



**AGENDA**  
**CITY OF BELTON, MISSOURI**  
**CODE ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2023 - 6:00 P.M.**  
**CITY HALL ANNEX, 520 MAIN STREET**

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**I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A.** Review of Minutes from November 10, 2022 meeting.

**B.** Review of proposed Rental Inspection Program. After review and discussion, the Committee may make a motion and vote on a recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council on the proposed Program. ***(Please note that while this meeting is open to the public, the Committee will not hold a public hearing or take any public comments. Opportunity for public comment will be held at a future Planning Commission meeting and will be noticed in advance).***

**IV. NEXT MEETING DATE:** To be determined

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

*A quorum of the City Council may be in attendance; however, no City Council votes will be taken.*

**Minutes of Meeting  
Code Enforcement Advisory Committee  
City Hall Annex, 520 Main Street  
November 10, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Matt Wright called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

*Committee:* Councilmember Rob Powell, Dennis Hull, Steve Hackett, Wanda Thompson, Rosemary Howard, Keith Richardson, Robert Miller, and Kerry White

*Absent:* Dawn Thomas

*Staff:* Matt Wright, Planning and Building Director; Madison Smith, Development Technician; Demetrius Ramirez, Chief Building Official; and Carla Wallen, HR Director

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Committee members introduced themselves and discussed how long they have been serving on the committee.

**REVIEW OF BYLAWS**

The bylaws were established in 2012 when the Code Enforcement Advisory Committee was first formed. A copy of the bylaws is included in the agenda packet. Matt Wright gave a brief overview of the purpose, structure, and conduct of the committee. The standards are included in the bylaws. The purpose of the committee is to assist with the policy and process development of Code Enforcement related to policies, procedures, and interpretations of the code. The committee shall foster and encourage improvements of the organization and services and may make recommendations to staff and City Council regarding those improvements. Each member is encouraged to participate and assist staff in developing solutions to policies.

Councilmember Powell asked if there is a Chairman or Vice Chairman of the committee. Matt Wright explained committees do not typically have a Chairman or Vice Chairman.

**ONLINE CODE COMPLAINTS PROCESS AND TRACKING SPREADSHEET**

Staff receives most of their code complaints via an online portal on the website. Most of those citizens call for an update after submitting a complaint. Staff has created an online complaint process and tracking spreadsheet. Citizens who report a code violation can go on the website and track the status of their complaint. When a complaint is submitted, it auto generates a receipt number; staff then uses that receipt number to track the complaint. An example of the tracking spreadsheet is included in the agenda packet. Staff is encouraging residents to utilize the online complaint tracker. The tracker is updated on a daily basis.

The Committee expressed that a generated summary of the complaint submitted would be a nice thing to add to give to the complaint filer to allow them to better track their complaint. Mr. Wright stated this is something that could be added once a new software system is implemented.

**UPCOMING DISCUSSION TOPICS**

There were topics of discussion brought up during the meeting. The following includes a summary of some of the items discussed:

- The code enforcement abatement flowchart
- The abatement process and notifying property owners
- Customer service from the abatement contractors
- The mailing process for code violation notices
- Concerns of inconsistencies in enforcement
- Hiring of a Code Enforcement Secretary
- Complaint statistics
- The goals of the Committee
- Ribbon driveways

Staff is working on a proposed rental inspection program for consideration. There will be a community meeting held in December to present the program to the public, answer questions, and gather feedback from residents and landlords. Staff is also working on a survey for the community to take regarding the proposed rental inspection program to determine where concerns exist or improvements could be made. Items will be brought to the Committee for discussion.

Staff has received several concerns about the maintenance of drainage and detention areas. Currently, the code does require that those areas be maintained to the same standard as a lawn. However, there are some drainage and detention areas that are intended to be more natural in appearance. In some cases, due to the terrain, trying to maintain that as a lawn can be very difficult and hazardous. Staff has been researching the codes in other communities to see how they address exceptions to that code. Staff will draft an ordinance for review and consideration by the Committee.

Lastly, staff has seen an increase in complaints about dead trees throughout the community. Several cities in the metro do have dead tree ordinances that require those to be removed by the property owner(s). Staff has been researching that as well for potential consideration. Currently, we do not have anything in our Property Maintenance Code that would require the removal of dead trees.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

The bylaws state the Committee is supposed to meet at 6:30 P.M. on the first Wednesday of odd numbered months. Staff would like to discuss changing the meeting schedule. If Thursdays at 6:00 P.M. work well for the Committee, staff would like to keep that as the meeting day.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** To Be Determined

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Matt Wright adjourned the meeting at 6:48 P.M.



**Code Enforcement Advisory Committee**  
**Proposed Rental Inspection Program**  
**February 23, 2023**

The following is a summary of the proposed Rental Inspection Program, including revisions that have been made since the community meeting that was held on January 19, 2023.

Program purpose:       Protect the general health, welfare, and safety of residents residing in rental dwellings.

Approximately 50 citizens attended the community meeting on January 19, 2023, including landlords and tenants. ***The presentation provided at the community meeting has been attached for reference.*** Staff has arrived at the revised proposal based on the following feedback that was received based on the community meeting and the community survey:

- Both landlords and tenants were concerned about requiring inspections while a unit was occupied. Tenants had privacy concerns, while landlords were concerned about the challenges of getting their tenants to comply.
- Landlords with fewer units or units that were single-family, duplexes, and fourplexes thought that the program favored larger apartment complexes. Several landlords expressed that either all units should be inspected or none at all.
- There were concerns about the costs of inspections, especially through a third-party inspector, and that those costs would be passed on to tenants.
- Landlords and tenants both expressed the need to have a well defined list of items that would be inspected.

A community survey was open between December 20, 2022 and January 29, 2023, during which 102 responses were received. The survey questions were based on the original rental inspection program proposal. The following is a summary of responses:

- Approximately 80% of respondents were somewhat or very familiar with rental inspection programs.
- Two-thirds of respondents were aware that the City requires landlord business licenses.
- 41 respondents were landlords; 29 were homeowners; and 21 were tenants. The remaining 11 respondents were a mix of business owners and employees.
- 52% of respondents thought that the original proposal for inspections every two (2) years was too frequent, with 36% responding that it was the right amount of time, and 12% responding that inspections should be conducting more frequently.
- 63% of respondents thought that the original proposal for third-party inspections was preferred. 73% of landlords preferred third-party inspectors, while 71% of tenants and 69% of homeowners preferred City staff conduct inspections.
- 46% of respondents thought that all units should be inspected and 23% of respondents thought that fewer units should be inspected than what was originally proposed. 67% of tenants wanted all units inspected, 52% of homeowners wanted all units inspected, and 34% of landlords wanted all units inspected.

- 58% of respondents thought that the list of items proposed to be inspected was fair, with 30% responding that fewer items should be inspected and 12% responding that they would like to see additional items inspected.

Based on community feedback, several revisions have been made to the original proposed rental inspection program that was posted in December 2022, which was built off of the proposed program from 2019. Staff believes that these revisions address the most significant concerns expressed by both landlords and tenants at the community meeting and through the survey results.

Topic	Original Proposal	Revised Proposal
Inspection Frequency	Every two (2) years	Between tenants (when unit is unoccupied)
Inspector	Qualified third party inspector	City staff (Planning & Building Dept.)
Number of units to be inspected	All detached and attached units with 4 or fewer units, 1 unit for 5-10 attached units, and 10% of units for buildings with more than 10 units	All rental dwelling units
Items to be inspected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No exposed electrical wires/open electrical and GFCIs tested within 6' of water source</li> <li>• Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in working order</li> <li>• Address numbers visible on exterior</li> <li>• Interior and exterior handrails, guardrails, stairs, and decks are secure</li> <li>• Plumbing fixtures maintained in working order</li> <li>• Safe, continuous, and unobstructed egress between unit and public right-of-way</li> <li>• Furnaces and water heaters properly installed and operational</li> <li>• Free of insect and/or rodent infestation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No exposed electrical wires/open electrical and GFCIs tested within 6' of water source</li> <li>• Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in working order</li> <li>• Address numbers visible on exterior</li> <li>• Interior and exterior handrails, guardrails, stairs, and decks are secure</li> <li>• Plumbing fixtures maintained in working order</li> <li>• Safe, continuous, and unobstructed egress between unit and public right-of-way</li> <li>• Furnaces and water heaters properly installed and operational</li> <li>• <del>Free of insect and/or rodent infestation</del></li> <li>• Exterior doors and windows in working order (open/shut)</li> </ul>

Other items that are proposed to be included in the program:

- Units less than 5 years old (based on when unit was completed) will not require an inspection.
- Property taxes must be paid on the property before an inspection will be approved.
- If an inspection fails, a reinspection must be called in within fourteen (14) days.

Items still in review and will be based on final recommendations and decisions from the Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council:

- Some modifications to the landlord business license process will likely be required, including possible changes to licensing fees.
- Inspection fees have not been determined, though the goal is to keep fees to a minimum, particularly for initial inspections as an incentive for landlords and tenants to pre-inspect their units to ensure compliance with the program.

**Next steps:**

**The CEAC is tasked with reviewing the program and providing any feedback or recommendations to staff to take to the Planning Commission and City Council.**

***PROPOSED***  
***RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM***

COMMUNITY MEETING PRESENTATION

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 2023



# ***HISTORY & PURPOSE***

- A Rental Inspection Program was proposed in 2019.
- The City Council at the time chose to only proceed with a Rental/Landlord Licensing requirement.
- The number of rental units has increased significantly in Belton, with over 1,000 units that are planned or anticipated to be rentals permitted over the past 3 years.
- The purpose of a rental inspection program is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents in rental dwelling units.
- ***The proposed program is based off of the proposed 2019 program and is subject to change based on community feedback, best practices from other communities in the metro area, recommendations of the Code Enforcement Advisory Committee, and final decisions from the City Council.***

# ***PROPOSED PROGRAM***

- Inspections required every 2 years.
- Inspections will be performed by third party inspectors (qualifications to be reviewed by City staff through Request for Qualifications process).
- Inspections required for all units and common areas, except for larger buildings (5+ units), which will require 1 unit to be inspected for buildings with 5-10 units, and 10% of units in buildings with more than 10 units.
- There is a list of 9 general categories of items to be inspected, a majority of which are for safety purposes.
- If an inspection fails, the item(s) must be corrected and re-inspected before occupancy of the unit.

# *COMMUNITY COMPARISONS*

- The proposed program mostly closely aligns with **INDEPENDENCE'S** program, established in 2017.
- Other communities in the metro with similar programs, include:
  - **GRANDVIEW**
  - **HARRISONVILLE**
  - **NORTH KANSAS CITY**
  - **RAYTOWN**
- Based on a review of other programs, Belton's proposed program includes inspections of common items of concern and is generally interior focused. Most exterior items can already be addressed through the Property Maintenance Code.

# *ITEMS STILL IN REVIEW*

City staff is still reviewing the following items and will have more details in the future:

- Rental inspection fees  
(this will largely depend on who will conduct inspections)
- Inspections for MHDC or HUD-supported properties
- Any other changes to landlord licensing/registration and associated fees

# ***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION***

- If you haven't done so already, please take the online community survey. The survey closes Sunday, January 29, 2023.
- Comment cards have been provided this evening.
- If you would like to receive updates on the program, please leave your email address on the sign-in sheet. Status updates will be emailed out periodically as program details evolve.
- The items proposed are not finalized and subject to change. Our goal is to develop a program that best fits the community and balances the interest of all.

# ***NEXT STEPS***

- Staff will prepare a draft of the program and ordinance.
- The Code Enforcement Advisory Committee will review and make a recommendation (with any modifications) to the City Council.
- The City Council will review and consider the program and ordinance.
- If adopted, the program is projected to be effective October 1, 2023.
- Current licenses must be renewed by September 30, 2023, therefore, all current licenses that are renewed on time will not be subject to inspection requirements until the 2024 renewal year.

# ***THANK YOU!***

Thank you for attending this evening's meeting!



Community Survey



Rental Inspection Handout