RENTAL LICENSING PROJECT REPORT

March 2023

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

Rental Licensing Project Summary

In 2023, the Metropolitan Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) researched city-level rental licensing programs in the Twin Cities metro region to inform program planning and landlord outreach for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Voucher holders face barriers to placing their vouchers for a variety of reasons including lack of landlords who are willing to work with the program.

Who we heard from

Cities were selected to be surveyed if they were either part of Metro HRA's jurisdiction, cities that elect to participate in the Metropolitan Council's Local Housing Incentives Program, or both.

93 out of 111 cities in the region responded. Background research verified that three of the non-responders manage a rental licensing program, so select known answers for these cities verified through background research are included in the survey results below when applicable. The remaining cities that did not respond had a population of less than 20,000 people.

Our approach

Metro HRA staff administered an online survey and conducted follow-up interviews to learn about cities' licensing programs, landlord relationships, and programming to answer the following questions.

1) Which cities in the region require rental property licensing?

72 cities reported having some form of a rental licensing or registration program: 65 require licenses and 7 cities require registration. Two additional cities maintain a list of rental properties but do not currently require licensing or registration.

2) To what extent is rental property data and landlord contact information tracked and available to the public?

For those cities that maintain a list, it was most common for cities to track owner (92%) and property manager/site manager contact info (84%) and the number of units by property, and lease common to track affordability of rental housing (%), rent by unit type (5%), and public complaints (9%). Any registration and licensing information can be accessed when collected by a government agency via a formal data request. Twenty cities (27%) have open data, meaning that the rental lists and data are available through an online public access portal. 62% of cities reported they would require a formal data request to release rental property data they maintain.

3) What requirements must property owners comply with as part of the license or registration process?

Of the 72 cities with a licensing or registration program for rental units, nearly all of them (97%) have some form of inspections program with standards ranging from compliance with basic health and safety requirements required by state fire code to a comprehensive inspections program. About a third of cities that reported having an inspections program (24 out of 70) use the International Property Maintenance Code. 35 cities require annual licensing or registration renewal (representing 51% of cities requiring licensing or registration), 21 cities (30%) require biennial renewal, and 33% have some other type of renewal structure, such as merit-based or when ownership changes.

4) How might the Metro HRA collaborate with and support cities across the region to advance housing choice and access to affordable housing options that accept vouchers?

Many city staff recognized a need for more detailed understanding of the voucher program and could use more training to better respond to public inquiries.

City staff reported constituents lumping HCV in with their opposition to all types of publicly funded affordable housing initiatives.

The rise in investor-owned housing has caused issues across the region with upkeep, neighbor relations, and code violations that negatively impact the perception of voucher program, and renters more broadly. These complaints are often fielded by city staff, not Metro HRA or other housing authorities in another jurisdiction.

Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV)

- Commonly known as Section 8
- Federally funded rental assistance program
- Participants shop for housing on the private rental market using a voucher.
- The voucher pays the difference between market rent and 30% of household income.
- Subsidy paid directly to the landlord.
- Participation by landlords is voluntary.
- Metro HRA is the largest HCV administrator in the state of MN serving over 7,200 households each month.

Introduction

The Metropolitan Council's Community Development division is responsible for regional growth strategy, planning, technical assistance to local communities, and planning for housing, regional parks, and open space. The division also provides housing services through the Met Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) and provides grants for development, redevelopment, and contaminated land cleanup to help communities grow and succeed through its Livable Communities Act (LCA) programs. Whereas the Met Council and its planning functions guide the entire seven-county Twin Cities region, Metro HRA and LCA both serve a smaller but overlapping subset of communities through the provision of rent assistance and grants. A list of Metro HRA and LCA communities is listed in Appendix A.

Staff from four areas of Community Development informed this project. Metro HRA served as a project lead and report author, while staff from LCA, Local Planning Assistance (LPA), and Research informed study design, data collection instruments, and findings.

The project's purpose was to do a systematic survey of cities to learn more about rental licensing in the region. The purpose of the research is to develop new relationships and better understand trends and opportunities impacting rental housing licensing and landlord programming. The results of the survey will inform Metro HRA landlord outreach and Imagine 2050 housing policies.

The Metro HRA provides rent assistance to over 7,200 low-income households in its service area, primarily through the federal Housing Choice Voucher program. The Metro HRA operates in four of the seven counties in the region, including all of Anoka and Carver counties and suburban Hennepin and Ramsey counties, excluding the cities of Saint Paul, Minneapolis, Bloomington, Plymouth, Richfield, and St. Louis Park. The program relies on the voluntary participation of private landlords. In recent years, rising rents and low vacancy rates have limited the number of landlords willing to participate in the program.

One barrier to reaching new landlords is figuring out where rental units are located and accessing landlord contact information. Many cities operate rental licensing programs or maintain formal and informal lists of rental properties. In many cases, city staff maintain direct relationships with landlords that can offer important insights.

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Background

The Housing Choice Voucher program—commonly known as Section 8—is a federally funded rental assistance program for low-income households. Eligible households are issued a voucher for a 120-day term to search for rental housing from a private landlord. Households pay between 30% and 40% of their income towards rent.

The federal voucher pays the landlord directly for the remaining rent balance. Participation by landlords is voluntary. The rent must be reasonable and the unit must pass an initial health and safety inspection as well as periodic inspections thereafter.

The Metro HRA is the state's largest voucher administrator, with the goals of increasing the number of rental units available to voucher holders and ensuring voucher holders can live in a community of their choice. Although landlord participation is an important driving factor of voucher placement success rates, other factors impact successful placement including:

- A family selected from the waitlist doesn't respond.
- A family chooses to not accept assistance because they:
    - Have already located housing or living elsewhere.
    - have already received assistance from another agency.
    - Are moving to a project-based unit.

Voucher program participants can also face challenges placing their voucher for a variety of reasons including:

- They can't find a landlord willing to accept the voucher.
- Unit rent is above program limits.
- Their family needs more bedrooms than they can find.
- The household or member(s) of the household has poor credit, a criminal history or a challenging rental history.
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The Metro HRA monitors the percentage of vouchers that expire before placement for current voucher households that want to move, and for households receiving voucher assistance for the first time. Below are the percentages:

Voucher Type	Success Rate %	Notes
Housing Choice Voucher	55%	Households coming off waiting list for first time.
Special Purpose Vouchers	80%	Serve specialized populations including people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and people living with disabilities – vouchers often come with housing search assistance and financial incentives.

Movers	65%	Households that already have a voucher and moving to a new unit.

The Metro HRA implemented Small Area Fair Market Rent (SAFMR) in an effort to increase housing choice and affordability for voucher households. SAFMRs are rent limits set at the zip code level vs. one limit for the entire Twin Cities metro region. The Metro HRA has 124 zip codes in its operating area with varying rents. With the adoption of SAFMRs, higher rent areas of the region have higher rent limits and lower rent areas of the region have lower rent limits. This allows for greater choice in all areas of the region.

Figure 1 Voucher Placement Success Rate, Metro HRA, 2019-2023
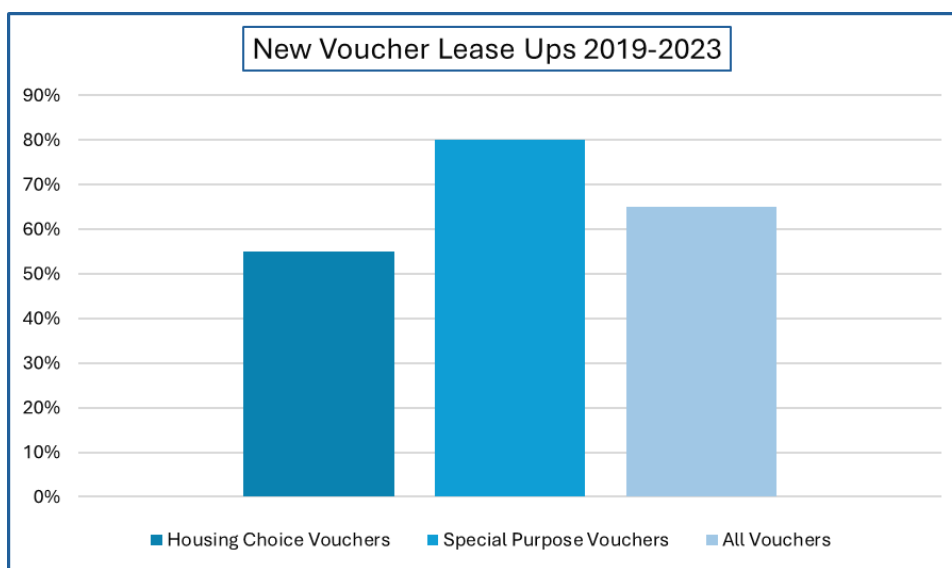
Many factors impact voucher acceptance by landlords. At the time this report was compiled, voucher program participants were not protected by state or federal Fair Housing laws which makes accepting vouchers discretionary for landlords. There are administrative barriers to the voucher program, such as communication and completing required paperwork and verifications. Mandatory Metro HRA inspections are done often in addition to a city-level inspections. Finally, there is stigma around the voucher program and its participants.

The Metro HRA takes a multi-faceted approach to attract new landlords to the voucher program. Staff offer incentives available through special programs, invite landlords to workshops to provide education and support successful partnerships, and directly engage landlords through targeted housing search for voucher holders enrolled in special programs. The Metro HRA continues to prioritize and invest in creative solutions for landlord recruitment, outreach, and engagement.

Many cities implement rental licensing ordinances that require registration and inspection of rental units. The goal of rental licensing programs is usually to promote and protect the health and safety of tenants by ensuring safe and decent rental housing. The programs typically involve some degree of engagement with landlords and data collection. The information on unit locations and landlord contacts would greatly expand Metro HRA's existing landlord outreach and would be a rich information source

for housing policy planning. However, a centralized tracking system does not exist for use by cities operating rental licensing programs, or a way to easily combine the data currently maintained by cities across the region.

The research project asks the following questions:

1) Which cities in the region require rental property licensing or registration?

2) To what extent is rental property data and landlord contact information tracked and available to the public?

3) What is required of property owners to comply with the license or registration process?

4) How might the Metropolitan Council's Community Development staff collaborate with and support cities in this work to advance the shared goal of improving housing choice and access to affordable housing options across the region?

Staff administered an online survey and conducted follow-up interviews to learn about cities' licensing programs and landlord relationship management.

Methods

Background research

The project began with background research to orient the team to rental licensing program coverage and common program components. Staff from Metro HRA, LCA and LPA created a list of target communities, which included every city in Metro HRA's operating area as well as LCA participating communities, see Appendix A.

First, staff searched city's official sites for key terms including "rental license," "rental registration," "rental properties," and "licenses." If no relevant results were returned, staff then searched city code (when publicly accessible) for ordinances related to rental licensing, registration, and inspections. Staff tracked the findings in a shared spreadsheet.

In the second step of background research, staff gathered information about common rental licensing program components. Programs typically included inspection standards used, frequency of inspections, language referring to "public health" or "public welfare" on a city's website or in the city code, links to public directories of licensed rental properties, notable ordinances, and key program details.

These components were not tracked systematically. Rather, the goal was to note program components implemented consistently across cities to inform an initial set of survey questions. For example, one notable distinction staff discovered was rental licensing versus registration. Typically, cities that required licenses also required inspections and collected a fee, while cities that registered rental properties did neither. A portion of the tracking spreadsheet can be found in Appendix B.

Survey

Design

Staff designed survey questions for the most common program components using information gathered during the background research stage. The first draft of survey questions included the following sections:

- Use of rental licensing or registration
- Rental property directory
- Program details
- City ordinances related to rental housing
- Awareness and perception of the voucher program.

Subsequent revisions resulted in several changes. Questions about the housing voucher program, being very open-ended, were deemed more appropriate for the interview stage. Several questions were added to the survey that focused on what data is captured by cities in lists/directories of rental properties and how external users, like the Metro HRA, might access the data. Information including contact information for landlords and rental property locations are of special interest to the Metro HRA for landlord outreach. The final survey instrument is included in Appendix C.

Administration

The survey was administered using Qualtrics, an online survey platform. Cities in the Metro HRA and LCA program areas totaled 123. Staff excluded 12 townships from the survey because they operate under county jurisdiction. The total number of target cities was 111.

Metro HRA staff circulated the list of cities to LCA colleagues, requesting contact information for city staff with whom they have an established relationship. Metro HRA staff gathered contact information for the remaining cities from city websites. Community Development Department city staff were the priority contact, then city planners, and finally, city clerks or city administrators. Cities were then divided into three groups for survey rollout.

1. Cities with a rental licensing program and a strong relationship with LCA colleagues.
2. Cities with a rental licensing program and a weak or lacking relationship with LCA colleagues.
3. Cities for which staff found no evidence of a rental licensing program, regardless of relationship.

The survey was sent via email in a personal message to each city contact in a phased roll-out, three weeks apart. Responses were tracked in a spreadsheet. Cities that did not submit a response were reminded at least twice via email. Staff followed up with the remaining non-responders via phone in the final two weeks before closing the survey.

Analysis

The exported Qualtrics dataset was cleaned by removing submissions without any identifying information and duplicative submissions. Several questions offered "other, please specify" as an answer, and respondents could give additional details in an open-ended response. Respondents often offered answers that fit better into other answer categories. So, "other" answers were re-coded into the proper response category, as appropriate. Survey data was analyzed using Excel.

Interviews

Design

Follow-up interviews were conducted with survey respondents who indicated their willingness and interest. The goal of the interviews was to gain a more in-depth understanding of the experiences of city staff related to rental licensing, as well as to serve as a first step in building relationships between the Metro HRA and partner cities. Seven interview questions were developed on the following topics: perceptions of the voucher program (among landlords, administrators, city residents, etc.); methods and ideas for landlord engagement; support needs for engaging with landlords; ideas for recruiting landlords to accept HCVs; and ideas, benefits, and concerns regarding partnership with the Met Council. The full list of interview questions is included in Appendix D.

Participants

56 cities indicated a willingness to participate in interviews in their survey response. Staff selected 10 cities for interviews and were able to conduct a total of 8 interviews. Cities were strategically selected to reflect a diversity of rural, urban, and suburban communities, in addition to geographic representation,

cities in opportunity areas,[1] and cities with high interest from voucher program participants. The following cities (and one additional, anonymous city) participated in follow-up interviews:

- Andover
- Blaine
- Brooklyn Center
- Burnsville

- Eden Prairie
- Maple Grove
- Roseville
- Anonymous

Analysis

Detailed notes were taken by two people during each interview, including stand-out, verbatim quotes. Following the completion of the interviews, the notes were summarized into main points, and common themes were developed within each of the five predetermined topics. Themes were included regardless of their frequency, meaning even if only one interviewee mentioned a topic, it was included in the report. Notable quotes were categorized into corresponding topics. Seven out of the eight interview participants permitted their city name to be used in this report.

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[1] Opportunity areas is a term used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to indicate areas with high educational attainment, low poverty, and a low concentration of existing Housing Choice Vouchers. Metro HRA is a study site for the national Community Choice Demonstration program which focuses on moving HCV families to areas of high opportunity. More information available at http://metrohra.org/ccdemo

SUMMARY OF RESULTS
<u>Quantitative Results</u>

A total of 91 partial and complete survey responses were collected, for a final response rate of 82%. A full list of target communities, broken down by response and non-response, can be found in <u>Appendix E</u>. Missing responses were concentrated in cities from the third phase of survey roll-out, presumably because they are considerably smaller in size with fewer staff. Background research revealed that three Phase 1 cities require rental licensing and therefore survey responses were manually coded and included in results for questions regarding whether the city maintains a list of rental properties, whether licensing or registration is required, and existence of an inspection program. Additionally, the results for one non-responder city with known open data practices were included in the survey tallies related to accessibility of data. Therefore, survey responses may be out of a total of 91, 93 or 94 responses and are indicated as such.

License and Registration of Residential Rental Units

All survey participants were asked whether their city licenses or registers residential rental units. Sixty-five cities (72%) require rental licenses, and seven cities (8%) require rental registration. Ten cities (11%) require neither a license nor registration, and eight (8%) cities described other stipulations and program details which did not fit our response categories. Seven of these eight described variable licensing requirements based on property type, for example requiring a rental license only for multi-family properties but not single-family homes. One of the eight specified that their city will be implementing a licensing program in the coming months.

Seventy cities (77%) have an inspection program for at least some residential rental units, while 19 cities (21%) do not. Cities that require a rental license, also have a rental inspection program: only two cities which requires rental licenses do not have an inspection program. The majority (5) of cities that require rental registration (8) do not have an inspections program.

Nearly half of the cities that require rental license or registration (49%) require licenses or registration to be renewed annually, and 21 cities (29%) require renewal biennially. Twenty-two cities (31%) responded that renewal follows some other frequency, including a different timeframe than annual or biennial, or variable renewal frequency based on property type or results of inspection. See Table 1 for the frequency of each response to questions about rental licenses and registration, inspections, and renewal.

Table 1. Frequencies of Licensing or Registration Programs (N=90), Rental Inspections (N=90), and Renewals (N = 76)	**N (sample size)**	**Among cities with only license required**	**Among cities with only registration required**
Does your city license or register residential rental units?			
License required	69	-	-

Registration required	8	-	-
License OR registration required	76	-	-
No license or registration required	10	-	-
Does your city have an inspections program for its residential rental units?			
Yes	70	66	3
No	19	2	5
How often must licenses or registration be renewed?			
Annually	35	28	3
Biennially	21	20	1
Other	22	14	3

Rental Property Lists and Directories

Among the 93 respondents, 71 cities (76%) report maintaining a list, directory, or database of residential rental properties. Another six cities (6%) responded "other," specifying unique circumstances such as working towards a complete list or maintaining a list that only includes specific property types (for example, short-term rentals, multi-family apartments). Fourteen cities (15%) do not maintain any sort of rental property list or directory.

74 cities that answered "Yes" or "Other" in response to having a rental property list or directory responded to several follow-up items regarding the purpose of their list. See Table 2 for the frequency of each response to follow-up questions about rental property lists. Cities utilize their rental property lists for a variety of purposes. Out of the 77 "yes" respondent cities, 55 (71%) report using the list for regulatory purposes and code compliance, and 55 (71%) use the list for local inspections. Twenty-one cities (27%) report using the list for crime prevention, 19 (25%) for outreach to properties, 11 (14%) for program planning, and 6 (8%) for public notice.

These 77 cities were also asked about the accessibility of their rental property list. Fifteen cities (19%) listed internal stakeholders (city staff) as the *sole* group with access to the list. Forty-nine cities (64%) indicated that their list is available to external parties by either formal or informal request, and 19 cities

(25%) responded that their list is available to the public through open data.[2] The latter two categories were not mutually exclusive, meaning for some cities, the list of rental properties may be both publicly available and available by request. These results signal that the majority (81%) of cities that maintain a rental property list or directory make it accessible to external users in some way. Six cities shared a direct link to their rental licensing lists, available to the general public. These cities (plus the City of Minneapolis) and the corresponding link are shared in Table 1.

Table 1 Links to cities with rental licensing lists published online

Brooklyn Center	https://www.ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us/government/departments/administration/business-licensing/rental-dwellings
Burnsville	https://burnsvillemn.mycusthelp.com/WEBAPP/_rs/(S(kpdppb1245j4kqdcwbtxm2z0))/supporthome.aspx
Falcon Heights	https://www.falconheights.org/government/advanced-components/business-directory-list
Golden Valley	https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/369/Renting-Out-Your-Home
Hopkins	https://www.hopkinsmn.com/241/Apartments-Condominiums-Townhomes-in-Hop
Minneapolis	https://opendata.minneapolismn.gov/datasets/active-rental-licenses/explore
St. Paul	https://stpaul.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MinimalGallery/index.html?appid=8163a199754d4367b85ee928026b58a1#viewer=1c165473388349069a83df8693df0a3b

74 cities responded to questions regarding the types of data their list includes. Sixty-eight of these cities (92%) have contact information for property owners, and 62 (84%) have contact information for property or site managers. Fifty-six cities (76%) include the number of units by property. Seventeen cities (23%) maintain data on properties' code violations and 7 cities (9%) collect public complaint data. It was less common for cities to collect or maintain data on the unit size/type (12 cities), rental prices (5 cities), affordability (1 city), or price by unit type (4 cities).

Table 2. Frequencies of Purpose, Accessibility Level, and Data Types for Cities' Rental Property Lists/Directories (N = 74)	n*
What is the purpose of the list?	

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[2] Open Data is data that has been made freely available to the public to use, edit, redistribute, etc. provided proper attribution is made to the original owner.

Regulatory/compliance with local or state code	55
Local Inspections	55
Crime prevention	21
Outreach to properties	19
Program planning	11
Public notice	6

Who has access to the list?

The list is available to internal stakeholders (city staff)	61
The list is available to external stakeholders by formal request	46
The list is available to anyone from the public (open data)	19
The list is available to external stakeholders by informal request	14

What type(s) of data is captured in your list?

Contact information for owners	68
Contact information for property or site manager	62
Number of units by property	56
Code violation data	17
Unit size/type by property	12

Public complaints	7
Rental rates	5
Rental rates by unit type	4
Whether the property is considered affordable	1
Cities were able to select multiple responses for each of the three questions above.	

Other Rental Housing Policies and Programs

Fourteen out of 88 cities (18%) that responded to the question report offering rental housing programming for owners and/or operators. Some of the examples include property managers associations with meetings throughout the year (one city incentivizes participation with reduced license fees), improvement and remodeling grants, Landlord 101 classes, and meetings with the police department to discuss safety concerns and needs.

Twety three cities (26%) have either a crime-free multiunit housing policy or program. These ordinance and/or program requirements may include attendance at crime-free housing training, adopting a crime-free lease addendum, completing a certification process, and conducting tenant background checks.

Four cities (4%) report having a rental density cap, which is a limit to the proportion of residential properties in a designated area permitted to operate as rentals. Three of those four cities cap rental properties at 10% of properties per block, while one of them sets the cap at 25%. All four cities with a rental density cap apply it to areas zoned as single-family residential.

Qualitative Results

Seven of the interview participants represent cities with a rental licensing or registration program, and one participant comes from a city without a program. Several key findings emerged from interviews. They can be broken down into the following topics:

- Common challenges (which encompass answers to interview questions about perceptions of the voucher program and support needs related to rental housing)
- Strategies and ideas for landlord engagement
- Thoughts on partnering with the Metro HRA.

Challenges

Interview participants frequently discussed the high prevalence of misconceptions and misunderstanding of the Housing Couch Voucher program among city residents, administrators, and landlords, and at times reflected those misconceptions themselves. Despite misconceptions, interviewees themselves typically had positive opinions about the program and its value within the affordable housing landscape.

A Brooklyn Center staff person said that voucher tenants who damage the property (which is a commonly cited concern from landlords) are, in fact, "the small minority of all participants... and most are in it to step out of poverty and reach home ownership." Regarding the perception of the program overall, Andover city staff said Section 8 is, "a good program for people looking for affordable housing, but there is definitely some stigma in the general public." One city mentioned "the [City] Council has a rather antagonistic view of affordable housing." So, although city staff tend to understand and acknowledge the benefits of the voucher program, they report negative perceptions of the program by landlords and the public. The city without a rental licensing program noted in their interview that they have no voucher tenants, and due to the demographics of city residents, they guessed that landlords would be unlikely to accept housing vouchers.

City staff frequently hear from landlords that they find inspections – whether city-required and/or in addition to voucher program requirements – to be burdensome and confusing. Landlords who rent their properties to voucher holders often complete city-based inspections for licensing purposes, as well as an inspection by the Metro HRA for voucher program purposes. Several interviewees mentioned that the additional required inspection by the Metro HRA may be a deterrent. Roseville staff suggested delegation of authority for inspections to cities to avoid duplication of work and burden on property owners.

The next set of challenges interviewees discussed relates to rental housing and licensing in general, not only limited to Section 8 housing. City staff frequently mentioned the challenge of high turnover among property managers, inspectors, and maintenance staff. City staff in Blaine said, "On-site managers are constantly changing," which hinders the continuity of relationships and collaboration with city staff. A related challenge is increasing corporate ownership of rental properties. Often, corporate owners are based out-of-state and, coupled with high staff turnover on-site, it is increasingly difficult to connect quickly with a local representative about time-sensitive matters.

The final challenge relates to the difficulty of protecting renters (especially low-income renters) and ensuring quality rental housing. Speaking about the voucher program generally, one city staff person said, "It's really hard to implement a public health intervention in a capitalistic market," referring to the tension between how the rental housing market operates and the goals of the program. Without regulation and intervention, property owners are able to low-income renters have less legal and economic recourse when issues arise. On this topic, staff from another city interviewed said, "The biggest issue we have is when tenants have an issue with their landlords and the city can't get involved." They mentioned the need for tenant advocates because, "When it comes to the mistreatment of tenants, [city staff] don't have many tools in our toolkit." Interview participants from several cities introduced ideas for addressing this barrier, for example by offering financial incentives for accepting housing vouchers, implementing stronger tenant protections, and intervening through policy to improve the accessibility of affordable housing. These recommendations will be discussed in detail below.

Landlord Engagement

The next set of topics from interviews relates to specific strategies cities use to engage with landlords, as well as their suggestions for Metro HRA's efforts to recruit new landlords. Cities described having success engaging with landlords through several specific modes of communication including marketing materials (for example, newsletters, mailings, email blasts) to update landlords on current events. Cities also recommended holding meetings and trainings for landlords. Brooklyn Center city staff mentioned that a training for how to pass inspections would be useful to landlords, considering most inspection

failures happen because of minor, easily avoidable issues. Eden Prairie city staff suggested a training on the rights and responsibilities for landlords with a housing attorney to attract new landlords that may not come to other programming. Brooklyn Center city staff also suggested holding a recruitment fair, where Metro HRA and/or city staff can interface with landlords in an in-person setting. Roseville city staff offered ideas for incentivizing attendance at such events, like lowering rental license fees or offering free food.

Several cities discussed the nature of the relationship between rental property owners and city staff. City staff in Roseville and Andover both emphasized the importance of tailored support to property owners. Roseville city staff said, "We have to meet them [property owners] where they're at," while Andover city staff suggested that support should be "going [property] manager to [property] manager," ensuring that each property owner or operator is aware of their responsibilities.

The importance of maintaining upfront and honest communication was also mentioned by several cities. For example, city staff noted that they alert property owners as soon as possible when changes to licensing fees or inspection standards are being implemented. Burnsville city staff specifically noted the need for clear expectations, saying that it is beneficial when inspectors take the time to educate landlords when there are issues with the property, as opposed to citing properties without giving them a chance to make it right. The city without a rental licensing program noted a similar idea, saying that it is important to educate tenants and landlords on the need for inspections, which is ultimately to keep people safe. City staff in Andover mentioned that they have the same goals as landlords and that mutual benefit should be highlighted. As opposed to an authority-based role, cities should seek to use a service-based approach. Eden Prairie city staff talked about this topic in-depth saying, "We work really hard to be a partner to owners. We're not super heavy-handed; we're not going to throw the book at them" and, "We're serving the same customer – we all want the same stuff and have a vested interest."

Cities offered other specific ideas to inform landlord engagement, specifically for the Metro HRA. Staff in Brooklyn Center and Maple Grove recommended communicating with landlords through or alongside city staff, considering they are more familiar with who the "problem" owners can be, versus who are more reputable. The staff person from Brooklyn Center said, "I know who the good landlords are and who the bad landlords are," and that sort of information would be useful to the Metro HRA for outreach efforts. City staff in Eden Prairie and Andover both suggested that "mom-and-pop" landlords (for example, owners of one to four rental units) be prioritized for outreach by the Metro HRA considering they are generally thought to be more consistent and involved in the operation and upkeep of their rental properties.

Finally, several cities noted that the Metro HRA should take steps to address misconceptions about the housing voucher program through targeted, educational outreach. As city staff in Blaine put it, "We have to get information out to them [property owners]." Staff in the city without a rental licensing program mentioned they would benefit from the Metro HRA's assistance with educating residents and property owners about the Section 8 program. They suggested that one strategy might be presenting the HCV program as it relates to jobs and overall economic development – more rental housing means more workers and more financial gain in their growing community. It would be beneficial to educate landlords that renting to a voucher holder means they receive guaranteed rent payments each month from tenants up to date with their paperwork and in compliance with the voucher program. Also, landlords can screen and accept tenants just as they would non-voucher holders, and there is an additional level of security and oversight from Metro HRA staff, who are involved in and supportive of voucher program participants' success in rental housing.

Partnership with the Metro HRA: Ideas, Benefits, and Concerns

Partnership with cities is a broad goal of the Metro HRA, and during interviews, Metro HRA staff wanted to learn city staff's perspectives on such a partnership, including any concerns they have. Two specific ideas for partnership were mentioned frequently across interviews. The first was to have Metro HRA staff attend cities' landlord programs, meetings, and events to present about the voucher program and answer questions. The second was to allow the Metro HRA to conduct outreach to landlords using cities' rental property directories. Among interview participants, there was a great deal of willingness and excitement to share rental property lists with information for property owners. There were also several cities, where political will for affordable housing was weaker, noted that existing lists would be shared through formal data requests.

Other themes were brought up within the topic of partnership with the Metro HRA. A few cities expressed concern about their City Council's approval of any partnership, one staff person saying any partnership "needs to be as behind the scenes as possible." Staff in the city without a rental licensing program noted that they would want to ensure city residents are supportive of the partnership because, without community buy-in, efforts will not be sustainable. City staff in Maple Grove and Andover suggested that the Met Council simplify the administrative tasks they assign to cities. For example, grant applications are burdensome and complicated for city staff, who must already manage many competing demands. Maple Grove city staff said, "A lot of this is so complicated…Anything you can do to make it easier." Staff in Burnsville mentioned that working to improve the housing stock and preserve affordable housing is a specific opportunity for partnership between the Metro HRA and cities. Cities that participated in interviews were generally very open to and enthusiastic about partnering with the Metro HRA.

CONCLUSIONS

Several promising findings arise from survey responses and interviews, including short-term opportunities and long-term direction. Cities that participated in interviews were consistently willing to share their rental property directories with the Metro HRA. Considering survey results showed that most cities with a rental licensing program maintain a list that is accessible to external users, rental property lists could be a great outreach tool for the Metro HRA. After submitting a data request to obtain the list, the Metro HRA can send paper mailings and email blasts to property owners. Information might include Housing Choice Voucher program details to address common misconceptions and concerns (a priority noted among interview participants), or the Metro HRA could advertise its landlord-focused programming.

Cities that participated in interviews were also consistently open to having Metro HRA representatives attend and present at their events. Although survey results indicate that landlord-focused programming occurs in few cities, the potential impact of Metro HRA's attendance and in-person interaction with landlords in the cities that offer this type of programming would be beneficial.

Findings can also inform longer-term efforts, both programmatic and legislative. There is an opportunity for increased coordination between cities and the Metro HRA on shared goals related to rental and/or affordable housing. Multiple inspections performed by separate entities can be burdensome and any level of inspection—especially if duplicative—will likely discourage voucher program participation among landlords. Streamlined inspections avoid duplicative work for landlords, making it more likely they will partner with the voucher program.

Turnover among property managers and increasing corporate ownership of rental properties are concerns for both cities and the Metro HRA. Concentrated ownership by non-local entities often spurs communications and cultural barriers about rental standards, inspections, and ongoing troubleshooting. Distant landlords tend to have less direct accountability to neighbors and may spur a negative impression of affordable rental properties among residents, even when tenants occupying the units are compliant with leases and local code. One potential solution introduced by an interview participant was "professionalizing" the field of property management. With more comprehensive training, streamlined standards, and recognition of good property management practices through certification, the revolving door of absent or fleeing property managers could be slowed.

Legislative change in the long-term is also required to improve the voucher program and to promote the accessibility of affordable housing. There are dynamic challenges to administering public assistance programs in a market-driven economy. Incentives to accept housing choice vouchers and legislation to prevent source-of-income discrimination are tangible steps forward that could have an immediate impact on voucher utilization rates. Additional funding to preserve affordable housing that already accepts vouchers could help keep these properties viable options for years to come. If there was an incentive that tied affordable housing improvement funds to voucher acceptance, this could assure that existing and new landlords operating affordable units continue to be incentivized to work with the voucher program. There are several potential courses of action, but the collective power of cities and the Metro HRA would encourage more effective and urgent change.

Cities served by Metropolitan Council, Metro HRA and LCA

Bold = Served by both Metro HRA and LCA

Green = Served only by LCA

Red = Served only by Metro HRA

No formatting = served by Metropolitan Council, but not Metro HRA or LCA

All cities listed are part of the greater Metropolitan Council's service area/jurisdiction with regards regional service provision.

Anoka	Carver	Dakota	Hennepin	Ramsey	Scott	Washington
Andover	**Carver**	Apple Valley	Bloomington	**Arden Hills**	Belle Plaine	Afton
Anoka	**Chanhassen**	Burnsville	**Brooklyn Center**	Blaine	Credit River	Bayport
Bethel	**Chaska**	Coates	**Brooklyn Park**	**Falcon Heights**	Elko New Market	Birchwood
Blaine	Cologne	Eagan	Champlin	Gem Lake	Jordan	Cottage Grove
Centerville	Hamburg	Empire	Chanhassen	**Lauderdale**	New Prague	Dellwood
Circle Pines	Mayer	Farmington	Corcoran	**Little Canada**	Prior Lake	Forest Lake
Columbia Heights	**New Germany**	Hampton	**Crystal**	**Maplewood**	Savage	Grant
Columbus	Norwood Young America	Hastings	Dayton	**Mounds View**	Shakopee	Hastings
Coon Rapids	**Victoria**	Inver Grove Heights	Deephaven	**New Brighton**		Hugo
East Bethel	**Waconia**	Lakeville	**Eden Prairie**	North Oaks		Lake Elmo
Fridley	**Watertown**	Mendota Heights	**Edina**	**North St. Paul**		Lake St. Croix Beach
Ham Lake		Miesville	**Excelsior**	**Roseville**		Lakeland
Hilltop		New Trier	**Golden Valley**	St. Anthony		Lakeland Shores
Lexington		Northfield	Greenfield	**Shoreview**		Landfall
Lino Lakes		Randolph	Greenwood	Spring Lake Park		Mahtomedi
Nowthen		Rosemount	Hanover	St. Paul		Marine on St. Croix
Ramsey		So. St. Paul	**Hopkins**	**Vadnais Heights**		Newport
Spring Lake Park		Sunfish Lake	Independence	**White Bear Lake**		
			Long Lake			
			Loretto			
			Maple Grove			

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Anoka	Carver	Dakota	Hennepin	Ramsey	Scott	Washington
St. Francis		Vermillion	Maple Plain			Oak Park Heights
		W. St. Paul				Oakdale
			Medicine Lake			
			Medina			Pine Springs
			Minneapolis			
			Minnetonka			St. Mary's Point
						St. Paul Park
			Minnetonka Beach			
						Scandia
			Minnetrista			Stillwater
			Mound			White Bear Lake
			New Hope			
			Orono			Willernie
			Osseo			Woodbury
			Plymouth			
			Richfield			
			Robbinsdale			
			Rockford			
			Rogers			
			St. Anthony			
			St. Bonifacius			
			St. Louis Park			
			Shorewood			

Cities served by Metropolitan Council, Metro HRA and LCA

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Anoka	Carver	Dakota	Hennepin	Ramsey	Scott	Washington
			Spring Park			
			Tonka Bay			
			Wayzata			
			Woodland			

BACKGROUND RESEARCH TRACKING SPREADSHEET

City Name	Link	License required	Directory of licensed properties?	Inspections standards	Inspections frequency	Public health language in ordinance?	Crime-free housing ord?	Rental Density Cap ord?	# Rental units	Notable program details
Andover	RENTAL HOUSING LICENSE INFORMATION & APPLICATIONS	Andover, MN - Official Website (andovermn.gov)	Yes			at least once within the license term	Purpose: The purpose of this Chapter is to protect the health, safety, and the general welfare of the people of the City				
Anoka	Rental Licensing	Anoka, MN	Yes					Crime Free Housing section in city code. Crime Free Drug Free lease addendum	Yes: Rental Density Cap Ordinance: no more than 10% of single-family lots on any block shall be eligible to obtain a rental license.		
Apple Valley	Residential Rental Registration	Apple Valley, MN	No - registration required								
Arden Hills	Rental Registration	Arden Hills, MN	No - registration required								*registration not required for properties with 5+ units
Belle Plain	Rental Dwelling License	Belle Plaine, MN	Yes								
Benton Twp.											
Bethel	no										
Blaine	Rental License	Blaine, MN	Yes								
Bloomington	Rental Housing Licensing and Inspection Program	Yes		2021 International Property Maintenance Code				Crime-free provisions repealed as of 4/25/2022			
Brooklyn Center	https://www.ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us/government/departments/administration/business-licensing/rental-dwellings	Yes	Active Rental Properties (brooklyn-center.mn.us)					crime free housing program			performance-based licensing program: "License categories are based on the condition of the property as determined by the rental license inspection and by excessive validated public nuisance police calls. The conditions attached to each license category are designed to help the operator maintain and improve the condition and management of the property."
Camden Twp.											
Brooklyn Park	Renting - Brooklyn Park	Yes	Rental Properties - Brooklyn Park, MN								Website has a list of S8 accepting apt communities and bedroom sizes: https://www.brooklynpark.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ApartmentCommunities.pdf
Burnsville	Rental Licensing	Burnsville, MN - Official Website (burnsvillemn.gov)	Yes								
Carver	2016: task force drafted ordinace for rental license and inspection program; unsure current status										
Centerville	General Information	Centerville, MN (centervillemn.com)	No - registration required								
Champlin	Rental Licensing Program	Champlin, MN	Yes						Yes: Rental Density Cap Ordinance: no more than 10% of single-family lots on any block shall be eligible to obtain a rental license.		
Chanhassen	no, list of licenses required: www.chanhassenmn.gov/government/permits-licensing										short-term rental ordinance has been proposed
Chaska	Rental Housing Maintenance & Inspection	Chaska, MN - Official Website (chaskamn.gov)	Yes			every 2 years following initial inspection					administered by Chaska Fire Dept. Fire Marshal's office
Circle Pines	Rental License Information - Circle Pines, Minnesota (govoffice2.com)	Yes									
Cologne	Rental-Dwelling-Application.pdf (colognemn.com)	Yes									
Columbia Heights	Rental Licensure (columbiaheightsmn.gov)	Yes									inspections by Community Development Dept. then license is administered by Fire Dept.
Dahlgren Twp.	no- building permits are issued by Carver Co										
Columbus	no										
Coon Rapids	Rental Properties	Coon Rapids, MN - Official Website (coonrapidsmn.gov)					"It is the purpose of this Chapter to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens of the City by adopting a rental dwelling licensing, inspection and maintenance program that corrects substandard conditions, maintains a standard for existing and newly constructed rental dwellings, and ensures neighborhood stability in the City."				
Corcoran	no										
Cottage Grove	Rental Housing	Cottage Grove, MN (cottagegrovemn.gov)									
Crystal	Rental Licensing and Inspections - City of Crystal (crystalmn.gov)				annual						
Dayton	2018_Rental_Dwelling_License_Application.pdf (cityofdayton.wpenginepowered.com)										
Deephaven	no										

Appendix B: Background Research Tracking Spreadsheet

City	Program/Link		Inspection Frequency	Purpose		Notes
Eagan	Rental Property Registration (cityofeagan.com)	Commercial Multi-FamilyHousingBuildingsinEagan2022-04.pdf (cityofeagan.com)				Rental registration program only, there are no inspections or fees associated. Website says the city is evaluating a possible rental license progra: https://www.cityofeagan.com/tenants-and-landlords
East Bethel	Residential Rental Licenses					
Eden Prairie	Rental Housing Licensing and Inspections | City of Eden Prairie		each complex once a year and inspect every individual unit every four years	"It is the purpose of this ordinance to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens of the City who have as their place of abode a living unit furnished to them for the payment of a rental charge to another by adopting licensing regulations for all rental dwellings in the City."		
Edina	Rental Housing | Edina, MN (edinamn.gov)		each unit every 3 years			
Elko New Market						
Excelsior	ARTICLE IV. - RENTAL HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND OCCUPANCY CODE | Code of Ordinances | Excelsior, MN | Municode Library					Rental licensing provisions found in city code, but not on city site
Falcon Heights	City Licensing | Falcon Heights, MN		fire inspection required every 2 years	"It is the purpose of this article to protect the public health, safety and welfare of citizens of the city who have as their place of abode a living unit furnished to them for the payment of a rental charge to another by adopting licensing regulations for all rental dwellings and multifamily rental dwellings in the city."		
Farmington						
Fridley	Rental Properties | Fridley, MN - Official Website (fridleymn.gov)					
Gem Lake	Rental-License-Application.pdf (gemlakemn.com)					standards can be found: Housing Ordinance 83 Section 10
Golden Valley	Renting Out Your Home | Golden Valley, MN (goldenvalleymn.gov)	PDF lists found here				
Greenfield						
Ham Lake						
Hamburg						
Hanover	Rental Dwelling License - HANOVER (hanovermn.org)					
Hastings	Licensed Rental Property | City of Hastings, MN (hastingsmn.gov)	List included on main webpage, broken down by property size	every 2 years			
Hilltop						
Hopkins	Rental License | Hopkins, MN (hopkinsmn.com)					After pause during COVID, program is being reviewed for effectiveness and equity: https://www.hopkinsmn.com/DocumentCenter/View/3506/Rental-Program-Update---Council-Presentation?bidId=
Hugo						
Independence						
Inver Grove Heights	Housing Information | Inver Grove Heights, MN					Program is relatively new. Inspections only required upon request or in response to a complaint
Jordan	Residential Rental Licensing and Inspection – City of Jordan, MN					
Lauderdale	Rental Housing License | Lauderdale, MN (lauderdalemn.org)					
Lexington	Lexington, Minnesota					
Lino Lakes	Rental Housing | Lino Lakes, MN					
Little Canada	http://www.littlecanadamn.org/350/Rental-Housing-License-Program					
Long Lake	Rental Housing - City of Long Lake (longlakemn.gov)					Obligatory registration program. However no fees or inspections require
Loretto						
Mahtomedi	RENTAL HOUSING LICENSE APPLICATION (mahtomedi.mn.us)					
Maple Grove	Rental property licensing | Maple Grove, MN (maplegrovemn.gov)				CFRH Ordinance: partnership between LE and rental property managers, criminal background checks required for all prospective tenants	"On June 6, 2022, the Maple Grove City Council passed a measure that places a moratorium on the issuance of new rental licenses for all single-entry rental properties. The moratorium will be in effect from July 1, 2022, through July 1, 2023."
Maple Plain						
Maplewood	Rental Housing Licensing Program | Maplewood, MN (maplewoodmn.gov)					
Mayer						
Medicine Lake	Rental Property Forms : City of Medicine Lake, MN					City also maintains a tenant register

City	Link		Records/Map		Inspection frequency	Purpose			Notes
Medina									
Minneapolis	Rental Licenses - City of Minneapolis (minneapolismn.gov)		Active Rental Licenses (minneapolismn.gov) **Map of rentals:** https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1nHy6xB2G5y1-zOC8hBwIHbosjBk&ll=0%2C0&z=12						
Minnetonka									
Minnetonka Beach									
Minnetrista									
Mound									
Mounds View	Welcome to Mounds View, Minnesota (moundsviewmn.org)								
New Brighton	Rental Licensing Programs	New Brighton, MN (newbrightonmn.gov)								enforcement to begin in 2023. the 2023 program is an expansion to include licensing for single family and duplex units
New Hope	Rental - City of New Hope				once every 2 years for small properites, once every 3 years for multifamily				Properties with 3+ units qualify for the Best Practices Program
Newport	Newport, MN								Properties four units or less, apply for a three year permit. Properties five units and more, apply for a yearly permit
North Oaks	https://www.northoaksmn.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif5416/f/uploads/rental_license_application_0.pdf								www.northoaksmn.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif5416/f/uploads/ordinance_121_-_regulate_residential_rental_properties.pdf - Eligibility is limited to single family rentals
North St. Paul	Rental Housing Licenses	North St. Paul, MN (northstpaul.org)								
Norwood Young America	Document Center - Norwood Young America (cityofnya.com)								
Nowthen									
Oak Grove									
Oakdale	Rental Housing License	Oakdale, MN								
Orono	https://www.ci.orono.mn.us/476/Licensing								license required for Home Rentals only
Osseo	https://www.discoverosseo.com/departments/community-development/rental-licensing/				Inspections are performed on a biennial cycle with common areas in apartment buildings being inspected annually.				City partners with Rum River Consultants to provide rental licenses
Plymouth	Rental Dwelling Licenses	City of Plymouth, MN (plymouthmn.gov)								
Prior Lake									
Ramsey	Ramsey - Rental License Application								
Richfield	Rental License & Inspections		Yes, updated each month, but does not include landlord information (only property address and # of units). Found on rental license homepage at link to the left.			"The purpose of this Section, which will be known as the housing maintenance code, is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare."			
Robbinsdale	Rental Housing Information	Robbinsdale, MN (robbinsdalemn.com)		CITY OF ROBBINSDALE APARTMENT LISTINGS (robbinsdalemn.com)						
Rockford	(cityofrockford.org)		Apartment Rental List (cityofrockford.org)						
Rogers									
Rosemount	Rental Licensing	Rosemount, MN - Official Website (rosemountmn.gov)								
Roseville	Rental Licensing	Roseville, MN - Official Website (cityofroseville.com)								Registration required for props with 1-4 units, license (and inspections) required for props with 5+
Savage	Residential Rental Property	Savage, MN (cityofsavage.com)								Obligatory registration program. However no fees or inspections require
Shakopee	Rental Registration & Crime Free Multi-Housing	City of Shakopee (shakopeemn.gov)								Webpage shows relatively heavy focus on crime-free efforts
Shoreview	Rental Housing Licenses	City of Shoreview (shoreviewmn.gov)		All Rental Property Records	City of Shoreview	BS&A Online (bsaonline.com)						
Shorewood	Rental housing license					"The purpose of this chapter is to protect the public health, safety and the general welfare of the rental population of the city"			
South St. Paul	Rental Housing Licensing	South St. Paul, MN - Official Website (southstpaul.org)				At least once every 3 years				
Spring Lake Park	Rental Permits	Spring Lake Park Minnesota (slpmn.org)								slp_rental_property_enforcement_policy.pdf (slpmn.org)
Spring Park									
St. Anthony	http://www.ci.saint-anthony.mn.us/172/Property-Rental								Licenses required for residential and commerical properties

Appendix B: Background Research Tracking Spreadsheet

St. Bonifacius	Residential Rental Dwelling License - St. Bonifacius, MN (st-bonifacius.mn.us)				"The city believes that providing for public health, safety and welfare to its citizens mandates the existence of a rental dwelling unit license and maintenance program that corrects substandard conditions and maintains a standard for rental dwelling units."				
St. Francis	Rental Housing Licensing | St. Francis Minnesota (stfrancismn.org)								
St. Louis Park	Rental License Ordinance and Training | St. Louis Park, MN (stlouispark.org)					ordinance repealed			"Rental owner/landlord training ordinance (Sec. 8-328): The owner or property manager must have attended a residential rental training program offered by the City of St. Louis Park before any rental license is issued. "
St. Paul	Renting Property | Saint Paul Minnesota (stpaul.gov)								It appears only *registration* is required. Map of Certificates of Occupancy: stpaul.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal /index.html?appid=1c165473388349069a 83df8693df0a3b
St. Paul Park	Rental Properties & Inspections - Rentals & Vacant Housing Requirements - City of St. Paul Park (stpaulpark.org)	Most recent list is from 2019: https://stpaulpark.org/vertical/sites/%7B 917EB38B-D67A-4E8B-9D54-1241156F27 C8%7D/uploads/2019_Rentals.pdf							inspections only for properties with 2 or more units
Stillwater	Short-Term Home Rentals | Stillwater, MN								Short-term rental licenses required: https://www.ci.stillwater.mn.us/city-gover nment/departments/community-develop ment/short-term-home-rental
Tonka Bay									
Vadnais Heights	Fire Certificate of Occupancy | Vadnais Heights, MN (cityvadnaisheights.com)								requires Fire Certificate of Occupancy
Victoria									
Waconia	Residential Rental Dwelling License | Waconia, MN - Official Website								
Watertown									
Wayzata	Rental Licenses | Wayzata, MN - Official Website								

West St. Paul	Rental Licensing Program Overview | West St. Paul, MN - Official Website (wspmn.gov)				"protect the public health, safety, and welfare of citizens of the city who occupy rental units by adopting a rental dwelling inspection and maintenance program that corrects substandard conditions and maintains a standard for existing and newly constructed rental dwellings in the city."				Rental density limits the number of single family rental properties to 10% per block in the R1 Single Family zoning districts. Blocks that have reached the rental density maximum are not allowed to have any additional rental properties, until a rental license becomes available.
White Bear Lake	Rental Property Applications | White Bear Lake Minnesota								
Woodbury	https://library.municode.com/mn/woodbury/co des/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CICO_CH6BU BURE_ARTVPRMA_S6-204LIMUDW								Rental licensing provisions found in city code, but not on city site
Woodland									

Rental Licensing Survey

The Metropolitan Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) is administering this survey on rental licensing programs on behalf of the Community Development Division. The survey results will inform landlord outreach strategies for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program and may also be useful for future housing policy planning.

Your response will provide important data and guidance with regards to your city's approach to monitoring and relationship building with housing providers. Answers from this survey will be added to an internal database that will primarily be used for program planning. A subset or aggregate of this data may be made available publicly if we find a public interest in doing so.

The following questions should take you less than 20 minutes to complete. Our goal is for 100% response rate from every city so that we have a complete data set for these core questions.

We will conduct 30-minute virtual interviews with staff members from select cities as follow-up to this questionnaire. If you are willing to do so, please let us know at the end of the survey. Thank you in advance for your time!

*If you have questions while filling out the survey, you can contact **Mary Anne Powell** at 651-602-1288 or* <u>maryanne.powell@metc.state.mn.us</u>.

1. City name: _____
2. Respondent First Name: _____
3. Respondent Last Name: _____
4. Respondent Title: _____
5. Respondent Department: _____

6. Does the City maintain a list, directory, or database of residential rental properties?
   a) Yes
   b) No (skip to 11)
   c) Other, please specify: _____
   d) Prefer not to answer (skip to 11)

   > 6a. *If you answered A to #6,* how many total rental **properties** do you have in your city? Please also let us know the year and data source for your unit count. If you don't know, write n/a.
   >
   > _____
   >
   > 6b. *If you answered A to #6,* how many total rental **units** do you have in your city? Please also let us know the year and data source for your unit count. If you don't know, write n/a.
   >
   > _____

7. What is the purpose of the list? **Check all that apply** and include other if your city uses your list in other ways not listed.
   a) Regulatory/compliance with local or state code
   b) Local inspections
   c) Crime prevention
   d) Public notice
   e) Program planning
   f) Outreach to properties
   g) Other, please specify: _____

8. Who maintains the list? List Department(s) and/or Division(s) and include whether there are multiple lists maintained by multiple departments.

   _____

9. Who has access to the list? **Check all that apply.**
   a) The list is available to anyone from the public (open data)
   b) The list is available to internal stakeholders (city staff)
   c) The list is available to external stakeholders by informal request
   d) The list is available to external stakeholders by formal request
   e) Other, please specify: _____

   > 9a. *If you answered A to #9,* please paste a link to the online list.
   >
   > _____
   >
   > 9b. *If you answered C, D, and/or E to #9,* please explain how an external stakeholder such as the Metropolitan Council could access the list and any limitations on sharing the list. If you prefer not to answer, write n/a.
   >
   > _____

10. What type(s) of data is captured in your list? **Check all that apply.**
    a) Contact information for owners
    b) Contact information for property or site manager
    c) Number of units by property
    d) Unit size/type by property (whether the property has 1BR, 2BR etc. units)
    e) Rental rates
    f) Whether the property is considered affordable
    g) Rental rates by unit type
    h) Code violation data
    i) Public complaints
    j) Other, please specify: _____
    k) Prefer not to answer

11. Does your city license or register residential rental units?
    a) License required
    b) Registration required
    c) No license or registration required
    d) Other, please specify: _____
    e) Prefer not to answer

12. Does your city have an inspections program for its residential rental units?
    a) Yes
    b) No
    c) Other, please specify: _____
    d) Prefer not to answer

    12a. *If you answered A to #12,* what inspections standards do you use?

    _____

13. How often must licenses or registration be renewed? Check all that apply and please specify in Other if you have a variable renewal schedule.
    a) Annually
    b) Biannually
    c) Other (please specify): _____
    d) Prefer not to answer

14. Does your city offer programming or have special programs for rental housing owners or operators (landlords)?
    a) Yes
    b) No
    c) Not sure
    d) Prefer not to answer

    14a. *If you answered A to #14,* what types of programming do you offer?

    _____

15. Does your city have a Crime-Free Multiunit Housing Ordinance or participate in a Crime-Free Multiunit Housing program? **Check all that apply.**
    a) Ordinance
    b) Program
    c) Neither
    d) Not sure
    e) Other, please specify: _____
    f) Prefer not to answer

15a. *If you answered A or B to #15,* what requirements must landlords comply with as part of the Crime-Free Ordinance and/or Program?

_____

16. Does your city have a rental density cap?
    a) Yes
    b) No
    c) Not sure
    d) Prefer not to answer

    16a. *If you answered A to #16,* at what percentage does the City cap rental properties (e.g., 10% of properties per block)?

    _____

    16b. *If you answered A to #16,* what land uses, if it is just a few, does your density cap apply to? Or is it an overlay area?

    _____

17. Are you willing and able to have a 30-minute virtual meeting with a Met Council staff member to further discuss the details of rental licensing in your community?
    a) Yes
    b) No, but there's someone else I can connect you to speak with.
    c) No thanks

    17a. *If you answered A or B to #17,* provide a contact for virtual meeting. If different than yourself, please leave the name, title, and contact information (email and phone) of the person to whom we should reach out for a follow-up interview.

    _____

18. Additional Comments. Please share anything else with us that was not already captured on this questionnaire.

    _____

1. Metro HRA is the largest administrator of Housing Choice Vouchers, also known as Section 8. When I say Section 8, what things come to mind?
2. We are interested in reaching more landlords that will accept Section 8 vouchers. Why do you think a landlord would want to work with a tenant with a Housing Choice Voucher? Why not?
3. Thinking of your own landlord engagement work more broadly, what do you think you do well with regards to rental licensing and/or landlord engagement?
4. Where do you wish there was more support with regards to rental licensing and/or landlord engagement?
5. One of our main goals at Metro HRA is to increase the supply of available units/landlords willing to accept Housing Choice Voucher participants. What are your ideas for connecting with landlords in your area to work toward this goal?
6. How would you like to see the Met Council partner with your city to advance affordable housing (not just Section 8)?
7. Would your city consider partnering with an agency like Metro HRA to reach out to landlords? What excites you about this idea? What concerns you?

Appendix E: List of Target Cities for Survey

Respondents

Andover	Fridley	Orono
Anoka	Gem Lake	Osseo
Apple Valley	Golden Valley	Plymouth
Arden Hills	Hanover	Prior Lake
Belle Plaine	Hastings	Ramsey
Blaine	Hopkins	Richfield
Bloomington	Inver Grove Heights	Robbinsdale
Brooklyn Center	Jordan	Rockford
Brooklyn Park	Lauderdale	Rosemount
Burnsville	Lexington	Roseville
Centerville	Lino Lakes	Savage
Champlin	Long Lake	Shakopee
Chanhassen	Loretto	Shoreview
Chaska	Mahtomedi	Shorewood
Circle Pines	Maple Grove	South St. Paul
Cologne	Maple Plain	Spring Lake Park
Columbia Heights	Maplewood	St. Anthony
Coon Rapids	Medicine Lake	St. Bonifacius
Corcoran	Medina	St. Francis
Cottage Grove	Minnetonka	St. Louis Park
Crystal	Minnetonka Beach	St. Paul Park
Dayton	Minnetrista	St. Paul

Deephaven	Mound	Stillwater
Eagan	Mounds View	Vadnais Heights
East Bethel	New Brighton	Victoria
Eden Prairie	New Hope	Waconia
Edina	Newport	Watertown
Elko New Market	North Oaks	Wayzata
Excelsior	North St. Paul	West St. Paul
Falcon Heights	Norwood Young America	White Bear Lake
Farmington	Oakdale	Woodland

Non-respondents

Bethel	Hugo	Rogers
Carver	Independence	Spring Park
Columbus	Little Canada*	Tonka Bay
Greenfield	Mayer	Woodbury*
Ham Lake	Minneapolis*	
Hamburg	Nowthen	
Hilltop	Oak Grove	

*Background research revealed that these three cities require rental licensing and therefore survey responses were manually coded and included in results for questions 6a, 6b, 6c (Whether city maintains a list of rental properties); 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d (License or registration required); and 12a, 12b, 12c, 12d, 12f (Inspections program). Results for Minneapolis only were manually coded for questions 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d and 9e (Availability of list data).

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