



**Allegheny County Council**

**Legislative File Number 4313-08 (version 1)**

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An Ordinance amending the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 2, entitled "County Government Operations," Chapter 270, entitled "Real Estate Website," Section 270-2, entitled "Search capabilities," in order to establish search capabilities on the County's Real Estate Website for certain community development entities functioning within Allegheny County.

**WHEREAS**, Allegheny County originally provided for the creation of a Real Estate Website under the terms of Ordinance 58-03, enacted on November 25, 2003;

**WHEREAS**, under the original terms of Ordinance 58-03, the Real Estate Website provided the ability to search properties by owner name; and

**WHEREAS**, this name search capability was removed under the terms of Ordinance 48-07, in recognition of significant public safety concerns posed by permitting uncontrolled access to a database of property that could, in unscrupulous hands, provide a means of finding the home addresses of County residents, along with pictures of residences and floor plans; and

**WHEREAS**, subsequent to the enactment of Ordinance 48-07, entities conducting community development projects within Allegheny County have indicated that the ability to search properties by name provided an invaluable tool for them, insofar as it provided a simple and economical way for them to locate multiple properties owned by a single individual or entity for the purposes of acquiring properties for legitimate development purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, given the importance of community development within Allegheny County, it is the desire of Council to provide a means by which legitimate community development entities conducting development activities within Allegheny County can search properties by owner name;

***The Council of the County of Allegheny hereby enacts as follows:***

***SECTION 1.***

The Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 2, entitled "County Government Operations," Chapter 270, entitled "Real Estate Website," Section 270-2, entitled "Search capabilities," is hereby amended as follows:

**§ 270-2. Search capabilities.**

- A. The Allegheny County Real Estate Website shall have searching capabilities which shall include, but not be limited to, the ability to search by property address, block and lot number, street, and municipality.
- B. Upon request by any community development entity, the Department of Economic Development shall require such information or conduct such investigation as shall be necessary to ascertain that the requesting entity conducts legitimate community development activities within Allegheny County, and shall forward a written copy of its findings to the Office of Property Assessments within 30 days of the request date. In the event that the Department finds that a requesting community development entity does conduct legitimate community development activities within Allegheny County, and upon the provision of a written certification from the requesting entity that the information derived from the Real Estate Website will be used exclusively for community development purposes, the office of Property Assessments shall provide the ability to search properties by owner name to the requesting entity. The investigation, information gathering, and search activities authorized by this Subsection shall be completed and provided to the requesting entities at no cost to the requesting entities.
1. The Office of Property Assessments shall provide unique identifiers for each entity granted name search capabilities under the terms of this Subsection, and the use by any individual of information gathered from such name search capabilities for any purpose other than community development shall be guilty of a summary offense and, upon conviction, shall pay a fine not to exceed three hundred dollars (\$300.00).
2. For the purposes of this Subsection, any request for which the Department does not issue written findings within 30 days of the request date shall be deemed approved. The Department shall find that a requesting entity does not conduct legitimate community development activities within Allegheny County as a result of any entity's refusal to provide any information or permit any investigation by the Department at a time that allows for a final determination to be reached by the Department within 30 days of the entity's original request.

***SECTION 2. Severability. If any provision of this Ordinance shall be determined to be unlawful, invalid, void or unenforceable, then that provision shall be considered severable from the remaining provisions of this Ordinance which shall be in full force and effect.***

