



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Linda Stewart, Director, Neighborhood and Community Services Department
COPY: Community Vitality and Safety Committee
Will Suarez, Committee Executive Liaison
PRESENTER: ChiQuata Elder, Office of Equity and Human Rights
Debra Casparian, City Attorney's Office
SUBJECT: Tenant Rights
DATE: June 22, 2018

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Request for Ordinance

SUMMARY:

On April 24, 2018, the City Council passed Resolution Number 39998. The Resolution directs the City Manager to review related City policies, have staff examine options for expanding tenants' rights while not doing undue harm to landlords, and provide information and options relating to tenants' rights for discussion by the Community Vitality and Safety Committee.

BACKGROUND:

The City Manager, through City Staff, conducted research and offered a range of tenant protections to the Community Vitality and Safety Committee on May 10, 2018. The Committee requested staff to conduct outreach to the community, and draft amendments to the current Tenant Rights code, Tacoma Municipal Code 1.95.

ISSUE:

The City, and the community, have been faced with rising rents and increased numbers in those experiencing homelessness. One way to give tenants extra protections is to implement some local rental agreement regulations.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Committee could choose not to forward these amendments on to the full Council. This could mean, at least, that the current 90-day notice to vacate requirement will sunset in September of this year. If the other rental agreement options are not considered, that means tenants within the City will have only the current protections offered by state law, specifically the Washington Residential Landlord Tenant Act, RCW 59.18.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Enforcement costs will be calculated and included in Council Action Memorandum.

RECOMMENDATION:

City staff are recommending the Committee direct this ordinance to go to the full Council for review and approval. The proposed Tenant Rights amendments will help to further protect tenants and guide landlords on what needs to be included in rental agreements.