



City of Cambridge

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FIRST IN COUNCIL
 April 7, 2025

VICE MAYOR MCGOVERN
 MAYOR SIMMONS
 COUNCILLOR SIDDIQUI
 COUNCILLOR WILSON

WHEREAS: On March 11, 2025, the City Council's Economic Development and University Relations Committee held a meeting to discuss issues surrounding commercial/retail buildings being left vacant and the impact they have on the community; and

WHEREAS: The City Solicitor informed the Committee that the City cannot issue additional taxes or fines to property owners whose properties are vacant; and

WHEREAS: The report provided to the Committee indicated that there are 27 storefronts that have been vacant for two to five years, and 23 vacant storefronts that have been vacant for five years or longer; and

WHEREAS: One property that has been vacant for over 10 years is the Harvard Square Movie Theater located at 10 Church Street, owned by Mr. Gerald Chan, who owns multiple properties around the city, several of which have been vacant for multiple years; and

WHEREAS: These vacant properties, particularly the Harvard Square Movie Theater, which will be 100 years old in 2026, have a negative impact on surrounding businesses and the community at large and at times can fall into disrepair, as is happening with the Harvard Square Movie Theater; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Council send a formal invitation to Mr. Gerald Chan to come before the Economic Development and University Relations Committee to answer questions and present his plans for the Harvard Square Movie Theater, as well as his other vacant properties in the City, so that the City Council and the community can better understand Mr. Chan's plans for these very important and long vacant properties.