



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

Administration and Finance Committee, May 21, 2024

Voting Members

Isaac B. "Zac" Bears, Chair
Kit Collins, Vice Chair
Emily Lazzaro
Matt Leming
Justin Tseng

This meeting will take place at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Medford City Hall, 85 George P. Hassett Drive, Medford, MA and via Zoom.

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88120425009>

Call-in Number: +13126266799, 88120425009# US

Broadcast Live: Channel 22 (Comcast), Channel 43 (Verizon), and medfordtv.org.

To submit written comments, please email AHurtubise@medford-ma.gov.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

24-025 - Offered by Matt Leming, City Councilor

Commercial Vacancy Tax

PAPERS IN COMMITTEE

To view Papers in Committee, please email ahurtubise@medford-ma.gov.

Adjournment



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE

May 21, 2024

SPONSORED BY

Matt Leming, City Councilor

AGENDA ITEM

24-025 - Commercial Vacancy Tax

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Whereas, the City of Medford has many commercial storefronts that are either vacant for unacceptably long periods of time or are rarely and inconsistently open for business; and

Whereas, there exists insufficient incentive for the owners of such property to maintain and rent their storefronts to active businesses; now, therefore:

Be it Resolved that the Medford City Council discuss the adoption of a commercial vacancy tax, which can be applied to disincentivize these storefront properties from remaining unoccupied indefinitely.

Be it Further Resolved that this matter be referred to committee for further discussion with the Chief Assessor, the Finance Director, and the Economic Development Director.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

- I. Home Rule Petition Draft

A Special Act Allowing the City of Medford to Impose a Commercial Vacancy Tax to
Disincentivize Effectively Vacant Storefront Businesses

Whereas vacant commercial and industrial properties can degrade the vitality of Medford's business districts, frustrate local planning and development efforts, create increased specific risks of fire damage, vandalism and unlawful entry or uses, and give rise to other public health and safety hazards; and

Whereas commercial storefront properties with businesses that are rarely or never open do as much to degrade the community as vacant storefronts; now, therefore:

Be it therefore resolved that the City Council of the City of Medford has the right to levy a tax on the owners of such vacant or effectively vacant properties, as defined by local ordinance, in order to disincentivize their vacancy; and

Be it further resolved that the City Council of the City of Medford may allow the owners of such properties, as defined by local ordinance, to terminate the leases of the tenants of such property who maintain an effectively vacant business; and

Be it further resolved that the City Council of the City of Medford may use the proceeds of such a tax to encourage the occupancy and revitalization of such properties, including but not limited to aiding the repair or upkeep of these properties, or funding local mechanisms to encourage tenant occupancy, as may be defined by local ordinance.