

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

TO: HOUSING AUTHORITY  
FROM: CARMELITA HOWARD  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
SUBJECT: PROPOSED FEE BASED RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

AGENDA ACTION: STUDY SESSION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Housing and Community Services Department that the City Council hold a study session to receive a presentation on a proposed fee-based Rental Inspection Program.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to present various options for a fee-based Rental Inspection Program as part of the Tier 1 housing goals to improve the quality of the rental housing stock. Outreach has been made with stakeholders to obtain feedback and recommendations for a successful rental inspection program. Considerations and feedback with California Apartment Association (CAA), North Bay Association of Realtors (NORBAR), tenant advocacy groups, and community organizations will be included in the study session. Subject to Council direction, staff will return in November with a draft ordinance for consideration and potential adoption

BACKGROUND

1. The Council of the City of Santa Rosa adopted a comprehensive housing strategy as part of its Tier 1 housing goals. A component of the housing strategy is to adopt a local ordinance that safeguards the health and safety of all rental units.
2. Given the increased housing cost burden faced by many Santa Rosa residents exacerbated by the 2017 wildfires, and complaints received regarding sub-standard conditions of rental units, Council expressed an interest in developing a rental inspection program as part of the sixteen specific deliverables of the housing strategy to be completed by 2023.
3. The proposed Rental Inspection Program was first introduced to Council at a Study Session on April 5, 2016 during a Code Enforcement presentation as a

tool to improve the quality of the rental housing stock and create a policy that provides safe, decent and sanitary housing for all rental units in Santa Rosa.

## ANALYSIS

1. Based on the US Census 2017, American Community Survey, Santa Rosa has an estimated 67,527 housing units, 30,328 of which are occupied by renters. From July of 2018 to June of 2019, the Code Enforcement Division received 213 complaints with substandard housing component received for the fiscal year 2018/2019. The NRP program inspected 1000 units and 700 units had health and safety violations.
2. Outreach was held with the rental property and real estate owners' groups, tenant advocates and different community organizations to seek input and recommendations of a successful program.
3. Based on the feedback and suggestions from the outreach completed to stakeholders, Council will be presented with options on the different components of the rental inspection program. The component options to be discussed will be the following: registration, inspection of different housing types, exemptions, self-certification, inspection standards, and processes, enforcement, amnesty program, outreach and education of the program. Recommendations from stakeholders regarding alternatives to the rental program will also be presented to Council for consideration. A timeline of the proposed rental inspection program will be provided.
4. Staff will be seeking direction on Council's interest to advance the proposed Program. Subject to Council direction staff will return in November with a draft ordinance for consideration and potential adoption.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The study session is for information only and no action is being taken, therefore, there is no fiscal impact at this time.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project.

## BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

None

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