

Council Agenda Item 25-016-0



MEETING DATE: July 1, 2025

SUBJECT/TITLE: ALTERNATIVE ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 29A OF THE DULUTH CITY CODE TO ADD TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR LANDLORDS, ADDITIONAL NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR TENANTS, AND REQUIRING REPAIRS TO BE MADE IN A TIMELY FASHION.

SUBMITTED BY: City Attorney's Office

RECOMMENDATION:

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: On June 9, 2025, the City Council passed Ordinance 25-013-0, an ordinance adding article V to chapter 29A of the Duluth City Code providing notice to tenants of available resources and protected rights under state law and city ordinance. On June 26, 2025, the City Council conducted a first reading of Ordinance 25-016-0. The Council also received public comment related to the Ordinance.

BACKGROUND:

Members of the city council and city staff have been listening to and working with community members and groups about rental property and tenant concerns. Ordinance 25-016-0 is an alternative ordinance under Section 51 of the City of Duluth Charter that covers the same subject matter as the petition ordinance (25-015-0) prepared by the Duluth Tenants Union and the Housing Justice Center. This alternative ordinance amends Chapter 29A of the Duluth City Code to provide a more robust enforcement process for repair issues and other code violations, to improve communication and transparency for tenants, and to require landlords to complete a landlord education program on a regular basis. This ordinance recognizes the importance of maintaining safe, dignified and code-compliant rental housing and ensuring the long-term viability of Duluth's housing stock.

Under Section 51 of the Duluth City Charter, if the council desires to pass an alternative ordinance, it must do so within ten days of the clerk's certification date—on or before July 3rd. If the council passes the alternative ordinance, then there is a ten-day period in which petitioners for the submitted ordinance (Ordinance 25-015-0) may file with the clerk a petition for withdrawal of their names from the petition. If at least 50 percent of the petitioners withdraw their names, then the petition ordinance will not go on the ballot in November. Instead, the alternative ordinance will become effective.

If the petition ordinance moves forward to the ballot in November, and the council passes an alternative ordinance, the council may also decide to place the alternative ordinance on the ballot and the voters get to choose which ordinance will become effective. This decision does not need to be made at this time. The purpose of these two special meetings is to make a decision on the petition ordinance and decide whether to pass an alternative ordinance.



The city council is not required to pass an alternative ordinance. The council may choose to do so on or before July 3rd, or the council may choose to table Ordinance 25-016-0 and re-visit it at a later date.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:

OPTIONS:

1. Approve Ordinance 25-016-0;
2. Table Ordinance 25-016-0 to a later date; or
3. Don't approve Ordinance 25-016-0.

NECESSARY ACTION: The council must pass the alternative ordinance on or before July 3, 2025, if the council wishes to invoke the 10-day time period under the City Charter that enables petitioners to withdraw their support for the petition ordinance (25-015-0). The council may table Ordinance 25-016-0 and re-visit it at a later date, but passing this ordinance after July 3, 2025 will not invoke the 10-day time period in Section 51 of the City Charter. Also, passing this ordinance after July 3, 2025 may not enable the Council to place this ordinance on the ballot as an alternative ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS: Ordinance 25-016-0