

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC)

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For Immediate Release

OTOC leaders applaud City Council to for taking the first small step today to reverse a decades long deterioration of affordable housing and rental property in Omaha.

“City Council sent a message to developers and property owners they have to maintain their existing rental properties before coming to the city seeking tax payer funded handouts for new development,” said OTOC Housing Team leader Susan Kuhlman.

“Now the City Council and Mayor must adopt an ordinance which prevents the deplorable conditions existing in way too many rental units” said Kuhlman.

OTOC leader Dennis Walsh said **“I am glad to hear that two Council members have asked the law department to develop an ordinance based on LaVista’s model which requires both registration and periodic inspection of all rental property. That’s the only way we will stop the ongoing deterioration of rental property in our community.”**

Since May of 2017, OTOC has been asking City Council members to investigate and develop proactive registration and inspection ordinances which are becoming a best practice locally (LaVista, Council Bluffs, Carter Lake and all cities over 15,000 in Iowa) and nationally as a way to proactively prevent the deterioration of older rental property.

OTOC has worked with 10 organizations that work with tenants to develop a proposal which we have given to Mayor Stothert, City Planning Staff and all City Council members outlining how a proactive ordinance could be both affordable and effective in Omaha. Also, Senator Justin Wayne’s LB 85 draws on the approach and research that OTOC leaders have done over the last 18 months.

That proposal is attached.

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