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## **City of Stonecrest Takes Major Steps to Crackdown on Unkept Abandoned Properties**

*Councilmembers unanimously voted to financially reprimand owners of vacant and abandoned properties that become a nuisance or blighted.*

**STONECREST, GA (Sept. 24, 2024)** – Monday, Stonecrest City Council unanimously passed two ordinances that aim to reduce the number of abandoned and vacant properties in the city.

In a 4-0 vote, District 5 Councilwoman Tammy Grimes was not present at the meeting, Council Members passed both the [“Blighted Property”](#) and [“Public Nuisance”](#) ordinances.

“I am excited City Council unanimously voted to approve this ordinance,” said Mayor Jazzmin Cobble. “I am equally proud of the work Councilman Terry Fye put into this along with our legal team and Planning and Zoning staff to enhance enforcement on property owners who leave their properties vacant, abandoned, and dilapidated.”

The two ordinances give City officials the authority to levy a tax against property owners who have a history of leaving their properties in conditions that include but are not limited to the following:

- Increasing the hazards of fire, accidents, or other calamities.
- Lack of adequate ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities.
- Dilapidation or an endangerment to public health.
- Disrepair by failure to conform to applicable codes and ordinances.
- Structural defects which render the structure unsafe for human habitation or commercial, industrial or business use.
- The vacant and/or abandoned structure is the location of repeated illegal activity.

Residents are encouraged to report abandoned or vacant properties that are left in the aforementioned conditions.

If deemed out of compliance with the ordinances, the owner would receive a notice to get the property up to code. That owner would also have the right to a hearing.

If after the hearing the property is still determined to be out of compliance, the property owner would have a set amount of time to get the property up to code before potentially facing an increase in property taxes.

The millage rate increase would remain on the individual property until it was fixed.

“We strongly believe in the right to due process, yet this ordinance gives the city the ability to take punitive action if our city codes are continuously violated. We encourage all of our citizens and business owners to contact our code enforcement department to report potentially abandoned or vacant properties.” Said Cobble.

You can contact Code Enforcement at [codeenforcement@stonecrestga.gov](mailto:codeenforcement@stonecrestga.gov) or 770-224-0200.

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