

NIP

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PLAN



CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM
Community and
Business Development





The Neighborhood Improvement Plan (NIP) is a collaborative effort of the City of Winston-Salem and several local non-profit organizations interested in the overall quality of life for all city residents. It was designed to educate tenants living in low-to-moderate income apartment complexes and neighborhoods about the do's and don'ts of city codes and ordinances, and programs throughout the City.

The NIP committee sponsors community outreach events at apartment complexes, seminars at schools and churches, as well as produces informational television programs and videos in Spanish.

This booklet was designed to be your guide to becoming more civic-minded and as an encouragement for youth and adults to take an active interest in civic affairs and activities.

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Housing Code

- The purpose of the Minimum Housing Code is to protect public health, safety and the general welfare of Winston-Salem residents. The code requires landlords and homeowners to maintain all housing (apartments, homes, townhouses, etc.) in a safe and clean condition.
- The Housing Code establishes minimum standards that all housing must meet. Neighborhood Conservation Officers (NCOs) inspect homes and apartments to ensure they meet those standards. Based on their findings, the NCO will determine if the house needs to be repaired or demolished.
- The Code Enforcement Program is an important part of the city's overall strategy to put into practice programs to preserve neighborhoods and to help maintain newly built houses. This program together with many other services that are provided by the city will work best if all interested individuals do their part to help it succeed.

HOUSING



Housing Code Violations



Exposed Wiring



Deteriorated Porch



Fire Damaged Dwelling



Peeling Paint



Broken Windows



Vacant Unsecured Dwelling

Housing Code Violations

- Tenants in rental property are required to maintain their dwelling in a clean and sanitary condition, and are encouraged to immediately report conditions in need of repair to the property owner or property manager.
- If you are aware of any of the conditions mentioned above anywhere in the City of Winston-Salem, please contact Community and Business Development, Code Enforcement Division, at 727-8000. Having the property's street address will aid in providing a faster response.
- You are not required to give your name when reporting a complaint.



Housing Code Enforcement Procedures



1

Request received, complaint registered, or inspector observe substandard housing conditions.



2

Initial housing inspection is conducted.



3

If no violations, case closed as standard. If minor case, owner notified and case monitored until brought into compliance . If unfit case, per state law, Notice of Hearing is served upon property owner and parties-in-interest within 10-30 day period.



4

Hearing is conducted within 10-30 days by the Housing Conservation Administrator to determine why property should not be declared unfit for human habitation.



5

Order to repair or vacate, and secure, or repair or demolish (generally within 30 days) is served upon the owner.



6

Owner may appeal decision of Housing Conservation Administrator within 10 days of issuance of order.



7

Housing is reinspected to determine if owner has complied with the Order. Reinspection at Order expiration at no cost; however if any additional reinspections, owner charged \$50 fee.



8

Housing is found to be in compliance with code requirements as directed in the order. If not, owner is subject to civil citation. If complied, case is closed.



9

If housing is occupied and owner has NOT complied with the Order, a civil penalty will be assessed at \$350.00 1st day and \$100.00 every day thereafter. If vacant the case will be referred to City Council for demolition consideration after a six month vacancy period.



10

Council renders a decision regarding enforcement action, i.e. repair, demolish or in rem repair.

11

Staff execute Council's directive.



12

Housing is brought into compliance with code requirements.

Environmental Nuisances

- Trash, litter, high grass, improperly maintained shrubbery, profusely growing vegetation, inside furniture stored outside, structures missing address numbers, and improperly stored foods present public health and general welfare concerns for residents of the City of Winston-Salem.
- Property owners and occupants are required to maintain their property at all times, free from the above-named nuisances. When not maintained, property owners and violators will be cited and allowed 5 days to correct the conditions. If not corrected, the city will correct the conditions and bill the owner and/or violator the cost of the correction plus an administrative fee and a penalty. The minimum cost is \$300.00.
- Repeated violations in excess of 2 violations during a calendar year classify the property as a chronic violator location, whereby only one notice is provided to the property owner. The following calendar year violations identified will be corrected without further notice, and the owner will be billed the cost of the correction, an administrative fee, plus a penalty.

Trash

- Trash, junk, old carpet, furniture, and mattresses on private property.



Trash and Solid Waste Violations

- Trash, junk, old carpet, furniture, boxes, and mattresses, **at the curb.**



Grass and High Weeds

- Grass and weeds over 8 inches high.



Rat Harborage

- Vegetation growing profusely and conditions that harbor and/or provide water and food for rats.



Indoor Furniture Use Violation

- Furniture made for inside use placed on porches and in yards.



Abandoned/Junked Vehicles

- Junked and/or abandoned vehicles present public, health and safety concerns.
- Vehicles left on city streets longer than 7 days (2 days on major thoroughfares) are considered abandoned.



Abandoned/Junked Vehicles

- Vehicles that are breeding grounds for rats, mosquitoes, insects, snakes or other pests, and that are a point of collection for water and/or source of danger from exposed metal, glass, or rigid surfaces.



Abandoned/Junked Vehicles

- Vehicles in danger of falling or turning over, or sources of entrapment.



Abandoned/Junked Vehicles

- Vehicles used to store trash & junk.



Abandoned/Junked Vehicles

- Depending upon the severity of the violation, violators are allowed 10 days in which to correct the conditions. When not corrected, the City of Winston-Salem will tow the vehicle to the abandoned vehicle storage lot. In order to reclaim the vehicle, the owner must pay the towing cost plus storage and administrative fees. If not claimed in approximately two months, the vehicle will be sold at auction.
- Repeat offenders may be charged an additional \$250 penalty per vehicle per occurrence.
- To report a concern or check on a complaint, call Community and Business Development, Code Enforcement Division, at 727-8000.

Abandoned Vehicle Procedures



1

Neighborhood Conservation Officer observes or a complaint is made of abandoned vehicle.



2

Neighborhood Conservation Officer verifies that motor vehicle is in violation of one or more of the junk and/or abandoned vehicle categories, and an abandoned vehicle tag is affixed to the vehicle.



3

If vehicle is located on private property and meets one or more of the aesthetic violation requirements, an aesthetic form is affixed to the vehicle with a 10 day expiration date.



4

Vehicle ownership and lienholder information obtained.



5

Pre-tow notice issued to owners of vehicles in violation of aesthetic ordinance.



6

Reinspection is made at expiration of notice.



7

Vehicles in violation towed to abandoned vehicle lot.



8

Vehicle assigned to secured space at abandoned vehicle lot.



9

Post-tow documentation processed.



10

Vehicles not reclaimed sold at auction.

Animal/Fowl Violations

- Improperly housed, fenced, and/or maintained animals contribute to unsanitary conditions, public health and welfare concerns which increases the presence of rats.



Animal/Fowl Violations

- Chickens, pigeons or other fowl.



- Each of the above animals must be contained within an adequate fence and housed within an appropriate shelter.
- Keeping chickens, pigeons or other fowl shelter or fencing within 150 feet of an adjoining property line is prohibited.

Animal/Fowl Violations

- Animal manure must be collected daily and placed in fly-proof and watertight containers with tight fitting lids.



Animal Waste

Animal Violations

- Keeping cattle, horses, mules, sheep, donkeys, ponies or rabbits or maintaining shelter for them within 50 feet of any adjoining property line is prohibited.
- When violations of the animal code are observed, the owner is notified and allowed five days to correct the violations. If not corrected within five days, the violator will be assessed a civil citation of \$20 per day until the conditions are corrected. If not corrected after 10 additional days, the city will take action to correct the conditions and assess the cleanup cost to the violator.

Environmental Control Procedures



1

NCO conducts initial environmental inspection.



2

When violation is found, NCO issues a Notice of Violation and Nuisance Abatement letter to property owner.



3

Property owner is allowed five days to comply for solid waste and weed violations, and five days for animal violations.



4

NCO conducts reinspection at expiration of notice to determine if property owner has corrected the violation.



5

If violation is brought into compliance, case is closed corrected by owner.



6

If violation is not brought into compliance, NCO refers case to environmental crew to be corrected.



7

Environmental crew corrects violation and prepares invoice for work done.



8

Revenue Department generates invoice mails to property owner.



9

If property owner pays invoice, no further action is taken.



10

If property owner fails to pay invoice, a sanitation lien is placed against property by the Revenue Department.

Rooming/Boarding Houses

- Rooming or boarding houses are not permitted in single-family zoned residential areas.
- What most people consider rooming and boarding houses are actually called single housekeeping units. Tell-tale signs of single housekeeping unit violations include but are not limited to locking mechanisms on internal bedroom doors, multiple mailboxes, locked or partitioned inside stair wells or doors separating the house, separate electrical meters, separate kitchens, or separate exterior entrances.



Inoperative Vehicles

- Zoning ordinances allow for only one inoperative vehicle on a property. An inoperative vehicle is defined as not having a current inspection sticker, not having a current vehicle registration, or being inoperable as originally designed. They are not allowed in residential areas, and are only allowed in areas zoned for motor vehicle storage yards.



Motor Vehicle Storage Yards

- Motor vehicle storage yards, where allowed by zoning, must be permitted through the Zoning office.
- Vehicles may violate both inoperative motor vehicle ordinances and junked and abandoned motor vehicle ordinances at the same time.



Signs

- Before erecting signs, permanent or temporary on your property, please check with the Inspections Division.
- Temporary signs are not permitted. Violators subject themselves to civil citations and potential court action.
- Real estate and yard sale directional signs are permitted at intersections from Friday noon to Monday noon. Signs are not permitted in the right-of-way at any other time.



Residential Businesses

- Businesses located in residential areas must be properly zoned for that specific business; must have appropriate permits; must have an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy; must have been inspected by the Winston-Salem Fire Department; and must have the required city and state business and privilege licenses.
- To determine zoning allowances, contact Zoning Enforcement at 727-8000.



- If converting a residential structure or a structure of residential character to a business use, the property must first be rezoned to accommodate the proposed use, proper permits issued and the structure must meet all applicable state building code requirements including but not limited to commercial structural requirements, fire resistance and suppression requirements and American Disabilities Act requirements.

Licenses and Permits

- The City of Winston-Salem’s Business Licensing section, 747-6954, can answer questions concerning city privilege licenses.
- Home occupations are allowed in some instances. Contact Zoning Enforcement for details and the required permit.
- Any use of a dwelling or an accessory building in a residential zoning district requires a permit issued by the Inspections Division.
- The occupation must be secondary to the residential use.
- Only one home occupation per dwelling unit is allowed.
- No evidence of a home occupation on the building’s property is allowed.
- Commercial floor area cannot exceed 25% of the gross floor area.
- The permit application requires a floor plan, a survey of the property, a completed application, and a completed affidavit. For more information, please contact Zoning Enforcement at 727-8000.

Household Garbage

All city households will receive free use of a sturdy, 96-gallon cart for their household garbage under the curbside garbage collection program. The cart can hold 10 garbage bags. This should be big enough to meet the needs of even large families (additional carts are available for an annual service fee). They roll easily, even when fully loaded.

Households with no one physically able to roll out the cart may request an exemption and continue to receive backyard collection. The form is located on our website at www.sanitation.cityofws.org or residents can call City Link at 727-8000 to request the form. No exemptions will be granted without written certification.

NOTE: Residents who receive a Certificate of Inability should continue to use their current garbage can(s) for garbage collection.

Backyard Collection

- Residents who maintain backyard collection should make sure containers are located in an easily accessible area, preferably in the back yard or the side of the dwelling, not in the front yard.



Guidelines for Curbside Collection

- Carts should be at the curb by 6 a.m. the day of collection and no earlier than 5 p.m. the day before. Remove them from the curb by 8 a.m. the next day.
- Only carts that work with our equipment can be used.
- Place cart at the curb, not in the street.
- The silver lift handle for the truck hoist should be facing the street. The hinge for the lid should be away from the street.
- Do not place cart behind parked cars or within three feet of trees and bushes or other carts.
- Use only the cart. Retain excess garbage for the next week's collection.
- Excess household trash is NOT permitted with the 96g curbside collection cart.



SANITATION

- During June, July and August, garbage is collected earlier and must be set out before 6:00 a.m.
- Hazardous waste can not be placed in household garbage containers.



Dumpsters

- Dumpsters must be maintained in good condition.
- Dumpsters must have lids and doors.
NO OPEN DUMPSTERS ALLOWED.
- All drainage plugs must be adequately and appropriately installed and maintained.



Bulky Household Trash

- Items such as carpet, appliances, furniture and mattresses are collected only once a year during the annual neighborhood bulky item pickup.
- Bulky item pickup occurs March through August, and residents are notified by mail several weeks in advance of their collection week. Bulky items are not collected at any other time. Collection schedules are available at www.bulkyitemcityofws.org
- Residents can dispose of bulky items at the Hanes Mill Road Landfill, located at 325 Hanes Mill Rd.
- The Community and Business Development Department will dispose of bulky items for a fee.



Electronic Waste Disposal Ban

Under a new state law that took effect July 1, televisions and computers and related computer equipment will be banned from landfills in North Carolina.



The electronic waste disposal ban affects computer equipment, including CPUs, laptops, monitors, printers, printer/fax/scan devices, mice and keyboards; and all televi-

sions, including flat-panel televisions, projection televisions and televisions with picture tubes. **These items are also banned from bulky item pickup.**

Disposal Options

Year-round, residents may drop off televisions and computer equipment at no charge at any attended Goodwill Donation Center and at 3RC The Enviro-Station at 1401 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, across from Bowman Gray Stadium.



Brush

- Brush is collected every 10-14 working days when crews are not involved with bulky item and leaf collection. Collection frequencies will be longer during the operation of these two programs. Branches, limbs and shrubbery must not exceed 6 inches in diameter and 6 feet in length. It should be placed neatly at the curb with all limbs facing the same direction. **DO NOT MIX OTHER WASTE MATERIAL WITH BRUSH.**
- A fee is charged for removal of more than 20 cubic yards, one load of brush.
- Commercially cut brush and limbs cut from vacant lots will not be collected.
- Brush collection is year round but is LIMITED during leaf season.
- Small branches, sticks and shrubbery clippings can be placed in yard carts with fee paid stickers for collection year round.



Leaves and Grass

- Loose leaves can only be placed at the curb for collection from November 1 to January 1. At all other times, leaves should be composted or placed in a yard cart with a fee paid sticker for collection. Piles of leaves should be free of sticks or debris.



Other Yard Waste

- Yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, shrubbery trimmings, etc.) can not be placed in bags or boxes for collection. Sanitation will collect yard waste if placed in a special roll out cart, and placed at the street by 7 a.m. on the day of collection, and removed from the street within 24 hours. Yard carts are emptied weekly year round.
- To order a yard cart, go to the city's website at www.sanitation.cityofws.org or call City Link at 727-8000.
- There is an annual fee for this service.



NO



YES

Recycling

- The city's curbside program provides weekly collection service through a private contractor to single-family households, multi-family units, and small businesses that receive once-a-week hand collection of garbage. For information, questions, missed collections, recycling bins, etc. call the Recycling Hotline at 72-EARTH (723-2784) or contact City Link at 727-8000.
- Recyclables may be taken to the Hanes Mill Rd. Landfill, located at 325 Hanes Mill Rd., at no charge.



Recycling

- The city's curbside recycling program will accept #1 thru #7 clear and colored plastic bottles (excluding motor oil bottles), aluminum and steel cans, aerosol cans, glass bottles and jars, newspaper, junk mail, office paper, magazines, telephone books, chipboard and corrugated cardboard 3 feet by 3 feet or less in size, (bundling will no longer be required).
- Containers should be at the curb by 6:00 a.m. on the day of collection.



Housing Discrimination

- Human Relations, 727-8000, enforces the Fair Housing Act and the City Municipal Code.
- Through enforcement, Human Relations ensures that citizens are provided equal housing rights by enforcing the Federal Fair Housing Act locally on behalf of HUD.
- Human Relations investigates and mediates housing discrimination complaints.

Landlord/Tenant Rights and Responsibilities

- Human Relations mediates disputes between landlords and tenants regarding their rights and responsibilities as per NCGS Chapter 42.

Limited English Proficiency Policy Compliance

- The City of Winston-Salem is committed to improving the accessibility of services to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or who do not speak English as a primary language and has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166 of 2000, as a federal funding recipient, the City of Winston-Salem has an LEP Policy. The City of Winston-Salem has delegated authority for LEP compliance to the Human Relations Department.
- The City’s LEP Policy includes LEP procedures, implementation, and the grievance process for any complaints from residents regarding a lack of Limited English Proficiency access to city services and/or programs.
- Departments must take “reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access” for serving limited English individuals based on the frequency of contact, nature or importance of the program, activity or service provided, and resources available.
- The department accepts complaints from residents of the City of Winston-Salem who believe they have been unable to access city services or programs due to limited English proficiency.

Fair Housing Law 7 Protected Classes

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex
- National Origin
- Status
- Disability



Fair Housing Law

Protection includes:

- Sale
- Rental
- Leasing
- Advertisements
- Brokerage Services
- Availability



Disability Protection

- Tenant is allowed to make reasonable modifications.
- Landlord must make reasonable accommodations.
- Buildings built after March 31, 1991 must have elevators if there are four or more units.
- Accessibility
 - Entrance into & through routes
 - Light switches, thermostats, electrical outlets, environmental controls
 - Reinforced bathroom walls for grab bars
 - Doors/Hallways wide enough for wheelchairs
 - Public/Common areas must be accessible to persons with disabilities
 - Usable kitchen & bathrooms

Disability Protection

If you or someone associated with you:

- Has a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Has AIDS, chronic alcoholism, chronic mental illness, visual, hearing or mobility impairments, mental retardation;
- Has a record of disability.



Types of Discrimination

- Refusal to rent, sell or negotiate housing.
- Setting different terms, conditions or privileges.
- Providing different housing services or facilities.
- Block–Busting.
- Falsely denying that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental.
- Denying access or membership to a facility or service.

Senior Housing Exemptions

- Federal/State programs specifically designated for elderly housing.
- 100% of units occupied by people aged 62 or older.
- 80% of units occupied by people aged 55 or older (at least 1 person).



Single Family Dwelling Exemptions

- Owner leases less than three single family units.
- Sale or rental without use of realtor.
- Sale or rental without discriminatory ads.
- Has made only one sale in 24-month period..



Filing a housing discrimination complaint

- Contact Human Relations Department to schedule appointment.
- Bring all necessary documentation including lease agreement.
- Sign 903 Form (written allegation).
- Respondent notified & interviewed.
- Conciliation attempted.
- Cause or No Cause Determination.
- Case turned over to City Attorney's Office.



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

FAIR HOUSING IS THE LAW!

What the law requires of the property owner

- Make your house or apartment comply with all building, housing, and health codes which significantly affect health and safety.
- Make all repairs necessary to make your house or apartment livable.
- Keep in good working order all electrical, heating, and ventilation systems.
- Supply adequate hot water and heat at all times.
- Keep halls and stairways safe and sanitary.
- If the property owner owns four units in the same building, he/she must provide garbage containers.
- The property owner must give tenant at least 24 hours notice before entering tenant's apartment. The property owner cannot walk in whenever he/she wants to for any reason, except for an emergency. If the property owner gives you notice, he/she must have a legitimate reason to enter — such as a need to make repairs.



What the law does not allow the property owner to do

- The owner cannot do anything to prevent you from exercising your rights. He/She cannot increase your rent and decrease your services. Nor can he/she bring threats of eviction if you have complied with or brought code violations to the attention of the city.
- The owner is not permitted to shut off any of your utilities, change locks on your apartment or threaten any of these acts in order to make you move out of your apartment.
- The owner cannot enter your apartment whenever he or she wants to or repeatedly demand to enter.
- The owner cannot do any of the above even if you are behind with your rent. Some of these actions would be considered crimes of trespassing and burglary. If the owner does any of these things, you should consult your attorney. You have the right to sue for damages, plus attorney fees.

What the law requires of the tenant

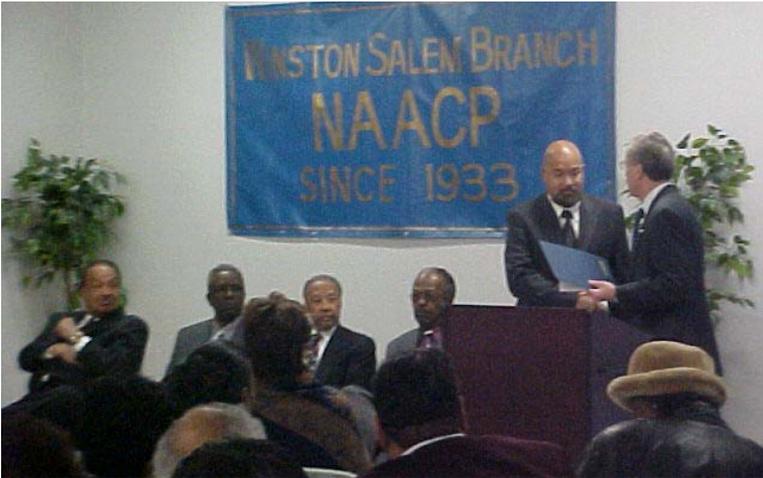
- Pay your rent on time.
- Keep your apartment or house safe and sanitary.
- Dispose of trash and garbage in a sanitary manner.
- Keep all appliances that the owner provides in good working order.
- Keep the electrical and plumbing fixtures clean and use them properly.
- Do not damage the apartment or permit your guests or visitors to do so.
- Do not disturb other tenants. All tenants have the right to quiet enjoyment. In the event you feel your peace and quiet are being disturbed or resident conflicts occur, please contact your landlord or management office.
- You are responsible to the owner for any damages you cause. The owner can take the money out of your security deposit when you move out and can sue you for additional damages. However, you are not responsible for normal wear and tear of the walls that routinely need to be repaired or plumbing fixtures that break down because of long use.
- The owner can evict you if you do not perform your obligations. Written notice of one of these violations must be given in order to process an eviction. If you do not remedy the condition within 30 days, the owner can begin eviction action in court.

Human Relations community and cultural outreach

Human Relations promotes and encourages positive community and cultural relations throughout the City of Winston-Salem through trainings and forums, specifically:

- Landlord Tenant Rights and Responsibilities Training.
- Race Relations Forums.
- Religious, Disability and other protected class forums.





Cultural Diversity Training



Fair Housing Law Training

Fire Extinguishers

- The gauge should be checked on a routine basis to ensure that the extinguisher is fully charged.
- Extinguishers should only be used if you are familiar with how to operate it. There are specific types of extinguishers for different classes of fire. In case of any emergency please call 9-1-1.
- The person using the extinguisher should always make sure they have an exit at their back in case the fire becomes too large to handle.



FIRE DEPARTMENT



The acronym PASS should be used when discharging a fire extinguisher.

1. P = Pull
2. A = Aim
3. S = Squeeze
4. S = Sweep



Extension Cords

- Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be substitutes for permanent wiring.
- Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact.
- Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle and shall serve only one portable appliance.



Smoke Detectors

- A smoke detector should be located on every level of the home including the basement, in every bedroom, and outside of every sleeping area.
- All smoke detector devices older than 10 years need to be replaced in the home.
- Batteries for smoke detectors should be replaced twice a year—once in the spring and once in the fall (easier to remember when the time changes).
- Detectors should be checked on a routine basis to make sure nothing is blocking/obstructing them from being able to operate properly.



Candles

- Never burn candles near or on anything that may be combustible.
- Make sure candles are completely out before going to bed.
- Candles should always be used in a noncombustible container or holder with a globe.
- Children should always be monitored around candles.
- Children should never be around lit candles.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.



CITY PROGRAMS



- Housing Rehabilitation
- Construction Training
- First Time Homebuyer
- Business Training
- Small Business Assistance
- Assistance with Neighborhood Improvement Plan
- Landlord-Tenant Training
- Landlord-Tenant Mediation
- Keep W-S Beautiful
- Bulky Item Pick-up
- Recreation and Parks
- Recycling
- Landfills
- Yard Cart Waste
- Leaves & Brush Pick-up
- Neighborhood Association Organizing
- Neighborhood Watch
- Operation Impact
- Trash Busters
- Trans-Aid

Please contact the Community and Business Development Department at 336-727-8000 for further information regarding this booklet.



Winston-Salem City Council

Allen Joines, Mayor

Vivian H. Burke, Mayor Pro Tempore, Northeast Ward,
Denise D. Adams, North Ward; Dan Besse, Southwest Ward;
Robert C. Clark, West Ward; Molly Leight, South Ward;
Wanda Merschel, Northwest Ward; Derwin L. Montgomery,
East Ward; James Taylor, Jr., Southeast Ward
Lee Garrity, City Manager