

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF WRITING AND ADOPTING A
RENTAL HOUSING CODE IN WEST BURLINGTON, IOWA

An Abstract of
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ABSTRACT

Rental housing is an integral part of a community's housing structure. It plays a significant role by providing temporary and lower cost housing which is important for many reasons. Rental housing often becomes dilapidated more quickly than owner-occupied housing, primarily because landlords want to maximize profits by investing the least amount of money into property maintenance. In an effort to address the quality of rental housing, the City of West Burlington, Iowa, adopted a rental housing code. This study provides an analysis of the process of writing and adopting a rental housing code for a community.

The methodology that was employed in this study is a comparative analysis of different rental housing codes from five communities. The first step in the process was to identify the components of a rental housing code. The structure of the rental housing code was divided into six subheadings: Registration/Licensing; Minimum Standards; Inspections; Enforcement; Corrective Measures; and Fees. Content analysis of the five sample ordinances generated a draft of a rental housing code in West Burlington.

The original draft went through several revisions as a result of feedback that was solicited and received from the community. As revisions were made, a new draft was submitted to the Council for review and feedback. This feedback was incorporated into each draft and culminated in the final version that was adopted by the City Council.