

Feedback from Neighborhood Services staff - needs to increase effectiveness January 2020

Top three actionable items:

1. **Revise the nuisance party/nuisance property ordinance** to address short term rentals. The current ordinance is effective when the tenant behavior changes or tenants move. Property owners need to be held responsible since tenants are gone due to the nature of short term rentals.
2. **Additional staff** to help with enforcement of short term rentals and other work of ONS. A position request has been submitted to HR as part of the budget process.
3. **Increase support by Solid Waste** to address trash out early and other trash issues that can be charged back to the utility holder or property owner. This is a quicker way to resolve the problem than the code enforcement process.

Staff Member #1 - Issues that may arise from short term rentals; *italic text added by Leigh Kottwitz*

Increase trash disposal, early out issues - *Additional Solid Waste support - charge backs for TOE/time charge*

Possible over occupancy complaints due to visitors stopping by- *Increase awareness for all parties to encourage voluntary compliance.*

Increased peace disturbance issues by frustrated neighbors unhappy about short term rentals anyway

Neighborhood covenant violation complaints not in our control

Possible nuisance party increases by those not familiar with such a specific ordinance

Chronic nuisance property ordinance amendment to address new/ different tenants each week to hold property owners accountable *Revise the ordinance to give it more teeth.*

Parking complaint increase for blocking sidewalks, mailboxes, overtime parking, parking on grass

Staff Member #2

Assuming that hosted STR's will need to meet IPMC requirements, and are held to the same standards as long term rentals the one major concern is staff. This may, of course, depend on the number of STR apps that come in and the frequency of inspections. Is there a possibility of a more frequent inspection schedule? The unhosted STR will likely need a conditional use permit, but those are likely to come from our usual owners and management companies.

GREATER PROTECTION OF NEIGHBORHOODS COMMENTS AND CONCERNS
BY Staff Member #3

Below is my opinion of the most common code violations and citizens complaints with time consuming challenges of the two Health Code Enforcement Specialists within the Office of Neighborhood Services

- **SIDEWALK & PUBLIC STREET OBSTRUCTIONS:**

Some snow events can include entire lengths of heavily traveled/utilized public streets & sidewalks where property owners do not remove snow or ice.

Example: Sidewalks along Broadway, West Worley, Scott Blvd & Rollins.

Citizens express unwillingness to remove snow from their sidewalks when Public Works has not cleared the streets in their neighborhoods. Citizens with limited/unavailable assistance to remove the obstruction. Elderly, disabled or illnesses. Efforts to contact multiple property owners or occupants by phone to discuss the violations.

Property owners who dismiss calls or code violation notices. Repeated violations found on the same property address multiple times. Some properties never correct with violation within the re-inspection time frame. It is usually resolved by the warming temperatures that melt the snow/ice.

(Landscape/vegetation obstructions are frequently corrected by the property owner. The New Landscape Management Codes includes the Nuisance Declaration and Order of Abatement Notice which could result in an Abatement by the City with all costs of correction being charged to the property owner).

I would suggest adding verbiage to the current code that states stricter expectations for removing snow from sidewalks. We could consider adding fines to the Ordinance and allow Code Enforcement Specialists to place tickets on the properties with violations & mail a copy of the violation notice with fine to all property owners. A photo of the posted ticket/violation notice must be taken and include the date and time. Example of 1st notice mailed to the property owner: Multiple sidewalk obstruction violations have occurred on the property owned or controlled by you. An additional staff member is needed to contact & notify Violators.

- **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT VIOLATION:**

We received a very high volume of turf grass/weeds over 12 inches tall from May-October.

We need additional staff to follow up on citizens complaints regarding violations within the new Landscape Management Ordinance.

- **NEW LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE/NATIVE/WILD YARD PROGRAM**

We have received an increase in complaints and calls for information regarding the new Landscape Management/Native Landscape requirements and the Wild Yard Program.

I would like to have frequent meetings with the programs community conservationist department/staff. I would like to participate in additional native landscape education.

I would like to see a plan created and list of all properties that are participating in the Native Landscape/Wild Yard Program. Encourage a documented monitoring schedule which includes the community conservation department employees. Assessment information, accessibility to the plan provided to the citizen and what goals/objectives were determined by the Conservation department with follow and re-inspections by this department. (This maybe in place already?)

- **TRASH OUT EARLY AND LARGE AMOUNTS OF TRASH PLACED AT CURB**

There was an increase of complaints to the Office of Neighborhood Service regarding Trash. The Solid Waste Department has also increased notifying our department concerning properties that have placed large amounts of “move out” trash & debris at the curb not following the specs created by the department. Complaints from citizens stating Solid Waste did not notify them regarding the specifications of how or what could be placed at the curb or recommendations of providing a dumpster.

I would recommend adding an additional staff member to contact the property Owner and advise the customer of the most cost effective way to remove all trash from their property. Is this information included in the City Newsletter before key move in & move out times? Possible additional training For ASA's regarding SW Specifications and determining if and when a dumpster should be placed at the property. Meetings with leadership of SW and ONS to Streamline processes and become better acquainted with what each department Could do to provide better customer service for our citizens.

Staff Member #4 - Additional staff: I think an extra code person would be great. Also extras admin asst would be helpful. We could tweak some ordinances to make them easier to enforce, or align the multiple ones that mirror or contradict each other. If we could get somebody with a native vegetation background, that wouldn't be too bad either.

Staff Member #5 - *responses from Leigh Kottwitz in italics*

1. An Administrative Professional that is ONLY devoted to ONS or the Rental Program. - *We have 1.25 ASA's dedicated to ONS. Before we request additional staff we need to do a time study to make sure we are getting that equivalent of staff support.*
2. Ensure that ALL ONS staff persons are trained in Environmental / Health so that we can all participate in enforcement during the busy weed season.
3. Allow ALL staff to do Property Maintenance cases instead of transferring to the one dedicated person who also does Rental / Environmental. *Four of our six CES's are doing property maintenance cases.*
4. A QA process that enables someone outside our department to perform an audit on the inspection process.

5. At this time, we have been asked to stop finding new illegal rentals and there is an incredibly large backlog that has not had 14DL sent. We need to enact a process that is easier for our admin staff to do these 14 DLs or perhaps we can tie this in to a dedicated staff member who does only Rental Processes, not budget, permitting or external customer service. *This is on the list and should be resolved soon.*

6. Having EnerGov work consistently and properly would be wonderful.

Leigh Kottwitz

- Social worker assigned to difficult owner-occupied cases in particular; required by the court
- Prohibit boarded houses for more than 90 days
- Refine vegetation ordinance
- Begin receivership on problem rental properties
- Foreclosure on property by the City with unpaid liens
- Local agent requirement for rentals (Boone and adjacent counties)
- Energy efficient rental requirement
- Homeless camp and shelter with ordinance
- Solid waste staff to pick up trash out early and other trash violations with charges back to the utility holder or property owner
- Prohibit basement sleeping rooms without egress
- Prohibit dumpsters at residential properties for more than 60 days
- Parking enforcement- on street or in yard
- Nuisance property nuisance party ordinance change to effect the owner and not occupant