

FOR PROPERTY, FACILITY, PROCUREMENT, AND BOARD TEAMS

Exterior Cleaning Budget Workbook

Build a defensible planning allowance from measured scope, condition, access, controls, and acceptance requirements - without relying on a universal square-foot rate or cleaning interval.

USE THIS TO	DO NOT USE THIS TO
Define the information every bidder should price; compare like-for-like scopes; document assumptions; set an approval path.	Predict a contractor's price; select a cleaning method before testing; diagnose a building; set legal, engineering, aviation, or environmental requirements.

2026 PLANNING EDITION

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PART 1 - DEFINE THE SCOPE

A budget starts with what is being priced

Floor area is not cleaning area. A preliminary facade estimate may use perimeter times height, but a real scope separates elevations, setbacks, parapets, towers, roofs, windows, flatwork, signs, fixtures, openings, excluded surfaces, and areas requiring another trade.

- 01** Record each surface system, coating, known repair, defect, contaminant, prior treatment, and manufacturer or designer requirement.
- 02** Measure included zones and identify openings, obstructions, setbacks, roof edges, courtyards, balconies, canopies, and ground interfaces.
- 03** State the desired observable result, viewing distance and lighting, permitted variation, excluded defects, and touch-up process.
- 04** Identify occupants, entrances, windows, air intakes, landscaping, vehicles, traffic, events, production, security, utilities, and emergency routes.
- 05** Require a representative test area before production pricing is treated as final when compatibility, production rate, or finish is uncertain.

PRELIMINARY TAKEOFF

ZONE	DIMENSIONS / QUANTITY	SURFACE + CONDITION	INCLUDE / EXCLUDE
Elevation A			
Elevation B			
Roof / upper structure			
Glass / frames			
Flatwork / other			

Planning formula: gross rectangular facade area = perimeter x height. Use it only as an early takeoff check; do not convert it to price without a project-specific rate and scope.

PART 2 - LEVEL THE BIDS

Compare complete work plans, not method labels

Drone-supported, lift, rope-descent, suspended-platform, scaffold, pole, and ground methods can produce different scopes. Ask every bidder to respond to the same matrix and identify conventional work that remains.

DECISION	BIDDER RESPONSE REQUIRED	OWNER REVIEW
Method by zone	Application and access method; equipment; hands-on detail or restoration	Does every included surface have a feasible method?
People + site	Crew positions; ground controls; traffic; occupants; falling-object and hose exposure	Do controls fit operations and emergency access?
Products + finish	Product, pressure, flow, dwell, rinse, test result, acceptance and exclusions	Are substrate and finish requirements matched?
Rules + records	Current credentials, insurance, permits, authorizations, SDS, plans and closeout	Are records current and tied to this project?
Environment	Water source; drains; overspray; containment, recovery, treatment and disposal	Who approves and documents the plan?
Schedule	Setup, testing, production, weather, cure, inspection, touch-up and teardown	Are dependencies and contingencies visible?
Price	Base scope, alternates, allowances, unit basis, assumptions, exclusions and change rules	Are bids actually like-for-like?

BUDGET RULE

Do not assume a drone eliminates lifts, traffic control, elevated work, closures, schedule days, insurance exposure, runoff controls, or documentation. Treat any claimed saving or performance difference as a project hypothesis until the bidder supplies a like-for-like basis.

PART 3 - BUILD THE ALLOWANCE

Make uncertainty visible in the budget

A useful planning allowance separates the defined base scope from unknowns and optional work. Replace each blank with a sourced estimate, approved allowance, or bidder response. Do not invent a unit rate.

BUDGET ELEMENT	BASIS / SOURCE	ALLOWANCE	OWNER
Base cleaning scope			
Access and mobilization			
Testing and mockups			
Occupied-site / traffic controls			
Protection and environmental controls			
Conventional detail / restoration			
Documentation and closeout			
Permits / owner requirements			
Contingency for defined unknowns			
Alternates			

CONDITION-BASED FOLLOW-UP

There is no universal cleaning cadence. Record post-work condition by surface and elevation, then inspect against an agreed appearance or performance trigger. Manufacturer guidance, exposure, moisture, shade, drainage, coatings, repairs, vegetation, traffic, salt, and airborne soil can change the interval.

SURFACE / ZONE	BASELINE DATE	TRIGGER	REVIEW OWNER

PART 4 - APPROVE THE PURCHASE

A budget line is not a service authorization

Before award, replace planning assumptions with the accepted proposal, current records, and owner approvals. Legal, engineering, environmental, preservation, aviation, traffic, risk, and procurement decisions stay with the responsible parties.

- 01** Confirm legal entity, assigned people, subcontractors, credentials, aircraft, insurance, endorsements, and owner onboarding requirements.
- 02** Approve measured scope, methods by zone, products, test result, finish standard, exclusions, owner responsibilities, and change control.
- 03** Approve airspace, property permission, access, people, traffic, weather, equipment, hose, emergency, security, and stop-work controls.
- 04** Approve labels, SDS, adjacent-material protection, water source, drainage, containment, recovery, treatment, disposal, and required records.
- 05** Confirm schedule dependencies, price validity, alternates, payment terms, warranties, documentation, inspection, acceptance, and closeout.

PASTE-READY PLANNING LINE

Exterior cleaning planning allowance for [property / zones], based on [takeoff or proposal date]. Includes [defined scope and controls]. Excludes [known exclusions]. Carries allowances for [defined unknowns]. Final method, schedule, price, credentials, permissions, and environmental controls require accepted project documents before authorization.

REQUEST A PROJECT-SPECIFIC REVIEW

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Submit the property address, surfaces, available photos or drawings, desired outcome, decision deadline, and known site requirements. Availability and all service terms are confirmed in writing for the project.