

RESOLUTION _____

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2 A RESOLUTION relating to rental housing and the City's efforts to improve the quality of rental
3 housing, requesting that the Department of Planning and Development report back to the
4 Council by July 1, 2011 on its efforts to utilize the inspection warrant authority recently
5 granted by State law.

6 WHEREAS, there has been consistent growth in the amount of rental housing within the City of
7 Seattle, estimated in the 2000 Census as exceeding 51% of the housing stock; and

8 WHEREAS, the City intends that rental housing meet basic life, health and safety standards and
9 therefore has adopted the Seattle Housing and Building Maintenance Code (Seattle
10 Municipal Code 22.200); and

11 WHEREAS, the City expends significant effort to provide that all housing, regardless of
12 ownership, meets or exceeds City and state codes governing building and life safety
13 construction, fire safety, energy consumption, sanitation, electrical services and other
14 such considerations; and

15 WHEREAS, despite the demonstrated commitment to responsible ownership by the majority of
16 rental housing owners, the City continues to experience problems caused by poor
17 maintenance of and failure to comply with basic life, health and safety standards in its
18 rental housing stock; and

19 WHEREAS, the City has an interest in preserving the stock of rental housing and the long term
20 health of its rental housing market; and

21 WHEREAS, the City finds that the existence of substandard and unsanitary rental units are a
22 detriment to the physical, social and economic stability of all housing in the City of
23 Seattle and the health and welfare of the citizens of the City of Seattle; and

24 WHEREAS, in 2007 the City Council commissioned a study to gauge the effectiveness of the
25 City's approach to housing code enforcement; and

26 WHEREAS, in 2008 the Cedar River Group presented the results of its study (known as the
27 Cedar River Study) to the City Council; and

28 WHEREAS, the Cedar River Study recommended that the City enhance its enforcement efforts
by, among other things, seeking State legislation to secure inspection warrant authority;
and

1 WHEREAS in 2010 the State Legislature authorized limited inspection warrant authority for
rental housing by passing SSB 6459, which will take effect on June 10, 2010; and

2 WHEREAS, the City Council would like to gauge the effectiveness of the new warrant authority
3 in improving the City's housing code enforcement efforts; NOW, THEREFORE,

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**
5 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

6 Section 1. Pursuant to the recommendation in the Cedar River Study and now that the
7 State Legislature has passed legislation authorizing inspection warrants for rental housing in
8 limited circumstances, the City Council requests that the Department of Planning and
9 Development (DPD) utilize the new inspection warrant authority whenever possible as a tool in
10 its toolbox of Housing Code enforcement efforts, and among other things, develop policies and
11 procedures for the use of the warrant authority and provide outreach and education to other
12 agencies and sources that might provide documentation of the conditions of rental properties that
13 could serve as the basis for seeking an inspection warrant.
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16 Section 2. The City Council requests that DPD report back to the Council by July 1,
17 2011, evaluating the effectiveness during its first year of use of the new inspection warrant tool
18 in DPD's efforts to improve its Housing Code enforcement efforts.
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