

Memorandum



Date: October 10th , 2025
To: Planning Commission
From: Tony McGhee, City Manager
Subject: Creation of Vacant Building /Cold Storage Ordinance

Vacant Building/Cold Storage Ordinance (SEE BELOW for some background info to include as well as this site <https://muskegon-mi.gov/city-services/development-services/planning/zoning/vacant-building-registration/>)

Concerns have been raised about the impact of vacant buildings or those used for cold storage in the community. The City Commission would like the Planning Commission to draft an ordinance addressing this issue to be forwarded to the City Commission.

Good morning all.

I am looking to see if anyone has found a way to deal with this problem. I have a home in a highly visible location that is partially constructed but no progress has been made on it in 2+ years. The original owner/builder sold it and the current owner has no interest in completing the buildout. The structure is fully enclosed, secured, and the property is maintained. In short, there are no safety, nuisance, property maintenance, building code etc concerns that would give rise to normal enforcement action. It is, simply, aesthetically unappealing and a source of frustration for neighboring property owners. The structure is oversized for the neighborhood it is located in (approximately 10,000 sq ft to give some context). My Council is pushing the City Attorney and I to come up with a way to force completion of the construction or demolition of it. We haven't found a way, yet.

If any of you have ideas or thoughts that we should consider, I would appreciate your advice. Open to creative ideas as well!

Brad,

Have you explored using the International Property Maintenance Code to address this issue? We implemented it a few years ago to address a retail space that had been vacant for over 20 years and creating an eyesore for the community. I would imagine the code could also be implemented to address this issue as well.

In Muskegon, we require vacant buildings to be registered with fees. Details can be found on our website.