



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM:
Vice Mayor Chappie Jones

SUBJECT: Extension of the Residential Eviction Moratorium, Consideration of a Rent Freeze and Exploration of Solutions for the Rental Community Impacted by COVID-19

DATE: April 13, 2020

Approved

Date 4/13/2020

RECOMMENDATION

- a) Accept Staff Recommendation A.
- b) Modify Staff Recommendation B to direct the City Attorney to include in the Urgency Ordinance and Companion Ordinance the following:
 - 1) a rent freeze on all new rent increases for rent stabilized apartments and mobile homes. The timeline for the rent freeze shall run parallel to the eviction moratorium and rent repayment period.
 - 2) a landlord rent reduction incentive that ensures any temporary rent reduction during the COVID-19 crisis does not impact “base rent” for future rent increase consideration for rent stabilized apartments.
 - 3) a fee waiver for all Apartment Rent Ordinance (ARO) late fees. Additionally, a fee waiver for building/repair maintenance permit fees for rental properties under 20 units.
- c) Consider a Council led task force to initiate a convening of stakeholders representing landlords and tenants to explore alternative solutions to address the needs of our rental community impacted by COVID-19. The task force could be modeled after the District 1 facilitated Small Business Advisory Task Force.

d) Accept item 4 in Councilmember Carrasco's Memorandum, dated April 10, 2020, to modify the eviction moratorium to protect tenants from landlord harassment, retaliation, or discrimination due to loss of income or inability to pay as a result of the pandemic.

BACKGROUND

I appreciate the diligence of the City Staff and my Council Colleagues for working thoughtfully and quickly to address the evolving needs of our residents during this unprecedented time. I acknowledge that the vast majority of landlords have no intention of increasing rents during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, like everything else in life, there are those few bad actors who choose to do the wrong thing at the wrong time. For the landlords who are doing their part to assist their tenants during their financial struggles, we want to provide them with additional incentives. I want to incentivize them to not just freeze their rents, but to lower them. By enacting a landlord rent reduction incentive, we can provide encouragement for landlords to temporarily lower rents while this crisis continues. This program is not meant to apply to landlords who may lower rents due to market conditions, but solely those who intend to lessen the financial hardship of their tenants during the time of this crisis.

I bring forth this memorandum to make clear that the intention of a "rent freeze" is not to disregard the weight that many landlords and small property owners feel during this crisis. Including these three items in today's Council direction to the City Attorney will offer a level of certainty and serve as a balanced approach for our landlord and tenant communities. We are in this crisis together and we must be comprehensive and thoughtful in our approach to protecting our residents and businesses.

I would also like to thank Councilmember Carrasco for her thoughtful memorandum dated April 10, 2020. Explicitly defending tenants from any harassment that may ensue from this pandemic is a protection we as the Council should support.

The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.