



PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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RENTAL REGISTRATION AND SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S RULE

APPLICABLE SECTION NUMBER AND TITLE:

BMC 6.15.050(A) - Certificates of Inspection

DIRECTOR:

Rick Sepler, AICP

DATE:

March 10th, 2016

ISSUES:

Establish and adopt a methodology for selecting the rental properties to be inspected each year.

FINDINGS:

1. BMC 6.15.050(A) requires the Department to prepare, and the Director to adopt, a methodology that will ensure that all registered rental properties are inspected once every three years.¹
2. The Department has completed registration of rental units consistent with the requirements of BMC 6.15, and has posted an audited list of those rental properties. 5,767 rental properties have been registered, for a total of 18,813 rental units.
3. The Department, using criteria established in BMC 6.15, has determined that 2,789 of those units are exempt from inspection.
4. The Department, using the rental registration database and GIS technology, has mapped all of the registered rental properties within the City which are eligible for inspection.
5. The Department has analyzed the spatial distribution of the rental units in the interests of identifying patterns that would lead to the division of units into three distinct areas.
6. The Department has identified that prominent geographic features (Whatcom Creek corridor and Interstate 5) and established neighborhood boundaries divide the mapped

¹ "All rental properties will be inspected once every three years. [...] The property selection process shall be based on a methodology adopted by the director that will further the purpose of this chapter."



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rental units into three distinct areas. GIS analysis indicates that each of the three areas have roughly the same number of registered rental units.

7. As evidenced by the map (see below), the south third of Bellingham (in yellow) contains one of the highest concentrations of rental units.
8. The Department has determined that given the location of Western Washington University in the south third, which results in a high number of student renters, that turnover in these rental units would be more frequent than in the other two thirds.

OPINION AND DIRECTOR'S RULE:

For maximum impact of the Rental Registration & Safety Inspection Program within the first inspection cycle, it is determined that the south third of Bellingham shall be designated Inspection Zone 1 and the rental units located there will be the first to be inspected.

