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## Ward 8 meeting

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## Summary

- According to the Akron Police Department, theft is the No. 1 offense in Ward 8. There have been several reported vehicle break-ins at Parkway Estates. Officer Aaron Brown encouraged Ward 8 residents to create an evening ritual confirming that valuables are removed from the car and ensuring that the vehicle is locked to prevent theft.
- The Nuisance Compliance Division is 100% complaint-driven, meaning that they rely on community members to report complaints. If you notice high grass, trash, junk vehicles, graffiti, or sidewalk or roadway obstructions in your neighborhood, call 311 to place a complaint.
- If you have a rental unit in the City of Akron, you are required to register the rental with Housing Code Enforcement. Akron began the rental registration process in 1997; it was the first city in Ohio to use this process. At a registration charge of \$15 per rental unit, Akron has one of the most cost-effective rental registration fees.

## Follow-Up Questions

- How does an increase in out-of-state landlords purchasing multiple, low-cost rental units in Akron impact housing costs? What are the long-term consequences if this

continues?

- What happens when a complaint regarding a homeless encampment is placed? Is there a process to give unhoused residents a temporary place to stay?

## Notes

### Presentation #1- Akron Police Department monthly crime stats update

Presented by- Officer Aaron Brown Ward 8 Community Engagement Team Member

- Updates for the Akron Police Department ([link here](#))
  - Brown said Ward 8 had only 5,440 calls placed out of 160,000 total emergency calls in the city.
    - The No. 1 call reason related to fights.
    - The No. 1 location for calls was the Acme located at 1835 W. Market St.
    - The No. 1 offense was theft/larceny.
  - There has been a considerable decrease in citywide homicides. APD will continue to work to get guns off of the street to support a continued decrease.
  - In Ward 8, several vehicle break-ins have been reported in Parkway Estates.
    - To prevent theft, remove all valuables from vehicles and confirm that the doors are locked. Make sure garages are locked as well.

### Presentation #2- Code Enforcement

Presented By- Greg Glen, Code Compliance Supervisor, Nuisance Complaints

- The [Nuisance Compliance Division](#) is responsible for 311 inquiries, nuisances, animal control and community service.
  - Code Enforcement handles complaints about the exterior portion of private property, including high grass, junk vehicles, trash and homeless encampments.
- What happens when a [311](#) call is placed? This line is used to file a variety of requests with the city from high grass and weeds to housing complaints to problems with streetlights.
  - The complaint is entered into an electronic system to be tracked, then it is routed to a ward inspector to verify the complaint.
  - The property owner will have seven days to comply.
    - If they do not comply, the job will be completed by a city-appointed contractor.
    - Fees are added to the property owner's tax bill

- Fees include the assessment charge as well as an administrative charge
- Fees can increase based on the number of offenses

Community members had the following questions and comments regarding the presentation:

- How is trash handled?
  - Glen said that trash is complicated. Fees will vary according to the size of what needs to be removed.
- How large is the staff?
  - Glen said there are seven inspectors, two administrators and a supervisor.
- Questions regarding the complaint process for rental properties was another point of discussion.
  - Glen said the process requires notification by post on the property and a mailed notification to the landlord's address.
- What happens when a 311 call related to animal control is placed?
  - The division is small and covers three wards.
  - Most of the time, they handle complaints about dogs.
  - The team relies on neighbors to report violations.
- What does animal control do about skunks and raccoons?
  - Glen said that they provide traps to property owners.
- Since extended barking violates the code, how do you prove the length of time a dog is barking?
  - Glen recommended recording the dog's barks and testifying in court. Being an active participant helps with this process.

### **Presentation #3- [Housing Code Enforcement](#)**

Presented By- Duane Groeger, Housing Administrator, Akron Housing Compliance Division

- Responsibilities of the team include:
  - The housing appeals board, vacant building registration, landlord inspections, residential and commercial building demolitions.
  - They are working on an ordinance to regulate short-term rentals such as Airbnbs and VRBOs.
  - Securing vacant properties
    - In 2023, they secured 306 properties at a cost of \$75,000
- The staff and caseload
  - Staff consists of an administrator, two sanitarian supervisors, one code compliance supervisor, seven code compliance inspectors, three

demolition team members, and two full-time clerical team members.

- Current caseload is 2,115. Only about 60 to 80 are located in Ward 8.
  - 55.8% (1,180) vacant properties, 12.5% (264) owner-occupied, and 31.6% (669) occupied rentals
  - 80% of the complaints (1,500-2,000) are from the general public; the remaining complaints come from public servant referrals.
  - The team enforces Title 15-Land Usage Chapter 150
    - Sec. 150.02 covers entry/inspection ([link here](#))
      - To enter the interior, the inspector must be invited in
      - The exterior can be assessed at any time
- The enforcement process
  - The complaint is received, then assigned, validated, an order to comply is issued and reinspection takes place.
  - If the issue is not resolved, there will be an administrative hearing and a final warning letter will be sent.
  - There are two potential outcomes:
    - Compliance, which is the goal
    - Enforcement (This could include administrative fees ranging from \$100 to \$1,000, criminal charges, and the ordered demolition of the property.)
    - Groeger said, “Everywhere I go in the city, I see the results of my work...It’s very rewarding.”

Community members had the following questions and comments regarding the presentation:

- Bolden asked how many rental registrations were sent.
  - Groeger said about 4,500-5,000 were sent and the goal is to get 75%-80% compliance.
  - In order to process an eviction, the landlord must be registered with the city and the county.
    - The [Rental Registration](#) started in 1997. Akron was the first city that utilized this process in the state. The fee is \$15 per unit.
- Have you seen an increase in out-of-state landlords?
  - Groeger said that out-of-state landlords are an issue. Landlords are being instructed to create LLCs. He shared an example:
    - SFRC LLC purchased 300 units
    - Groeger said, “Corporate ownership of single-family housing is a not-so-small part of the reason people can’t afford to buy houses anymore. It’s a big problem.”

**Ward 8 updates presented by Bolden**

- Bolden is working on fixing up Treeside Rentals
  - The community is creating a landlord organization to assist Bolden's efforts
  - Bolden is also trying to secure a Community Development Grant from the federal government to assist with the cost of the project.
- There is a traffic study taking place near Resnick School
  - The study will track traffic going westward during peak drop-off and pick-up times
  - To help offset current traffic issues, there are adjustments to the timing of the traffic signal during school hours.
- The next Ward 8 meeting will cover Probate 101
  - Bolden encouraged community members to submit any topics of interest for meetings going forward.