

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**02-608**

**AGENDA:**

NOVEMBER 18, 2002

**SUBJECT:**

RENTAL HOUSING  
CODE FEES AND  
LENGTH OF  
CERTIFICATE

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION**  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**SUBMITTED BY:**

JIM GRANT  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR

**ITEM 61**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**SYNOPSIS —**

At the Council meeting of November 4, 2002, Council requested that the comparison between the annual inspection rates for the following cities be verified. The following table was completed by Ben Bishop, Neighborhood Inspection Division (NID) Administrator and reflects the figures provided him from the respective cities during a telephone survey conducted November 5<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Every city surveyed performs and charges for their rental inspection programs in different ways. It should be noted that each community has tailored their programs to fit their needs. Newer communities with newly built structures have different concerns than older cities; and college town needs are different than more urban areas. This all makes comparisons difficult.

The tables that follow reflect the inspection fees and/or registration fees for rental certifications for single-family, duplex, and 12 unit rental structure per year. In addition, the inspection and/or registration fees vary in time frames as far as applicability. Following the table is a narrative for each community indicating their general program and how the fees were calculated. The narrative describes which charge registration fees, which charge inspection fees, and which charge both, also included with the descriptions are the time frames for the respective fees.

**FISCAL IMPACT —**

The fiscal impact is a \$600,000 per year increase in revenue generated over the current rate if the number of inspections and first re-inspections remain the same.

**RECOMMENDATION —**

**Approval, following a general policy of having services paid by the users of the service.**

**BACKGROUND —**

As a result of questions raised by the Council during the meeting of November 4<sup>th</sup> the following figures have been confirmed and are explained in the narrative. Only cities with a population of 50,000 or

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greater are required by state law to have a rental housing inspection program. Each of cities listed below have different fees for registration and/or inspection, and the time frame for the life of the inspection and/or registration differ widely. The detail information by community follows the table.

**Annual Rate for Inspection and/or Registration of Rental  
Property**

(Single-family = SF, Duplex = Dup, 12 Unit Apartment Building = 12 Unit)

<u>Jurisdiction Unit</u>	<u>SF</u>	<u>Dup</u>	<u>12</u>
<b>Marshalltown</b> <b>\$405.00</b> Annual registration fee. No charge for inspections which are done every 3 years.	<b>\$33.75</b>	<b>\$67.50</b>	
<b>Polk City</b> <b>233.33</b> Inspection fee every 2 years for SF and Dup and every 1.5 years for 12 unit. No registration fee.	<b>37.50</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>Des Moines</b> <b>200.00</b> Proposed rate for inspections every 3 years for SF/Dup and 2 years for 12 unit. No registration fee.	<b>33.33</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>Iowa City</b> <b>124.50</b> Inspection fee every 3 years for SF/dup and 2 years for 12 unit. No registration fee.	<b>32.58</b>	<b>37.33</b>	
<b>Newton</b> <b>270.00</b> Annual registration fee. Inspections each 2 years for all units no charge.	<b>30.00</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>Davenport</b> <b>130.00</b> Inspection annually. No registration fee.	<b>30.00</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>Cedar Falls</b> <b>81.66</b> Inspected every three years plus annual registration fee.	<b>26.66</b>	<b>31.66</b>	
<b>Ottumwa</b> <b>300.00</b> Annual registration fee. All inspections are every three years at no charge.	<b>25.00</b>	<b>50.00</b>	
<b>Ft. Dodge</b> <b>121.00</b> Inspections for all every 5 years. No registration fee.	<b>25.00</b>	<b>41.00</b>	
<b>Des Moines</b> <b>134.66</b> Current rate for inspections every 2.5 years for SF/Dup and every 1.5 years for 12 unit. No registration fee.	<b>23.60</b>	<b>36.80</b>	
<b>Coralville</b>	<b>21.50</b>	<b>25.50</b>	

<b>65.50</b>			
Inspections for all every 2 years. No registration fee.			
<b>West Des Moines</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>20.00</b>	
<b>63.00</b>			
Inspections for all every 2 years. No registration fee.			
<b>Windsor Heights</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>26.50</b>	
<b>97.33</b>			
Registration fee and inspection fee every 2 years for SF/dup and every 1.5 years for 12 unit.			
<b>Van Meter</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>26.50</b>	
<b>97.33</b>			
Registration fee and inspection fee every 2 years for SF/dup and every 1.5 years for 12 unit.			
<b>Dubuque</b>	<b>18.50</b>	<b>27.00</b>	
<b>112.00</b>			
Annual registration fee. Inspect every 5 years with no charge.			
<b>Ames</b>	<b>17.35</b>	<b>26.10</b>	
<b>142.20</b>			
Inspection for all every year. No registration fee.			
<b>Urbandale</b>	<b>16.66</b>	<b>33.33</b>	
<b>96.00</b>			
Inspection of SF/Dup every three years, 12 unit every year. No registration fee.			
<b>Sioux City</b>	<b>16.00</b>	<b>18.00</b>	
<b>38.00</b>			
Annual inspection of all. No registration fee.			
<b>Burlington</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>11.60</b>	
<b>48.66</b>			
Inspection of SF/dup every 5 years and 12 unit every 3 years. No registration fee.			
<u><b>Jurisdiction</b></u>	<u><b>SF</b></u>	<u><b>Dup</b></u>	<u><b>12</b></u>
<u><b>Unit</b></u>			
<b>Ankeny</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>10.60</b>	
<b>48.66</b>			
Registration fee and inspection fee of SF/dup every 5 years and 12 unit every 3 years.			
<b>Cedar Rapids</b>	<b>6.42</b>	<b>8.57</b>	
<b>27.71</b>			
No registration fee. All properties are inspected every 7 years and fees charged.			
<b>Bettendorf</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>7.00</b>	
<b>25.50</b>			
No inspection done. Registration fee every year.			
<b>Marshalltown</b> charges an annual registration fee of \$33.75 per unit per year. Single-family = \$33.75. Duplex = \$33.75 x 2 = \$67.50. 12 Unit building \$33.75 x 12 = \$405 per year. They inspect every 3 years but inspection fees are not charged only registration fees.			

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**Polk City** inspections are done by The Building Inspectors, a private company. On January 1, 2003, the rate they charge Polk City will go to \$75 for a single-family home, \$100 for a duplex and \$375 for a 12 unit building. Polk City does not charge a registration fee. They require that single-family and duplex structures be inspected every 24 months and multiples every 18 months. SF \$75 divided by 2 = \$37.50. Duplex \$100 divided by 2 = \$50. 12 Units \$75 + (\$25x11) = \$350 divided by 1.5 = \$233 per year.

The **proposed fee** for **Des Moines** is for inspections every 36 months for single-family and duplex structures and every 24 months for multiple structures. No registration fee is proposed. SF \$100 divided by 3 = \$33.33, Duplex \$150 divided by 3 = \$50, 12 units every 2 years, \$100 for the first unit and \$25 for each additional unit.  $\$100 + (25 \times 11) = 400$  divided by 2 = \$200.

The current fee for **Des Moines** is \$59 for inspections of single-family homes for 2.5 years.  $\$59$  divided by 2.5 = \$23.60 per year. Duplexes are \$92 for 2.5 years.  $\$92$  divided by 2.5 = \$36.80 per year. 12 unit buildings are \$32 for the 1<sup>st</sup> unit, \$16 for units 2-10 and \$13 for units #11 and #12.  $\$32 + (\$16 \times 9) + (\$13 \times 2) = \$202$ . No registration fee is charged.

**Iowa City** inspects single-family and duplex structures every 3 years and multiples every 2 years. They charge \$78 + \$11.50 per unit + \$2.75 per bedroom. A single-family house is \$78 + \$11.50 and if it is a 3-bedroom house  $\$2.75 \times 3$  or  $\$78 + \$11.50 + \$8.25 = \$97.75$  divided by 3 = \$32.58 per year. A duplex is  $\$78 + (\$11.50 \times 2)$  + the number of bedrooms in the structure, assuming 2 per side = 4 or  $4 \times \$2.75 = \$11 + \$78 + \$23 = \$112$  divided by 3 = \$37.33 per year. A 12 unit building would be  $\$78 + (12 \times \$11.25) + \$2.75$  per bedroom, assuming these are all single bedroom buildings the rate would be  $\$2.75 \times 12$  or \$33.  $\$78 + \$33 + \$138 = \$249$  divided by 2 = \$124.50 per year.

**Newton** does not charge for inspections; however, they charge an annual registration fee. They inspect all properties every 2 years. As of January 1, 2003, that annual registration fee will be \$30 for a single-family, \$50 for a duplex, and \$22.50 per unit for multiples. The fee for a 12 unit building will be  $\$22.50 \times 12 = \$270$  per year registration fee.

**Davenport** charges an annual fee of \$30 for a single-family, \$50 for a duplex, and \$130 for a 12 unit building. They inspect all rentals every year.

**Cedar Falls** charges an annual registration fee of \$15 for all rental housing units regardless of the size of the unit. They inspect all units every 3 years regardless of the size. They charge \$35 for a single-family, \$50 for a duplex, and \$200 for a 12 unit building inspection. The fee per year for a single-family house is  $\$15 + 1/3$  of  $\$35 =$

\$26.66 per year. A duplex is  $\$15 + 1/3$  of  $\$50 = \$31.66$  per year. A 12 unit building is  $\$15 + 1/3$  of  $\$200 = \$81.66$  per year.

Effective January 1, 2003, **Ottumwa** will charge registration fees as follows: single-family \$25, duplex \$50, and 12 units \$300. Properties must be registered and the fee paid each year. Inspections are done every 3 years without consideration of size and are free.

**Fort Dodge** conducts inspections every 5 years and charges the following fees: single-family \$125, duplex \$205, and a 12 unit \$605. These inspections are done every five years. Single-family is \$125 divided by 5 = \$25 per year; duplex is \$205 divided by 5 = \$41; 12 units is \$605 divided by 5 = \$121.

**Coralville** does inspections every 2 years regardless of the size of the unit. They charge \$43 for a single-family, \$51 for a duplex, and \$131 for a 12 unit building. Single-family  $\$43$  divided by 2 = \$21.50; duplex is  $\$51$  divided by 2 = \$25.50; and 12 units is  $\$131$  divided by 2 = \$65.50 per year.

**West Des Moines** does all inspections every two years. They charge \$40 for a single-family and \$40 for a duplex, for multiples they charge \$10.50 per unit. A 12 unit building is therefore  $\$10.50 \times 12 = \$126$ . Single-family is  $\$40$  divided by 2 = \$20 per year. Duplex is the same. 12 Units is  $\$126$  divided by 2 = \$63.00.

**Windsor Heights** has their housing inspections done by The Building Inspectors. The Building Inspectors charge \$30 for a single-family, \$41 for a duplex, and \$114 for a 12 unit building. Windsor Heights adds a \$10 registration fee for the first unit and \$2 for each additional unit. Single-family and duplex are inspected and registered every 2 years. Multiples are inspected and registered every 18 months. Therefore, the charge for a single-family house is  $\$30 + \$10$  divided by 2 = \$20 per year. A duplex is  $\$41 + \$10 + \$2 = \$53$  divided by 2 = \$26.50 per year. A 12 unit building is  $\$114 + \$10 + (11 \times \$2) = \$146$  divided by 1.5 = \$97.33 per year. **The Building Inspectors have raised their rates for Polk City effective January 1, 2003. They plan to raise the rate for Ankeny, Windsor Heights, and Van Meter as well.**

**Dubuque** charges a registration fee of \$18.50 per year for single-family, \$27.00 for duplex structures, and \$112 for a 12 unit building. They attempt to inspect all units every five years. They do not charge for inspections.

**Ames** charges an annual registration fee of \$17.35 for a single-family house, \$26.10 for a duplex, and \$11.85 per unit for multiples. A 12 unit would be \$142.20 per year. They inspect all rentals every 3 years and do not charge for those inspections.

**Urbandale** inspects single-family and duplexes every three years.

They charge \$50 for a single-family, \$50 divided by 3 = \$16.66 per year; and \$100 for a duplex, \$100 divided by 3 = \$33.33 per year. They inspect multiples every year. The charge for a 12 unit building is \$96.

**Sioux City** charges an annual registration fee of \$16 for a single-family, \$18 for a duplex, and \$38 for a 12 unit building. They do inspections every 4 years without charge.

Effective January 1, 2003, the fees in **Burlington** will be \$50 for a single-family, \$58 for a duplex, and \$146 for a 12 unit. Single-family and duplexes are inspected every five years and multiples every 3 years. Single-family is \$50 divided by 5 = \$10 per year. Duplex is \$58 divided by 5 = \$11.60 per year. 12 units is \$146 divided by 3 = \$48.66 per year.

**Ankeny** inspections are done by The Building Inspectors. They charge \$30 for a single-family, \$41 for a duplex, and \$141 for a 12 unit building. **As mentioned above, they have raised their inspection fees for Polk City and are planning on raising their fees for Ankeny, Windsor Heights, and Van Meter as well.** Currently, Ankeny charges a registration fee of \$10 for a single-family, \$12 for a duplex, and \$32 for a 12 unit building. Currently, single-family houses and duplexes are inspected every 5 years and multiples every 3 years. The current rate is \$30 + \$10 = \$40 divided by 5 = \$8 per year for a single-family. The current rate for a duplex is \$41 + \$12 = \$53 divided by 5 = \$10.60 per year. The current rate for a 12 unit building is \$114 + \$32 = \$146 divided by 3 = \$48.66 per year.

**Cedar Rapids** charges \$45 for a single-family, \$60 for a duplex, and \$194 for a 12 unit building. All inspections are done every 7 years. A single-family is \$45 divided by 7 = \$6.42 per year. A duplex is \$60 divided by 7 = \$8.57 per year. A 12 unit building is \$194 divided by 7 = \$27.71 per year.

**Van Meter** is also inspected by The Building Inspectors at the same rate as Ankeny and Windsor Heights. **Like Polk City, the company is anticipating increasing those fees.** Currently, Van Meter charges the same registration fees as Ankeny. The inspection rate from The Building Inspectors is the same, however, the time frame differs. Van Meter inspects single-family and duplexes every 2 years and multiples every 18 months. Therefore, a single-family is \$30 + \$10 = \$40 divided by 2 = \$20 per year. A duplex is \$41 + \$12 = \$53 divided by 2 = \$26.50 per year. A 12 unit building is \$114 + \$32 = \$146 divided by 1.5 = \$97.33 per year.

**Bettendorf** does not charge for inspections. They do charge an annual registration fee of \$4 for a single-family, \$7 for a duplex, and \$25.50 for a 12 unit building.

