



Housing Authority of the City of Alameda

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To: Debbie Potter, City of Alameda Community Development Director

From: Claudia Young, Rent & Community Programs Director

Date: May 15, 2016

Issue: **Alameda Rent Program April 2016 Monthly Report**

Program Administration

Ordinance 3148 went into effect on March 31, 2016. The Program Administrator (PA) agreement between the City and Housing Authority was approved on April 4, 2016. This report is the first monthly report by the Program Administrator as required under the agreement.

Informational workshops:

- Began on March 22, 2016.
- Initial attendance for both landlord and tenant workshops has been at capacity.
- Recently attendance has tapered off and staff has combined the landlord/renter workshops, but will continue to hold workshops twice a week. Sign up is available online at <http://www.alamedarentprogram.org/workshops/>.

Phone and email inquiries for the month of April:

- Most inquiries received at the beginning and end of the month.
- Generally, a larger number of inquiries come from landlords than from tenants.
- Calls last 10 - 45 minutes and it is common for a caller to follow-up with multiple calls with additional questions.
- It is important that City staff redirect all inquiries to the designated 510.747.4346 phone number or rrac@alamedahsg.org to ensure consistency in information.

There is frequently often daily communication with City staff on program issues as practices and forms are developed. AHA staff is making sure to coordinate with City Attorney's Office on legal and regulatory issues and to keep City staff informed on inquiries that question the interpretation of the ordinance.

A dedicated website has been established for the Rent Program at <http://www.alamedarentprogram.org/>. The site provides access and links to:

- The City's Rent Ordinance;
 - Policies;
 - Educational workshops;
 - Tenant/landlord rights & resources;
 - Submit questions;
 - Register for our email list to stay informed;
 - Download forms.
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- Staff is working to make the forms fillable online with a direct submission.

- Staff has completed approximately 13 forms and initial form letters for the Rent Review Advisory Committee (RRAC). Currently, there are 10 forms approved and available to the public. These forms include five rent increase forms, one termination of tenancy form, one sample notice for rent increase equal or less than 5%, one sample notice of a unit subject to New Ordinance, one Capital Improvement Plan application and a reasonable accommodation request form.

Outreach

- Newspaper ads: Alameda Journal, SUN, Sing Tao, Asian Journal, Vision Hispana
- Realtors Association weekly Friday newsletter will include short updates.
- Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) to include an announcement of the new Ordinance in the monthly newsletter and provided hardcopies, in four additional languages, that will be made available in each school office.
- Alameda Municipal Power will include the announcement of the new Ordinance in the billing inserts for the month of June.

RRAC

- There is a homeowner vacancy with one potential candidate. Staff is working with the City Clerk's office to advertise and encourage applications to fill this position.
- The month of April resulted in 11 active RRAC cases.
- This month, all paperwork received for the RRAC was for rent increases above 5%. There was a trend, particularly for the large apartment complexes, to offer different rent increase amounts based on the length of lease selected by the tenant. For example, a the rent increase notice offered an 8% rent increase for a 12-month lease and a 36% rent increase for a month-to-month rental agreement.
- All rent increase submissions stated their reason for the rent increase above 5% was that the unit was below market rate.
- It was challenging for all parties to fully understand the new process. Landlords had difficulty filing complete paperwork and understanding the required language in noticing, calculation of rent increase including fees and utilities, required presence of ownership interest at the RRAC meeting and offering a 12-month option.
- While the forms provide directions and lists compliance requirements, landlords were confused and had to refile with the Housing Authority and sometimes re-notice their tenants. (Staff will be looking to provide some general education to landlords and tenants on noticing procedures in the coming months.)
- Seven cases settled before going to the RRAC.
5 cases settled between 5.1%-10%; and
1 case settled at or below 5%.
- In conversations with tenants, several stated:
 - Alarmed to be contacted by a third party.
 - Not interested in engaging in the public rent review process.
 - Apprehensive about disagreeing with their landlord.
 - Felt rents were going up in the area and accepted their rent increase.
 - Chose to hire a lawyer to go through the rent review process.
- The 2 cases heard at the RRAC meeting were resolved during the meeting and the parties expressed appreciation for the RRAC process. Significant staff time was spent to engage both

parties in the new rent review process, to explain new rights and responsibilities, and to ensure paperwork was complete and met compliance. On average, staff contacted the landlords and tenants 5-6 times each before the RRAC process to answer questions, request missing information, and receive updates.

- Prior to the May 2nd RRAC meeting, the Committee received mediation training from the SEEDS organization. The Committee was able to apply the training, which assisted in moving mediation into an agreement.
- Staff will coordinate additional training as needed to continue to assist the Committee.

Terminations of Tenancy

The month of April had a total of six filings for Termination of Tenancy.

- Two were valid for "No Cause" and "Owner Move-In."
- Two were invalid for Capital Improvement Plans (CIP).
- Two other invalid filings were for "Withdrawal from the rental market", because the notices did not include the relocation assistance.
- All landlords have been contacted regarding the validity of the notice.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

- Resolution 15138, adopting policies for CIP's, was approved by council on April 5, 2016.
- The application for CIP is available online and information workshops specifically for CIP have been developed and are scheduled to begin on May 19th.
- There are four workshops scheduled, which includes one evening option. If attendance continues to be high, staff will add additional options.
- One Capital Improvement Plan application was submitted at the end of April. After initial review of the application, staff determined that it was incomplete. The landlord was notified and asked to provide additional information and supporting documentation for the cost calculation.

Staffing Update

- Claudia Young was hired as the new Director of Rent and Community Programs and began on May 2, 2016. Staff recruitment for a Program Assistant and two Specialists is underway.

Rent Program Monthly Report
April 2016

of public contacts

	Number of unduplicated public contacts	Number of duplicated public contacts
Total:	118	245
Average 2 duplicated contacts per unduplicated contact		

of applicants to initiate RRAC process

	Number	Governing ordinance
	2	3143
	9	3148
Total:	11	

cases dismissed before RRAC meeting

	Number	Governing ordinance	Results
	1	3143	Settlement- terms unknown
	1	3148	Postponed
	1	3148	Dismissed because original rent was below 5% (submitted on miscalculation)
	5	3148	Settlement- terms stated rent increases between 5.1% - 10%, no additional specifics provided.
	1	3148	Settlement- terms stated rent increase at or below 5%
Total:	9		

of cases heard at RRAC

	Number	Governing ordinance	Results
	1	3143	Agreement @ 5% and delayed 3 months
	1	3148	Agreement @ 9.3%
Total:	2		

of petitions

	Number	Governing ordinance	Results
	0		
Total:	0		

of appeals to City Council

	Number	Governing ordinance	Results
	0		
Total:	0		

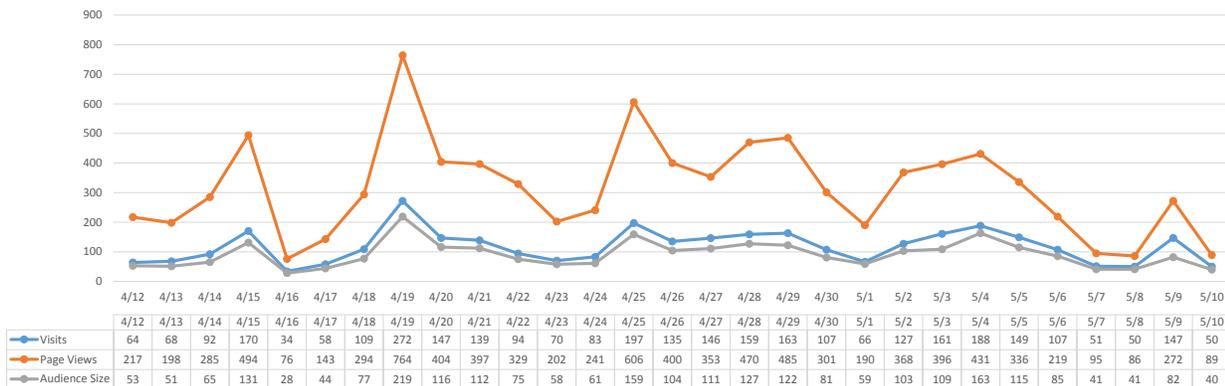
# of valid terminations by type		
	1	No Cause
	1	Owner Move-In
	0	Demolition
	0	Capital Improvement Plan
	0	Withdrawal from the rental Market
	0	Compliance with a govermental order
Total:	2	
# of invalid terminations by type		
	0	No Cause
	0	Owner Move-In
	0	Demolition
	2	Capital Improvement Plan
	2	Withdrawal from the rental Market
	0	Compliance with a govermental order
Total:	4	
Capital Improvement Plan Application		
	1	# of applications filed
	\$835.65	Average rent increase (requested)
	1	# of households relocated (temporary)
Details of Outreach Activities		
	Descriptions	
	Website launch	
	Periodic updates to website lists	
	School newsletter	
	Flyers available at all schools (5 languages)	
	Mailings to all registered landlords with a business licencse	
	2 x week educational workshops	
	Press release	
	Realtors Association Weekly Newsletter (On-going)	
	AMP Bill inserts (Scheduled for June)	
	Newspaper ads (Scheduled in May; 5 languages)	

Workshop Attendance



Capital Improvement Workshops	
May 19, 2016	26
May 26, 2016	7
June 2, 2016	0
June 9, 2016	0

Website Traffic



Google Ads

