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#### STAFF REPORT

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
**MEETING DATE:** MARCH 17, 2025  
**FROM:** CITY MANAGER DUBOIS  
**SUBJECT:** DISCUSSION ABOUT EMPTY STOREFRONT ORDINANCE

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss whether Sutter Creek should adopt an empty storefront ordinance and, if so, what parameters should be included.

#### BACKGROUND:

A thriving retail space needs to be attractive and lively. We periodically experience periods with a lot of empty storefronts on Main Street, which can be detrimental to the remaining businesses. Most of the buildings are pretty well maintained but we also have a couple with peeling paint and less attractive appearance.

Many cities have an "Empty Storefront Ordinance". Staff has attached one from Nevada City as an example. Generally, a first step is to require that the display windows be attractive and have an interesting display, even if the building is unoccupied. Windows should not be papered over, frosted, or the space left empty visible from the street. Buildings should be maintained and can be cited if not complying.

#### DISCUSSION:

Council should discuss their interest in putting a similar ordinance in place for Sutter Creek. . If interested in such an ordinance the next step would be outreach to the business community and, primarily, to building owners, to explain the ordinance and give people time to comply. Staff would ask for assistance in communicating the benefits and requirements by Council to the business community

#### BUDGET IMPACT:

Budget impact will primarily be staff time to work on this and the opportunity cost of not working on something else. Once in place, code enforcement will need to be conducted to implement it. Once its understood, the economic benefits should be to help encourage buildings to be occupied, and hopefully generating sales tax.

#### ATTACHMENT:

Sample ordinance