

# Reaching Rental Property Owners to Advance Energy Efficiency

ACEEE Workshop

January 29, 2026

**ACEEE**  
Smart Energy. Clean Planet. Better Lives.



## About ACEEE:

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), is a nonprofit research organization that develops policies to reduce energy waste and combat climate change. Its independent analysis advances investments, programs, and behaviors that use energy more effectively and help build an equitable clean energy future.

*Learn more at [aceee.org](http://aceee.org)*



# Housekeeping Announcements



We are recording this webinar and will be making it available to all registrants within a few business days.

We will also provide the slides to all registrants.



To ask a question during the webinar, please submit it via the Q&A button at the bottom of your screen and we will get to it during our Q&A segment towards the end of the webinar.

You can upvote questions you think are particularly good and we will prioritize those.



You can talk with one another and network via the chat button at the bottom of your screen.

# Facilitators



## **Stefen Samarripas, Senior Manager, ACEEE**

Stefen conducts research, analysis and outreach on policies and programs that encourage energy efficiency throughout local communities. His work currently focuses on supporting local government-led clean energy initiatives and scaling up energy efficiency investments in affordable housing.



## **Roxana Ayala, Senior Research Analyst, ACEEE**

Roxana conducts research, writing, and technical support on local-level energy efficiency policies and initiatives. Her work currently focuses on local government and utility-led initiatives that scale the energy efficiency workforce and increase energy affordability.



## **Krista Lee, Program Assistant, ACEEE**

Krista assists with the Residential Retrofits for Energy Equity (R2E2) initiative, which encourages local policy makers to invest in energy upgrades for affordable housing.

# Speakers



**Lauren Lowery, Director of Housing and Community Development, National League of Cities (NLC)**

Lauren conducts research and technical assistance on housing supply, housing stability, homelessness, and community development.



**Joe Lange, Senior Energy Analyst, City of Ann Arbor, Office of Sustainability & Innovation**

Joe focuses on the design, implementation, and development of various residential energy-related programs.

# Webinar Agenda

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

## 2. Presentation: Key Resources to Know

- ACEEE's Energy for Equity Toolkit and Xcel Energy's Property Owner Engagement Toolkit
- National League of Cities' Landlord Engagement Toolkit

## 3. Breakout Group Activity

- Group discussion: share your experience
- Q&A with Expert

## 4. Presentation: Case Example

- City of Ann Arbor's Green Rental Housing Program



## **Introduce Yourself in the Chat!**

Please share the following:

- **Name**
- **Organization**
- **In what ways might you use or build from the information shared today in your work?**

The background of the slide is a photograph of a large metal power line tower standing in a green field. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. Several power lines stretch across the sky from the tower towards the right. The overall scene is peaceful and rural.

# Key Resources to Support Rental Property Owner Engagement

**ACEEE**

# energy equity

## FOR RENTERS

— Cut Carbon · Reduce Costs · Save Communities —

Dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions from houses and other residential buildings is vital for tackling climate change. Rental homes present an added challenge: They are less energy efficient than others, on average **consuming 15% more energy per square foot** than owner-occupied homes.

These inefficient homes also mean renters spend a lot on energy bills, with nearly **one-third having high energy burdens, spending more than 6% of their income on energy bills**. Yet for the more than one in three U.S. households that rent their homes, making energy-saving improvements may be difficult or even prohibited.

ACEEE's **Energy Equity for Renters initiative** is helping tackle the challenge of reducing energy waste in rental housing.

# Key Resources

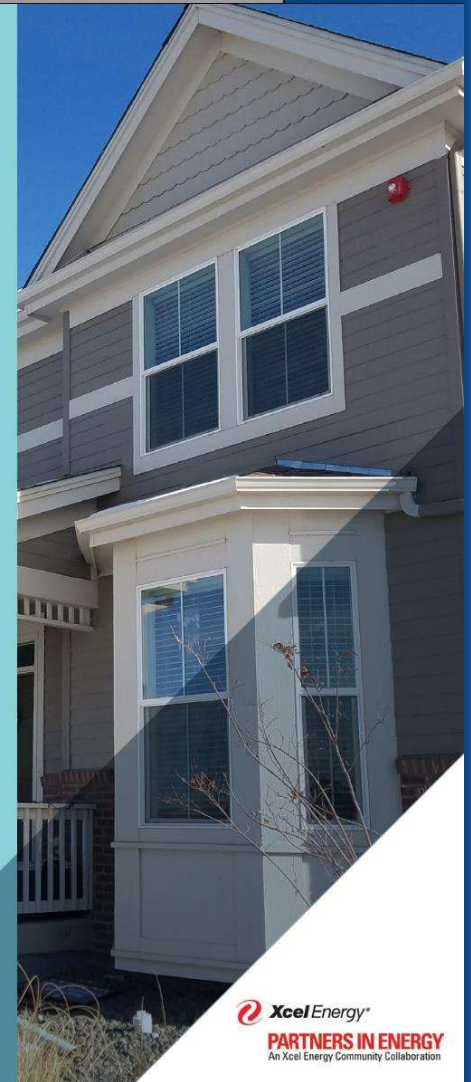
Resource	Description
Xcel Energy's <a href="#">Partners Toolkit</a>	A framework with tips on how to identify properties and develop and implement an outreach approach.
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ACEEE's <a href="#">Effective Marketing and Outreach Strategies for Multifamily Energy Efficiency Programs</a>	Recommends seven marketing and outreach strategies proven to be effective in reaching targeted audiences
ACEEE's <a href="#">Opportunities for Increasing Participation in Multifamily Energy Efficiency Programs</a>	Identifies best practices to achieve high participation numbers through marketing, outreach, and networking.

# Xcel's Partners in Energy

- Partners in Energy is a service offered by Xcel utilities in Colorado, Minnesota, and Wisconsin to help communities develop and implement an energy plan.
- Communities receive customize support from Partners in Energy to understand Xcel Energy's data, community participation and energy use, and have access to a network of peer communities.
- Services can vary but may include support with community engagement, education and outreach events, and data analysis.

# Xcel's Partner in Energy Toolkit

Colorado/Minnesota  
**Reaching  
1–4 Unit  
Properties**



# Guide to Reach Property Owners



# Guide to Reach Property Owners

## Identify Property Owners

- Engage local homeowner associations
- Review rental licensing
- Leverage existing city communication channels
- Explore assessor records

## Develop a Strategy

- Integrate information in city platforms
- Host in-person events
- Engage owners directly on social media or by sending mail or emails or making calls

## Coordinate & Execute Strategy

- Coordinate with stakeholders to:
  - Develop co-branded outreach material
  - Cross-promote with other programs

## Track Success

- Monitor points of contact
- Track enrollment in programs (if promoting a program)
- Collect testimonials
- Share

# Toolkit Resources

- Event planning worksheet
- Outreach presentation template
- Strategy and outreach plan template
- Sample email and script
- Outreach flyer (see image)

## BOOST YOUR ROI WITH ENERGY IMPROVEMENTS

Follow these easy steps to boost your property's value, reduce operating costs, and improve tenant satisfaction.

# 1

### GET A HOME ENERGY AUDIT

For \$70-\$100 per unit, the Home Energy Squad® will professionally install energy-saving measures, plus complete an inspection of your home, which includes thermal image testing, a carbon monoxide check, and a blower door test.

You'll get recommendations on energy-saving projects and Home Energy Squad will even connect you to contractors to do the work.

Visit [HomeEnergySquad.net](http://HomeEnergySquad.net) to sign up.



# 2

### CUT UPFRONT COSTS

Need to upgrade aging equipment or appliances? From furnaces to refrigerators, Xcel Energy offers rebates to keep upfront costs low.

And with new energy efficiency equipment, operating costs will stay low, even during the coldest months.

Visit [xcelenergy.com/HomeRebates](http://xcelenergy.com/HomeRebates) to learn more.



# 3

### COMPLETE SMALL DIY UPGRADES

From thermostats to ceiling fans, small upgrades can improve your property's appeal and help make your tenants feel more comfortable.

- Install programmable or smart thermostats
- Upgrade showerheads and install faucet aerators for natural gas savings
- Add ceiling fans to help control cooling
- Install energy efficient window treatments
- Regularly assist or remind tenants to change air filters

**Bonus:** The Home Energy Squad will install a programmable thermostat and upgrade lighting, showerheads, and faucet aerators for you. Sign up by calling 866-222-4595.



#### Need help?

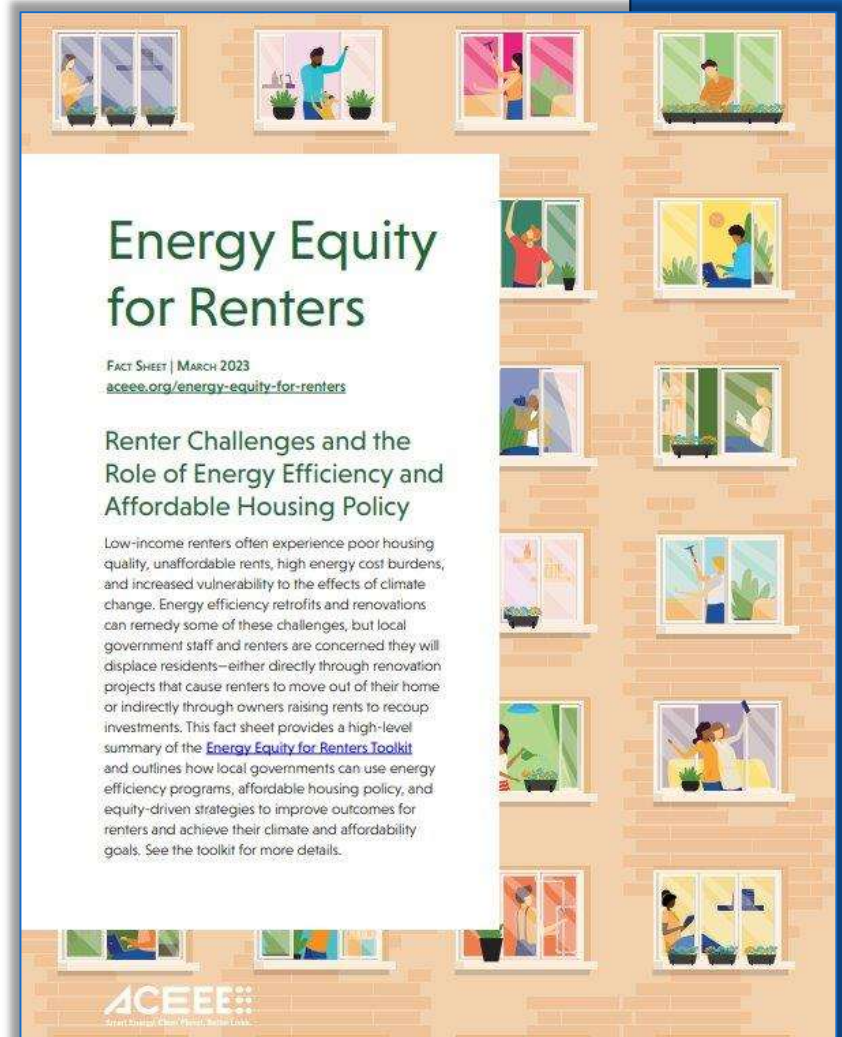
If you don't know where to start or want to ask more questions, call an energy efficiency specialist at 1-800-481-4700.



**PARTNERS IN ENERGY**  
An Xcel Energy Community Collaboration

CONTACT YOUR PARTNERS IN ENERGY FACILITATOR FOR CUSTOMIZATION OF THIS TEMPLATE

# Energy Equity for Renters Toolkit



# Toolkit Topics

01

Integrated energy efficiency and housing strategies

02

Filling financing and funding gaps for energy efficiency retrofits

03

Guidance on stakeholder and community engagement, marketing, and outreach

04

Tools for local governments to hold themselves accountable to equity

# Guidance on stakeholder and community engagement, marketing, and outreach

## Engage local associations

- Work with local housing and property owner associations to directly reach property owners

## Simplify programs and marketing

- Simplifying the ways in which communication is exchanged could improve a program's accessibility and enable more owners to participate

## Target energy efficiency upgrades during other building improvements

- Map energy efficiency upgrades onto other building improvements when owners are to purchasing, renovating, or refinancing their property

## Present case studies of program successes

- Showcase success stories to convince property owners to participate in the program

# Strategy highlight: One-Stop Shops

- One-stop shop models can enhance a program's accessibility which may create positive engagement experiences for property owners.
- Through this model property owners engage with one designated point of contact that can help them choose the appropriate services and guide them at each step of accessing these services.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY FOR ALL**

## One-Stop Shops for the Multifamily Sector

The need for owners to navigate a complex landscape of clean energy and water programs greatly inhibits participation in multifamily efficiency programs nationwide. Yet, millions of lower-income rental households could significantly benefit from efficiency services, and save an aggregate of \$9.2 billion annually as a result.<sup>1</sup> To capture these savings and provide streamlined and straightforward access to programs tailored to this sector's needs, jurisdictions are increasingly offering comprehensive one-stop multifamily programs.

### COMPREHENSIVE ONE-STOP-SHOP SERVICES

**A one-stop shop can provide coordination across electricity, gas, and water programs.**  
Because these services are often supplied by different entities, program administrators may not encourage projects that aim at comprehensive savings. A one-stop shop can assist owners in capturing the savings across all fuels and water.

- A single point of contact
- A universal intake application
- Comprehensive technical assistance
- Streamlined access to all multifamily

**A one-stop shop provides building owners access to integrated program services through a single point of contact.**  
Program experience shows that building owners benefit from access to individuals who can help navigate program offerings and provide project

**ONE STOP SHOP**  
3x One-stop-shop, whole-building programs can lead to **three times** as much savings in energy costs  
**AND**  
7x **seven times** the uptake rate as other energy-efficiency programs.\*

development and technical assistance, such as initial assessments, audits, and project support. These single points of contact can become trusted advisors to local building owners. The people in this function should be able to provide robust technical assistance and build relationships with local partners, such as lenders, contractors, and utility staff. A single point of contact should be able to assess entire portfolios in order to identify which programs meet the needs of individual properties and avenues for leveraging multiple funding sources.

### A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC) ASSISTS AN OWNER THROUGHOUT THE RETROFITTING PROCESS

**ADMIN** | **SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT**

Pipeline Development | Customer Intake | Project Selection | Project Planning & Funding | Project Approval | Installation/Construction | QA/QC Inspection & Project Wrap-up | Ongoing Monitoring

**CUSTOMER-OWNER**

**CONSTRUCTION MANAGER**

**CONTRACTORS**

Image Source: Elevate Energy

# Examples of one-stop shops from toolkit

## Dane County's Efficiency Navigator



### Efficiency Navigator Program Overview

Making multi-family housing affordable and resilient

The Efficiency Navigator helps small to medium-size multi-family housing become more efficient and resilient while reducing operating costs to remain affordable.



#### Program Goals

##### Housing Resilience

Foster innovation to help preserve affordable workforce housing

##### Equity

Address the intersection of environmental, social, and economic justice for cost-burdened residents

##### Climate change

Reduce energy and water demand in our existing building stock to tackle the effects of climate change

Move Forward with the Efficiency Navigator

## Fort Collin's Efficiency Works Neighborhood



### COMFORT & EFFICIENCY UPGRADES IN PROGRESS

Join your neighbors  
call 970-413-6020

[fcgov.com/hpp](http://fcgov.com/hpp)



# Key Resources

Resource	Description
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## Contact

Email the Local Policy team at [localpolicy@aceee.org](mailto:localpolicy@aceee.org) with any additional questions.



# Questions?

ACEEE

January 29, 2026

# Landlord Engagement Toolkit

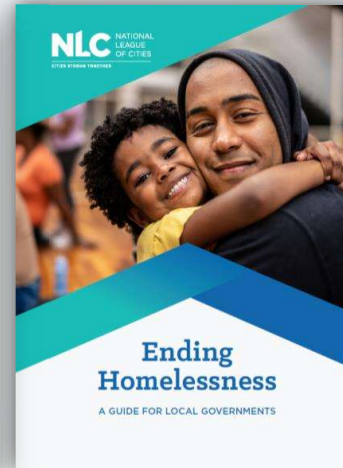
Lauren Lowery



## OUR MISSION

*To relentlessly advocate for, and protect the interests of, cities, towns, and villages by influencing federal policy, strengthening local leadership, and driving innovative solutions.*

NLC



**Local Eviction Prevention Policy & Program Tool**

NLC NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES LEGAL DESIGN LAB Stanford Law School

**What is this tool?**  
Local governments play a pivotal role in preventing evictions and supporting households when an eviction is filed. In recent years, cities have experimented with new policies and programs. This tool aims to provide insight into the eviction prevention policies and programs from 200 cities across this country and share additional resources for local leaders looking to take action.

**Who is this tool for?**  
This tool is designed for local housing staff, elected officials, community-based and non-profit organizations and researchers who are passionate about eviction prevention. Using this tool, local leaders can explore the legislative and programmatic actions cities are taking to prevent evictions.

**How do I use this tool?**  
Use the navigation pane on the right to find the right information for you.

Last updated: December 2022

- Explore All the Data
- Find Custom Matches
- Learn More About the Policies & Programs
- Additional Resources
- View and Download the Data
- Submit Information to the Tool
- Methodology

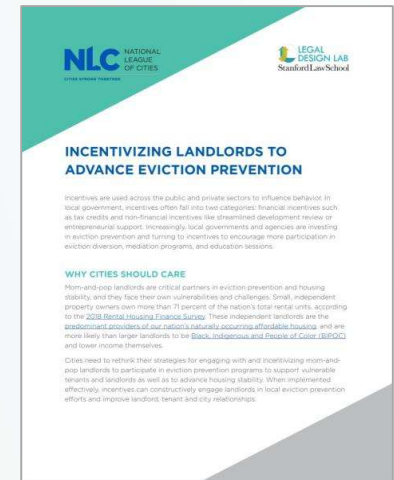
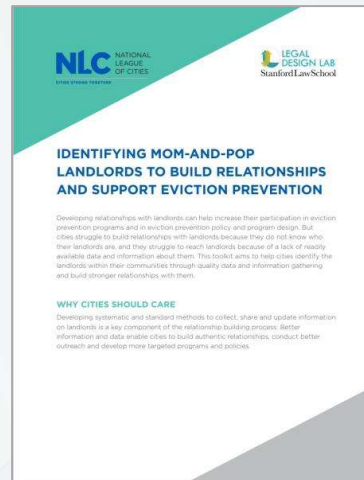
# National League of Cities' Resources

From homelessness and housing stability, to expanding, preserving and improving the local housing supply, to implementing equitable development, NLC provides local leaders with foundational and applied knowledge to the most pressing housing issues cities face today.



# Landlord Engagement Toolkit

This toolkit includes a series of resources developed for local leaders interested in building or refining their strategies for engaging landlords. These resources offer important insight into key elements of a successful landlord engagement strategy.



[Read More](#)



# Landlord Engagement Toolkit's Features

## Background

- Outlines the context for each strategy.

## Step-by-Step Guidance

- Gives practical, step-by-step instructions.

## Recommendations

- Offers actionable recommendations

## Case Studies

- Showcases real-world examples through case studies.

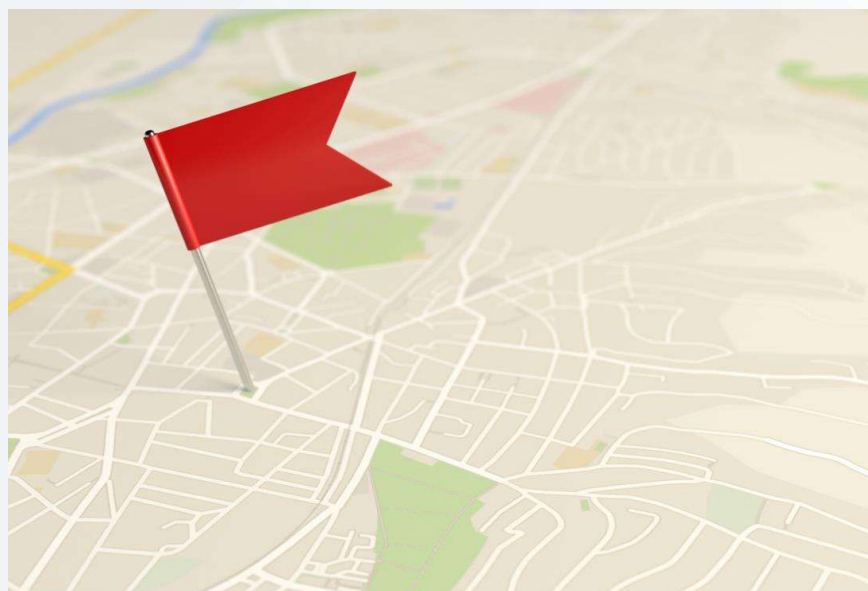
# Developing a Mom-and-Pop Landlord Engagement Strategy

- **Understanding the current landscape.** More specifically, prior to diving into create a strategy it is important to know what.
- **The strategy should focus on the people it serves – the landlords.** As emphasized in the brief, it is important that the landlord be apart of the building of the strategy (at least providing feedback to see if it successful).
- **Be realistic with goals and timelessness.** As you might already know, building relationships with landlords takes time and effort—and trust.



# Identifying Mom-and-Pop Landlords to Build Relationship and Support

- **Data is important but does not substitute for engagement and relationship building.** Having data does not justify foregoing engagement with landlords. Data should serve the opposite purpose and bolster outreach and engagement efforts
- **Leverage shared interest.** Cities and landlords can and do share common interests. Starting from a mutual understanding and shared goal will help cities build better and more relationships with local landlords.
- **Make a commitment to authentic community engagement building-long term relationships with landlords.** Relationship building takes time and requires cities to be open-minded and realistic about their local rental landscapes.



# Communicating with Mom-and-Pop Landlords

- **Coordinate across city agencies and departments.** Many city agencies, departments and community organizations have programs that impact/serve landlords, but they may not be coordinated with each other. Bridging these gaps and coordinating across these landlord-serving entities can help program effectiveness.
- **Talk to your local landlord association.** Local landlord associations are powerful groups that hold sway and influence. Build stronger relationships with them to understand key messaging points that resonate with their audiences.
- **Leverage and test various forms of communication.** Every landlord community is different. Depending on budget, consider testing various forms of communications with the landlord community to see what is most effective.
  - this include **paper outreach, social media, websites and community outreach.**





» **Questions** «  
[housing@nlc.org](mailto:housing@nlc.org)

NLC

# Breakout Groups

ACEEE

# Breakout Group Activities

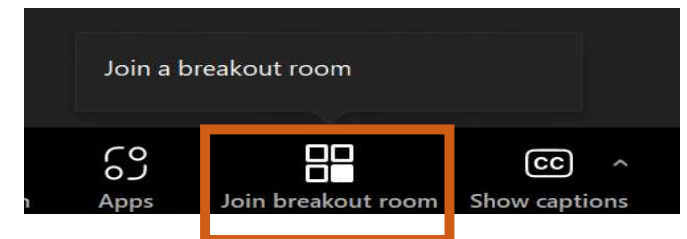
For this activity, we will host three breakout sessions where attendees can engage with a topic and share their own experience. Attendees can choose from the following topics:

- **Appealing incentive and financing offerings for owners**
- **Effective messaging for owners**
- **Identifying and creating communication channels to reach owners**

Attendees will also engage in a Q&A session with facilitators.

# Breakout Group Instructions

- Click “**Breakout Rooms**” at the bottom of your Zoom window.
- A pop-up window will appear showing the three available breakout groups.
- Review the options and select the breakout room that interests you or aligns with your work experience by clicking “**Join.**”





# Green Rental Housing and Landlord Engagement

Joe Lange, Senior Energy Analyst

City of Ann Arbor

Office of Sustainability and Innovations

[jlange@a2gov.org](mailto:jlange@a2gov.org)

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1. Context
2. Ordinance
3. Landlord Engagement Takeaways
4. Questions



# A<sup>2</sup>ZERO

EQUITABLE • SUSTAINABLE • TRANSFORMATIVE

# Green Rental Housing



**STRATEGY 3:** Significantly Improve the Energy Efficiency in our Homes, Businesses, Schools, Places of Worship, Recreational Sites, and Government Facilities

## 8. PROMOTE GREEN RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM

The Green Rental Housing Program improves energy efficiency and reduces greenhouse gas emissions associated with our rental buildings. Since rental units make up 55% of Ann Arbor's housing stock, actions in this area are vital to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Green Rental Housing program is accomplished by adding energy efficiency requirements into the existing City rental licensing process, thereby ensuring that every rental unit in Ann Arbor meets a minimum energy efficiency performance standard. Trainings, rebates, and financing support are provided as well to help transition rental units to greater efficiency.

### Vision for Promoting Green Rental Housing Program

Renters are living in vastly more energy efficient homes and are saving on their energy bills and/or rents. Property owners are investing in the value of their properties and are seeing increased tenant retention and satisfaction.

#### Party Responsible for Implementation

- Office of Sustainability and Innovations and Community Services

#### Collaborators / Project Co-Designers

- Rocky Mountain Institute
- Urban Sustainability Directors Network
- University of Michigan's Beyond the Diag
- Washtenaw Area Apartment Association
- Michigan Saves
- DTE Energy

#### Equity Impacts

Renters in Ann Arbor may be able to rent more energy efficient homes as soon the ordinance goes into effect, and as more buildings become more energy efficient.

#### Indicators of Success / Goals

10% reduction in energy usage in rental properties within the City by 2030.

#### Assumptions

- We are able to integrate energy efficiency requirements into existing City rental licensing processes
- 80% compliance with the policy after the policy has been in effect for 4 years
- No net increase in average rents, outside of normal market inflation, 5 years post policy adoption

# Program Goals



- Set a minimum baseline for health, comfort, and energy efficiency in rental units as we all work towards our carbon neutrality goals
- Be simple and flexible
- Provide resources to save money, simplify planning, and make compliance easy
- Satisfied tenants to boost tenant retention and online reviews

# Program Development



- Compiled local data and national information
- Convened a Task Force to tailor policy to Ann Arbor
- Representatives for tenant advocacy, landlord advocacy, low-income housing, Building Department
- Saw presentations by RMI, USDN, ACEEE
- Defined challenges & opportunities
  - How to address split incentive
- Developed recommendations
- Public feedback and updates

# Energy Efficiency Requirements



## What

- Sets an energy efficiency target for rentals through two pathways
- Gives choices & flexibility for compliance
- Will be added to the existing inspection process

## Why

- Current checklist does not include efficiency
- Equalizes market expectations for rentals
- Streamlined process
- Flexibility

# Two Pathways



## Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Pathway

- Undergo a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Assessment through a certified Home Energy Rater
- Achieve a minimum HERS score

## Checklist Pathway

- Choose from a combination of items on the Green Rental Housing Checklist developed by Elevate and Ann Arbor
- Achieve a minimum energy efficiency score

# How to Comply



- Built into existing inspection process
- When landlords go to schedule their next inspection, they will need to:
  - Upload a document showing they have met the requirements
  - Attach accompanying documentation to show they have done those measures





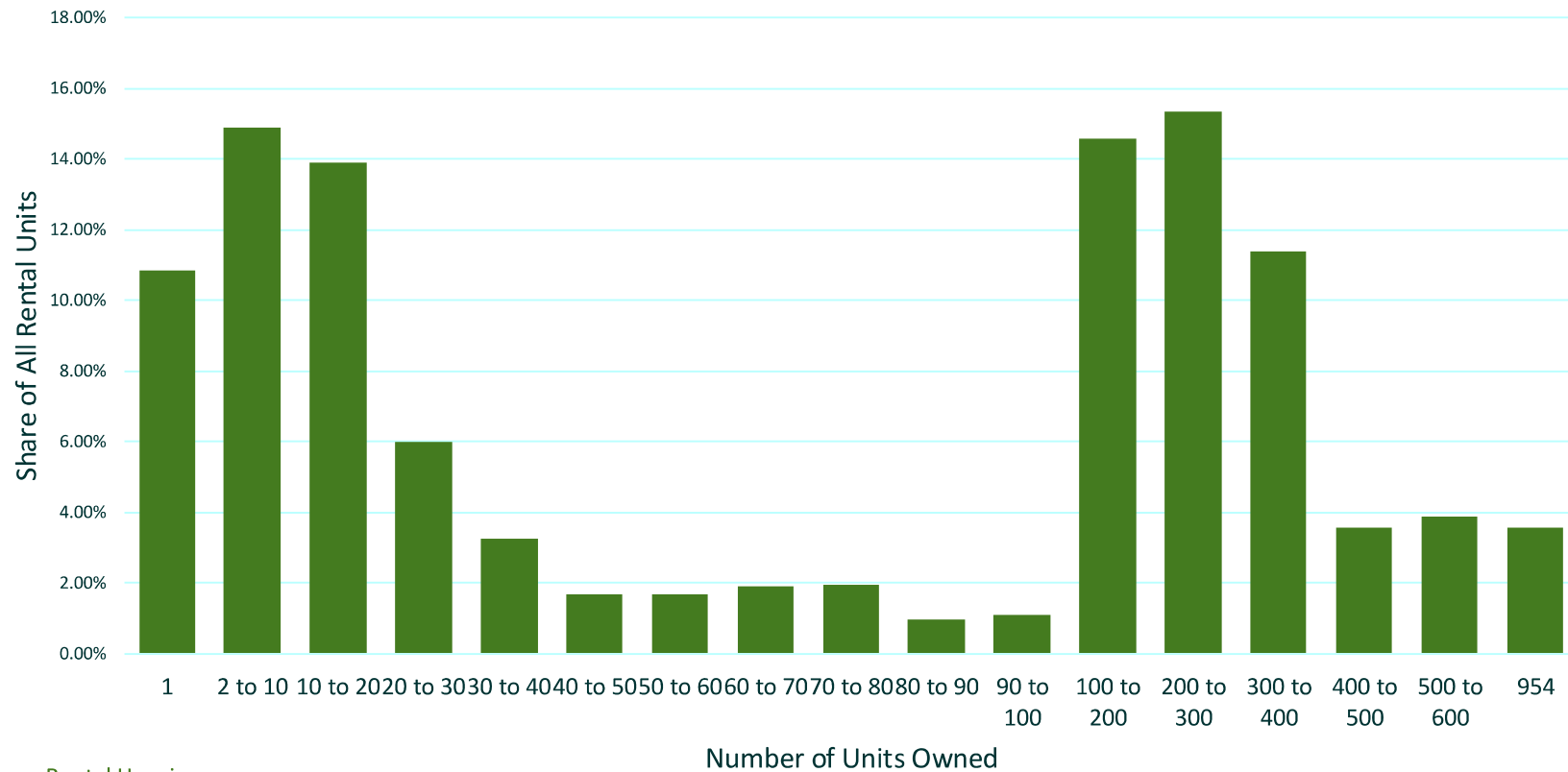
# Lesson 1:

Every landlord and property is unique\* and different landlords need different things

# Ann Arbor Context



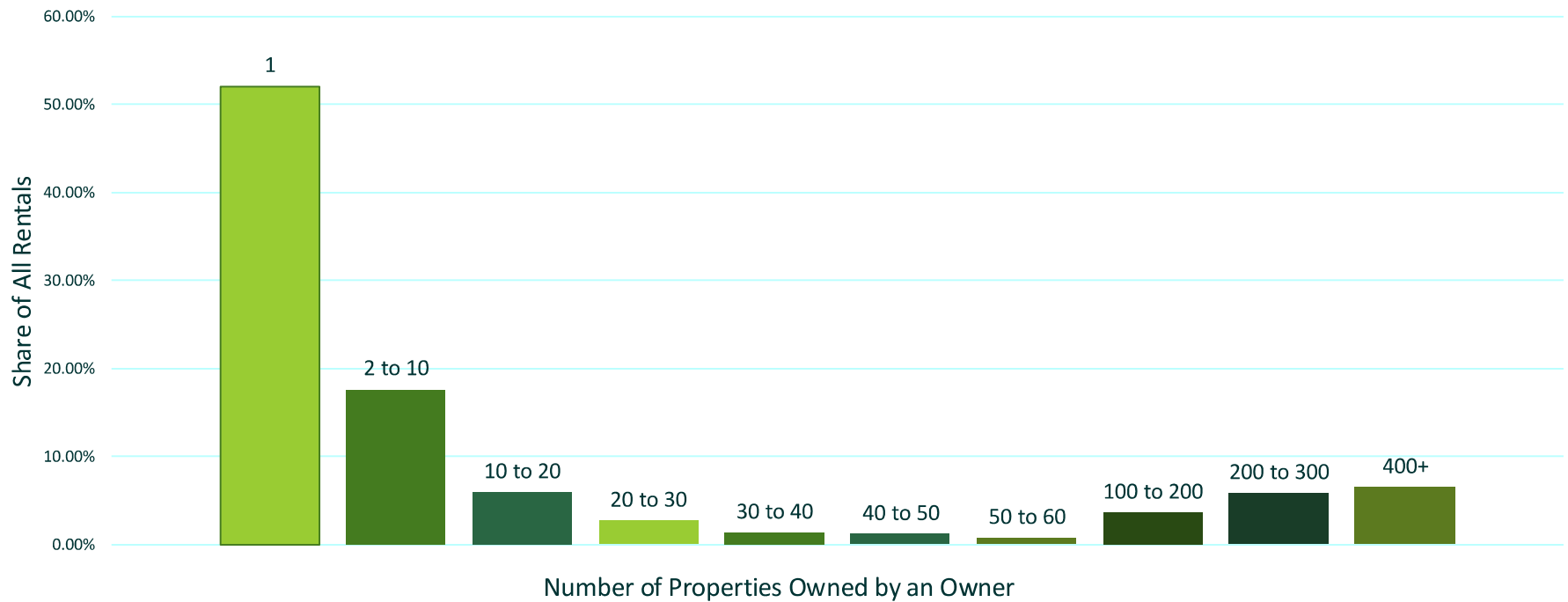
Breakdown of Rental Units Owned by Owners



# Ann Arbor Context



Breakdown of Rentals Owned by Owners





## Lesson 2:

Provide resources and guidance to make it as SIMPLE and AFFORDABLE as possible

# Landlord Resource Hub



## Resources

**Financial**



**Educational**



**Incentive Databases**



**Local Resources**



# Landlord Resource Hub



## Green Rental Housing Materials

Below are a number of materials on the Green Rental Housing Ordinance, including resources that can be used to achieve points on the Green Rental Housing Checklist.

**Ordinance**

**Renter Education**

**Renter Sustainability Session**

**Checklist Guidance**

The following are the core materials of the Green Rental Housing Ordinance.

- **Ordinance**
- **Regulations**
- **Checklist**
- **Checklist Methodology**

For an overview of Green Rental Housing, view this **episode of Green Light** to hear from City staff.



## Lesson 3:

Meet landlords where they are at and often,  
acknowledging you will never be able to do enough

## Extensive and personal engagement



- Meet with relevant organizations in your community
  - Apartment Association
  - Regional Relator Association
  - Property management groups
- Be available for 1:1 meetings
  - No matter how much information you put out there, no matter how clear you think you are being, it will not get to everyone and not everyone will understand it
  - Bring a second person with you if going in person



## Lesson 4:

Also consider renter behavior

# Renter Resource Hub



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**Ordinance**

**Renter Education**

**Renter Sustainability Session**

**Checklist Guidance**

One item on the Green Rental Housing Checklist is tenants attending a renter sustainability session. Tenants can view this recording for credit.

**[View the Renter Sustainability Session](#)**



## Lesson 5:

Create talking points, fact sheets, and FAQs for yourself and for your elected representatives – keep this messaging consistent across all platforms



# THANK YOU

Questions? Feedback?

[jlange@a2gov.org](mailto:jlange@a2gov.org)

[osi.a2gov.org/GreenRentalHousing](https://osi.a2gov.org/GreenRentalHousing)

The background of the slide is a landscape photograph. It shows a green field in the foreground, a line of trees in the middle ground, and several high-voltage power line towers stretching across the horizon. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white and yellow clouds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is peaceful and industrial.

# Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact us at  
[localpolicy@aceee.org](mailto:localpolicy@aceee.org)

**ACEEE**