

Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law

Vacated Buildings Strategy

DECEMBER 10, 2025



500 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver - Council report and motion



Council direct staff as part of their planned regulatory task force related to unoccupied buildings to consider building inventory, monitoring process, standards of maintenance bylaw for vacant buildings, and taxation options. (December 18, 2024)

Challenges with Vacated Buildings

- **Public safety concerns**
Buildings are not maintained in a safe condition
- **Impact on neighbourhood**
Safety concerns tied to trespassing, unpermitted activity, and resulting property hazards
- **Building decay**
Deteriorating structural building conditions
- **Fire risks**
Faulty electrical and unauthorized activities
- **Operational strain and costs**
Repeated attendance by City staff and other agencies



Vacated Buildings in Vancouver

3-1-1 complaints to DBL

- 2023: 140
- 2024: 156
- 2025 (YTD): 125

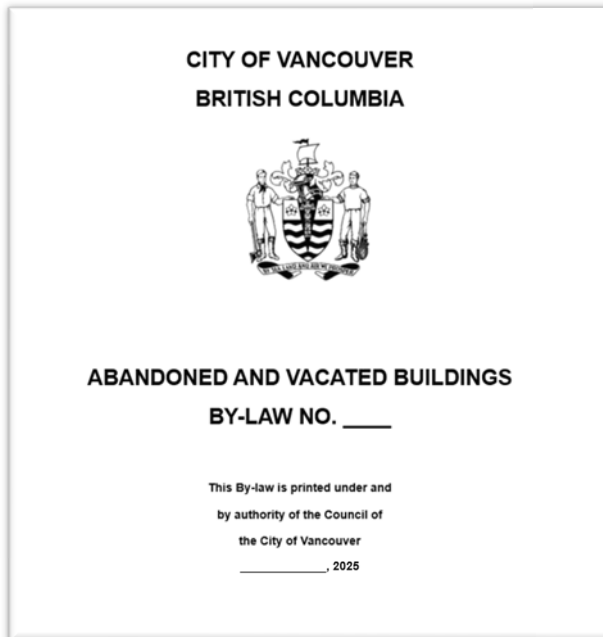
DBL caseload

2023: 121
2024: 124
2025 (YTD): 99

VFRS

- Approximately 170 vacated buildings identified by VFRS
- 132 incidents recorded in 48 of those properties between January and October 2025

Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law



- **Minimum standards for vacated buildings**
 - Structural integrity and public safety
 - Keep property free of pests and rubbish
- **Securing access and standards for board up**
 - Prevention of unauthorized access
 - Including board up requirements into the By-law
- **Utilities and Fire Safety Systems**
 - Disconnect utilities
 - Maintain fire alarm and sprinkler systems
- **Certification and Orders**
 - Clarifies responsibilities of both property owners and property managers
 - Reconsideration process for Demolition Orders
- **Emergency Action at Owner's Expense**
 - City may take action and recover City costs
- **Penalties and Fees**
 - Recover administrative City costs associated with enforcement
 - Enforcement tools: Letters, Orders, MTI, BVN and Court Prosecution

Proposed Fines and Penalties

	\$ Amounts	Applicable By-law
Municipal Ticket Informations (MTI)	\$1,000 for first offence \$2,000 for second offence \$3,000 subsequent offence(s)	Ticket Offences By-law
By-law Violation Notices (BVN)	\$1,000 for first offence \$2,000 for second offence \$3,000 subsequent offence(s)	Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law
Court-Imposed Fines through prosecution	\$500 to \$50,000	Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law

Proposed Administrative Fees

	\$ Fee	Jurisdictional Scan
Administrative Service Fee	20% of invoice (\$5,000 max)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richmond: 20% Penticton: 18% Surrey: 10% with min/max thresholds
Return Inspection Fee	\$277 – Low Complexity \$455 – High Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria: \$250 for initial investigation & inspection Surrey: \$357 for initial building inspection, \$139 to coordinate inspections of other authorities

- Request Council to approve the new **Abandoned and Vacated Buildings By-law**
- Subject to approval of recommendation A, request Council to approve amendments to the **Ticket Offences By-law**

Monitoring

- Ongoing collaboration to identify and respond to problematic vacated buildings

Inventory

- Review of board up invoice data to identify volume and cost recovery options
- Review of 3-1-1 complaint data to estimate type and volume of complaints
- Case studies identified by staff to identify low/high casefile complexity scenarios

Taxation considerations

- Empty Homes Tax program objectives
- No new taxation options are proposed by staff at this time



Thank you!