

**CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS**  
**STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** September 4, 2007  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** George Chavez, City Building Official *GC*  
David Yelton, Building Inspection Manager  
**Subject:** Proposed Rental Housing Inspection Program  
**Attachments:** Staff Report Dated November 7, 2006

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**INTRODUCTION**

This memo is intended to provide an update to the City Council on the progress of the proposed Rental Housing Inspection Program and seek feedback and direction with regard to moving forward with an ordinance including the proposed changes.

**DISCUSSION**

Last November, the department presented the City Council a progress report on the proposed systematic Rental Housing Inspection program (Staff Report Attached). The proposed program mimicked established programs found locally and throughout the State. In an effort to properly shape the program, staff conducted multiple public outreach presentations which included invitations to:

- Apartment Owners Association
- Rent Control Association
- Realtors
- Homeowners Associations
- The Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee

Participation and feedback from the public outreach presentations varied. The apartment owners association provided the most feedback based on experiences they have had with other inspection programs. This particular meeting was held in February and resulted in gaining important perspectives from the property owners. Unfortunately,

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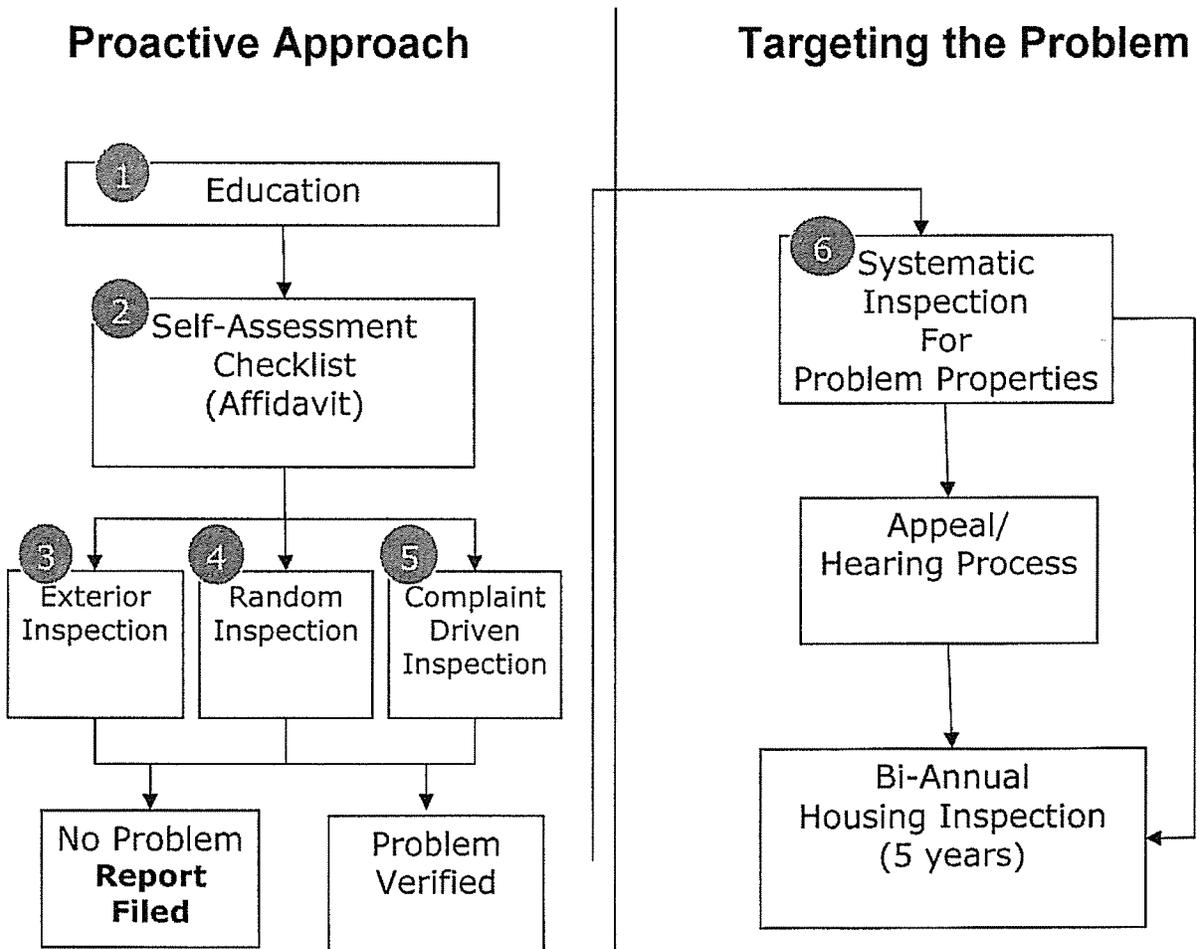
only two members of the public showed up at the outreach meeting arranged for tenants and the homeowners groups.

In summary, public comments and concerns voiced are as follows:

- Concerns with **Cost**
- Equity (good buildings should not need systematic inspections)
- Tenant's **privacy**
- Added Bureaucracy
- Negative experience with other programs
- Positive nature of **Self Assessments**
- Education for Landlords & Managers is key

As a result of comments and concerns raised at public outreach meetings, **staff went back and reshaped the proposed program** addressing concerns raised, while still keeping in mind the goal of preserving and maintaining the City's aging rental housing stock to standards Beverly Hills residents expect.

**Instead of systematically inspecting** the interiors and exteriors of the over 8700 units, the revised proposal relies on a unique approach which focuses on the following Six elements:



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1. **Education-** Owners and Managers will be provided checklists along with information related to State Housing Codes and Municipal Code standards so there is a clear understanding of program expectations.
2. **Self-Assessment-** Owners or managers will simply fill out a self-assessment checklist and submit it to the department on an annual basis. Included on this checklist will be questions related to the interior and exterior of the building including the Fire Department requirements. Owners will be required to sign an affidavit.
3. **Exterior Inspections-** Staff will inspect the exterior of all multi-family properties and verify conditions submitted on the checklists. (The Fire Department currently inspects apartment buildings with 3 or more units).
4. **Random Interior Inspections-** A small percentage of the units city-wide will be inspected to verify the interior conditions stated on the checklist. This will only be done by invitation of the tenant unless a hazardous condition is observed.
5. **Complaint Driven Inspections-** Staff will continue to respond to tenant complaints.
6. **Systematic Inspections-** If a building is verified to be substandard and is not repaired in a reasonable amount of time, it will be placed on a mandatory systematic inspection program. This measure includes a process to allow a property owner an opportunity to appeal their case to an independent hearing officer. In an effort to reduce ongoing costs, workload associated with enforcement in these cases will be outsourced to a third-party inspection company with all costs borne by the owner of the problem property.

In summary, the proposed Rental Housing Inspection Program will proactively enforce existing property maintenance and Housing & Fire Codes without creating new codes. Efficiencies will be realized by consolidating efforts by the Fire Department and Building and Safety Division. Building and Fire inspections and checklists will be consolidated eliminating duplicate efforts. These efforts will free up Fire Department staff allowing them to focus on other areas of Public Safety getting involved only when necessary.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

To establish a program based on the above recommendations, it is estimated that \$200,000 in staffing costs will be necessary to support this program. This is \$390,000 less than the program originally proposed last year. Verified substandard properties will be charged separately and directly for the enforcement time and efforts spent on them.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends an ordinance be developed establishing a Rental Housing Inspection Program.

Vince Bertoni  
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 Approved By