



Property Maintenance

Residential Rental Properties

Overview

- Why look at rental housing?
- Who has come before us and how did they deal with it?
- What are the potential outcomes?
- What do we need to accomplish this program?
- How does Council want us to proceed?





Why are we reviewing housing rental code?

- Council has made this a priority.
 - 2019 Council Goal: Quality neighborhoods with safe and habitable residential homes.
- Recent changes in State law requires notification on ‘zombie’ housing.
- Code enforcement.
 - Complaint based rather than pro-active.
- Lack of buildable lands for new subdivisions.
- And then there are the numbers:

2344 rental units in Kelso

A rental rate of 53%

Washington State rentals are 36%*

National average is 31%*

Washington State vacancy rates less than 5% since 2012*

Vacancy rates in Cowlitz County are 1.3%



*US Census 4th quarter 2018



Community Programs Reviewed



"Progress - Pride - Prosperity"



What others have done

Policing/safety focus

- Auburn
- Sequim
- Pasco

Highlights include:

- Primarily focused on exterior.
- Auburn tied the license to police calls.
- Minimal or no inspections.
- Sequim includes commercially owned rentals.

Comprehensive (policing/safety/code enforcement/building codes/property maintenance)

- Lakewood
- Toppenish
- Mountlake Terrace

Highlights include:

- Inspections every 3 to 5 years.
- Interior and exterior inspections.
- Annual business license.
- Owners have the right to hire an independent inspector that meets City approved qualifications.





Potential Positive Outcomes





- New investment in rental housing.
- Improved neighborhood appearance and aesthetics.
- Higher standard of living.
- Increase in assessed property values.
- Reduction in tenant turnover resulting in neighborhood stability.
- Reduction in crime and emergency service calls.
- Overall increase in median income for City residents.

**What do we
need to
accomplish this
program?**



Program considerations

- **What we have:**

- A certified property maintenance code official that can follow up on more egregious issues.
- State regulations that support rental housing programs.
- C2FR is willing to provide inspection services.
- Software system that can support our efforts for licensing and permitting.



- **What we lack:**

- Direction from Council on this issue.
- Codes that allow us to perform the task.
- A clear and workable program.
- Administrative staff to support the work.





What we need from Council

Direction.

As a suggestion, do you want us to:

- Come forward with a complete proposal including code and program guidance.
- Create a workplan for outlining the public process, code development, and administrative guidelines.
- Table the topic until a later date.
- Other ideas???





Questions?