



Annual Vacant/Under-Utilized Building Registration and Activation Plan Directions and Application

Overview of Program

The City Commission adopted Ordinance 2026.05/449 on May 11, 2026, which became effective on May 29, 2026 and amended the Code of Ordinances. This amendment requires all buildings/structures vacant or under-utilized more than 90 days to register with the City of Buchanan.

The intent of the program is to reactive buildings/structures that have been vacant or under-utilized for more than 90 days. Vacant or underutilized buildings/structures can represent lost opportunities for housing, commercial and industrial business activity and uses along with investment into the community. The goal is to reduce opportunities for vandalism, improve property maintenance and decrease nuisances. Activating properties will improve community pride, tax base and overall economic and social vibrancy in the City.

This attached single application provides three options for a property owner with a building/structure vacant for more than 90 days.

1. Registration with Activation Plan – applicant provides detailed information on steps to make the building/structure occupied with a permitted use.
2. Registration with No Activation Plan – applicant simply registers property with no intent to activate the building/structure with a permitted use.
3. Registration with Hardship Exception – applicant meets one of the established hardship exceptions and provides documentation.

Once a certificate is issued it is valid for one year and must be renewed annually if the property continues to be vacant.

Process

1. **Complete the Annual Vacant Building Registration and Activation Plan.** Any questions regarding the application should be directed to the Planning and Community Development Department.
2. **Submission of Application.** Completed applications along with any required supplemental information must be submitted to the City of Buchanan with the appropriate application fee.

- a. The city typically has notaries available during business hours. Please bring state issued photo identification if this service is needed as the forms must be notarized.
- 3. **Acceptance of Application.** Staff review the application and supplemental information for completeness and determine if the Activation Plan is acceptable or if the Hardship Exception can be granted.
 - a. Staff may forward the accepted application packet to other city departments for review and comment.
- 4. **Property Inspection.** Staff will contact the applicant to schedule the required inspection. A written inspection report will be forwarded to the applicant outlining approval, approval with conditions or the next steps necessary to secure the property, buildings/structures within a set timeframe.
- 5. **Issuance of Certificate of Vacant Building Registration.** Once the inspection has been completed. A certificate will be issued based on the type of request made. This certificate is valid for one-year and if the building/structure remains vacant or underutilized a new application, supplemental information and filing fee is required.

May 2026



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Annual Vacant/Under-Utilized Building Registration and Activation Plan Application

Please print legibly. All portions must be completed. Do not leave any section blank, use N/A.
Incomplete forms will be returned.

Registration Being Requested

Registration with Activation Plan: _____

Registration with No Activation Plan: _____

Registration with Hardship Exception: _____

Type of Property

The vacant structure/property has the following type of building(s) on the property:

One or Two-Family Residential _____ Three or More Residential _____

Commercial (retail) _____ Commercial (office) _____

Mixed Use (commercial and residential) _____ Industrial _____

Other _____ Please explain: _____

How many tenants or different users are in the building? _____

General Property Information

Property Address: _____

Property Code Number(s) (Tax Number): 11-58-_____

Reason for vacancy: _____

Date when structure became vacant: _____

Last known use or purpose of structure: _____

Original use or purpose of structure: _____

Provide a brief description of the existing condition of the structure and property: _____

Describe how the structure and property has been secured against unauthorized entry: _____

Explain how the structure and property is being maintained (trash removal, graffiti, lawn maintenance, snow removal, walkways and parking areas, vermin and mold removal, exterior of building including doors and windows):

Does the structure have items stored or warehoused inside? Yes _____ No _____

Utility and Insurance Information

Water: On _____ Off _____ If on, please provide name, address and telephone number of responsible person for utility bill: _____

Electricity: On _____ Off _____

Gas: On _____ Off _____

Security Alarm System: On _____ Off _____ No security alarm system _____ If on, please provide name, address and telephone number of Security Alarm System Provider: _____

Fire Suppression System: On _____ Off _____ No suppression system _____

If on, please provide name, address and telephone number of Fire Suppression System Provider: _____

Insurance: Is the structure(s) and property covered by a current liability insurance policy?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please provide a copy of the current liability insurance policy.

Foreclosure Information

Is the property in foreclosure? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please provide the following information:

Court where paperwork has been filed: _____

Case Number: _____

Filing Date: _____

Status: _____

Lender Name, Address, Contact Name, Telephone Number: _____

Activation Plan Being Proposed (the term "property" includes the land and structures(s))

In order for a structure to not be considered vacant, the applicant must submit an activation plan that includes clear milestones and anticipated completion dates.

An Activation Plan is being proposed? Yes: _____ No: _____

Sale - is the property being actively advertised for sale? Yes: _____ No: _____

Rent - is the property being actively advertised for rent? Yes: _____ No: _____

Advertisement – on what day, month and year did the property become actively advertised for sale or lease? _____

Explain marketing efforts: _____

Demolition - are you actively looking into having all structures on the property demolished?

Yes: _____ No: _____ If yes, please provide name of demolition company and date of when required permit will be requested: _____

Renovation – are actively working on renovation plans with a design professional for a permitted use? Yes: _____ No: _____ If yes, when will a building permit application be submitted to the City of Buchanan: _____

Please provide written detailed information or include documents with dates/time frames on the process to get the structure(s) and property with an allowed tenant/owner with a permitted use:

Hardship Exception

The City may grant hardship exception for a specified, limited period of time, for any one or more of the following:

1. Financial Hardship. Documented inability to finance rehabilitation/lease-up despite good faith efforts.
2. Legal Impediments. Probate/estate, bankruptcy, foreclosure, receivership, title defects, active litigation, or recorded restrictions preventing action.
3. Physical/Environmental Constraints. Contamination requiring remediation; disaster damage; extraordinary structural failures; public infrastructure constraints outside of Owner control.
4. Redevelopment in Progress. Executed design contracts, permits applied or issued, construction financing in process or secured, or executed letters of intent to purchase real property or leases.
5. Health/Disability. Temporary Owner incapacitation with a property care plan or agent engaged.
6. Inability to Reside in Residence. Owner not living in residence due to needing care provided through a facility such as a nursing home, memory care center, assisted living facility, or rehabilitation facility.
7. Market Hardship. Demonstrated lack of reasonable market interest despite listing or marketing at fair market value for a period of six or more months and Owner submission with a revised market strategy.

Please provide written information based on at least one of the above-mentioned items on why a hardship exception should be granted. In addition, supporting documents such as financials, legal filings, contracts, environmental reports, real estate listings/price history or such other additional documents shall be submitted with the application.

[illegible]

Contact Information – use additional sheets of paper if needed. Do not use PO Box numbers, physical street addresses are required

Property Owner Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Local Agent/Emergency Contact – person or entity must have a residence or office located with 60 miles of the City of Buchanan boundaries

Entity and Responsible Individual Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Lien Holder or Mortgage Holder or Others with Legal Interest In or Control Over the Property

(1) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

(2) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

(3) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Design Professional (if applicable): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Realtor/Agent (if applicable): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Emergency Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

ANNUAL VACANT BUILDING AND ACTIVATION APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

The Applicant certifies and acknowledges and agrees that:

- A. The statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of the Applicant's knowledge and belief. The owner of the subject property, if different from the applicant, states that they consent to the filing of the application and that all information contained is true and correct to the best of their knowledge;
- B. The Applicant understands that an incomplete or nonconforming application will not be considered. In addition, the Applicant understands that the City may require additional information prior to the consideration of this application;
- C. The Applicant shall make the property that is subject of this application available for inspection by the City at reasonable times;
- D. If any information provided in this application changes or becomes incomplete or inapplicable for any reason following submission of this application, the Applicant shall submit a supplemental application or other acceptable written statement containing the new or corrected information as soon as practicable but not less than ten (10) days following the change, and that failure to do so shall be grounds for denial of the application;
- E. The Applicant understands that if the application is approved with conditions, those conditions will need to be met as part of any permit issued; and
- F. The Applicant understands they are responsible for all application fees. Fees are non-refundable and there is no guarantee the application will be approved or permits issued. There should be no outstanding monies owed to the City (i.e., water bill or taxes).

On the _____, day of _____, 20_____, I/We have read the above certification, understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

Signature of Applicant or Authorized Agent

Name of Applicant or Authorized Agent

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this _____ day of _____, 20_____

Notary Public

ANNUAL VACANT BUILDING AND ACTIVATION APPLICATION OWNER'S CONSENT FORM

I/We, the Owner(s) of the property listed below, hereby grant permission for the Applicant,
_____(Compa
ny name and contact person) to seek _____ (state request
that can be made) as required by the City of Buchanan, Michigan for the property commonly known
as _____ (street address) and having the
Property Code Number (Tax Number) of 11-58-_____.

On the _____, day of _____, 20_____, I/We have read the above certification,
understand it, and agree to abide by its conditions.

Signature of Property Owner

Name of Property Owner

Signature of Property Owner

Name of Property Owner

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN

To before me this _____ day of
_____, 20_____

Notary Public