PROPOSED CPR ORDINANCE
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Commercial Property Reoccupancy Program?
The Commercial Property Reoccupancy (CPR) Program is an adopted City policy to address the impacts of long-term commercial vacancies.

The program creates a framework to:

- Register commercial properties that have been vacant for 60 days or more.
- Support basic property maintenance and safety while spaces are vacant.
- Help keep vacant properties secure, maintained, and positioned for future reoccupancy.

The program is designed as a partnership: property owners would keep sites secure, maintained, and market-ready, while the City would provide resources, contacts, and guidance to help bring spaces back into productive use.

2. Why is the City considering this program?
Over the past three years, the City has made progress in blight abatement and beautification through its Strategic Plan. The City Council has identified the next step, as a Strategic Objective, to explore ways to address long-term commercial vacancies. Vacant buildings can lead to property decline, safety concerns, and lost economic opportunity.
Community input has indicated interest in continued progress on commercial blight abatement:

- 70% of residents said improving the look of commercial areas is the most important step to attract desired businesses.
- 60% identified abandoned or rundown commercial buildings as the top priority for improvement.

Programs in other California cities have reported reductions in blight, improved safety, increased leasing, and stronger business climates. The proposed CPR Program is modeled with those outcomes in mind but tailored to Citrus Heights.

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3. Why isn't Code Enforcement enough to solve this problem?
Code Enforcement is an important tool to address violations after they occur. The proposed CPR Program would take a preventative approach by requiring regular maintenance, security measures, and communication with property owners to reduce the likelihood of issues developing.

Vacant properties can generate more calls for service than occupied ones. They can generate repeated calls for services related to trespassing, vandalism, and property damage. The proposed CPR program helps manage those demands more effectively by requiring registration which keeps contact information current and establishes a clear line of communication with property owners, it also promotes fairness through cost recovery, ensuring that properties needing a higher level of policing and code enforcement services contribute proportionally to the cost of those services.

4. What impact could the proposed program have on commercial real estate and business investment?
The question has been raised whether additional requirements could deter investment. The proposed CPR Program is intended to do the opposite, by helping maintain secure, well-kept, and market-ready commercial areas that appeal to investors and tenants.

Investors often seek communities where commercial districts are vibrant, safe, and visually appealing. For property owners, the program would aim to help protect property value, reduce nuisance activity, and keep spaces in a condition that is easier to lease or sell. Well-maintained and secure properties may lease faster, achieve stronger lease rates, and attract higher-quality tenants. When neighboring properties are also well maintained, the entire area can become more appealing to customers, tenants, and investors, strengthening the overall business climate.

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5. In what ways is the proposed program tailored to Citrus Heights' unique conditions?
In developing the proposed CPR Program, the City reviewed similar programs in other communities and identified ways to adapt the approach to fit local needs and priorities. This includes exemptions for well-maintained properties, options for relief from monitoring fees, and a Reoccupancy Support Packet with marketing resources, City contact information, permitting guidance, and details on available incentives or programs that could apply.

These features are intended to make the program both effective in addressing long-term vacancies and workable for property owners in the Citrus Heights business community.

6. What if it takes a while to find a tenant?
The proposed program would focus on helping properties remain safe, maintained, and secure so they are ready to lease or sell when opportunities arise. Properties in better condition may attract tenants more readily, even during slower market conditions.

7. What triggers registration?
If adopted, the program would require registration for any property meeting the definition of a vacant commercial property, including those that are:

- Unoccupied for more than 60 days.
- Unsecured, or secured by boarding.
- Unoccupied with multiple code violations.
- Unoccupied and in foreclosure or subject to a notice of default, trustee's sale, or tax lien sale.
- Unoccupied after foreclosure or title transfer via deed in lieu.
- Determined vacant by the Program Administrator.

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8. How will the City know which properties must register?
Owners would be encouraged to self-register. The City may also identify potential vacancies through inspections, public complaints, or reports from other agencies. If a property meets the ordinance's definition of a vacant commercial property and is not registered, the City would send notice outlining the requirement and available support before any enforcement action.

9. Why are there fees and what are they?
Fees are based strictly on the City's actual cost to administer the program and conduct regular compliance inspections. They are not be intended to generate surplus revenue.

- Annual Registration Fee: $1,092 (non-refundable)
- Annual Monitoring Fee – Small Site: $1,128
- Annual Monitoring Fee – Large Site: $5,568

Monitoring fees may be prorated and partially refunded if a property is reoccupied, based on the reoccupancy date. Owners who keep properties in good condition and meet specific conditions may qualify for relief from monitoring fees. Owners who keep properties in good condition and self-register a vacant property may be eligible for waived registration fees.

Requests for waived registration fees or relief from monitoring fees should be identified by the applicant at the time of registration.

10. Are there exemptions to registration?
Properties with active construction or approved reoccupancy permits may be exempt if they:

- Have a valid building or planning permit.
- Are making diligent progress to complete work within six months.
- Are kept free of trash, debris, and graffiti.

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11. What is a Request for Relief and how does it work?

Property owners could request relief from the annual monitoring fee for 12 months if the property is:

- In good repair, with no graffiti, litter, dumping, broken windows, deteriorating façades, or overgrown landscaping.
- Free of open code cases or nuisance actions in the last 12 months.
- Not generating excessive calls for service tied to vacant portions.

Relief could be revoked if conditions change and would not be guaranteed upon renewal.

12. What support will be available for owners?

Owners registering a property would receive a Reoccupancy Support Packet with:

- A maintenance and compliance checklist.
- CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) guidelines.
- A City contact directory for key departments.
- Business attraction and marketing resources, including available incentives.
- Permit and improvement guidance, including information on expedited permitting.

Keeping the City informed could also help speed up assistance with finding tenant leads, navigating permits, or addressing maintenance issues before they become costly.

13. What will the CPR fees be used for?

The fees are designed to recover the cost of staff time needed to administer the program. Fees collected from the program will help fund additional code enforcement and police resources to support property maintenance.

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14. How did community feedback shape the proposed Commercial Property Reoccupancy (CPR) Ordinance?

The CPR Ordinance evolved through multiple draft versions based on feedback from property owners, business groups, and community partners. While the overall purpose remained the same: establishing shared standards for property upleap and reducing long-term commercial vacancies, each revision refined how and when requirements would apply.

Version 2 Key Updates:

- Extended registration and compliance window from 30 to 60 days, giving property owners more time to complete registration requirements.
- Expanded exemptions and relief options for well-maintained properties ("good actors").
- Eliminated the 75 percent occupancy threshold for Request for Relief eligibility, expanding access to monitoring-fee relief for well-maintained vacant properties with no open code cases.
- Waived registration and monitoring fees for property owners who self-register within the 60-day period. Fees apply to only properties formally noticed by the city after non-registration.

Version 3 Key Updates:

- Added an flexibility for partially occupied office buildings that remain well maintained.