

**Mayor's Housing Quality Task Force  
Community Meeting**

**Date:** June 28, 2016

**Time:** 5:30PM-7PM

**Location:** Spokane Public Library, downtown

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**What is Housing Quality?**

- Safe, secure, free of pests, weatherized to keep utility costs low, accessible, working plumbing, working heat.
- Accessible for people with disabilities and able bodies
- Appropriate areas, residential areas not in commercial/industrial areas
- Within reasonable reach of medical
- Weatherizes, functional, insulated windows/walls
- Meeting health and safety standards (national standards)
- Meeting the family's needs, offering good quality of life and quality of neighborhoods.
- Updated electrical
- Speaking to quality of neighborhoods, speaking to the character of the neighborhood (home and yard)
- Access to transit and safe places to walk and bike, proximity to parks, community gardens
- A minimum standard that applies to all housing
- Housing quality leading to home ownership
- Size of the home accommodates the people living there.
- Giving people choice in the expectation of the home. (rental/ownership)
- Safety; floors, doors, windows...etc. work as they are intended to. Structural things work as they are designed
- Safe, affordable, clean neighborhoods with access to amenities
- Indoor air quality, free of mold, asbestos and lead paint.
- Freedom from harassment and discrimination
- Yearly inspection of privately held non subsidized housing and rentals paid by landlord.
- Enforcement of standards
- Legislation of renters rights of quality housing
  - Mechanism to enforce the standards
  - Landlords may lose their bonding landlords by not complying

## What is Housing Affordability?

- 30% of their income and includes all housing costs, access to transportation and groceries stores.
- Maintenance – major repairs are taken care of (owner occupied)
- Affordability should mean renting and/or buying
- Costs for maintenance and capital replacement, future costs
- Utility costs (rental/owner)
- Identifying what is a comfortable cost for rent vs. what is the standard
- Funds available to help with maintenance and foreclosure prevention
- Having a landlord that does not accept section 8 vouchers
- Credit for making repairs to the rental
- Residual Income approach – takes into account location/neighborhood specific costs
- Disposable income to invest in the community
  - Boost the local economy
- Universal rental application and screening process (recommendation)
  - Myscreeningreport.com
- Affordable housing that allows for people to save
- *Encourage low to med income to encourage mixed use and low cost housing and incentivize tax increment financing*
- Family has enough money to have a good quality of life
- *Enable Just Cause eviction*
- No non refundable security deposit
- Can afford a down payment
- Make move-in costs more affordable or place a cap on move in costs
- More options for middle income people in terms of down payments
  - Define middle income
- Have a housing stock (at various ages) that meets the needs and abilities of all people.

## What are the barriers to quality and/or affordable housing?

- Getting owners to do maintenance
- Ongoing credit counseling
- Property owners are not available and/or responsible to their properties
- Lack of ordinance that compel affordability and quality housing
- Low wages
- Unreasonable landlord assoc. – not responsible to the needs of tenants
- Lack of enforcement of current codes and ordinances
- High costs of lawyers

- Imbalance of power between landlord and tenants.
- Less incentives of tax credit/structure for local companies to improve housing
- Job skills to increase your income
- Costs of safety inspections
- Homes that are affordable in terms of costs do not pass inspection
- Cost of deposits (pets, first/last income)
- Political barrier – lack of awareness of availability of affordable housing
- Lack of orgs. To educate people on housing affordability
- Lack of organizational capacity for people who need legislation on their behalf and representation
- Criminal history (felonies, sex offenders)
- Not have a rental history
- Ethnicity/discrimination
- Lack of personal vehicle resulting in lack of finding home or meet other criteria
- Rising cost for people who are on a fixed income
- Lack of funding available for rehabilitation to bring quality up
- Barriers to the zoning code to offer a variety of housing within a neighborhood (NIBY-ism)
- Education on how to maintain your home, education about home ownership
- Limited ability to save money limits the ability to purchase a home
- Limited ability to obtain better paying jobs (poverty)
- Lack of knowledge of the existing laws dealing with rentals
- Lack of enforcement and communication between departments
- Lack of marketing and/or education for landlords about incentives
- Reduction in federal rehab money
- Having a disability
- Historically low vacancy rates
- Low housing stock
- Reputation of neighborhoods resulting in people not choosing to live there
- Agencies in the city are stretched too thin
- Credit history
- Median housing cost is too high
- No profits for rehabilitating housing
- Holding landlords accountable to following HUD guidelines
- Gentrification to neighborhoods
- People moving in from other locations driving up costs
- People who have evictions

## **What are the solutions too quality and/or affordable housing?**

- Support something on the ballot (levy) to raise funds for housing
- Making it mandatory to get counseling in order to get a mortgage.
  - Includes mortgage notes
- Change code enforcement from being complaints driven to proactive
- Require a response from an agencies overseeing low income housing to respond in a reasonable amount of time
- Require low income housing assistance for relocation
- Address discrimination
- Connect people to job skill training
  - Increase skills to increase income
- City wide affordable housing plan
  - Set benchmarks
- Comprehensive reform for the regressive state budget
  - Fully fund the State trust fund
- Program that enables a family to improve home quality without charging rent
- Eliminate no cause of eviction and termination of rentals
- Partnership w/ City and Spokane housing auth that directs funding at rehab of city owned properties and the building of new housing from low to moderate income with market rate units in affluent neighborhoods.
- Require landlords to remove the background ban the box
- Better fund Neighborhood Matters, keep programs in the community for longer periods of time
- Increase in public school education RE: trades
- Rental inspections and registration
- Enforcement against landlords that do not do repairs
- Encourage more housing options, change zoning
- Ordinance on blight
- Enable local businesses to create more/diverse local economy
- Balance between protecting tenants and landlords
- Review current laws, ID what exists currently and education people
- Enact requirements that include inclusionary zoning
- Rent control of areas that are reasonable with cost of living
- Land Banks – focused areas where money is already being focused
- File fins and liens to recoup costs to the city that may be incurred by the property owner
- Bad tenant list
- Bad landlord list
- Centralize a location for people call in complaints for rentals