



RESOLUTION NO. 41239

1 BY REQUEST OF MAYOR WOODARDS, DEPUTY MAYOR WALKER, AND
2 COUNCIL MEMBERS HINES AND USHKA

3 A RESOLUTION relating to the Rental Housing Code; directing the City Manager
4 to conduct additional research and outreach on items related to the Rental
5 Housing Code for discussion at the Community Vitality and Safety
6 Committee, and report back to the City Council by the end of 2023 on
7 available data and data gaps, strategies for addressing data gaps, and
8 options for implementing additional protections; and include in the
9 research any amendments that are not adopted as a part of Ordinance
10 No. 28894 as items to be researched as a part of this resolution.

11 WHEREAS over the last five years of administering the Rental Housing
12 Code ("RHC"), research and ongoing engagement with the RHC Stakeholder
13 Advisory Group ("Group"), targeted community outreach efforts conducted in
14 the Spring of 2023, and a year of engagement with the City Council Community
15 Vitality and Safety ("CVS") Committee, recommendations meant to further
16 strengthen the RHC were developed to bring to the City Council, and

17 WHEREAS over the course of May 2023, City Council sponsors including
18 Mayor Woodards, Deputy Mayor Walker, and Council Members Hines and Ushka
19 met with signature gatherers to better understand a community proposal that will
20 be on the November ballot, and

21 WHEREAS following these meetings, sponsors worked with RHC staff to
22 further develop the protections that were shared with the CVS Committee on May
23 25th, and with the full City Council on June 13th and 20th; the City Council
24 considered Ordinance No. 28894 at first reading on June 27, 2023, that contains the
25 sponsors' recommendations, and
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1 WHEREAS during the review of RHC changes, community stakeholders,
2 City Council members and staff identified additional opportunities to strengthen
3 the RHC to serve the community, and the sponsors recognize these topics are
4 nuanced and have the potential to have harmful unintended consequences on
5 the rental housing market and broader community, and
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7 WHEREAS thorough policy development warrants more research and
8 stakeholder engagement to ensure that what is ultimately adopted policy-wise is
9 not only legally enforceable, but will also do as much as possible to protect tenants
10 while avoiding adverse community-wide impacts in an already challenging housing
11 market, and
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13 WHEREAS the importance of continuing work on the RHC in a meaningful
14 way led the sponsors to bring this companion resolution to Ordinance No. 28894
15 to ensure that important questions raised during the outreach process are
16 thoroughly researched and solutions brought back to the entire City Council on a
17 timeline that shows serious dedication to addressing the issues of housing in the
18 City, and
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20 WHEREAS the research questions were captured as part of the RHC
21 comparison chart and subsequent conversations by the sponsors, and these
22 additional topics and questions will be researched by staff, with additional
23 information and options for implementing additional protections to be brought
24 back to the City Council, and
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WHEREAS the topics are based on the following categories considered during the outreach process:

General topics

- 1) Can the City require digital notices and tenant information packets rather than printed in some or all cases while still ensuring proper notice to tenants to cut down on costs to housing providers;
- 2) What are the demographics of housing providers in the City, including income, age, ethnicity, gender, those with limited English-speaking ability, veteran or current military status, female head of household, or differently abled;
- 3) What are the demographics of renters in the City, including income, those defined as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE), age, ethnicity, gender, those with limited English-speaking ability, veteran or current military status, female head of household, or differently abled;
- 4) Research what other communities are doing to regulate out of state/out of city housing providers, and what communities are doing to incentivize local housing providers to build and/or maintain local rental units; and
- 5) Provide options for defining low-income under the RHC and how that can be implemented throughout the code, including provisions for reconsidering tenants' eligibility for certain programs when they lose their job or income level changes during a lease.



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Screening criteria

Research what other communities are doing when it comes to addressing landlord limitations on dog breeds in their units if they allow pets, and alternative methods that may be used to limit pets other than breed.

Fees and deposit standards

- 1) Research what other communities are doing to limit monthly fees associated with pets, and what current housing providers in the City charge for pets at their properties;
- 2) Determine if the City should adopt protections that limit certain move-in fees, including whether the City should limit move-in fees that exceed the first month's rent; and define allowable/prohibited move-in fees including "last month's rent"; and
- 3) Define and determine which refundable deposits are allowable/prohibited at move-in, and provide options on how additional deposits can be utilized to mitigate risks of housing providers renting to higher risk tenants.

Business license requirement

Through the annual business license and/or through an annual survey, what information should be asked of housing providers to collect usable data? For example, rental rates across landlord's portfolio, and rent increases implemented that year.



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Relocation assistance

Provide options for implementing an economic displacement relocation program for low-income tenants that provides financial assistance when their rent increases beyond a certain level in a year, including what proportion the City/landlord each pay, how much assistance is provided, how a tenant applies, and other questions required for implementation.

Eviction protections

What specific concerns do tenants have around no-cause evictions and termination of tenancy during cold weather or school year months for certain low income/fixed income tenants that are not covered by just cause eviction protections?

Penalties and enforcement

- 1) What funding sources can support relocation assistance, or support programs for smaller housing providers? For example, can penalties assessed by the RHC, or rental business license funding be utilized;
- 2) Determine if the RHC allows penalties assessed by the City to be given to the tenant if the tenant was due relocation assistance under current code and the landlord did not comply, and whether this source of funding should be used to support rental/relocation assistance or incentives for housing providers; and
- 3) Research options for penalizing scammers who falsely list rental properties who are not the property owner and determine if these



penalties can and/or should be used to fund financial crimes

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enforcement, and

WHEREAS the sponsors recommend adoption of this companion resolution to prioritize research into additional questions that were not considered as part of Ordinance No. 28894 amending the Tacoma Municipal Code, Chapter 1.95, "Rental Housing Code"; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That the City Manager is hereby directed to conduct additional research and outreach on items related to the Rental Housing Code for discussion at the Community Vitality and Safety Committee, and report back to the City Council by the end of 2023 on available data and data gaps, strategies for addressing data gaps, and options for implementing additional protections; and include in the research any amendments that are not adopted as a part of Ordinance No. 28894 as items to be researched as a part of this resolution.

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney