



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: December 12, 2022

In Control: Planning and Community Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Development Services Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Michael Shannon

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Status report on the Proactive Apartment Inspections Task Force and development of potential code changes to address violations at multi-family residential properties.

SUMMARY:

In October 2022, the Development Services Department (DSD) created a proactive apartment inspection task force and has hosted six public meetings with the group along with the opportunity for public comments at each meeting. DSD has received two unique proposals from the group which have set the framework of discussion for defining a “bad actor” however, discussions and development of potential code changes and the creation of a “Bad Actor” Apartment Registration Program are ongoing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Apartment complexes present a unique and challenging situation when owners fail to meet the City's minimum property maintenance standards and safety codes because of the negative impacts

to health and quality of life to multiple tenants and families. This summer, there were two separate apartment complexes with significant property maintenance code violations: Colinas at Medical formerly known as Seven Oaks (Council District 7) and Wurzbach Manor (Council District 8). The City's Development Services Department (DSD) Code Enforcement team responded to the calls for service and have issued notices as well as citations to bring the properties into compliance. Despite these efforts, the health and safety of residents were negatively impacted, and proactive inspections have been requested, moving forward, to mitigate the presence of similar conditions at other apartment complexes.

The cases this summer highlighted the need to review options to address proactive inspections at multi-family residential properties and possibly create a “Bad Actor” Apartment Registration Program. DSD presented three options at the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC) meeting on August 25, 2022 to begin addressing proactive inspections of apartment communities and were asked to further brief the Committee on September 22, 2022. At the September meeting, PCDC recommended DSD move forward with the creation of a stakeholder group to discuss and develop potential code changes and the creation of a “Bad Actor” Apartment Registration Program. Furthermore, PCDC recommended DSD provide an update to the Committee in December 2022.

In October 2022, DSD created a proactive apartment inspection task force that is intended to be balanced with five renters or renter advocates and five industry professionals for a total of 10 members and two alternates. Since October, DSD has hosted six public meetings with the stakeholder group and has allowed for public comments at each meeting. DSD will also host two public comment meetings in December, in person and virtual. DSD has received two unique proposals from the group which have set the framework of discussion for defining a “bad actor” however, discussions and development of potential code changes and the creation of a “Bad Actor” Apartment Registration Program are ongoing.

Currently, Code Enforcement reactively responds to calls related to apartment property maintenance violations. Code Enforcement inspects these locations to determine whether violations exist and directs owners to correct the property maintenance violations per the City’s notice and citation procedures. DSD also has a Multi-Tenant Inspection (MTI) team that assists with challenging code enforcement cases and inspects apartment complexes with significant property maintenance violations. The MTI team is dispatched when multiple code violations are noted in an apartment complex to quickly identify and facilitate the resolution of code violations.

The City does have a few proactive inspection programs in place to enforce code compliance. The Boarding Home and Mobile Living Park Teams are dedicated to proactively ensuring the living conditions for some of our City’s most vulnerable residents. Additionally, the Dangerous Assessment Response Team (DART) is a proactive unit that investigates nuisance properties with a two-year documented code and/or criminal history.

ISSUE:

DSD’s Code Enforcement team currently responds reactively to calls related to apartment property maintenance violations. The task force, comprised of renters or renter advocates and industry

professionals, will assist the City with developing potential code changes to address violations at multi-family residential properties and possible creation of a Bad Actor Apartment Registration Program. The increase in proactive inspections is expected to ensure compliance with City codes and increase the quality of life for tenants who reside at apartment complexes.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the task force continue to discuss and develop potential code changes and possible creation of a Bad Actor Apartment Registration Program.