

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
DES MOINES, IOWA

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 96-479  
NOVEMBER 18, 1996 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
MULTI-FAMILY UNIT RECYCLING	RESOLUTION ◆ ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	JAMES GRANT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**SYNOPSIS —**

Staff has prepared an ordinance amendment which would require that owners of rental properties with five or more units provide a recycling program for their tenants. The ordinance would be enforced by the Housing Safety Division as part of the routine housing inspection efforts.

Similar ordinances have already been enacted in several Des Moines suburbs.

**FISCAL IMPACT —**

N/A

**RECOMMENDATION —**

Approval.

**BACKGROUND —**

At the April 15, 1996 City Council meeting, staff was directed, by Roll Call No. 96-1384, to provide a report by July, 1996 on the status of the City's recycling efforts, particularly as they related to the provision of recycling opportunities for tenants of rental properties. Staff was also directed to work with the Metro Waste Authority to develop an ordinance which would require that owners of Multi-Family Unit Rental (MFUR) properties provide recycling programs for their tenants.

Council was provided with the status report on June 5, 1996; efforts to create the MFUR ordinance were delayed until this time due to the reorganization of the Housing Safety Division.

The proposed ordinance amendment will address two issues:

1. Owners of rental properties containing five or more units will be required to provide a recycling program for their tenants in conjunction with their normal solid waste collection services. Owners will not be required to enforce the provisions of this ordinance and will not be held accountable for their tenants' actions in this regard.

Owners of properties with up to 10 units who can demonstrate that they do not have sufficient property to accommodate additional solid waste containers can apply to the Community Development Director for a variance from the ordinance's requirements.

2. Current code requirements stipulate mandatory plastics recycling by all City residents. This provision was included in the code at a time when the City was contractually obligated to provide plastics to Blueberry

Recycling. As this obligation no longer exists, and the requirement is nearly impossible to enforce, staff recommends that it be deleted from the ordinance.

A letter was sent to owners of all certified rental properties in Des Moines informing them of the proposed ordinance amendment, and inviting them to one of two informational meetings which staff held on October 15 and 16 to discuss the ordinance and answer questions. Of the 550 owners who were notified of the meetings, a total of 31 people attended. Of greatest concern was the degree of responsibility owners would have to insure that tenants participated in the recycling program. As explained above, owners would not be required to force participation, only to insure that a recycling program is provided.