



Department of Administration
Budget and Management Division

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Sharon Robinson
Administration Director

Dennis Yaccarino
Budget and Management Director

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MEMORANDUM

To: Finance and Personnel Committee Members
From: Eric Pearson, Budget and Policy Manager
Subject: Vacant building issues

At the DNS budget hearing, there was a question about inspections of vacant buildings.

Historically, vacant buildings were inspected on a complaint basis. Following the downturn in the local housing market following the global financial crisis of 2007 and 2008, the number of vacant properties in the City began to increase.

In response to Vacant Building issues, the Mayor and Council adopted CCFN 090428 in November 2009, which established vacant building registration and maintenance requirements. Registration is required to be renewed every 6 months. Inspections occur at registration and renewal to ensure no critical code violations exist.

The ordinance requires owners of buildings that become vacant to register each building with DNS within 30 days. The ordinance also establishes minimum requirements for vacant buildings, including standards for lot maintenance, exterior maintenance, interior maintenance and building security. Violations of the regulations subjects owners to building code forfeiture.

Currently there are 2,721 properties on the vacant building registration list.

Monthly inspections of registered vacant properties started in 2010. Quarterly inspections started in 2018.

In 2016 over 34,000 inspections were conducted. In 2017, 14,707 inspections were conducted. Between January and October 5, 2018, 11,103 inspections were conducted. The decrease in inspections from 2016 occurred in part as a result of data migration from prior Neighborhood Services System software to the new Land Management System software. Not all vacant building records migrated and the ones that did came over as closed records. DNS had to re-verify vacant properties and reopen/activate each record individually.

We developed staffing and cost estimates for different inspection protocols for vacant buildings. The estimates all assume 3,000 vacant properties. The estimated staffing and costs for inspecting vacant buildings is:



- Quarterly exterior inspections:
 - Estimated 12,000 inspections per year
 - 4 Residential Code Enforcement Inspectors
 - Salaries: \$183,884; Fringe: \$82,748; Other Costs: \$47,760; Total Cost: \$314,392

- Monthly exterior inspections:
 - Estimated 36,000 inspections per year
 - 8 Residential Code Enforcement Inspectors, 1 Office Assistant III
 - Salaries: \$398,298; Fringe: \$179,235; Other Costs: \$95,520; Total Cost: \$673,053

DY: ECP

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