



# STAFF REPORT

DATE: 11/05/2025  
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members  
FROM: Planning and Development Department

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**2025-390**

## REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

### **SUBJECT:**

REQUEST BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPEAKE TO DISCUSS ESTABLISHING TIME LIMITS FOR TEMPORARY FENCING AND BOARDED WINDOWS FOR UNOCCUPIED DEVELOPED PROPERTIES

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This staff report asks the City Council to provide direction on Council Member Speake's request to explore an amendment to the Corona Municipal Code to set time limits on temporary fencing and materials used to board up windows on unoccupied developed properties. The future agenda item request was presented to the City Council at its meeting on March 19, 2025. The Council agreed to have further discussion on this request.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

That the City Council provide direction on whether staff should explore an amendment to the Corona Municipal Code to set time limits for temporary fencing and boarded windows on unoccupied developed property.

### **BACKGROUND & HISTORY:**

At the City Council meeting on March 19, 2025, Council Member Speake requested to explore options that could be amended into the city's municipal code to limit the amount of time temporary fencing and boarded windows can be used on unoccupied developed properties. The grounds for this discussion were prompted by the unoccupied buildings located at the northeast corner of Main Street and Parkridge Avenue, and the Wells Fargo

building located at 1111 W. Sixth Street, which stayed vacant for several years with on-going property maintenance violations before being demolished. Unlike the partially vacant commercial center at the corner of Main Street and Parkridge Avenue, the former Wells Fargo building located on Sixth Street was enclosed with temporary fencing before it was demolished.

#### Code Compliance and Police Department

The city's Code Compliance division requires property owners of unoccupied properties to do the following to deter public nuisance and unlawful activity on the property:

- Secure the property to deter transient activity, loitering, and illegal dumping (staff commonly recommend using temporary fencing).
- Regular clean-up of the property from debris and graffiti.
- Replace or boardup broken windows and doors to prevent access to the building.
- Remove dead vegetation from landscaped areas.

The Corona Police Department also requests support to have windows boarded up on unoccupied buildings to prevent intrusion into the building. This is to minimize calls for service of unlawful activities inside the building and to deter squatters.

#### Corona Municipal Code Chapter 8.32, Property Maintenance

All properties in the city, including vacant undeveloped properties and unoccupied developed properties, are subject to the property maintenance regulations established in Corona Municipal Code (CMC) Chapter 8.32,

Per CMC Section 8.32.030, unoccupied buildings are not considered a nuisance if:

- The premises are locked and secured from intrusion by persons and animals,
- The windows are not broken or are boarded up by a method or material approved by the Planning and Development Department,
- The property is actively maintained and monitored for the removal of trash, debris and graffiti,
- The on-site landscaping and exterior building materials are maintained,
- The building continues to be in compliance with code regulations, and
- Criminal activity is prevented on the premises.

#### Permit Requirement

A building permit for temporary fencing is only required if the fencing uses in-ground footings. This type of fencing is typically only used to secure vacant, undeveloped properties to prevent illegal dumping and trespassing. No building permit is required for temporary fencing using panel stands not affixed to the ground or to board up windows on unoccupied buildings. As a result, most temporary fencing of buildings is not regulated by the CMC unless it pertains to property maintenance.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

Because temporary fencing is routinely used to keep vacant properties secure and help owners comply with property maintenance requirements, any amendment to the CMC

setting a time limit on temporary fencing and materials will need to address how owners can become compliant with requirements to secure and maintain the property. Additionally, consideration should be given to the mechanism of enforcement for a time limit in the absence of a permit requirement for temporary fencing.

Staff have provide four key concerns (Table 1) for a proposed time limits on the methods of security, such as temporary fencing and boarded-up windows, on unoccupied developed properties.

<b>TABLE 1 Time Limits on Temporary Fencing &amp; Boarded Windows Concerns and Issues</b>	
Concern	Issue
Without the continuous use of reasonable security measures, unoccupied properties are exposed to activities that would create nuisances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal dumping.</li> <li>• Homeless camps and increased risk of structure fires.</li> <li>• Loitering.</li> <li>• Property damage.</li> <li>• Graffiti.</li> <li>• Intrusion into buildings.</li> <li>• Illegal activities inside breached buildings.</li> <li>• Increase calls for service to Code Compliance and the Police Department.</li> <li>• Frequent contact with the property owner to address violations.</li> </ul>
Balancing enforcement with the property owner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limiting reasonable security measures is counterproductive to Code Compliance's enforcement in requiring property to be secured to deter nuisances and unlawful activity.</li> </ul>
No building permit is required for temporary fencing using panel stands not affixed to the ground and boards covering windows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some type of permit would be required to monitor imposed time limits.</li> <li>• Determining how often a property can use temporary fencing and boarded windows to secure an unoccupied building (one-time permit vs. annual permit).</li> </ul>

Market constraints or circumstances associated with the property may not result in the occupancy of the property even if the methods of reasonable security are limited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The city does not control the leasing of the building or the sale of property.</li> </ul>
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If the Council directs staff to explore an amendment to the CMC, Table 2 lists the tasks and estimated time for staff to research other cities and propose options to the City Council for consideration.

<b>TABLE 2</b>	
<b>Approximate Time Allocated to Research</b>	
<b>Task</b>	<b>Estimated Total Hours (spread out with other work assignments)</b>
Research of approximately 10 cities in the surrounding area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Code Enforcement staff from other agencies.</li> <li>Review applicable ordinances from other agencies.</li> <li>Compile research.</li> </ul>	20 hours
Draft proposed options for consideration by the City Council.	5 hours
Prepare presentation materials for City Council.	5 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>30 hours</b>

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Full-time city staff resources will be used to conduct research on this request, which is part of the department’s budgeted positions. No additional cost is anticipated with this request.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from the CEQA if the activity is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This request is for staff to receive policy direction from the City Council and will not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

**PREPARED BY:** JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Exhibit 1 – Presentation
2. Exhibit 2 – Future Agenda Item Request from Council Member Speake dated March 12, 2025