (a) unauthorized entry or occupation; or
- (b) filth, refuse, garbage, or other miscellaneous materials dumped or stored,

the owner must immediately take steps to secure the Vacated property in accordance with **section 5.2**.

5.4 All roofs and building envelopes of a vacated property, including exterior walls, foundations, exterior doors and windows, basements and cellars, fire escapes, staircases, balconies,

porches, and exterior features which, if not maintained, may become a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health, must be maintained in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Standards of Maintenance By-law.

SECTION 6 UTILITIES AND FIRE SAFETY SYSTEMS

Utilities

- 6.1 A vacated property must be disconnected from the:
- (a) the water supply in accordance with the City's by-laws, except where a connection to the water supply is required to maintain a functioning fire sprinkler system;
 - (b) the natural gas supply, except where the natural gas supply is required to maintain a fire suppression system including to provide heating to maintain a functioning fire sprinkler system; and
 - (c) the electrical service, except where:
 - (i) it is required to maintain a fire suppression system including to provide heating to maintain a functioning fire sprinkler system; or
 - (ii) the vacated property has an active monitored intruder alarm system or an active monitored fire alarm system and, for greater clarity, an active monitored fire alarm system does not include local smoke alarm devices.

Fire Safety Systems

- 6.2 All fire sprinkler systems on or in a vacated property must be maintained in good repair and in an operational condition, including regular inspections and one or more of the following:
- (a) being insulated or heated to prevent freezing;
 - (b) maintaining the heating systems of a building to maintain a temperature of 5E Celsius measured at the base of the sprinkler heads; or
 - (c) using or installing such other measures or devices as may be satisfactory to the City Building Inspector.
- 6.3 All fire alarm and detection systems on or in a vacated property must be maintained in good repair and in operational condition.
- 6.4 All floors, roof constructions, exterior walls, and any other means of fire protection designed to prevent or mitigate the spread of fire to other buildings, which form part of a vacated property must be maintained in such a manner to afford the fire resistive properties and protection for which they were designed.

SECTION 7 CERTIFICATION AND ORDERS

Administration and Inspection

- 7.1 The City Building Inspector is authorized to administer the applicable provisions of this by-law.
- 7.2 The City Building Inspector and Inspectors may enter any building or premises at any reasonable time for the purposes of administering this by-law.
- 7.3 Every owner or occupier of a vacated property, including the owner's agent, will give the City Building Inspector and Inspectors such access at any reasonable hour to such real property and every part thereof and such information with respect thereto as may be reasonably required to enable necessary inspection to be made.

Certification and Orders

- 7.4 The City Building Inspector or an Inspector may issue in writing such notices and orders as may be necessary to notify a person of a contravention of this by-law, in the manner set out in this by-law.
- 7.5 The City Building Inspector may:
 - (a) certify, in writing, that any vacated property is a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health; and
 - (b) issue an order to an owner of a building or land directing that the certified vacated property be brought into compliance with a provision of this by-law.
- 7.6 An order issued pursuant to **section (b)** may:
 - (a) require that the order be complied with within a specified time;
 - (b) require the vacated property be brought into compliance with the applicable provisions of the Vancouver Building By-law, the Standards of Maintenance By-law, or any other City by-law which establishes standards related to fire, safety, or health;
 - (c) require that fire sprinkler systems and fire alarm or detection systems must be inspected on a schedule to the satisfaction of the City Building Inspector;
 - (d) require a building to be demolished, removed, or amended, in whole or in part; and
 - (e) direct that if the owner does not comply with the order within the time specified in the order, the City may remedy any default specified in the order at the expense of the owner and in accordance with **sections 7.16-7.20**,

to ensure the building is no longer a fire hazard, structurally unsafe, or a menace to health.

- 7.7 An order requiring a building to be demolished, removed, or amended, in whole or in part, may only be issued to the owner of a vacated property, and not to the owner's agent.

Service of Notice or an Order

- 7.8 A notice or order issued under this by-law is sufficiently served:

- (a) in the case of a notice, by sending it by electronic mail to the electronic mail address of the owner;
- (b) if the notice or order is delivered:
 - (ii) by hand, ordinary prepaid mail, or registered mail, to the owner's, or owner's agent if applicable, address as shown in the records of the Assessment Authority of British Columbia; or
 - (iii) in the case of an owner, or owner's agent if applicable, that is a corporation, the notice or order is delivered by hand, ordinary prepaid mail, or registered mail to the registered and records office of the corporation; and
- (c) if the notice or order is posted on the affected premises.

- 7.9 In the case of Crown-owned lands, notice must also be served to the Crown.

Deemed Receipt of Notice or an Order

- 7.10 Notices and orders issued in accordance with this by-law are deemed to have been received:
- (a) on the date it was sent, if sent by electronic mail;
 - (b) four days after mailing, if sent by ordinary prepaid mail, to the mailing address of the owner;
 - (c) on the date of delivery as noted in the Canada Post tracking system, if sent by registered mail; or
 - (d) immediately upon receipt, if handed to the owner or a representative of the owner, delivered to the registered and records office for the owner, or posted on the affected premises.

Reconsideration of Order of Demolition, Removal, or Amendment

- 7.11 Except where an order has been issued pursuant to **section 8.18.1**, an owner in receipt of an order pursuant to **section 7.6(b)** requiring a building to be demolished, removed, or amended, in whole or in part, may request Council reconsider the demolition, removal, or amendment requirement.
- 7.12 A request for reconsideration under **section 7.11** must be made by written notice to the City Clerk within 14 days of receipt of the order in accordance with **section 7.10**;

- 7.13 After receipt of a written notice that complies with **section 7.12** and before any matter is dealt with by Council pursuant to **section 7.11**, the City Clerk will notify the owner that Council will be reconsidering the demolition, removal, or amendment requirement. Such notice will specify the time and place at which the owner may appear before Council to make representations in respect of the matters alleged.
- 7.14 After considering all material presented at the meeting pursuant to **section 7.13**, Council may confirm, amend, or cancel the order.
- 7.15 Notice of Council's decision in **section 7.14** will be provided to the owner. Where the order includes that the City may take remedial action pursuant to **section 7.6(e)**, the City:
- (a) may take action in accordance with the timing specified in the order, as confirmed or amended by Council; and
 - (b) must not take action prior to receipt of notice of Council's decision by the owner in accordance with **section 7.10**.

City Action on Failure to Remedy

- 7.16 The City Building Inspector may order that failure to remedy any default specified in an order within not less than 30 days after service of such order will result in the work being carried out by the City at the expense of the owner.
- 7.17 Despite **section 7.16**, where notice has been provided to the owner pursuant to **section 5.3**, an order by the City Building Inspector requiring a building be secured in accordance with **section 5.2** may reduce the time for compliance from 30 days to not less than 5 days.
- 7.18 If, upon expiration of the period for compliance specified in the order, any of the defaults specified in an order under **section 17.16** are not remedied, the City may, by its workers or others, enter upon the premises and effect such demolition, removals, or amendments to the Vacated property as are necessary to make the Vacated property conform to the standards set out in the order and this by-law.
- 7.19 All costs and expenses of the City, as a consequence of work carried out pursuant to **section 7.17**, shall be paid by the owner of the property within 30 days from the date of a statement of account from the City. The costs and expenses of the City may include a City staff administrative recovery fee as set out in the Fee Schedule attached as **Schedule B** of this by-law.
- 7.20 Any amount which remains unpaid after the time limit in **section 7.19** will, after certification by the Director of Finance, be added to the Real Property Tax Roll as a charge with respect to the parcel on which the work was carried out.

SECTION 8 EMERGENCY ACTION AT OWNER'S EXPENSE

Emergency

- 8.1 Where the City Building Inspector has certified that the vacated property poses an immediate and substantial risk to the public because of the identified fire hazard, structural unsafeness, or menace to health, the City Building Inspector may order that the City enter onto the premises and carry out such demolition, removal, or amendment of the vacated property necessary to address the fire hazard, structural unsafeness, or menace to health and at the expense of the owner.
- 8.2 Notwithstanding any other provisions of this By-law, where the City Building Inspector has certified a vacated property pursuant to **section 8.1**:
- (a) the City may enter onto the premises and take any action necessary pursuant to **section 8.1** immediately after service of the order in accordance with **section 7.10**; and
 - (b) all costs and expenses of the City will be paid by the owner in accordance with **section 7.19**, including adding any unpaid costs and expenses to the Real Property Tax Roll in accordance with **section 7.20**.

SECTION 9 FEES

9. Where the Chief Building Inspector or an Inspector attends a vacated property for:
- (a) more than three inspections within a 12 month period, the owner of a Vacated property must pay a City staff return inspection service fee as set out in the Fee Schedule attached as **Schedule B** to this By-law for every additional inspection by the Chief Building Inspector or an Inspector at the same Vacated property; and
 - (b) more than five inspections within a 12 month period, the owner of a vacated property must pay an enhanced City staff return inspection service fee as set out in the Fee Schedule attached as **Schedule B** to this By-law for every additional inspection by the Chief Building Inspector or an Inspector at the same vacated property.

SECTION 10 OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Offences

- 10.1 Every person who:
- (b) violates any provision of this by-law;
 - (c) suffers, permits or allows any act to be done in contravention of this by-law;
 - (d) neglects to do anything required to be done by this by-law; or

(e) fails to comply with an order or notice given under the by-law,
is guilty of an offence and liable to the penalties listed herein.

Fines and Penalties

- 10.2 Every person who commits an offence against this by-law is liable to a fine of no less than \$500 and no more than \$50,000 for each offence.
- 10.3 Every person who commits an offence of a continuing nature against this by-law is liable to a fine of no less than \$500 and no more than \$50,000 for each day such offence is continued.

**SECTION 11
FORCE AND EFFECT**

11. This by-law will come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this day of , 2026

Mayor

City Clerk

SCHEDULE A

Board-Up Requirements For Vacated Buildings

The following are the minimum standards for affixing structural barriers to vacated properties:

1. The board-up of all windows and doorways must be done with the following materials:
 - (a) Plywood sheets of minimum 5/8" thickness;
 - (b) Studs minimum 2 x 4;
 - (c) 3" screws, both Robertson and Phillips;
 - (d) 3" screws capable of drilling into metal; and
 - (e) 3" nails.
2. The method of board-up must be done as follows:
 - (a) Using the materials specified in Section 1 of this Schedule fastened with alternating Phillips head Robertson head 3" screws intermingled with 3" nails to board-up structure;
 - (b) Using the materials specified in Section 1 of this Schedule fastened with 3" metal use screws to drill into metal (e.g. door and window frames) where possible; and
 - (c) Fasteners must be spaced no more than 6" apart;
3. The following must be secured in accordance with sections 1 and 2 of this Schedule:
 - (a) All windows and doors within easy access from the ground, decks, or roofs, at the absolute discretion of the City Building Inspector;
 - (b) All broken windows and doors open to the elements.
4. All swimming pools must be secured to prevent deaths or injury, e.g. from drowning or falls.

SCHEDULE B

Fee Schedule For Vacated Buildings

Item	By-law Section	Activity	Fee	GST applicable
1	Section 7.19	City Staff Administrative Service Fee	20% of contractor invoice amount (before applicable taxes) Maximum \$5,000.00	YES
2	Section 9(a)	City Staff Inspection Service Fee	\$270.00	YES
3	Section 9(b)	Enhanced City Staff Inspection Service Fee	\$455.00	YES

**DRAFT By-law to amend the Ticket Offences By-law No. 9360
to add offences under the Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law**

Note: An amending by-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

1. This by-law amends the indicated provisions of the Ticket Offences By-law No. 9360.
2. In section 1.2, Council adds the following before “City Licence Inspector”:

““Chief Building Official” means the person appointed by Council from time to time as Chief Building Official for the city, and includes any officer, official, or employee acting on behalf of or in place of the Chief Building Official and any property use inspector or other person authorized by Council or the Chief Building Official to enforce by-laws;”

3. Council renumbers sections 2.5 and 2.6 as 2.6 and 2.7, respectively, and adds a new section 2.5 as follows:

“2.5 In Column 4 of Table 20:

- (a) “1st offence” means the first offence by an owner of any by-law provision listed in Column 3 of Table 20;
- (b) “2nd offence” means the second offence by an owner of any by-law provision listed in Column 3 of Table 20, regardless of whether it is an offence of the same by-law provision as the 1st offence;
- (c) “subsequent offence” means the offence by an owner of any by-law provision listed in Column 3 of Table 20 after the 2nd offence;
- (d) where legal title to a vacated property has transferred, an offence committed by the former owner of the vacated property will not apply to a determination of the number of offences committed by the current owner; and
- (e) for the purposes of this section, “lands”, “owner”, and “vacated property” have the same meaning as in the Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law.”

4. In section 2.7, Council adds “Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law,” before “Animal Control By-law”.
5. Council adds a new Table 20 as follows after Table 19:

**“Table 20
Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law**

<u>Column 1</u>	<u>Column 2</u>	<u>Column 3</u>	<u>Column 4</u>
Chief Building Official	Property is a fire hazard	Section 4(a)	1 st offence: \$1,000.00 2 nd offence: \$2,000.00 Subsequent offence: \$3,000.00
	Property is not structurally safe	Section 4(b)	
	Property is injurious to health	Section 4(c)	
	Property is a risk to public safety	Section 4(d)	
	Property endangers health of the public	Section 4(e)	
	Address not identified	Section 5.1(a)	
	Property not clean of rubbish and debris	Section 5.1(b)	
	Property not free of pests	Section 5.1(c)	
	Property not secure	Section 5.2	
	Fail to maintain roofs, building envelopes, or exterior of building	Section 5.4	
	Property not disconnected from water supply	Section 6.1(a)	
	Property not disconnected from natural gas supply	Section 6.1(b)	
	Property not disconnected from electrical service	Section 6.1(c)	
	Fire sprinkler system not maintained	Section 6.2	
	Fire alarm or detection system not maintained	Section 6.3	
	Fire resistive features not maintained	Section 6.4	

6. Council:

(a) in section 2.5, strikes “Table 20” wherever it appears and replaces it with “Table 17”;
and

(b) renumbers Table 20 as Table 17.

7. This by-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment except section 6, which comes into force and takes effect on July 21, 2026.

ENACTED by Council this day of , 2026

Mayor

City Clerk

APPENDIX C
JURISDICTIONAL SCAN

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Bylaw/Regulations</u>	<u>Registration Required</u>	<u>Fees</u>
<i>Surrey, BC</i>	Abandoned Properties By-law	No	N/A
<i>Victoria, BC</i>	Abandoned Properties By-law	No	N/A
<i>Port Alberni, BC</i>	Building Standards By-law, Vacant Premises	Yes	\$1,000 - Permit Registration Fee
<i>Penticton, BC</i>	Good Neighbour Bylaw	Yes	\$500 - Permit Registration Inspection \$1,500 - \$3,500 - Permit Registration Fee
<i>Winnipeg, MA</i>	Vacant Buildings By-law	No	Residential Properties: \$2,870 Boarding Permit \$645 Occupancy Certificate Commercial Properties: First year: \$2,870 Second year: \$5,030 Third year: \$7,090 Fourth year: \$9,230 Fifth year and up: \$2,150 for each additional year
<i>Ottawa, ON</i>	Vacant Property By-law	Yes	\$60 Administration Fee \$1,523 Permit Fee
<i>Toronto, ON</i>	Property Standards By-law	No	N/A
<i>Seattle, WA</i>	Seattle Municipal Code, Minimum Standards for Vacant Buildings	No	Monitoring fee \$271.85 - \$542.60 (complaint-based inspections)
<i>Detroit, MI</i>	Vacant Property Registration Ordinance	Yes	Single Family: \$223.00 Two Family \$278.00 Multi Family \$501.00 Commercial Flat Rate \$197
<i>Chicago, IL</i>	Vacant Building Registration Ordinance	Yes	\$250-\$500