

INFORMATION NOTE

Title:	What We Heard – 2022 Landlord Survey
Date Prepared:	July 12, 2022
Report To:	Committee of the Whole
Councillor and Role:	Councillor Ophelia Ravencroft, Housing
Ward:	N/A

Issue:

Provide Council with a summary of what was heard through the 2022 Landlord Survey.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

As part of the 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategy’s commitment to Informing Action and “supporting the involvement of the private sector in affordable housing,” the City of St. John’s has produced a What We Heard report detailing responses to the 2022 Landlord Survey. The purpose of the survey was to understand the impacts of recent changes in the rental properties market, as well as to gauge interest in, barriers to, and build knowledge around providing affordable housing in our city.

The online survey was open from May 9 to June 3, 2022 and received 249 responses with a 64% completion rate. The City promoted the survey via City of St. John’s social media, community partner networks, and during a landlord engagement event held on May 25, 2022.

A number of key findings emerged through the survey responses, including:

- The vast majority of landlords in St. John’s operate on a small scale, holding 1-5 units, the majority of which are basement apartments and single detached homes.
- Of the 249 respondents, only 3 indicated operating accessible units, highlighting a key need.
- According to respondents, the greatest impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were loss of rental income and increased rental arrears.
- Landlords indicated damages and poor support processes as common challenges experienced throughout a tenancy.
- 57% of landlords indicated dissatisfaction with recent changes to the Residential Tenancies Act.
- 47% of respondents are interested in/able to provide affordable housing based on the Affordable Housing Strategy definition (i.e., housing costs are no more than 30% of a household’s income). However, lack of security regarding recouping costs of missed rent, damages, etc. is cited as a significant barrier.

ST. JOHN’S

- Landlords also view cost of living increases as a major barrier to providing affordable rentals.
- Landlord mitigation funds and tax incentives are cited as key incentives that would make affordable housing provision more feasible.

Findings from the 2022 Landlord Survey will be presented to the Affordable Housing Working Group and used to inform working group initiatives and advocacy around increasing the feasibility of affordable market rentals.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. **Budget/Financial Implications:** The survey was developed and completed inhouse. There was no budget attached to the survey.
2. **Partners or Other Stakeholders:** The City's Affordable Housing Strategy was built upon public and strategic stakeholder engagement, and the implementation continues to be guided and shaped by multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes.
3. **Alignment with Strategic Directions:**

A Connected City: Develop and deliver programs, services and public spaces that build safe, healthy and vibrant communities.
4. **Alignment with Adopted Plans:** The 2022 Landlord Survey aligns with the 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategy's Informing Action strategic direction, as well as items 5.3 and 5.3.1.
5. **Accessibility and Inclusion:** The City's Affordable Housing Strategy emphasizes fostering an inclusive housing sector with options available along the entire housing continuum. This includes investing in, advocating for, and building knowledge around accessible and universally designed housing (i.e., strategic directions 2.3.2, 6.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2).
6. **Legal or Policy Implications:** No legal or policy implications
7. **Privacy Implications:** The landlord survey was anonymous. Identifying information was not collected and only generalized information was collected to develop a profile of the current rental market.
8. **Engagement and Communications Considerations:**

The survey was communicated through various channels and the What We Heard will be shared on the Affordable Housing project page at EngageStJohns.ca, through City Communications channels, and with the Affordable Housing Working Group.

9. Human Resource Implications: None anticipated at this time.

10. Procurement Implications: None anticipated at this time.

11. Information Technology Implications: None anticipated at this time.

12. Other Implications: None anticipated at this time.

Conclusion/Next Steps:

Review the What we Heard report and consider the findings when decisions related to the topic are brought forward for consideration at a future meeting.

Attachment: WWH 2022 Landlord Survey 2022-07-26.pdf

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	IN WWH Landlord Survey 2022.docx
Attachments:	- WWH 2022 Landlord Survey 2022-07-26.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jul 21, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Judy Tobin - Jul 21, 2022 - 9:21 AM

Tanya Haywood - Jul 21, 2022 - 9:24 AM