

# S.A.F.E. HOUSING SAINT PAUL

Stable, Accessible, Fair, and Equitable  
Housing in Saint Paul



# City of Saint Paul Commitment to Fair Housing



The Most Livable  
City in America

## Fair Housing Work Group

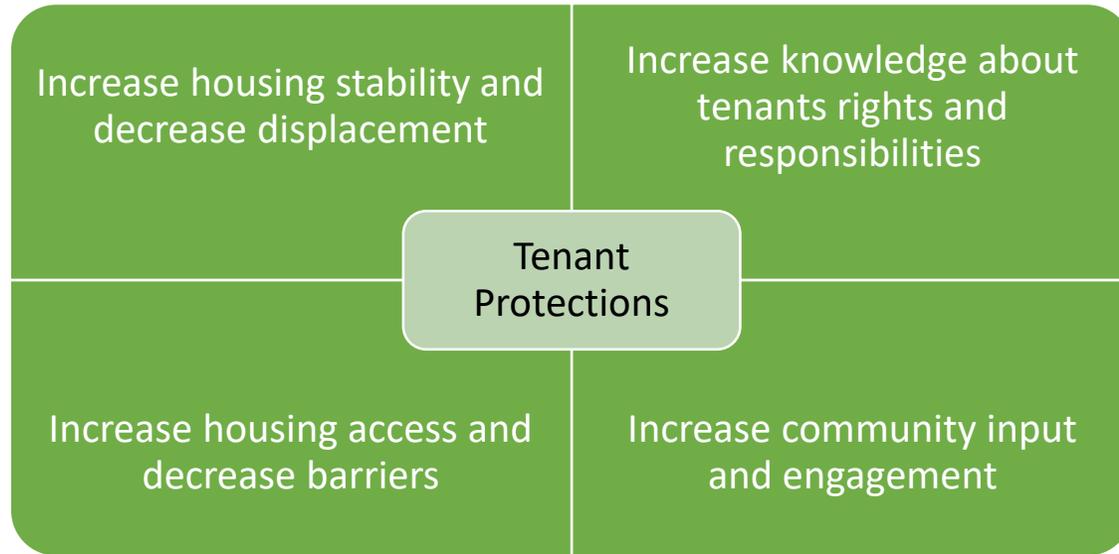
Status update and policy and program options in response to  
Resolution 17-2064.

St. Paul’s Fair Housing work group has its work cut out for it



**2017-2018**

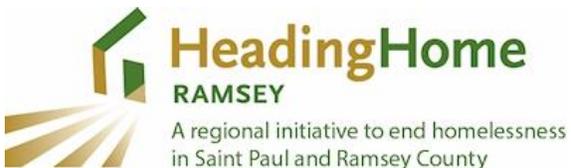
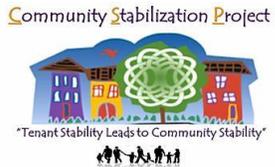
# Summer/Fall 2019 Stakeholder Engagement



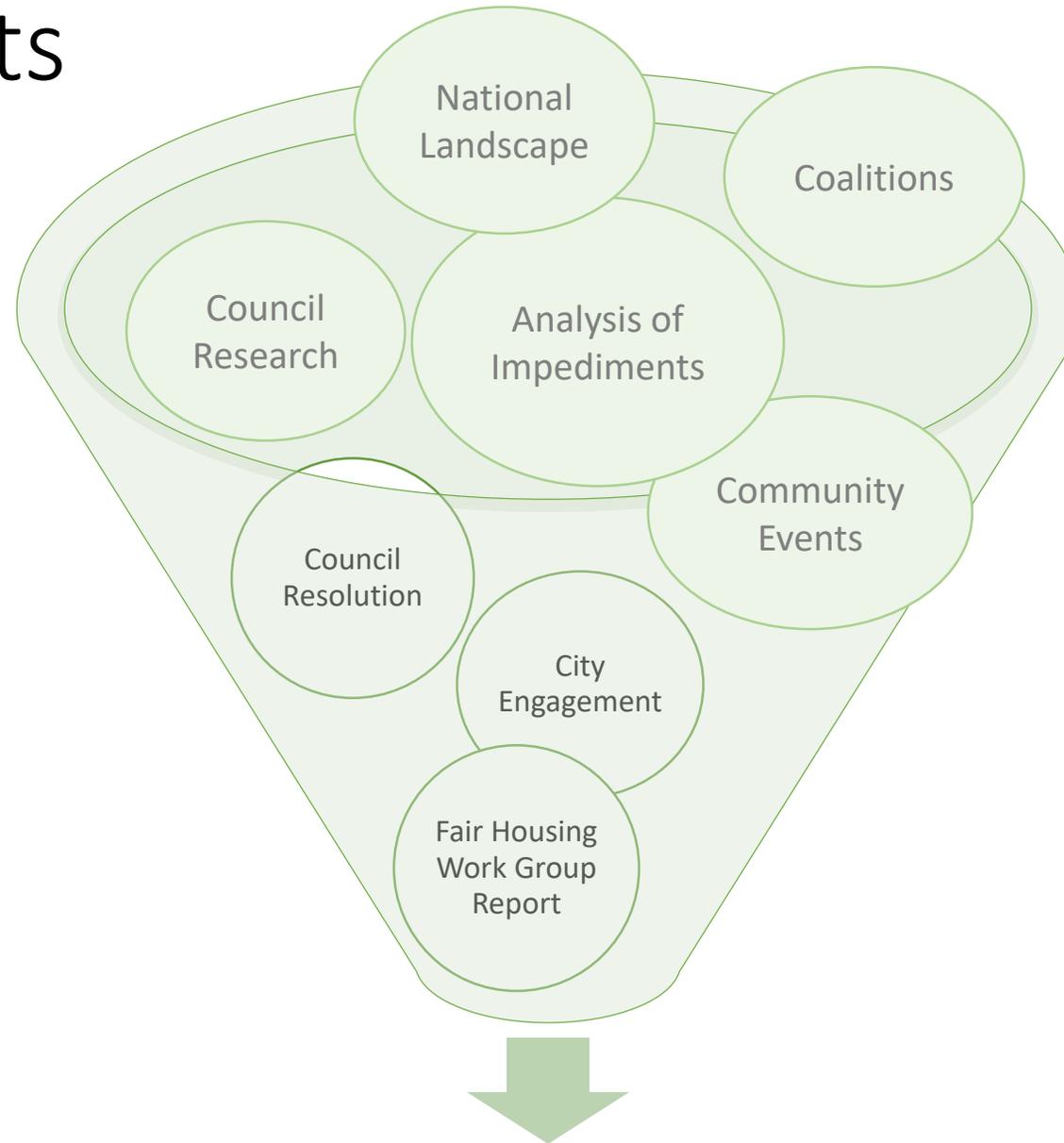
NEWS

St. Paul schedules three policy forums on tenants' rights





# Inputs



**Fair Housing Policy Agenda**

# Rights and Responsibilities

**Why do we need a local Tenant-Landlord Information Packet?** Many tenants are unaware of their housing rights and responsibilities. Information regarding tenant rights are often difficult to access, in multiple locations, or hard to understand. Creating this resource will aid in a clearer shared understanding between landlords and tenants on rights, responsibilities, and resources available to support better communication and resolution related to landlord-tenant issues.

**Goal:** Inform tenants and landlords of their rights, responsibilities, and available resources.

**Policy details:** Compilation of relevant city ordinance, state statute, and federal laws regarding landlord and tenants' rights, responsibilities, and resources.

- Easy to read
- Multiple Languages

# Security Deposits

**Why do we need a limit on the upfront costs of housing?** Minnesota currently does not have any restrictions on the amount a housing provider can charge for a security deposit or prepayment. Requiring large security deposits and/or rent prepayments creates an additional financial barrier for residents who have lower but steady incomes to accessing rental housing.

**Goal:** Limit the upfront costs of accessing rental housing.

**Policy details:** City would set requirements regarding maximum amounts allowable as security deposits and prepaid rent required to move in.

- Security Deposit can equal up to One (1) months' rent
- Prepaid rent cannot exceed One (1) months' rent
- Does not include application fees and/or pet deposits.

# Tenant Screening

**Why do we need tenant screening guidelines?** Tenant selection criteria is a crucial piece of fair housing work. Property owners create and utilize tenant selection criteria to screen tenants and assess risk often based on criminal history, rental history, and credit score. Lack of regulation in this space has resulted in residents who are disproportionately impacted by the disparities in our criminal justice system and predatory financial systems being denied access to rental housing.

**Goal:** Increase housing access and mobility for persons with backgrounds negatively impacted by criminal, credit, and rental histories

**Policy details:** Establish uniform screening criteria that will:

- Limit the impact of criminal history
  - Misdemeanors – 3 years
  - Felonies – 7-10 years
- Limit the impact of rental history
  - Evictions – 3 years
  - Consider additional payment standards
- Prohibit the use of credit scores

# Just Cause Notice

**Why do we need a Just Cause Notice?** In many cities and states, landlords can non-renew or terminate tenancy without providing the tenant with any information. As a result, landlords can refuse to renew a tenant's lease for any reason or for no reason.

**Goal:** Prevent housing displacement without cause and increase housing stability.

**Policy details:** City would require landlords to give written reason for non-renewal or termination of tenancy that aligns with one of ten established Just Causes:

- Non-payment of rent
- Repeated late payment of rent
- Material non-compliance
- Refusal to renew
- Occupancy by property owner or family member
- Building demolition and dwelling unit conversion
- Rehab and renovation
- Complying with a government order to vacate
- Occupancy conditioned on employment
- Exceeding Occupancy

# Advance Notice of Sale

**Why do we need and Advance Notice of Sale Policy:** The Advance Notice policy provides information earlier in the sales process to two key stakeholders: preservation buyers and tenants. Engaging preservation buyers earlier in the process strengthens the City's NOAH preservation efforts by creating more opportunities for preservation buyers. Notifying tenants ensures they are informed and can prepare for any potential changes to the status of their housing.

**Goal:** Support preservation of affordable housing and increase protections for tenants potentially facing displacement.

**Policy details:** Require property owners of affordable buildings to give notice to the City & tenants in advance of a proposed sale as well as after a change in ownership. Establish a tenant protection period to minimize displacement.

**Properties covered by this policy as proposed:**

- 3+ units ( Amended to 5+)
- 20%+ of units affordable
- Affordable=80% AMI or below
- 90-day advance notice period
- 90-day tenant protection period