



Community Development Department
675 Wildwood Avenue
Rio Dell, CA 95562
(707) 764-3532

For the Meeting of December 2, 2025

☒ Consent Item; ☐ Public Hearing Item

To: City Council

From: Kevin Caldwell, Community Development Director 

Through: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

Date: November 19, 2025

Subject: Suspension of the Rental Housing Inspection Program

Recommendation:

That the City Council:

1. Suspend the City's Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) effective immediately; and
2. Adopt Resolution No. 1653-2025 suspending the RHIP; and
3. Direct staff to refund all RHIP registration and inspection fees paid.

BACKGROUND

The City of Rio Dell adopted the Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) to ensure minimum health and safety standards were maintained in rental properties citywide. The program was created during a period when the City had limited code enforcement capacity and relied heavily on proactive inspection requirements to identify substandard conditions.

Under the RHIP, property owners were required to register rental units and pay a program fee. Inspections were scheduled either on a routine basis or when violations were suspected.

DISCUSSION

Over the past year, the operational landscape of the City's code enforcement and community response services has significantly changed. These changes warrant reconsideration of the RHIP.

1. Decline in Rental-Related Complaints

The City has documented a **substantial decline in rental housing complaints**, unit habitability concerns, and calls requiring Housing Code enforcement. Trends indicate that voluntary compliance and improved landlord responsiveness have reduced the need for a dedicated inspection program.

2. Increased City Staffing Capacity

The City now employs **two Community Services Officers (CSOs)** who provide direct, rapid response to code enforcement issues, including rental property concerns.

The CSOs have successfully demonstrated that:

- Tenant and neighborhood complaints are being resolved promptly;
- Case loads are manageable without support from a separate inspection program;
- Enforcement tools already in place (Municipal Code, nuisance abatement, administrative citations) are adequate to address property-related violations.

Given this increased capacity, the RHIP is no longer necessary to maintain safe rental housing.

3. Administrative Efficiency and Cost Savings

Suspending the RHIP will reduce administrative burden and staff time associated with:

- Registration tracking;
- Routine inspection scheduling;
- Program reporting and correspondence;
- Fee collection and accounting.

Redirecting staff resources to enforcement-on-demand through the CSOs will provide more efficient service to the community.

4. Refund of Program Fee

Because the need for the RHIP has diminished and services tied to registration may not be rendered for the remainder of the cycle, staff recommends the City:

- Refund all RHIP registration fees collected, ensuring fairness to property owners;

- Notify all registered participants of program suspension;
- Provide information on how rental complaints will be handled going forward.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Suspending the program will result in the return of all registration fees, estimated at approximately \$2,385.

No long-term negative financial impacts are anticipated.

CONCLUSION

Given the reduction in rental housing complaints, the increased capability of the City's Community Services Officers, and the opportunity to improve administrative efficiency, staff recommends **suspending the Rental Housing Inspection Program** and refunding all collected fees.

These actions will maintain resident safety while ensuring responsible and efficient use of City resources.

Attachment 1: Resolution No. 1653-2025 Suspending the RHIP.

Attachment 2: Cover Letter to Property Owners and Property Managers.

RESOLUTION NO. 1653-2025



RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RIO DELL SUSPENDING THE RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM (RHIP) AND DIRECTING REFUNDS OF REGISTRATION FEES

WHEREAS, the City of Rio Dell adopted the Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) to ensure minimum health and safety standards in rental housing and to address substandard living conditions through proactive inspections; and

WHEREAS, at the time of adoption, the City had limited code enforcement capacity and intended to rely on the RHIP to identify and correct violations affecting habitability and tenant safety; and

WHEREAS, the RHIP required property owners to register rental units and pay a program fee, with inspections conducted on a routine basis or when violations were suspected; and

WHEREAS, over the past year, the operational capacity of the City's code enforcement and community response services has significantly improved, particularly with the hiring of an additional Community Services Officer (CSO); and

WHEREAS, the City has experienced a decline in rental-related complaints, habitability concerns, and Housing Code enforcement calls, demonstrating increased voluntary compliance and improved responsiveness from landlords; and

WHEREAS, the CSOs have demonstrated the ability to address rental-related concerns promptly using existing enforcement tools—including the Municipal Code, nuisance abatement procedures, and administrative citations—making a separate inspection program unnecessary; and

WHEREAS, the RHIP now duplicates functions that can be efficiently managed through enforcement-on-demand via the CSOs, allowing the City to reduce administrative workload, eliminate program-related staffing hours, and improve overall efficiency; and

WHEREAS, fairness to property owners warrants refunding all RHIP registration fees collected, estimated at approximately \$2,385; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Rio Dell as follows:

1. The Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) is hereby suspended effective immediately.
2. Staff is directed to refund all RHIP registration fees paid for the current program cycle, totaling approximately \$2,385.
3. Staff is further directed to notify all registered property owners and property managers of the program's suspension and provide information regarding how rental housing complaints will be addressed going forward.
4. Code enforcement for rental-related concerns shall continue to be handled by the City's Community Services Officers utilizing existing enforcement authority and procedures.
5. The City Manager is authorized and directed to implement any administrative actions necessary to carry out the intent of this resolution.

PASSED and ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Rio Dell on December 2, 2025 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Mayor Debra Garnes

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

City of Rio Dell

ATTEST:

I, Karen Dunham, City Clerk for the City of Rio Dell, State of California, hereby certify the above and foregoing to be a full, true and correct copy of Resolution No. 1653-2025 approved and adopted by the City Council of the City of Rio Dell on December 2, 2025.

Karen Dunham, City Clerk, City of Rio Dell



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675 Wildwood Avenue
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Subject: **Suspension of the Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) and Refund of Registration Fees**

Dear Property Owners & Property Managers,

We are writing to inform you that on **December 2, 2025**, the Rio Dell City Council voted to **suspend the City's Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP)**. This decision was made following a decrease in rental-related complaints and the expansion of the City's code enforcement capacity through the addition of another Community Services Officer. The City now has the resources to be able to respond promptly and effectively to property-related concerns.

Because the RHIP will no longer be active, the City is refunding all registration fees paid. Enclosed is your refund.

Although the RHIP has been suspended, the City remains committed to ensuring safe and habitable housing within our community. Rental housing complaints or concerns will now be handled directly by our Community Services Officers. If you or your tenants require assistance, please contact the Police Department at (707) 764-5642.

We appreciate your participation in the RHIP and your ongoing efforts to maintain quality rental housing in the City of Rio Dell. If you have any questions regarding the suspension of the program or the refund process, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Mayor Debra Garnes