



Executive Summary

City Council Workshop

AGENDA ITEM: Ordinance 348- Amended Rental Ordinance
PREPARED BY: Jacob Schillander, City Administrator
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discussion

Overview

The proposed amendments to Chapter 4, Article 13 of the City Code modernize Maple Plain's rental licensing program and strengthen health, safety, and property maintenance standards. The revisions clarify definitions, update licensing procedures, reinforce inspection authority, expand maintenance and safety requirements, and refine enforcement tools. The ordinance also restructures the "Safe Rental Housing" section to better address criminal activity, tenant conduct, and landlord responsibilities while maintaining alignment with state law.

Key Themes

- The amendments create a clearer licensing framework for the licensee. The updates provide more detail on bi-annual renewal timelines, and documentation standards. They also reinforce that a license must be issued for each individual dwelling unit (with special rules for apartment buildings).
- The ordinance strengthens the health and safety standards for renting. Revisions expand requirements for substandard dwelling units, permissible occupancy limitations, smoke/CO alarms, and exterior lighting.
- The amendments will improve the compliance and enforcement tools available for the City. Updates enhance the City's ability to inspect units, issue compliance orders, and respond to tenant complaints. The ordinance clarifies grounds for suspension, revocation, or denial (including repeated disorderly conduct) while specifying notice and appeal processes.
- The amendments redefine the criminal and disorderly behavior provisions in City Code. The Safe Rental Housing section clarifies recommended background check practices,

establishes required lease addendum language regarding criminal activity, and defines disorderly conduct and exemptions consistent with state law. WHPS is designated as the determining authority for disorderly conduct based on a preponderance of evidence.

- The amendments update the responsibility for utility billing for licensees. Owners are made explicitly responsible for utility billing of rental properties. is also clarified.

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the City Council review and confirm the updated rental licensing structure, including clarified inspection authority, renewal timelines, and procedures for ownership changes. Staff further recommend evaluating the strengthened maintenance and safety standards to ensure they align with City priorities and can be effectively enforced. Council should also discuss the expanded enforcement and disorderly-conduct provisions to ensure the framework supports safe rental housing while remaining practical for property owners. Particularly the WHPS review process and required lease-addendum language. Finally, staff requests Council feedback on clarity, implementation impacts, and any additional modifications needed before the ordinance moves forward for adoption.