



Building  
Community  
Value **Detroit**

## **DETROIT LANDLORD SURVEY**

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*Submitted by*

**WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**Center for Urban Studies**

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## Executive Summary

This report summarizes results of a survey of Detroit landlords and property managers conducted by Wayne State University's Center for Urban Studies (Center) in collaboration with Building Community Value (BCV), a Detroit-based nonprofit that works with Detroit residents to provide training and technical assistance for those who wish to do small-scale development in their neighborhoods. BCV has sought to understand lead remediation in Detroit's rental housing stock as well as knowledge and perceptions of lead abatement and the City's compliance requirements. In late 2021 and early 2022, the Center surveyed 72<sup>1</sup> self-identified landlords and property managers maintaining rental units in the city of Detroit.

The survey included responses from both small-scale and large-scale landlords and illuminates the need for a more representative sample of smaller landlords to more accurately portray the needs of small-scale landlords in providing and maintaining healthy and safe rental housing in the city of Detroit. The key findings from this survey are as follows:

### Rate of compliance

- Over 70% of respondents reported that compliance with the City of Detroit's rental ordinance was 'somewhat' or 'very' difficult. Respondents who expanded on their response selection noted the process for compliance was "expensive" and noted "confusion around policies" and "changing policies."
- On average, for the 64 respondents who discussed their properties' compliance, a little over half said their reported properties were certified as compliant with the City (53.1%, n=34). About a third of respondents reported 100% of their properties had a Certificate of Compliance (32.8%, n=21), while nearly a quarter of respondents reported none of their properties were certified compliant with the City (23.4%, n=15).

### Working with the City

- Nearly thirty percent of respondents selected 'difficulty in working with City departments' as the main frustration of landlords in Detroit.(29.2%, n=19).
- When asked what the City could do to better partner with landlords, nearly a third of participants chose to elaborate and provide suggestions (32.3%, n=21). Those responses included establishing a universal landlord portal, giving benefits to those who are following compliance protocols, lower costs and fees to allow property

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<sup>1</sup> The number of respondents may vary by question.

owners to provide affordable rental housing, provide tenant education, and develop a hearing process for landlord-tenant disputes.

### **Attitudes towards requirements**

- More than half of respondents agreed on the need for home inspections and lead inspections as a requirement for ensuring tenant protection in rental housing (63.1%, n=41, and 55.4%, n=36, respectively).
- A substantial majority of respondents recognized that a 'lead inspection/risk assessment' is needed or required prior to leasing under Detroit's ordinance/city code/regulations (83.1%, n=54).

### **Remediation efforts**

- More than half of participants said their current or future remediation plans employ interim controls and less than a third plan to engage in abatement measures (52.3%, n=34 and 32.3%, n=21, respectively).
- The encouraging factor for most participants in choosing abatement over interim controls was funding assistance, with 83.1% (n=54) of respondents selecting this response. Four respondents said interim controls were sufficient in eliminating the threat of lead or that they would not choose abatement (6.2%).
- Responses indicated that landlords and property managers broadly understood the concept of lead "abatement" (87.7%, n=57) with more than half of those respondents defining it as the removal of lead or anything hazardous (n=32), but fewer were aware of the term "interim controls" (44.6%, n=29). Those who described practices of interim controls described engaging in encasement, scraping, and painting of affected areas to manage lead in their properties.

## Sampling of participants

Voluntary response and convenience sampling were used to recruit participants through a process of opting-in to the interview and use of Building Community Value (BCV) contact lists. BCV engaged in several methods of invitation for phase one and phase two interviews. For phase one pilot surveys, BCV selected seven known contacts for participation via direct invitation. Phase two primarily employed voluntary response opt-ins. BCV deployed email invitations in late November 2021 to an unknown number of organizational contacts who were invited to participate in the survey and were instructed to sign up via a Google Forms pre-survey if they were interested, which initially closed on December 10, 2021.

There were 51 self-identified Detroit landlords who opted to be contacted for participation. BCV also provided the Center 64 contacts with phone numbers (after de-duplication), amassed through the organization's collaboration with Detroit landlords. The sample was not randomly selected or representative of all landlords and property managers. As such, this sample is not randomly selected nor representative of all landlords and property managers in the City of Detroit.

Early in 2022, BCV and their funder requested an increased survey goal. As a result, voluntary opt-ins were re-opened via the same Google Forms pre-survey in early January. Instead of email invitations, BCV advertised the survey to potential participants on its public Facebook page, private BCV alumni page, and a Detroit real estate investors page, asking those who saw the posting to share it. This led to another 42 opt-ins which were added to the interviewing sample and called during the first two weeks of January 2022. All respondents were offered an incentive of a \$50 gift card for their participation.

## Phase 1 pilot interviews

For the first iteration of the survey, interviews were conducted with seven landlords referred to the Center by BCV. Interviews were held on Zoom for a duration of approximately 45 minutes. The questions in the pilot interviews were largely open-ended, allowing participants to guide Center research staff toward pressing and relevant topics of landlord experiences. Feedback provided in these initial interviews assisted in the development of the refined survey instrument used in phase 2.

Interviews in phase 1 involved the participant and at least two interviewing staff for each meeting. One staff member conducted the interview while at least one staff member transcribed responses. Following the interview, if there was more than one transcriber, the transcribers merged their responses into a collective narrative. Given the small sample size of the pilot, responses throughout this report are discussed in a qualitative manner and are excluded from all univariate analysis.

## Phase 2 interviews

Following survey instrument refinements informed by phase one interviews, and with input from BCV, phase 2 interviews began in early December 2021. Sixty-five interviews were conducted via phone with responses recorded by interviewers using the Qualtrics



survey platform. One interviewer conducted each survey, with frequent monitoring and supervision. Interviewers were required to both conduct interviews and record responses in multiple choice and open-ended formats. Interviews in phase 2 had an average duration of approximately 25 minutes. As requested by BCV, responses from phase 2 interviews will also be discussed for the following subgroups on selected questions:

1. participants with only detached single-family homes;
2. participants with a Certificate of Compliance for 100% of their units only; and
3. participants who only reside in Detroit.

Data is reported for all survey respondents before subgroup results.

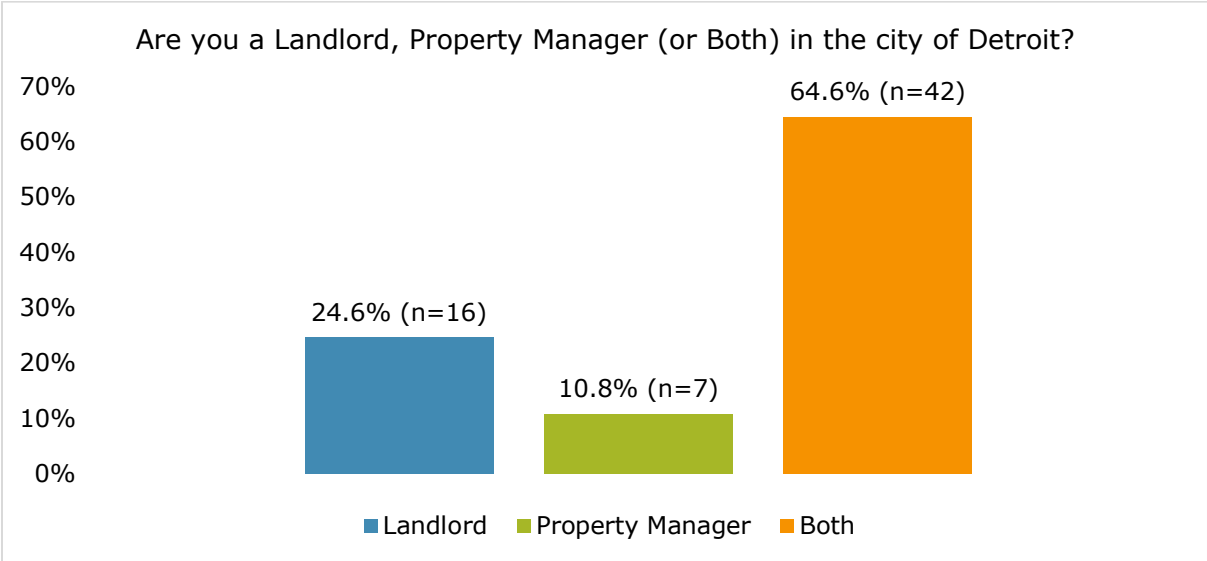
# Background & Characteristics of Participants

## Profile of survey participants

### Respondent Role

Survey respondents were first asked if they identified as a landlord, a property manager, or both in the city of Detroit. The largest portion of respondents said they were both landlords and property managers in the city of Detroit (64.6% n=42). A quarter of respondents identified as landlords only (24.6%, n=16), and seven respondents (10.8%) said they were exclusively property managers (see Figure 1). Of those who identified as both, three-quarters (73.8%, n=31) said they were equally both landlords and property managers. Eight said they were primarily landlords, and three said they were primarily property managers.

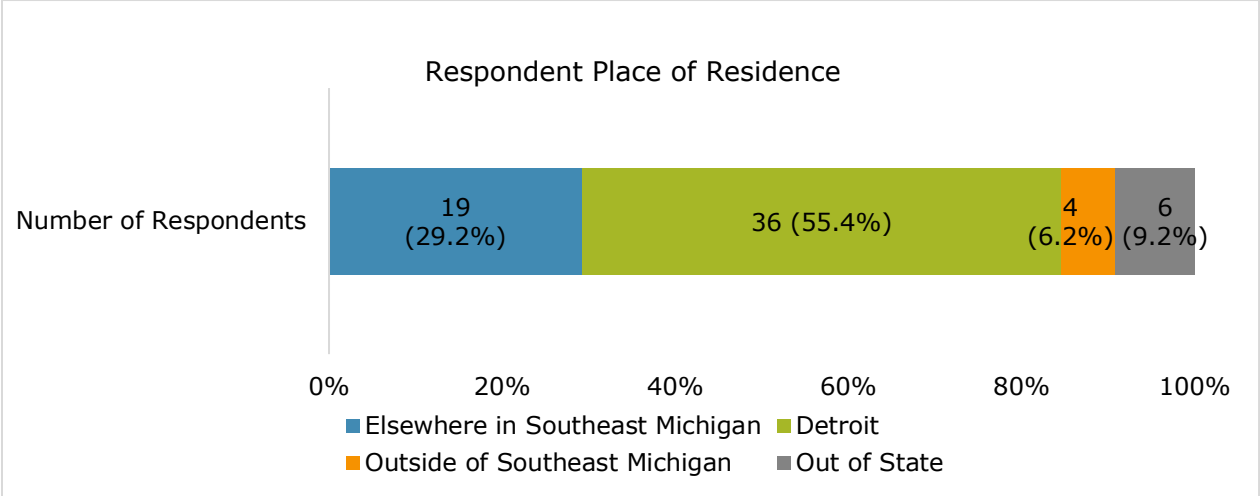
**Figure 1:** Role as landlord, property manager, or both.



### Place of Residence

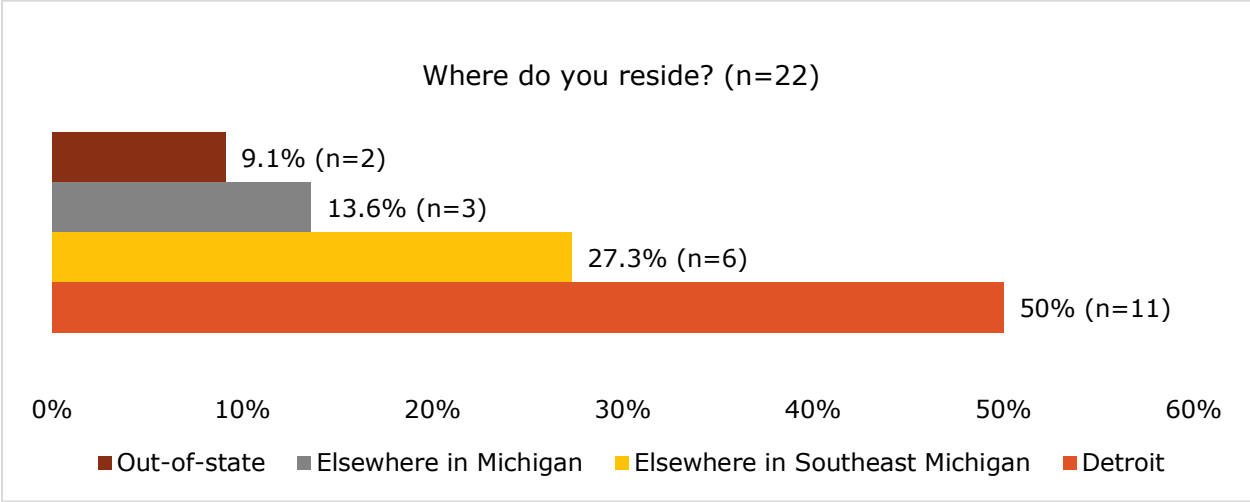
Many landlords interviewed were residents of Southeast Michigan (84.6% n=55), with a little over half of respondents identifying as residents of the city of Detroit (55.4% n=36), and more than a quarter reporting they resided elsewhere in the region (29.2%, n=19). Six respondents reported living outside of Michigan (9.2%), and none said they lived outside the United States (see Figure 2). Similarly, in phase 1 of this survey, five of the seven respondents reported residing in Southeast Michigan themselves, with four residing in the city of Detroit.

**Figure 2:** Respondent Place of Residence



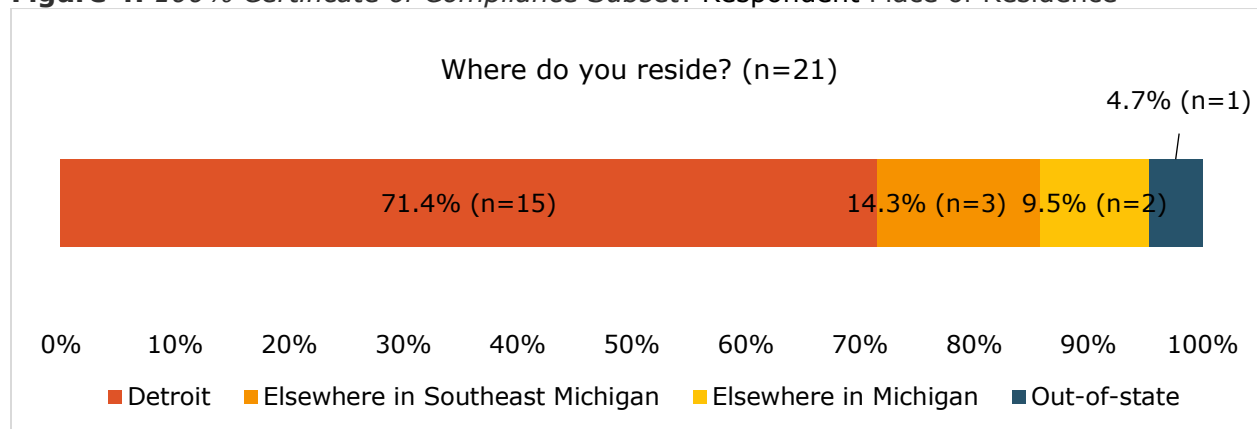
*Detached Single-Family.* Of respondents with only detached single-family units, half reside in Detroit (50%, n=11), over a quarter reside elsewhere in southeast Michigan (27.3%, n=6), three (13.6%) reside elsewhere in Michigan, and two (9.1%) live out-of-state (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Detached Single-Family Subset: Respondent Place of Residence



*100% Certificate of Compliance.* Almost three-quarters of respondents with a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units reside in Detroit (71.4%, n=15). In addition, three respondents (14.3%) reported living in locations elsewhere in southeast Michigan, two (9.5%) reported living elsewhere in Michigan, and one reported living out-of-state (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4:** 100% Certificate of Compliance Subset: Respondent Place of Residence

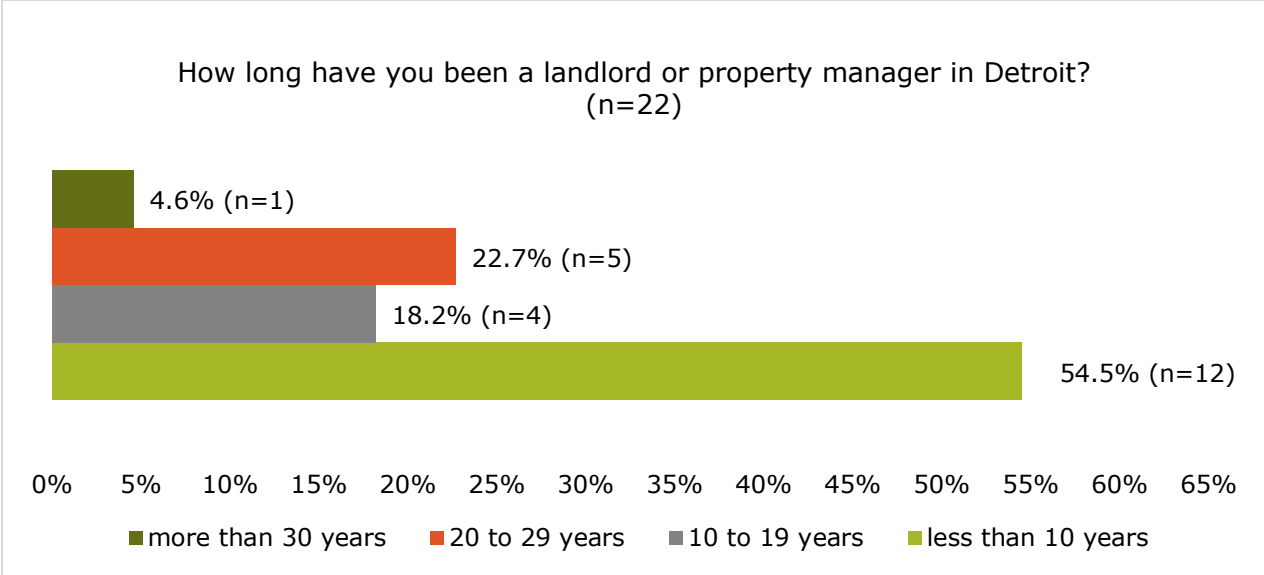


Length of Time as Landlord or Property Manager

In addition to being asked about their place of residence, all respondents were also asked about their length of time as a landlord or property manager in Detroit. A wide range of experience in the business of leasing housing was reported. The average length of time respondents reported being a landlord in Detroit was just under 12 years, with the shortest time being just one month and the longest 40 years. The median time in the business was 10 years. In phase 1 of this survey, the average length of time respondents reported being a landlord in Detroit was 9.6 years, with the shortest time being less than five years and the longest over 15 years.

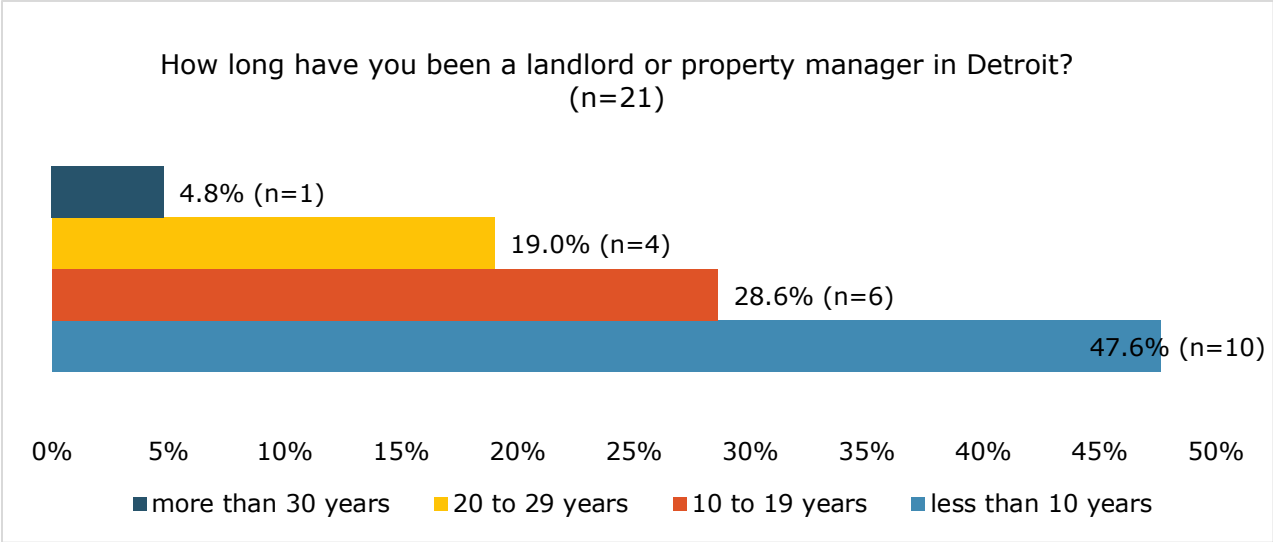
*Detached Single-Family.* When considering the 22 respondents who are landlords and property managers of detached single-family homes only, 12 (54.5%) have been a landlord or property managers for less than a decade. Four (18.2%) have been landlords or property managers for 10-19 years, while five (22.7%) have been in their role for 20-29 years. Just one respondent in this group reported being in their role for over 30 years (4.6%) (see Figure 5). The average number of years respondents who owned or managed only detached single-family units reported being a landlord or property manager is 11.9 years. Collectively, respondents who resided in Detroit provided a similar average estimate of the time they had spent as a landlord or property manager, which is 12.4 years. Both averages are relatively similar to the average reported duration for all respondents, which is 11.8 years.

**Figure 5:** *Detached Single Family Subset: Length of Time as Landlord*



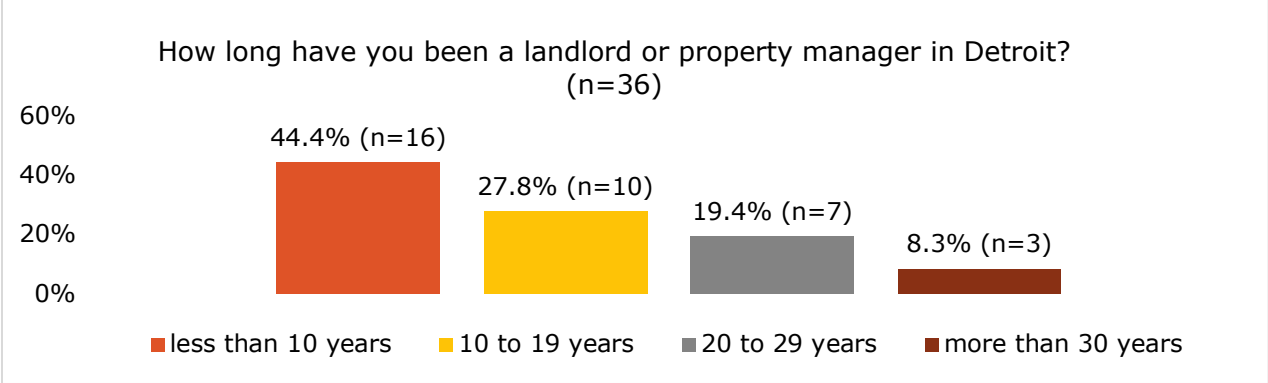
*100% Certificate of Compliance.* For participants who indicated that 100% of their properties had a Certificate of Compliance, the length of time as a landlord or property manager ranged from 10 months to more than 30 years. The average time as a landlord or property manager for those in this category is 10.7 years, with a median of 10 years. About half of these respondents (47.6%, n=10) have been landlords or property managers for less than 10 years, and six (28.6%) have been so for between 10 and 19 years. In addition, four of these respondents (19.0%, n=4) have been landlords or property managers between 20 and 29 years, and one (4.8%) has been so for more than 30 years (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6:** *100% Certificate of Compliance Subset: Length of Time as Landlord*



*Detroit Residents.* Of the 36 respondents who are residents of Detroit, 16 (44.4%) have been a landlord or property manager for less than a decade, 20 (55.5%) have been a landlord or property manager for a decade or more, and three (8.3%) have been in this role for more than 30 years (see Figure 7).

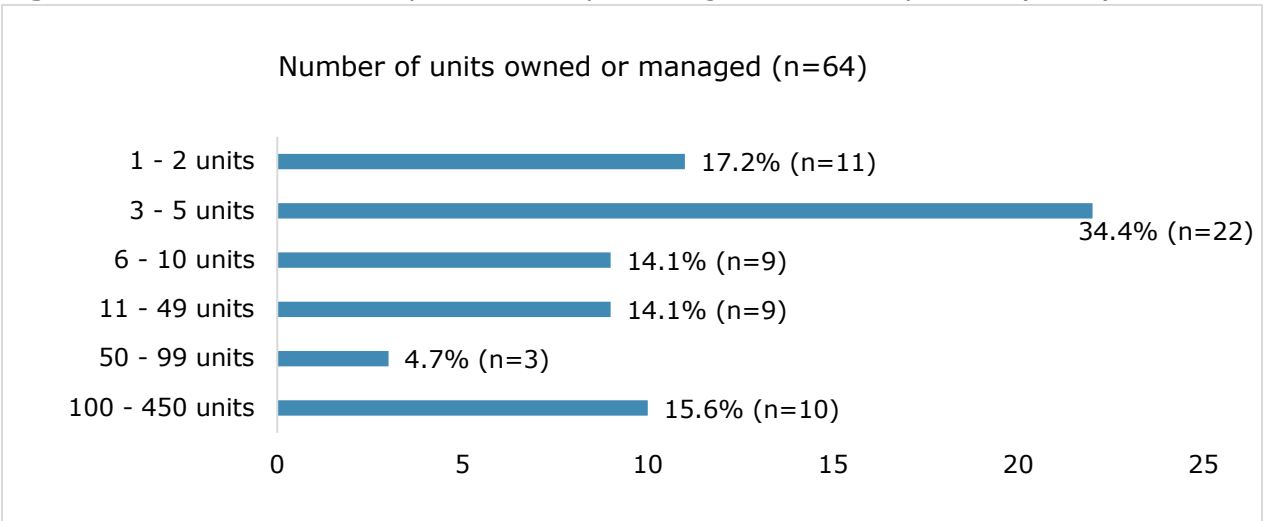
**Figure 7:** *Detroit Resident Subset:* Length of Time as Landlord



### Scale of landlord operations

When asked how many housing units they **owned and/or managed in Detroit**, responses varied from a low of 1 to a high of 450 units<sup>2</sup>. Most respondents, 51 of 64 (79.7%), tended to own or manage fewer than 50 properties (see Figure 8); 33 respondents reported owning/managing five or fewer units (51.6%). Ten landlords reported owning or managing more than one hundred residential units in the Detroit. The average number of owned or managed units reported was 47.4 and the median was 5.0.

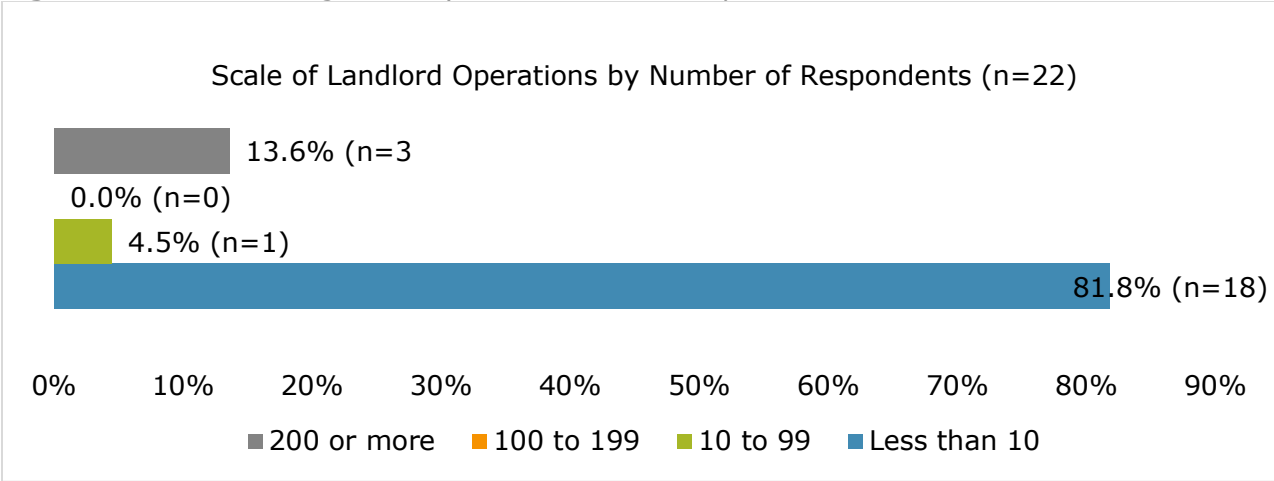
**Figure 8:** Scale of Landlord Operations, in percentages of total responses. (n=64)



<sup>2</sup> An outlier of 6,000 reported owned or managed units was excluded from analysis.

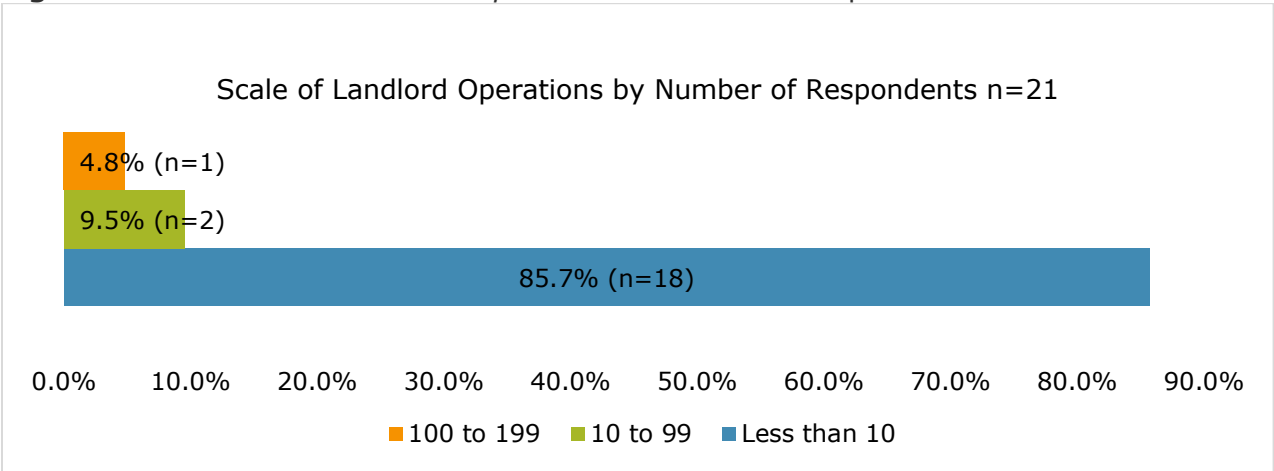
*Detached Single-Family.* The number of units owned or managed by respondents with only detached single-family homes ranged from one to 450. Over four-fifths of these respondents (81.8%, n=18) owned or managed fewer than ten units, one (4.5%) owned between ten and 99 units, and three (13.6%) owned 200 or more units (see Figure 9). The average number of units owned or managed by those with only detached single-family units was 43.2 units, with a median of four units.

**Figure 9:** *Detached Single-Family Subset: Scale of Operations*



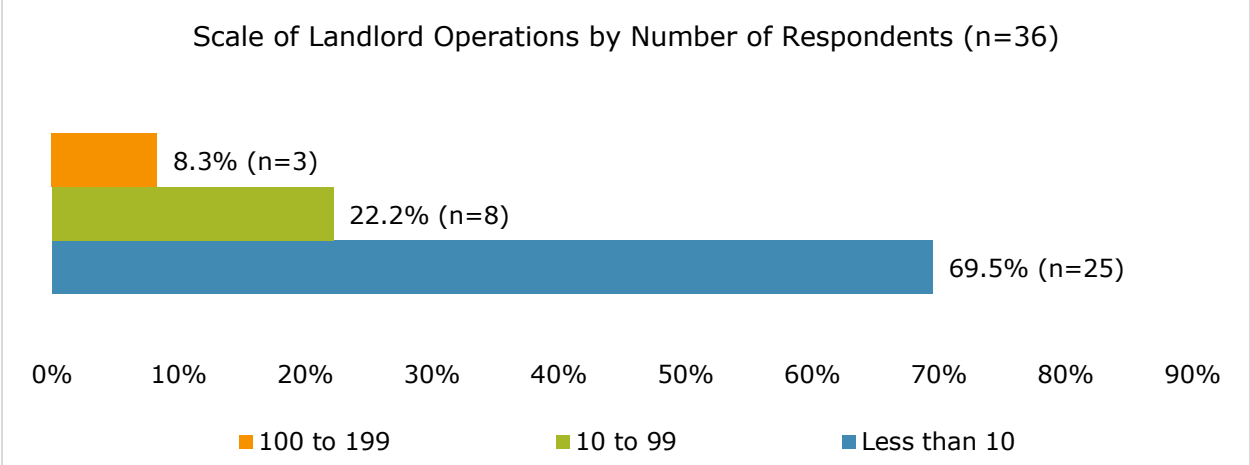
*100% Certificate of Compliance.* Respondents indicating they had a Certificate of Compliance for 100% of their properties had between one and 194 properties, with an average of 17.8 units and a median of four units. Over four-fifths of these respondents (85.7%, n=18) owned or managed less than 10 units, two (9.5%) owned or managed between 10 and 99 units, and one (4.8%) owned or managed more than 100 units. (see Figure 10).

**Figure 10:** *100% Certificate of Compliance Subset: Scale of Operations*



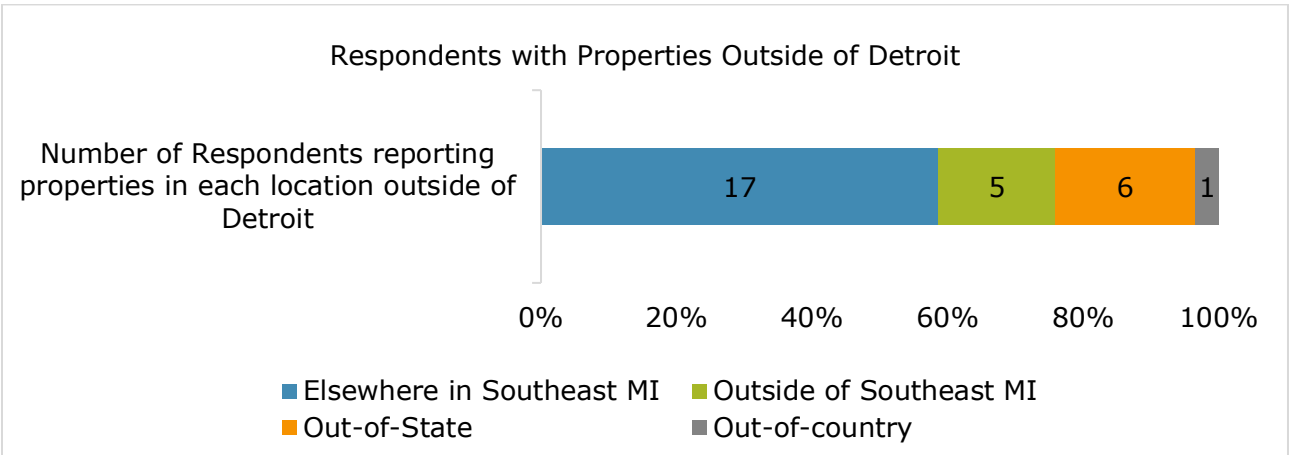
*Detroit Residents.* The number of housing units owned or managed by participants who reside in Detroit ranged from 1 to 196, with an average of 21.3 housing units and a median of 4.5 housing units. Over two-thirds of these participants (69.5%, n=25) owned or managed fewer than 10 housing units, about a quarter (22.2%, n=8) owned or managed between 10 and 100 units, and three (8.3%) reported owning or managing over 100 housing. Of the 25 participants living in Detroit who owned fewer than 10 housing units, 18 respondents said they owned managed fewer than 5 housing units (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11:** *Detroit Resident Subset: Scale of Operations*



Over a third of respondents reported **owning or managing properties outside of Detroit** (36.9%, n=24). When asked to specify where all locations of their other properties were, 17 reported other Southeast Michigan locales, another five said they had properties outside of Southeast Michigan, six out-of-state, and one outside the United States (see Figure 12).

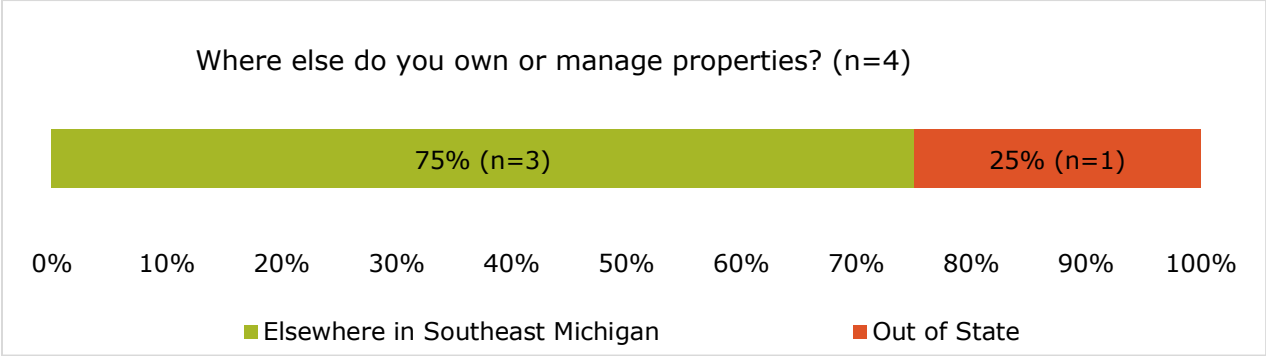
**Figure 12:** Respondents with Properties Outside of Detroit, by region. (n=24)





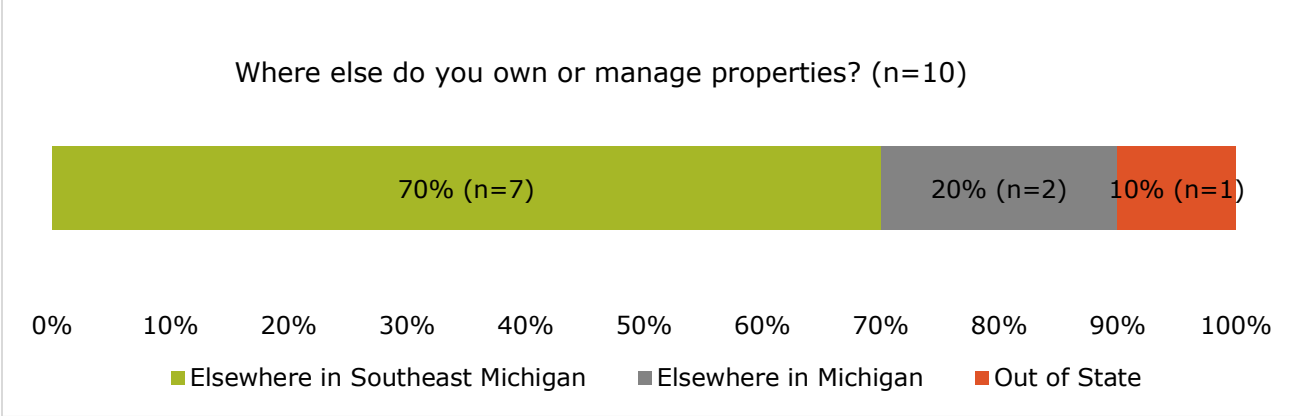
*100% Certificate of Compliance.* Over four-fifths of those with a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units only own or manage properties in Detroit (81%, n=17). Of the four respondents that reported owning or managing properties outside of Detroit, three (75%) named locations elsewhere in southeast Michigan, and one (25%) named a location outside of Michigan (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13:** *100% Certificate of Compliance Subset:* Respondents with Properties Outside of Detroit



*Detached Single-Family.* Of the 10 respondents with only detached single-family homes outside of Detroit, seven participants (70%) own or manage properties elsewhere in southeast Michigan, two (20%) in other locations within Michigan, and one (10%) outside of Michigan (see Figure 14).

**Figure 14:** *Detached Single-Family Subset:* Respondents with Properties Outside of Detroit

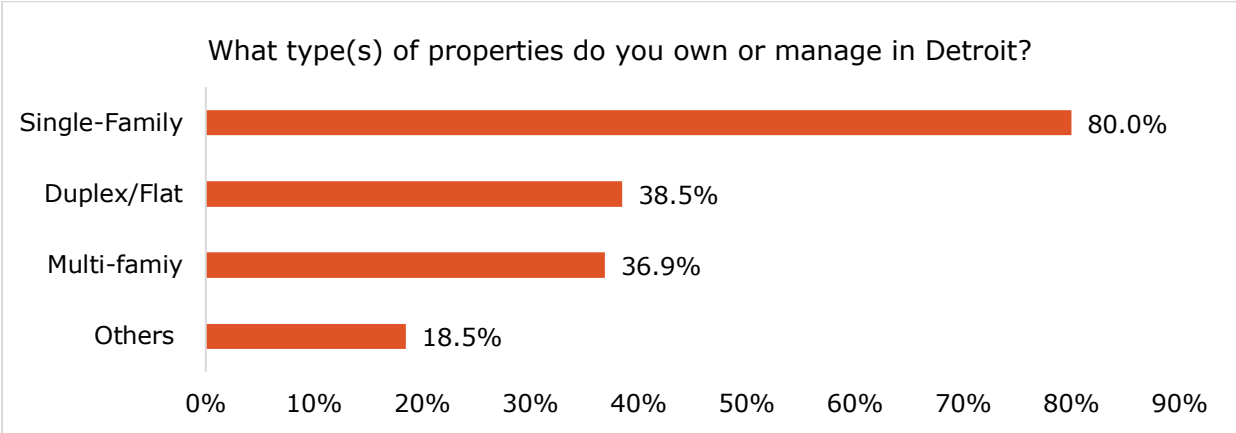


In phase 1 of this survey, responses varied from less than 10 to over 150 when asked how many housing units they owned and/or managed in Detroit. The average number of owned/managed units was 65.6 as reported amongst phase 1 interviewees. Five of the seven respondents reported owning or managing fewer than 50 units. Five of the seven respondents reported also owning or managing properties outside of Detroit, with three noting other Michigan locales and two noting properties in the US outside of Michigan.

### Types of housing owned & managed

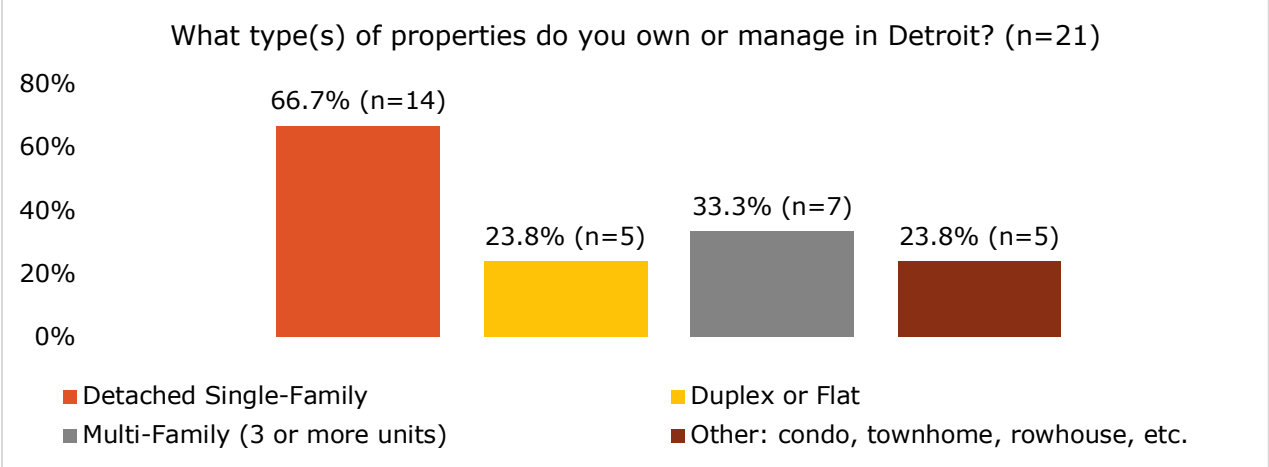
Landlords and property managers were asked what types of housing they own or manage in Detroit (multiple responses were permitted). A large majority of respondents (80.0%, n=52) reported owning or managing detached single-family homes. Over a third of landlords interviewed noted owning or managing duplexes (38.5%, n=25) and multifamily structures with three or more units (36.9%, n=24). Twelve landlords specified owning or managing condos, townhomes, and second floor apartments (18.5%) (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15:** Types of Properties Owned or Managed in Detroit



*100% Certification of Compliance.* Two-thirds of participants who reported having a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units reported owning or managing detached single-family units (66.7%, n=14). In addition, a third (33.3%, n=7) reported owning or managing multi-family homes with three or more units, less than a quarter (23.8%, n=5) reported owning or managing a duplex or flat, and a similar number (23.8%, n=5) reported owning or managing other properties such as condos, townhomes, rowhouses, etc. (see Figure 16).

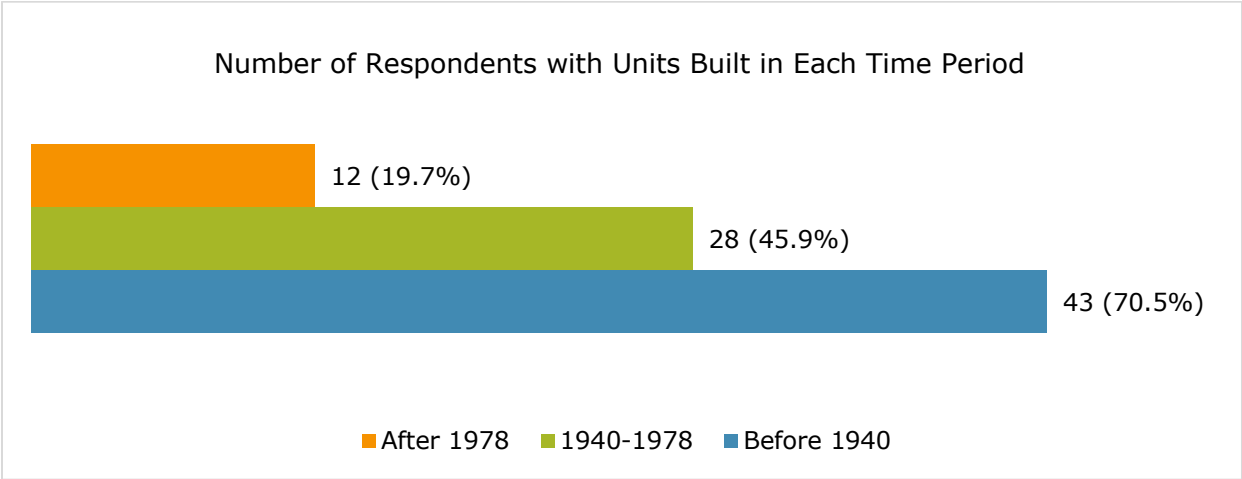
**Figure 16:** *100% Certification of Compliance Subset:* Type of Properties Owned or Managed in Detroit



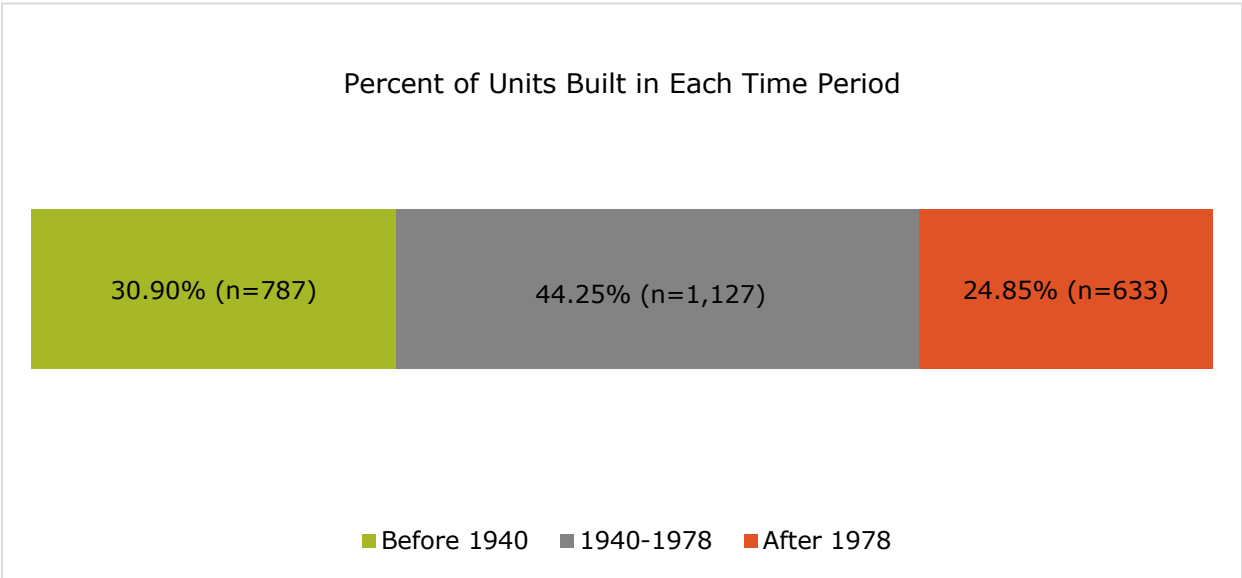
Age of Housing

Sixty-one landlords responded when asked about the age of their housing structures. 43 (70.5%) respondents identified at least some of their housing as built before 1940, with 30 respondents stating that all their housing was older than 1940. Housing built between 1940 and 1978 made up the bulk of owned or managed units, numbered at 1,127. Twelve respondents (19.7%) reported having any properties built after 1978, with a total of 633 units, or roughly a quarter of all units reported (see Figures 17 and 18). Again, the high outlier case reported previously was excluded from this analysis.

**Figure 17:** Age of units owned or managed by respondents, by time period (before 1940, between 1940-1978, and after 1978). (n=61)



**Figure 18:** Units reported built before 1940, between 1940 and 1978, and after 1978, in percentages of total units (2,547 total) reported.

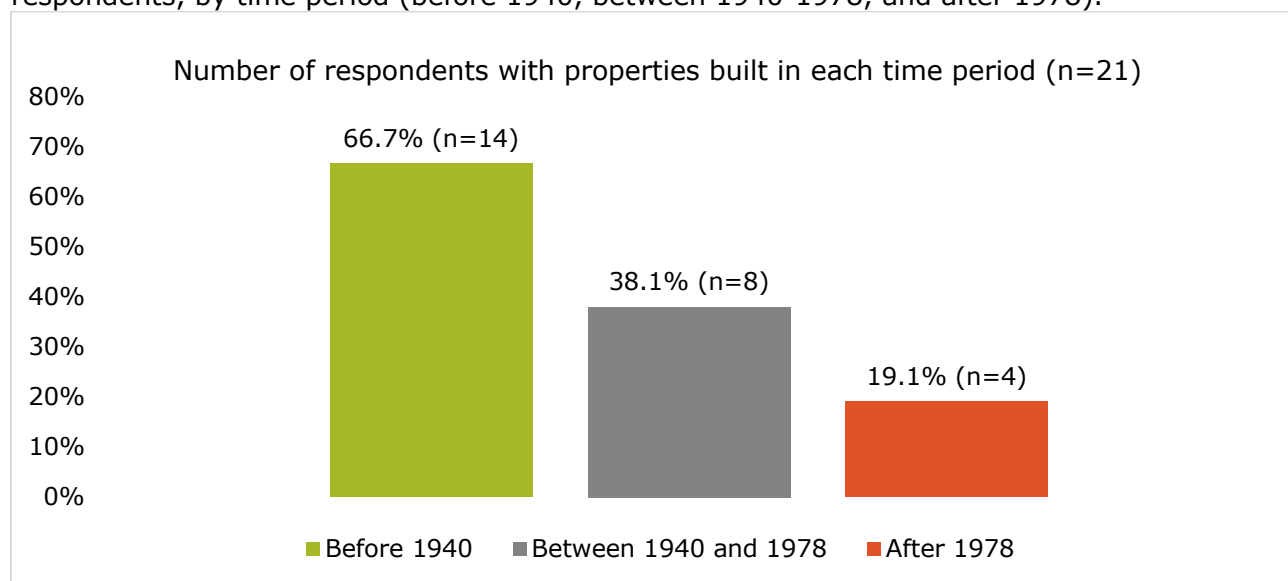


*100% Certification of Compliance.* Respondents who reported that 100% of their units had a Certificate of Compliance owned or managed between 0 to 22 properties built before 1940, with an average of 2.6 properties built before that time, and a median of one. Two-thirds of these respondents (66.7%, n=14) reported owning or managing properties built before 1940.

In addition, respondents who reported that 100% of their units had a Certificate of Compliance owned or managed between 0 to 8 properties built between 1940 and 1978, with the average of 1.4 properties built between this time period, and a median of three properties. Almost two-fifths of these respondents (38.1%, n=8) reported owning or managing properties built between 1940 and 1978.

Finally, respondents who reported that 100% of their units had a Certificate of Compliance owned or managed between 0 to 190 properties built after 1978, with an average of 13.6 units, and a median of one. Almost a fifth of these respondents (19.1%, n=4) reported owning or managing properties built after 1978 (see Figure 19).

**Figure 19:** *100% Certification of Compliance Subset: Age of units owned or managed by respondents, by time period (before 1940, between 1940-1978, and after 1978).*



In phase 1 of the survey, all seven landlords reported owning/managing detached single-family homes, and four reported owning/managing duplexes and multi-family structures with three or more units. Several specified owning condos, townhomes, and second floor apartments. When asked about the age of their housing structures, nearly all respondents identified the majority of their housing units as built before 1940, with four of the seven stating that all of their housing was older than 1940. Two respondents specified that a sizeable percentage of their housing was built between 1940 and 1978.

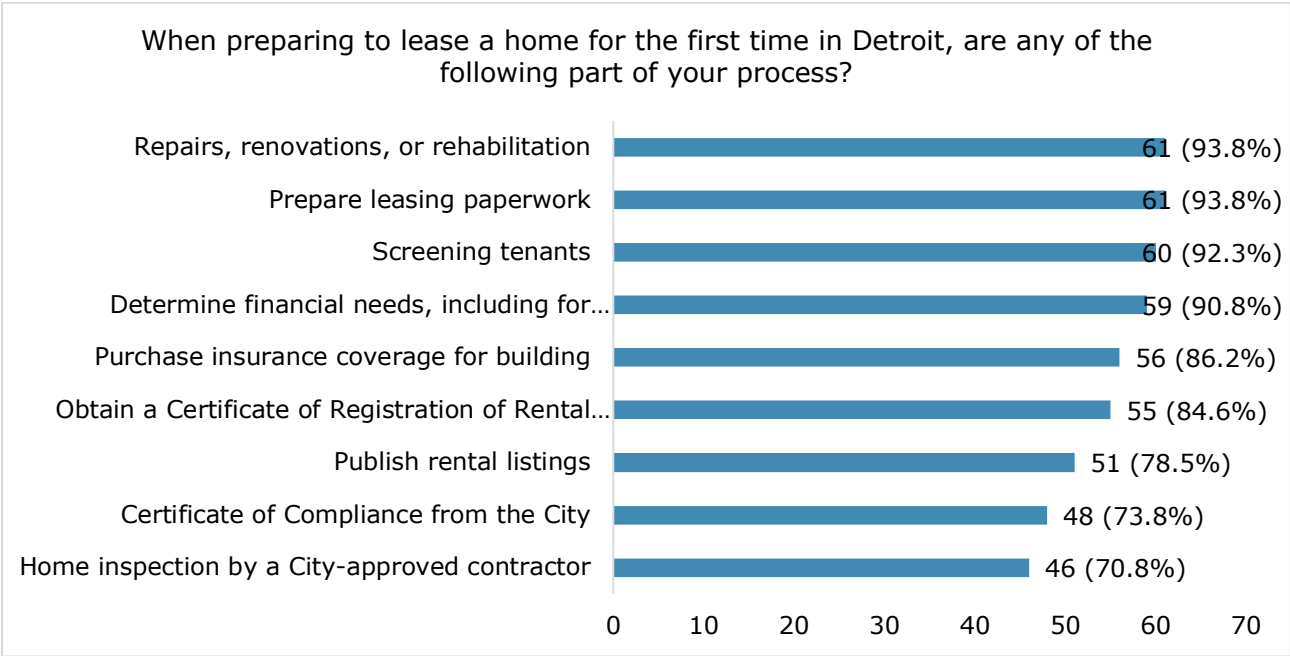
# Leasing Rental Properties in Detroit

## Preparing rental properties for leasing

In phase 1 of the survey, respondents were asked to walk interviewers through the process of preparing to lease a home for the first time in Detroit. Several themes emerged from the responses, the most common being descriptions of necessary renovations and rehabilitation of distressed homes in order to be in rentable condition. Other common threads included details on listing units for rent, managing utilities, screening prospective tenants, and preparing leasing paperwork. Two landlords mentioned City of Detroit inspections or compliance measures. These themes were used to create response choices, or categories, for phase 2 participants.

Phase 2 participants were asked about their process for leasing a home for the first time in Detroit. Four categories stood out as particularly important to respondents, as nearly all said they were part of their preparation process (> 90% affirmative response). The top four reported steps were repairs, renovations, or rehabilitation (93.8%, n=61), preparing leasing paperwork (93.8%, n=61), screening tenants (92.3%, n=60), and determining financial needs, including maintenance (90.8%, n=59). Other steps in the rental process included purchasing insurance coverage for the building (86.2%, n=56) and obtaining a Certificate of Registration of Rental Property from the City (84.6%, n=55). The three least reported steps as part of the process were home inspection by a City-approved contractor (70.8%, n=46), obtaining a certificate of compliance from the City (73.8%, n=48), and publishing rental listings (78.5%, n=51) (see Figure 20)

**Figure 20:** Process of preparing to lease a home for the first time in Detroit.



## Resources for managing properties

In phase 1, respondents were asked who they talked to regarding landlord topics. While responses varied, two mentioned their business partner(s), two said other landlords, and two identified their spouse. Some respondents also mentioned the following: attorneys as a source of information for legal matters, City Council, lead regulation groups, Building Community Value, and real estate podcasts. Two respondents noted that there is much competition among landlords, so they generally operate in their own space. The responses from this question guided the response choices available to participants in phase 2 of the survey.

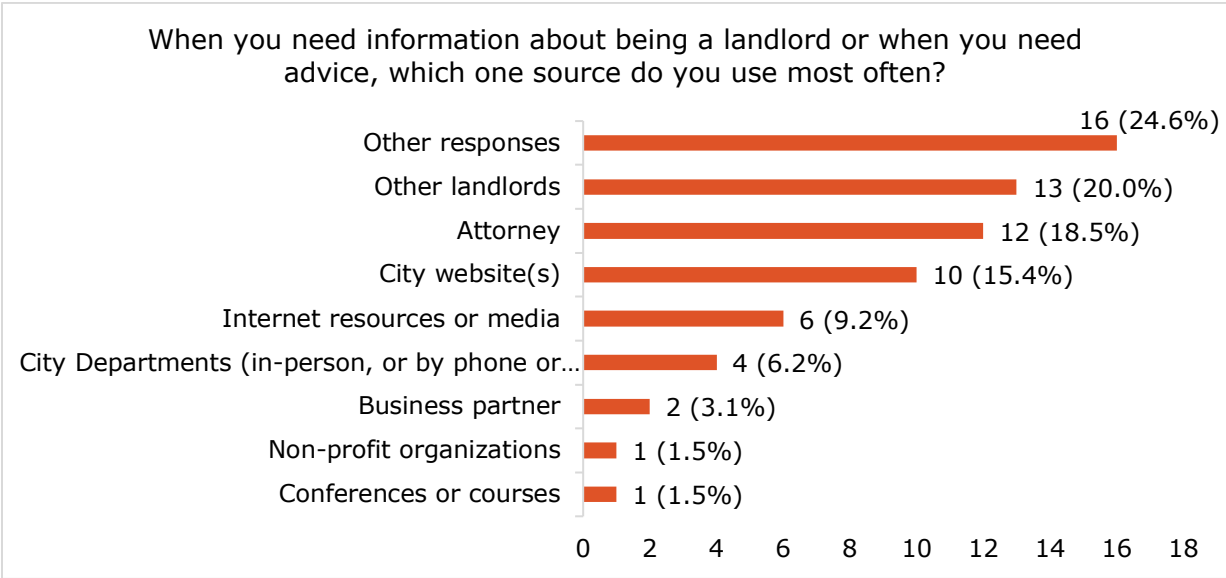
Respondents in phase 1 were then asked where they get information on being a landlord. Respondents cited unique sources, but commonalities included information on the internet, legal counsel, and their own experience. Other responses included local media and nonprofits, conferences, courses, and other landlords. Four of the seven respondents said they did not utilize the City of Detroit as a resource per se, but they did use City websites for various services, compliance information, city-approved inspectors, and paying blight tickets.

When asked how difficult it is for them to comply with Detroit's rental ordinance, or obtain a Certificate of Compliance, four of the seven phase 1 respondents said this was "very difficult." Others said it was moderately or somewhat difficult. Respondents specified that the City is challenging to work with and requirements are multi-layered, often unclear, and complex. There was a recurring perception that punitive fees and penalties are assessed too often, and that required inspections are too frequent. Respondents asserted that both of these factors make it difficult to provide affordable housing for tenants.

Participants were then asked what should be required of landlords to ensure the protection of families and children while providing rental housing. Most agreed that safety inspections are necessary, but that the City's requirements for annual lead inspections and complete abatement are overly burdensome. Suggestions included targeting only the units with families and small children, aligning City requirements with that of HUD's for better streamlining, providing educational resources for landlords and renters, developing more realistic requirements for lead testing, surveys for basic utility functionality, and providing low-interest loans/grants for keeping rents affordable after doing extensive abatement. Responses to these items were used to construct response choices for phase 2 participants.

In phase 2, respondents were asked for the one source they turn to most often when they need advice or information on being a landlord. Six response categories were mentioned more than once across interviews. Many landlords interviewed turned to 'other landlords' when they needed advice or information (20.0%, n=13). Others turned to 'attorneys' (18.5%, n=12), 'City websites' (15.4%, n=10), 'internet or media resources' (9.2%, n=6), and 'City departments' (6.2%, n=4) when seeking advice or information on being a landlord. Two respondents reported turning to their 'business partners' when they needed information or advice (3.1%). One respondent reported turning to 'non-profit organizations' (1.5%), and another reported 'conferences or courses' as sources of information or advice (1.5%) (see Figure 21).

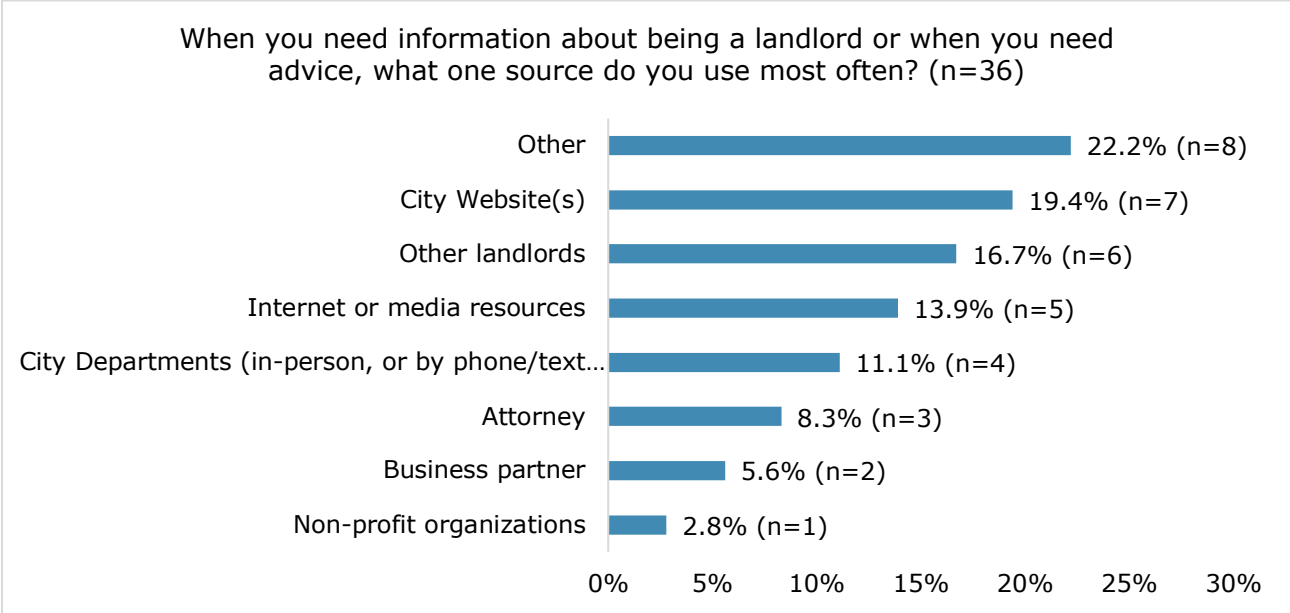
**Figure 21:** Sources used for information or advice about being a landlord.



Those who responded with the category 'City website' were asked to specify which city website they used; eight said they started their search at the City's main website, and one specified 'detroit.mi.gov/landlord.' Sixteen 'Other' responses included 'State of Michigan', 'HUD', 'BCV', 'LARA', 'Michigan Association of Realtors', and 'state representative tenant handbook'.

*Detroit Residents.* A plurality of participants, who were also residents of Detroit, chose to specify an 'other' response (22.2%, n=8) when asked about their most utilized information source about being a landlord. Under a fifth mentioned 'City website(s)' (19.4%, n=7), or 'other landlords' (16.7%, n=6), and five (13.9%) mentioned 'internet resources or media'. Less popular information sources were 'City departments' (11.1%, n=4), 'attorney' (8.3%, n=3), 'business partner' (5.6%, n=2), and 'non-profit organizations' (2.8%, n=1). For those who specified an 'other' response, most elaborated or specified aspects of the provided response categories, such as specifying 'Google' or 'Facebook' as internet resources or specific city websites (see Figure 22).

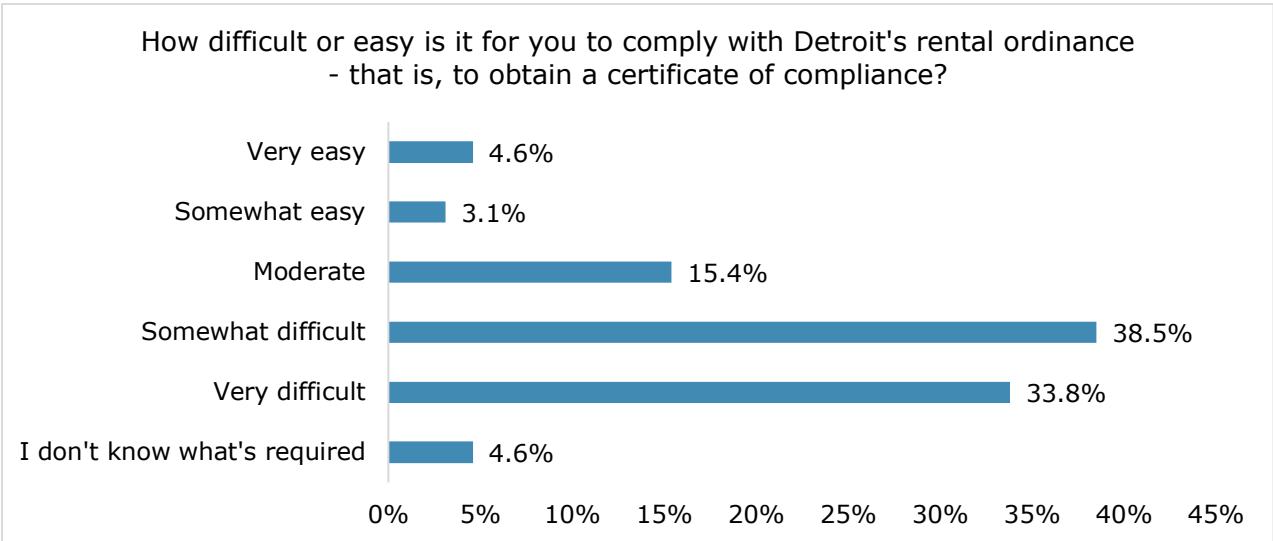
**Figure 22:** *Detroit Resident Subset:* Sources used for information or advice about being a landlord.



Compliance with Detroit’s Rental Ordinance

In terms of compliance with the City of Detroit’s rental ordinance, or obtaining a Certificate of Compliance, all respondents were asked to rank the ease of compliance on a Likert scale with the following response options: *very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, very difficult, and I don’t know what’s required*. A little over 70% of respondents said they felt it was ‘somewhat’ or ‘very’ difficult to comply (38.5%, n=25 and 33.8%, n=22, respectively). Those who expanded on their answers specified that the process was “expensive” and noted “confusion around policies” and “changing policies” (see Figure 23).

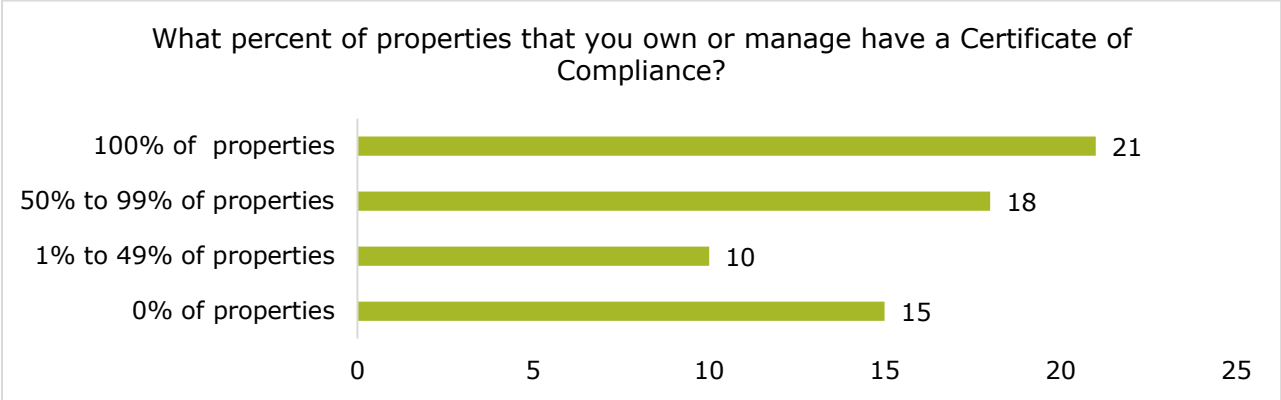
**Figure 23:** Ease of compliance with City of Detroit’s rental ordinance.





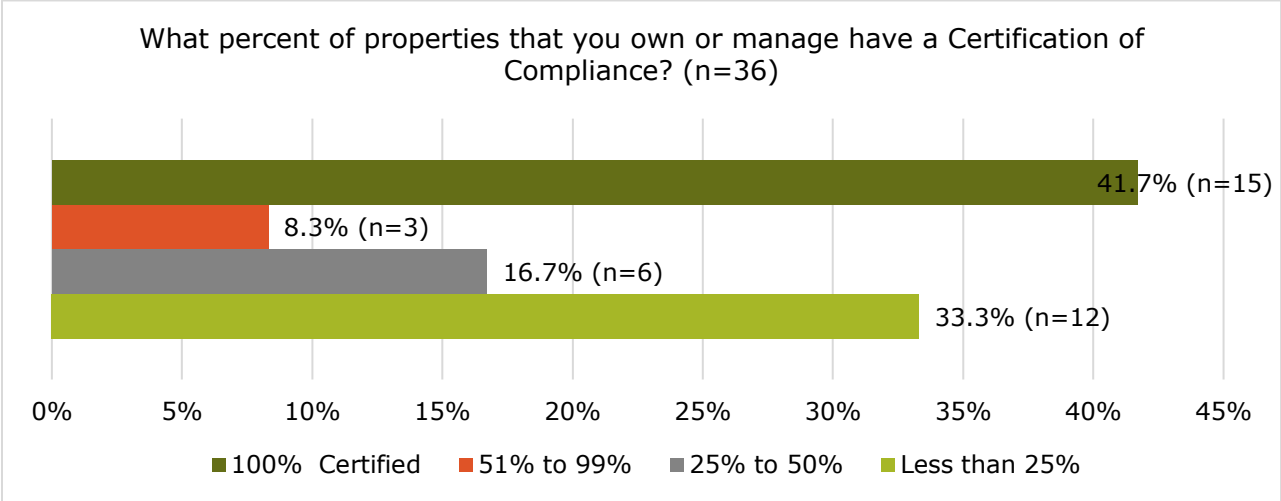
When asked what percentage of properties that they own or manage have a Certificate of Compliance, the average reported compliance by the 64 landlords who responded was 53.8%. Twenty-one respondents (32.8%) reported 100% compliance. Twenty-five respondents (39.1%) reported less than 50% of their properties were certified as compliant, of which fifteen (23.4%) reported none of their properties were in compliance (see Figure 24). Those who reported 0% compliance reported that they owned or managed a total of 310 units. For reference, when comparing the recent number of Certificates of Compliance (C of C's) (4,819), to the number of rental units in the City of Detroit (141,707), according to the Census (ACS, 2020), calculations indicate that 3.4% of rental units have C of C's.

**Figure 24:** Percent of properties owned or managed with a Certificate of Compliance. (n=64)



*Detroit Residents.* Three-quarters of respondents who live in Detroit have a Certificate of Compliance for at least one property (75%, n=27). Of those 27, over half (55.6%, n=15) reported that a hundred percent of their properties with this certification, just over a tenth (11.1%, n=3) had over 50 percent but less than 100 percent of properties with this certification, and less than a fifth (18.5%, n=5) had fewer than 50 percent but at least one property with this certification (see Figure 25).

**Figure 25:** *Detroit Resident Subset:* Percent of properties owned or managed with a Certificate of Compliance.

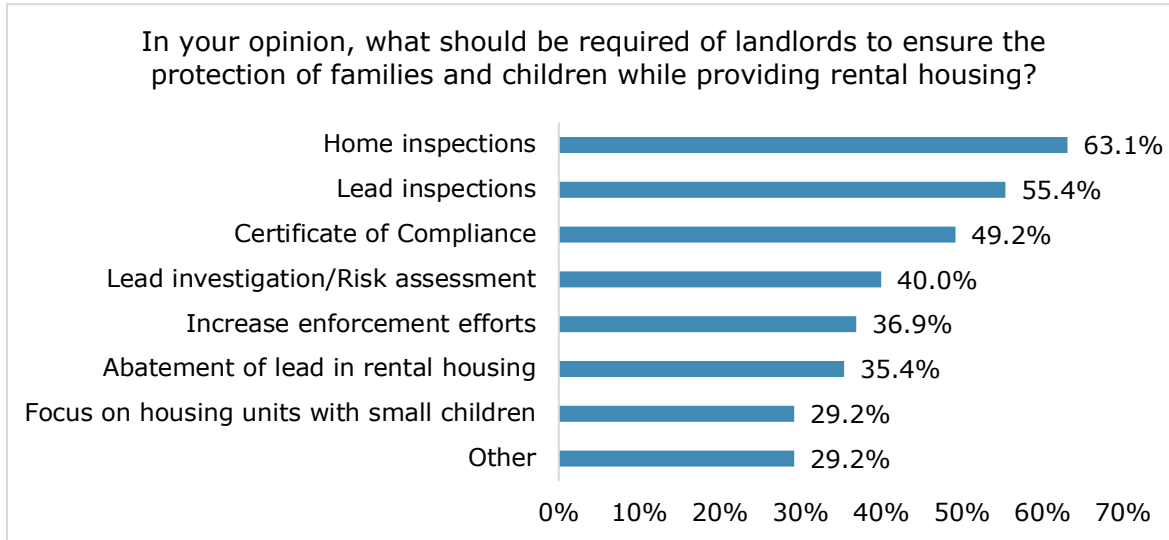


Protection of Tenants

Respondents were then asked what should be required of landlords to ensure the protection of families and children while providing rental housing. The responses were recorded with multiple choice options developed from common themes of phase 1 responses, as well as an option to record other verbatim responses.

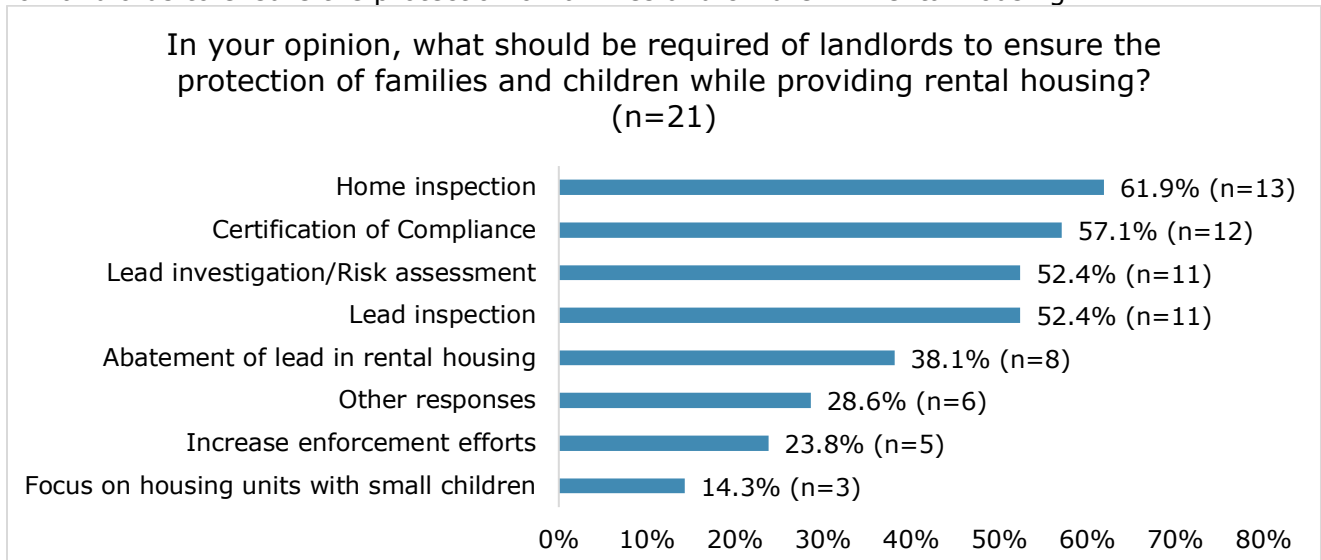
More than half of respondents agreed that both home inspections and lead inspections were necessary (63.1%, n=41, and 55.4%, n=36, respectively). Other categories offered elicited less than a majority of agreement from respondents on the whole. Nineteen respondents provided qualitative responses outside the closed categories offered. Many of these responses expanded on perceived needs of tenant education regarding rights, and in-home safety measures such as fire escape routes, carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, heat, and running water (see Figure 26).

**Figure 26:** Participant opinions of requirements for landlords to ensure the protection of families and children in rental housing



*100% Certification of Compliance.* When respondents who reported they had a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units were asked what should be done to ensure the safety of families and children, over three-fifths (61.9%, n=13) mentioned 'home inspections', 57.1% (n=12) mentioned obtaining a 'certificate of compliance', over half (52.4%, n=11) mentioned 'lead investigation/risk assessment', and a similar number (52.4%, n=11) mentioned 'lead inspections'. Less popular selections included 'abatement of lead in rental housing' (38.1%, n=8), 'increase enforcement efforts' (23.8%, n=5), and 'focus on housing units with small children' (14.3%, n=3). Over a quarter of these respondents (28.6%, n=6) also supplied their own 'other' responses (see Figure 27).

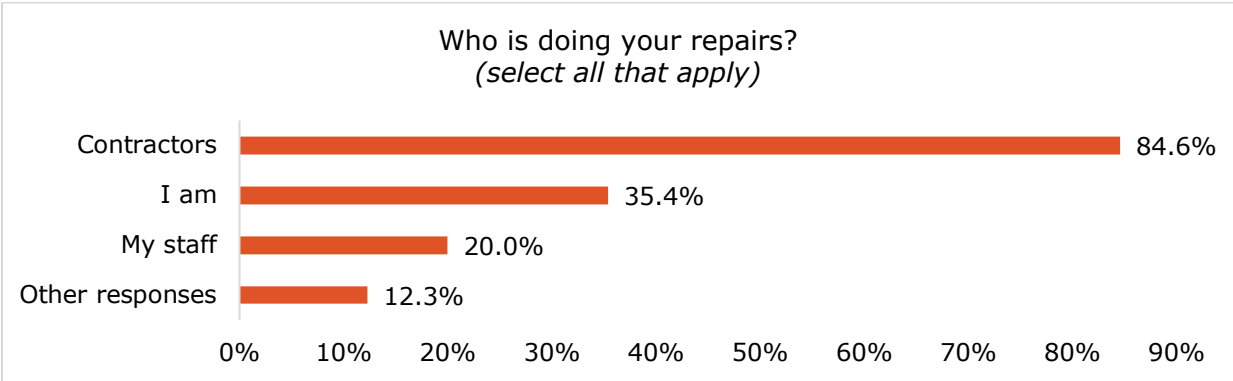
**Figure 27:** *100% Certification of Compliance Subset:* Participant opinions of requirements for landlords to ensure the protection of families and children in rental housing.



Repairs and Maintenance of Properties

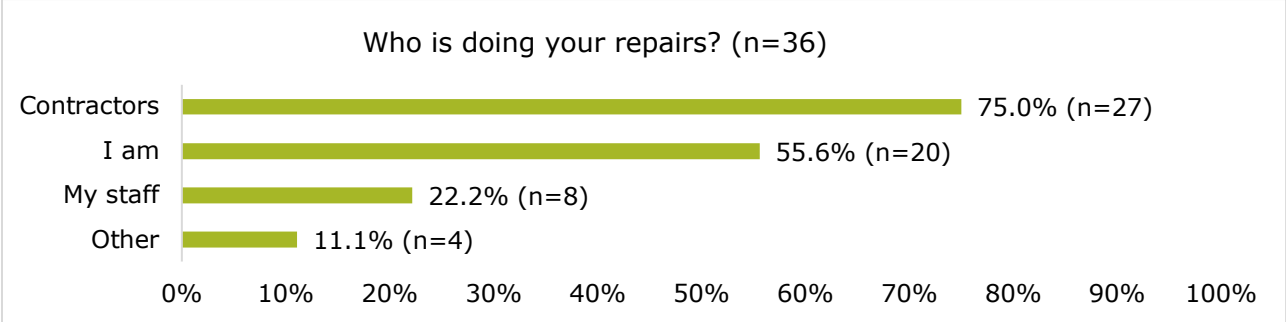
In terms of deciding when to do a repair - that is, whether to do a repair immediately, later, when the funding is available, or not at all - more than half of respondents said they decide to do repairs 'immediately' when they are needed (55.4%, n=36). Twenty-two expanded on their "other" responses, with most specifying their timeline depends on "severity" or "urgency" of the problem. These repairs are largely done by the landlords themselves, staff members, or contractors. In this sample of landlords, respondents overwhelmingly identified the use of hired contractors, though a little over a third reported they do their own repairs, and about one-fifth said their staff handled repairs (84.6%, n=55; 35.4%, n=23; and 20.0%, n=13, respectively) (see Figure 28). Several noted that it depends on the type of repair; for example, if it is simple, they do it themselves, but when it is more intensive, or requires a permit, the work is contracted.

**Figure 28:** Individuals doing repairs for landlord or property managers.



*Detroit Residents.* Three-quarters of the respondents living in Detroit reported hiring contractors to do repairs (75%, n=27). Over half of the respondents living in Detroit (55.6%, n=20) said they do their repairs themselves, and less than a quarter (22.2%, n=8) have staff members doing repairs. Four of the respondents living in Detroit (11.1%) specified other people, such as 'people in the community' that they know, or their partner (see Figure 29).

**Figure 29:** *Detroit Resident Subset:* Individuals doing repairs for landlord or property managers. (multiple responses permitted)



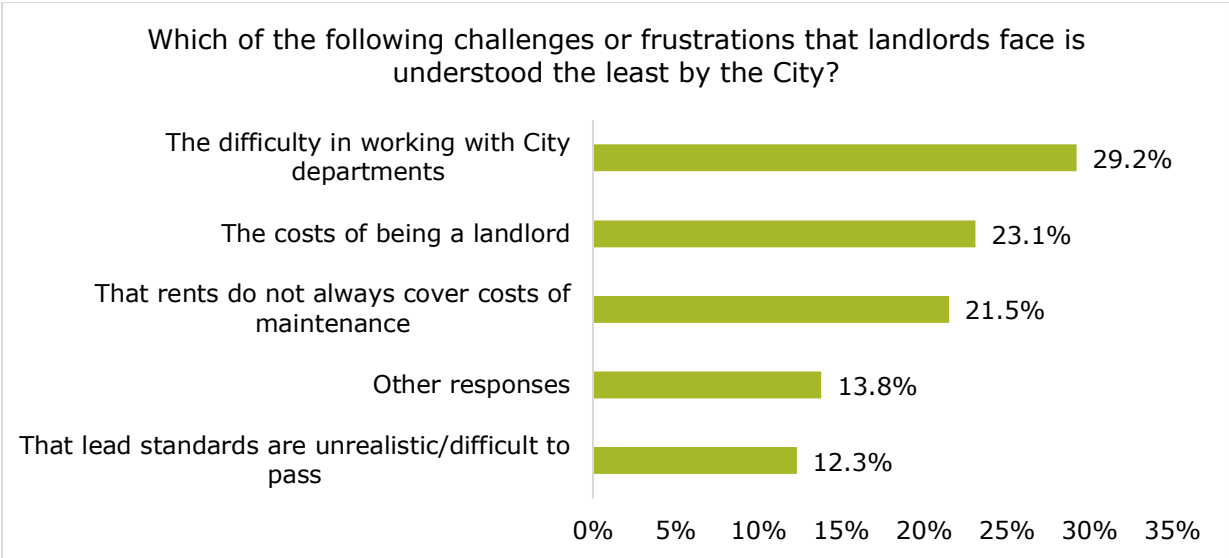
### Communication and Partnership with the City

In phase 1 of the survey, respondents were asked what the City does not understand about the challenges that landlords face. Four respondents said the City does not understand that landlords are not all wealthy, and that low rents in the City do not allow for costly work to bring properties into compliance. Two others noted that lead testing standards are unrealistic and nearly impossible to pass in older homes, given the prevalence of lead dust in the environment of older cities like Detroit. When pressed further on the frustrations of landlords that the City does not understand, respondents expressed experiencing unclear messaging, poor communication, frustrations with City department bureaucracy, and a feeling that the City is forcing extensive capital investment.

Respondents were asked what the City should do tomorrow to better partner with landlords, and what would it take to accomplish that. Ideas for improving partnership with landlords included reconsidering fees, addressing vacancies, improving the information available for landlord, offering City-led landlord trainings, a friendlier outreach approach, creating a City office for landlord assistance, and creating a fund to finance improvements required by ordinances.

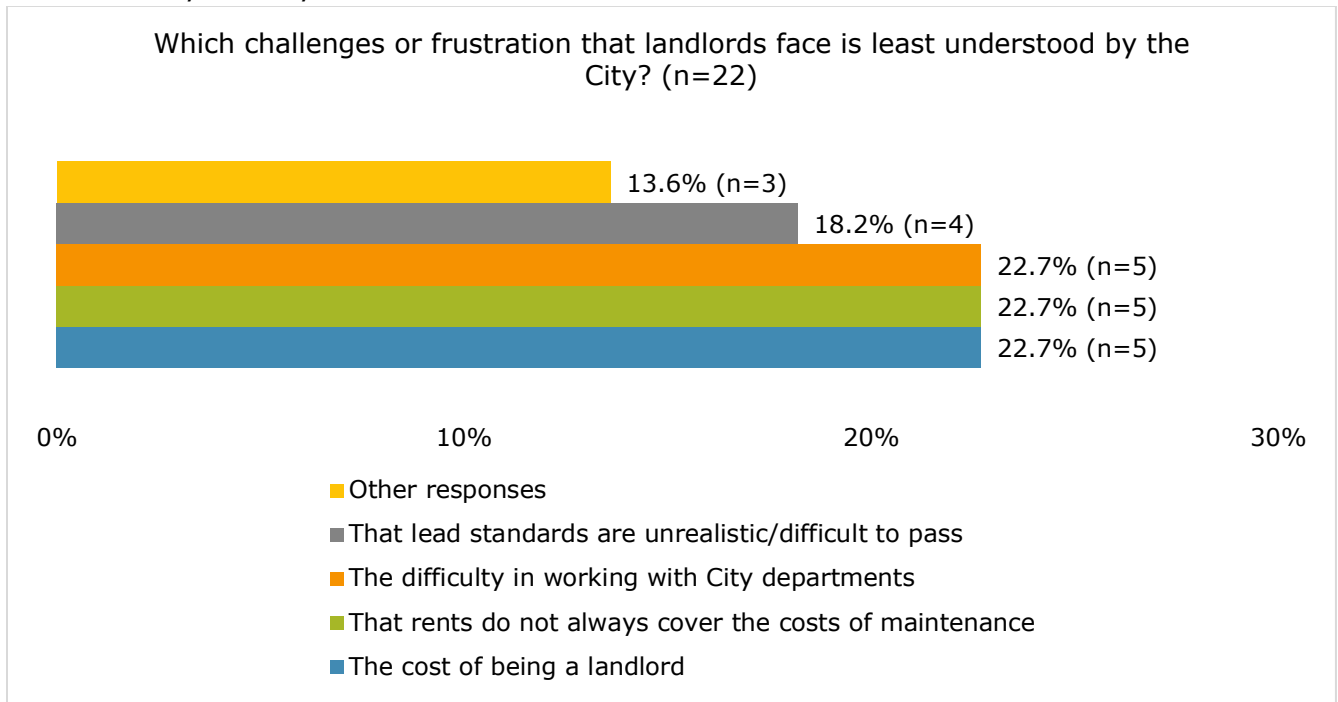
Using the responses from phase 1, phase 2 participants were asked which frustration faced by landlords is least understood by the City. Participants were presented with the following response categories: the difficulty in working with City departments; the costs of being a landlord; that rents do not always cover costs of maintenance; and that lead standards are unrealistic and difficult to pass. Responses were split among the several categories offered, though more selected 'difficulty in working with City departments' than any other category (29.2%, n=19) (see Figure 30). "Other" responses included frustration around dealing with "uncooperative" or "problematic" tenants, and "laws that protect the tenant more than the landlord". Two other respondents mentioned frustration with the court system.

**Figure 30:** Frustrations, faced by landlords, least understood by the City of Detroit.



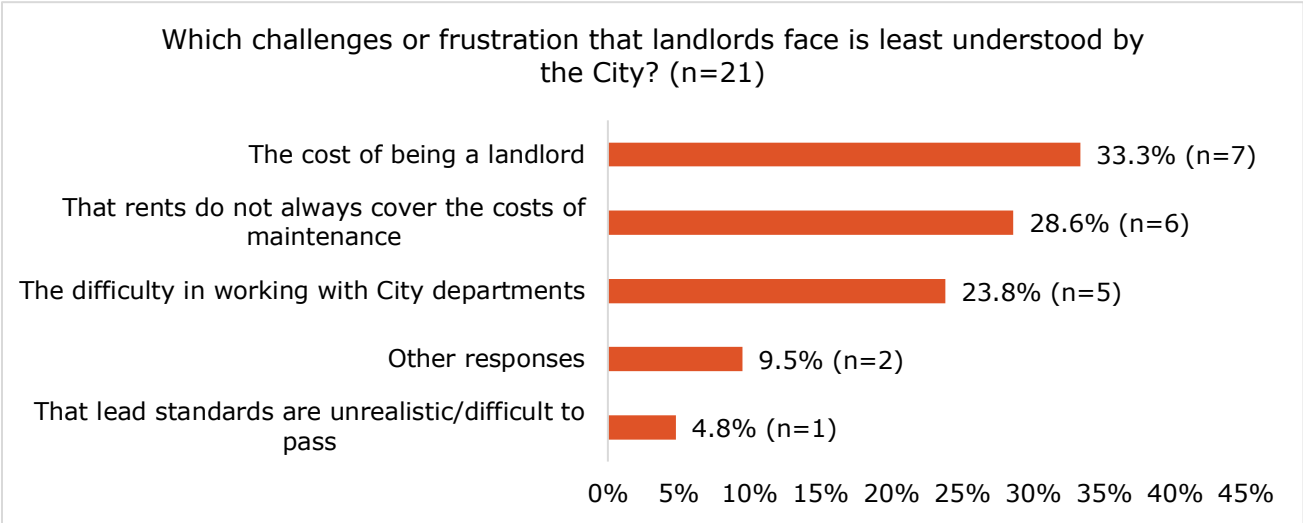
*Detached Single-Family.* Among those landlords with only detached single-family homes, the following responses regarding frustrations garnered the most responses: 'the costs of being a landlord', 'that rents do not always cover costs of maintenance', and 'the difficulty in working with City departments' (22.7%, n=5 per response category). Four respondents (18.2%) agreed that the City did not fully understand 'that lead standards are unrealistic/difficult to pass', and three respondents (13.6%) offered an open-ended response. Open-ended responses mentioned the 'court system' and dealing with 'problematic tenants' (see Figure 31).

**Figure 31:** *Detached Single-Family Subset:* Frustrations, faced by landlords, least understood by the City of Detroit.



*100% Certification of Compliance.* Among respondents who reported Certificates of Compliance for all of their units, there is little consensus on which frustration(s) landlords face that are least understood by the City. However, a third (33.3%, n=7) pointed to 'the costs of being a landlord', over a quarter (28.6%, n=6), agreed 'that rents do not always cover costs of maintenance', just less than a quarter (23.8%, n=5) pointed to 'the difficulty in working with City departments', and one (4.8%) agreed 'that lead standards are unrealistic/difficult to pass'. Other responses (9.5%, n=2) mentioned the 'availability of contractors' and 'complying with everything when others aren't' (see Figure 32).

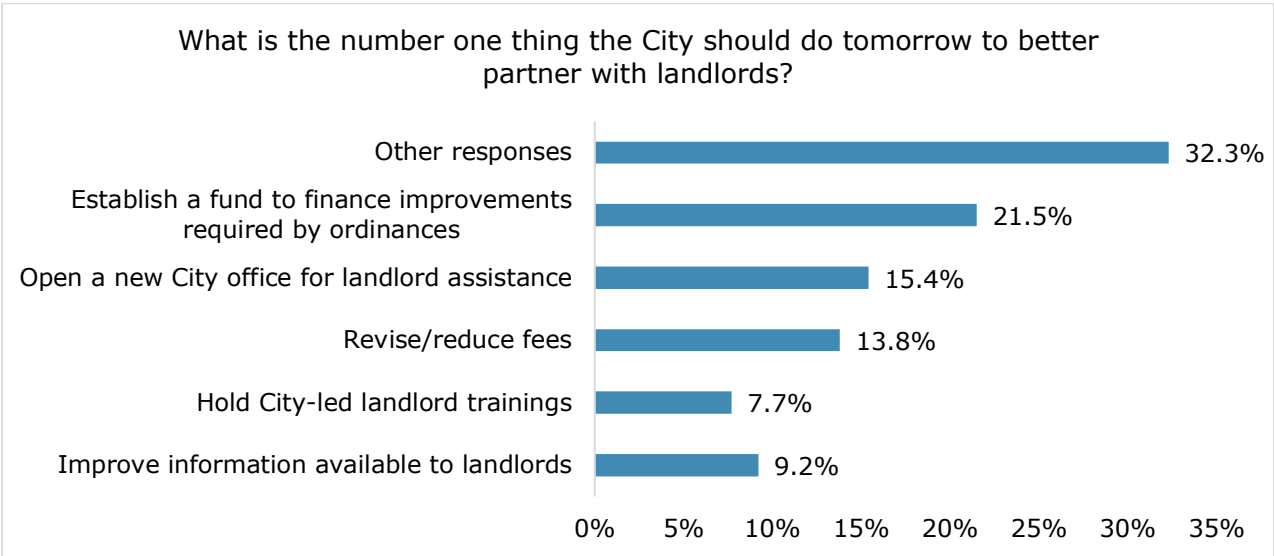
**Figure 32:** 100% Certification of Compliance Subset: Frustrations, faced by landlords, least understood by the City of Detroit.



Better City-Landlord Partnership

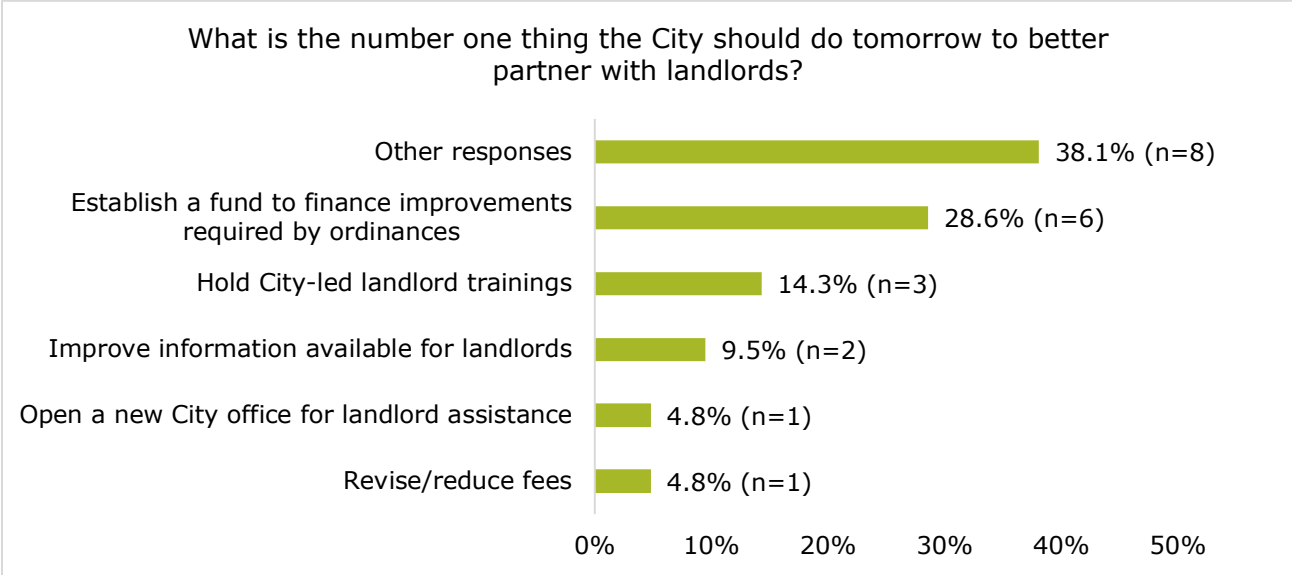
Additionally, respondents were asked the number one thing the City should do tomorrow to better partner with landlords. There was little consensus among the responses, but about one-fifth of respondents said the City should 'establish a fund to finance improvements required by ordinances.' (21.5%, n=14). Nearly a third of respondents chose to suggest an alternative response (32.3%, n=21) (see Figure 33). Suggestions included establishing a 'universal landlord portal' and general statements about improved landlord-City-tenant relations and communication, including 'streamlining paperwork', 'hearings' for tenant-landlord disputes, and reducing fees so they can provide affordable housing.

**Figure 33:** Responses for bettering City-landlord partnership.



*100% Certification of Compliance.* When asked what the City could do to better partner with landlords, over a quarter of respondents who reported a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units (28.6%, n=6), agreed with 'establishing a fund to finance improvements required by ordinances'. In addition, three (14.3%) supported 'hold[ing] city-led landlord trainings', two (9.5%) agreed with the idea of 'improv[ing] information available for landlords', one supported an idea to 'revise/reduce fees', and another supported 'open[ing] a new City office for landlord assistance'. Over a third (38.1%, n=8) also supplied an 'other' response. These other responses mentioned educational programs for landlords and tenants, stronger 'landlord-tenant laws in the City of Detroit', and general suggestions to strengthen city-landlord relations (see Figure 34).

**Figure 34:** *100% Certification of Compliance Subset:* Responses for bettering City-landlord partnership.





## Lead Risks in Detroit's Rental Housing

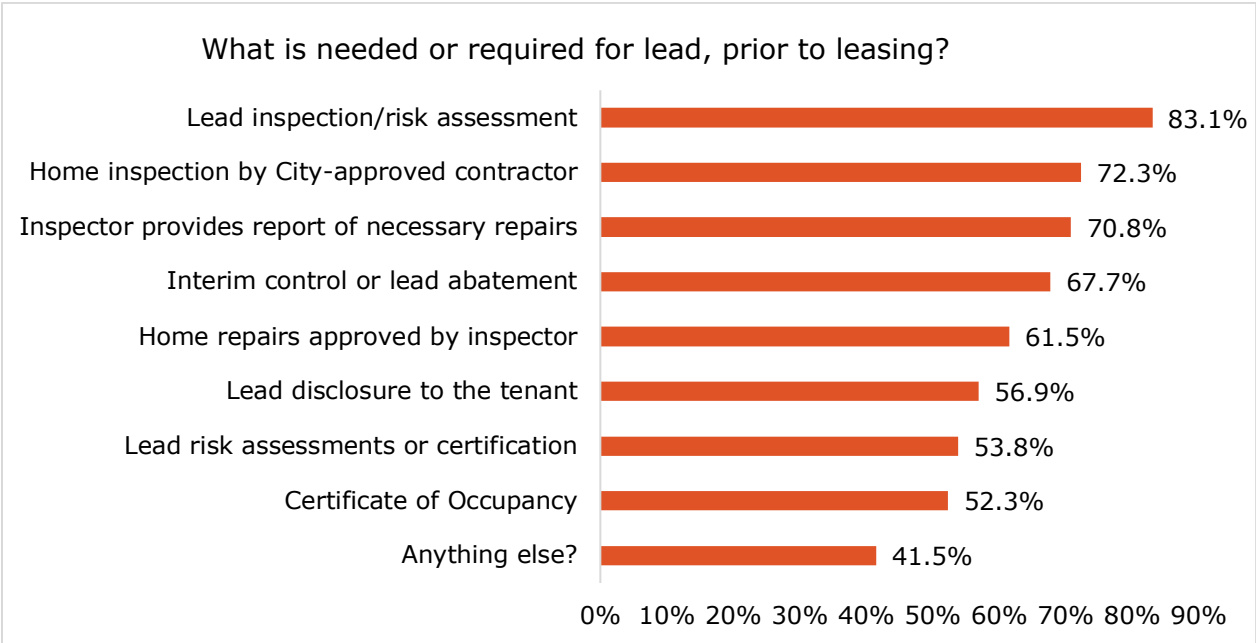
### Lead abatement & interim controls

In phase 1 of this survey, all seven respondents said they were moderately or very familiar with the lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit. When asked what is needed or required prior to leasing, among the responses mentioned were: lead risk assessments and certification; encapsulating lead paint (e.g. replacing windows, painting); providing an EPA document and formal lead disclosure to tenants; that compliance is not necessary to move tenants in, but the City may issue fines and tickets. Additionally, respondents were asked of their familiarity with lead requirements as they relate to rehabilitation and repairs. All seven participants reported similarly high levels of familiarity. When asked if there were any restrictions on who can perform work on a property with lead, five of the seven respondents said there were restrictions.

Participants in phase 1 were then asked of their knowledge of the term "interim controls"; responses were mixed, but a subsequent survey question which provided examples (cleaning, painting) prompted mention of measures landlords have undertaken (encapsulation, wetting surfaces after disturbing). When asked about their knowledge of "abatement", all respondents knew the term, and each explained their understanding and their actions as a landlord. Nearly all mentioned removal of lead from affected areas of the house. Additionally, respondents were asked if they knew the cost of home inspections and Lead Investigations or Risk Assessments. Answers ranged from under \$200 for a City inspection of a single unit to over \$15,000 for a multi-family structure. Several respondents expressed uncertainty about specific costs of the various inspections required.

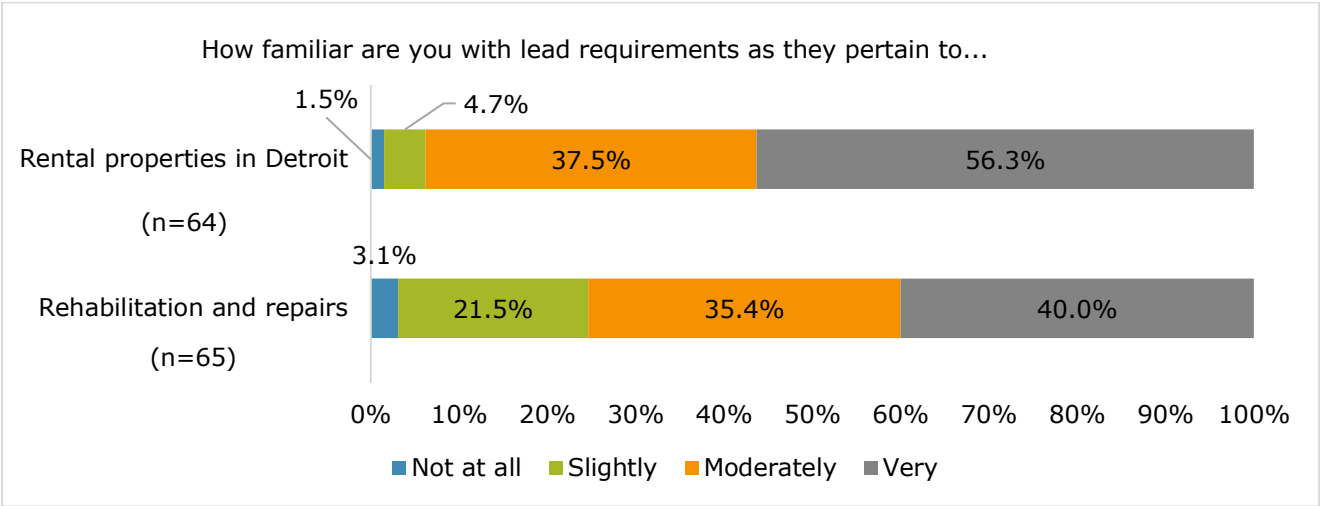
The landlords interviewed in phase 2 of the survey were also asked about their familiarity with lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit. Nearly all respondents said they were familiar to some degree (98.5%, n=63). Over half specified they were 'very' familiar with the requirements (56.3%, n=36) (see Figure 36). Additionally, respondents were asked about their familiarity with lead requirements as they relate to rehabilitation and repairs, as well as if there are restrictions on who can perform work on a property with lead in it. Respondents were provided with eight closed response options, as well as the ability to provide other verbatim responses. All categories garnered affirmative responses from at least half of all respondents. 'Lead inspection/risk assessment' received the highest affirmative response, from more than four-fifths of respondents (83.1%, n=54). Twenty-seven respondents (41.5%) opted to provide qualitative responses for additional requirements (see Figure 35). Many responses expanded on the existing categories, noting other requirements including details on painting and interim controls, land clearance, and landlord/property management company inspections.

**Figure 35:** Lead needs or requirements, prior to leasing.



When asked how familiar they were with lead requirements as they pertain to rehabilitation and repairs, nearly all respondents said they were familiar to some degree (96.9%, n=63). Two-fifths specified they were 'very' familiar with the requirements (40.0%, n=26). These responses indicate that landlords are more familiar with lead requirements in general than those related specifically to conducting rehabilitation and repairs (see Figure 36).

**Figure 36:** Familiarity of lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit, and rehabilitation and repairs.



Three-quarters of respondents agreed that there are restrictions as to who can perform work on a property with lead in it, and nearly one-fifth said they were not sure or did not know (76.9%, n=50 and 18.5%, n=12, respectively). Fourteen respondents expanded on their answer, specifying the requirements that those working on properties with lead were 'trained', 'certified', or 'licensed'.

Landlords were also asked about their familiarity with the terms *abatement* and *interim controls*, as well as costs for home inspections and Lead Investigations or Risk Assessments. For every affirmative response, an explanation or estimate was asked.

Respondents were asked if they knew what *abatement* is, and nearly nine-tenths of them responded affirmatively (87.7%, n=57). When asked to explain *abatement*, about half of respondents (n=32) described complete removal of lead or anything hazardous. A smaller number described activities more akin to *interim controls*, such as 'wiping surfaces with a cloth', 'reducing' lead risks, or painting over surfaces containing lead. These responses indicate that some landlords equate less intensive lead control measures with abatement.

Respondents were then asked if they knew what *interim controls* are; fewer than half of them responded affirmatively (44.6%, n=29). They described *interim controls* as actions like scraping and painting, encasing surfaces such as doorways and windows, temporary covering, taping off affected areas, using air purifiers, and general inspections and maintenance.

Next, respondents were asked if they knew the cost of home inspections, and most agreed they did (86.2%, n=56). However, there was little consensus about the dollar amount for the inspections. When prompted for estimates, costs provided ranged from \$139 to \$10,000 "for a 30-unit apartment building." A common estimate provided was \$150 (n=12) which several noted was the price for a single-family home inspection. Others specified their costs varied depending on the type of property or size of the dwelling.

Respondents were asked if they knew the cost of Lead Investigation/Risk Assessments, over two-thirds agreed they did (69.2%, n=45); however, like cost estimates for inspections, answers varied greatly among respondents, and many provided wide ranges of estimates. Responses ranged from a low of \$250 to a high of \$4,000. Again, there was little consensus about this cost.

## Compliance with Detroit’s legal requirements

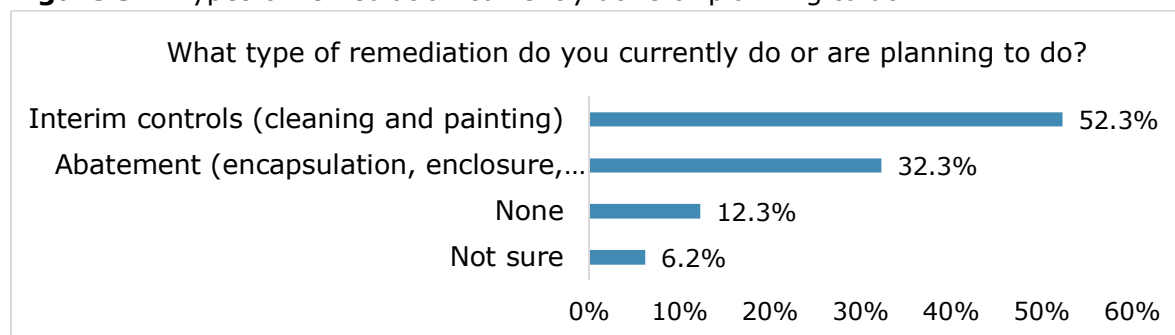
Respondents were asked of their familiarity with legal requirements for leasing rental properties in the City of Detroit. All phase 1 respondents said they were familiar or very familiar. Phase 2 respondents were asked the same question; just over half of respondents said they were moderately familiar (52.3%, n=34), and over a third of respondents reported being very familiar with the City’s leasing requirements (36.9%, n=24). Six respondents reported being slightly familiar with these requirements (9.2%), and one noted being not at all familiar with them (1.5%).

Participants in both phases of the survey were asked the type of remediation they currently do or plan to do. In phase 1, five respondents said they were currently doing or planning to utilize interim controls, while two specified abatement. Then respondents were asked about their familiarity with the State’s Lead Safe Home program and the City’s High Impact Lead grant. Three of the seven respondents said they were familiar, and two noted they had applied, and both expressed frustrations with the slow speed of the process and dealing with bureaucracies and extensive paperwork.

Participants were then asked what were their main frustrations as a landlord when it comes to lead, as well as the main positives for them in eliminating lead in a rental unit. In terms of frustrations, four respondents noted that old homes are bound to have lead and suggested the danger to adult inhabitants is minimal. There were mentions of frustration about a lack of resources to address lead and that the testing criteria is impractical. In terms of positives, four respondents mentioned the importance of addressing risk to children or making housing safer.

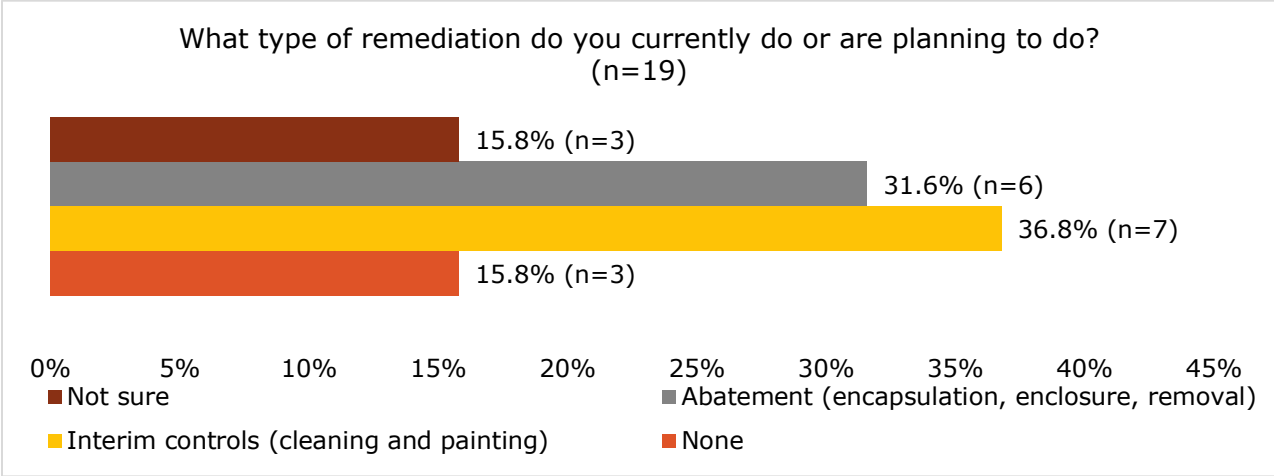
Phase 2 participants were asked on the types of remediation respondents are currently doing or plan to do, a little more than half of respondents said they were employing measures of interim controls (52.3%, n=34). Fewer, about one-third, said they were engaging in abatement (32.3%, n=21) (see Figure 37). Comments from 35 participants mentioned actions such as window, door, and molding replacement, removal and encapsulation, renovation, enclosure, painting, deep cleaning, and pipe replacement. Several noted that their decision depends on the severity of the lead hazards. Several others specified they do not have lead hazards in their properties because they were “completely rehabbed” or being renovated.

**Figure 37:** Types of remediation currently done or planning to do.



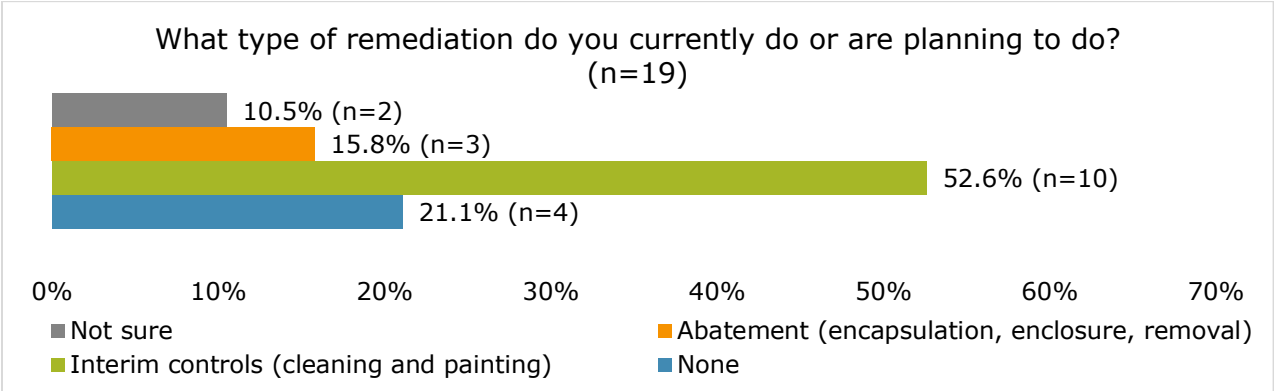
*Detached Single Family.* Of respondents with only detached single-family units, who selected a multiple-choice response to this question (n=19), over a third (36.8%, n=7) identified interim controls as the form of remediation they currently or plan to utilize, and almost a third (31.6%, n=6) identified abatement for this purpose. Of these 19 respondents, three (15.8%) were not utilizing or planning to utilize any form of remediation, and three (15.8%) indicated that they were 'not sure' (see Figure 38).

**Figure 38:** *Detached Single Family Subset:* Types of remediation currently done or planning to do.



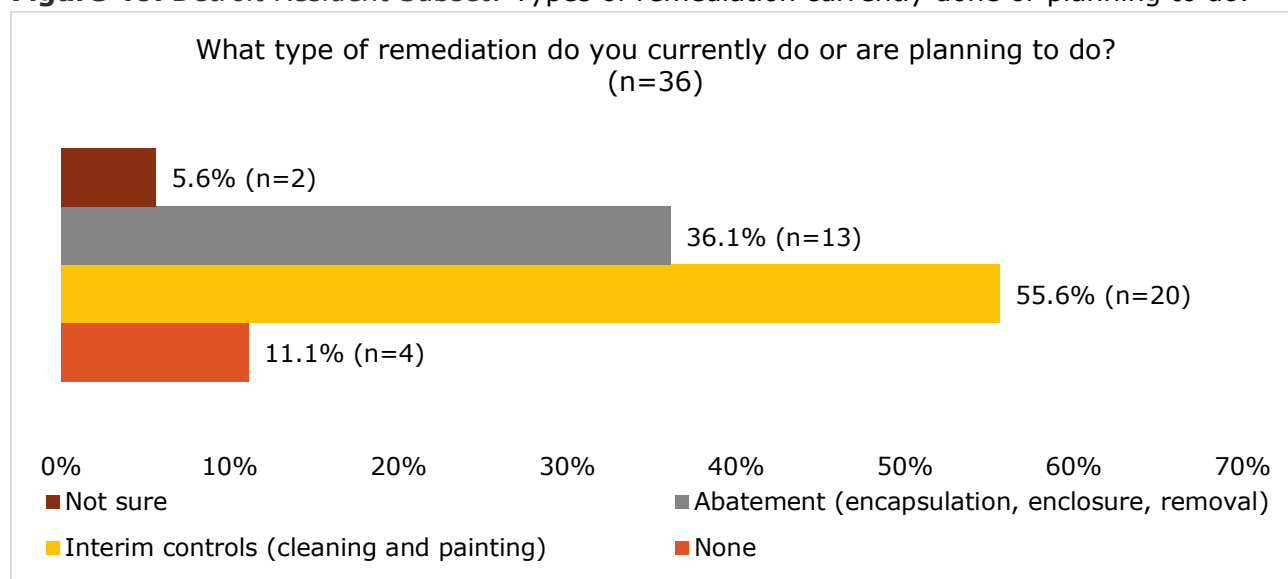
*100% Certificate of Compliance.* Of the respondents who reported a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units, and who answered this question (n=19), over half said they plan to or are utilizing interim controls for remediation efforts (52.6%, n=10). In addition, four respondents (21.1%) reported said they are not employing or planning to employ any forms of remediation, three (15.8%) said they are using or planning to use abatement, and two (10.5%) were 'not sure'. (see Figure 39).

**Figure 39:** *100% Certificate of Compliance Subset:* Types of remediation currently done or planning to do.



*Detroit Residents.* The majority of landlords or property managers living in Detroit are using or plan to utilize interim controls (55.6%, n=20) in remediation efforts, and over a third are using or planning to use abatement (36.1%, n=13) for this purpose. Few of the participants living in Detroit (11.1%, n=4) were utilizing no forms of remediation, and fewer still (5.6%, n=2) were unsure of which remediation efforts they were employing. While many chose to elaborate on their response (63.9%, n=23), elaborations specified the forms of interim controls or abatement they were utilizing, such as ‘scraping’, painting’, ‘encapsulate’, and ‘window replacement’ (see Figure 40).

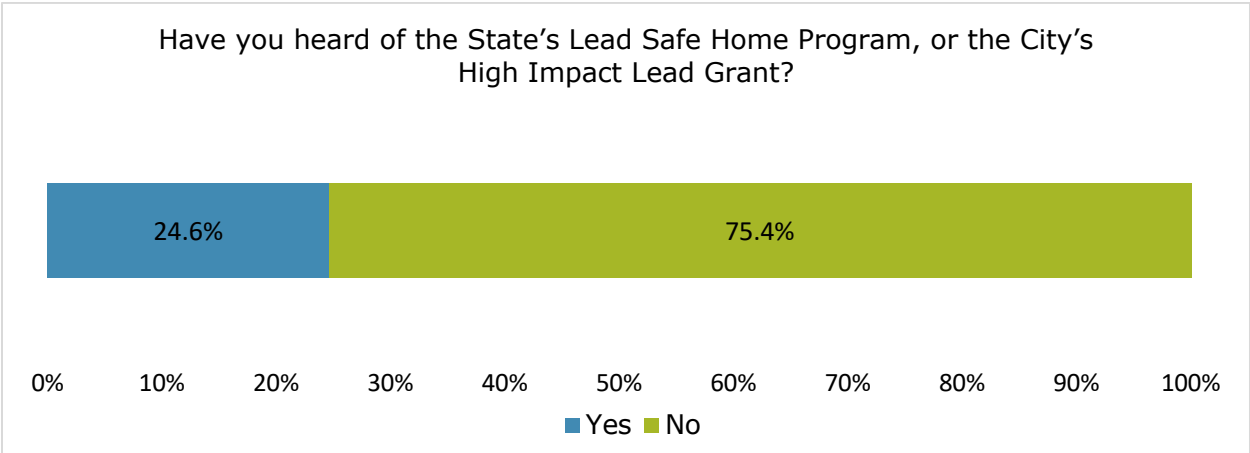
**Figure 40:** *Detroit Resident Subset:* Types of remediation currently done or planning to do.



Lead Abatement Assistance

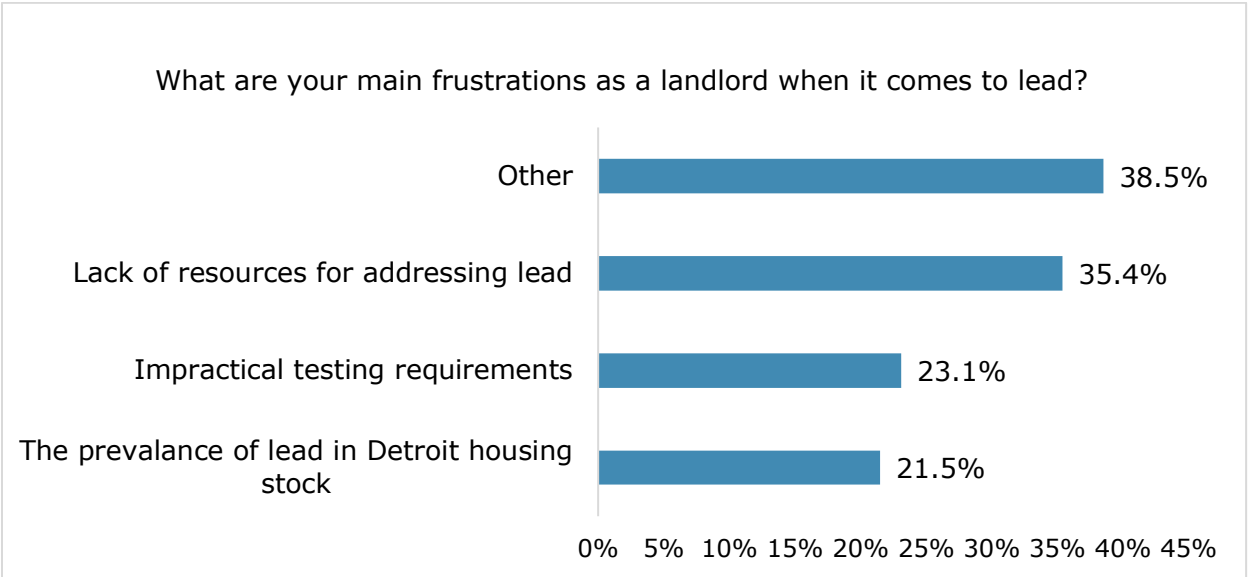
Phase two respondents were also asked their level of familiarity with the City’s High Impact Lead Grant and the State’s Lead Safe Home Program. When asked if they had heard of these two specific programs to fund abatement for landlords, three-quarters said they had not (75.4%, n=49) (see Figure 41). Of those who said they had, few said they knew more than basic details about the programs. Just three said they had applied to either of these programs. When asked about their experience, difficulty was expressed in collaborating with the agencies, being put on a waitlist, and the length of the application process.

**Figure 41:** Familiarity with State and City lead programs and grants.



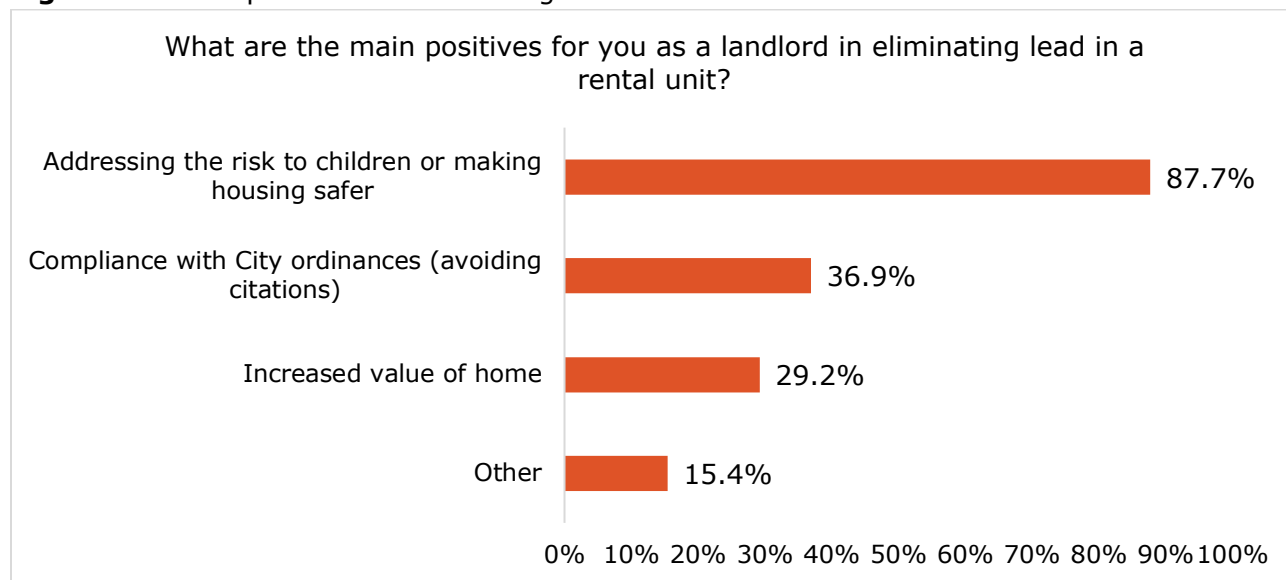
Landlords were also asked of the main frustrations they faced when it came to lead as well as the main positives for them, as landlords, in eliminating lead in a rental unit. More than a third said their main frustration was the lack of resources for addressing lead (35.4%, n=23). Even more chose to specify other frustrations (38.5%, n=25) which included costs of remediation, a lack of clarity and unreliable enforcement of City requirements, and children's safety in homes with lead. Around one-fifth of respondents reported the prevalence of lead in the City's housing stock as a main frustration, and nearly a quarter of respondents said their frustrations were in the impractical testing requirements (21.5%, n=14 and 23.1%, n=15, respectively) (see Figure 42 – multiple responses were allowed).

**Figure 42:** Lead related frustrations for landlords.



When asked of the main positives in eliminating lead from rental units, nearly nine in ten respondents identified ‘addressing the risk to children or making housing safer’ (87.7%, n=57). A third of landlords reported ‘compliance with City ordinances, or ‘avoiding citations’ as the main positive for them, and over a quarter of landlords interviewed said increased value of the home (36.9%, n=24, and 29.2%, n=19, respectively) (see Figure 43 – multiple responses were allowed).

**Figure 43:** Main positives in eliminating lead from rental units for landlords.



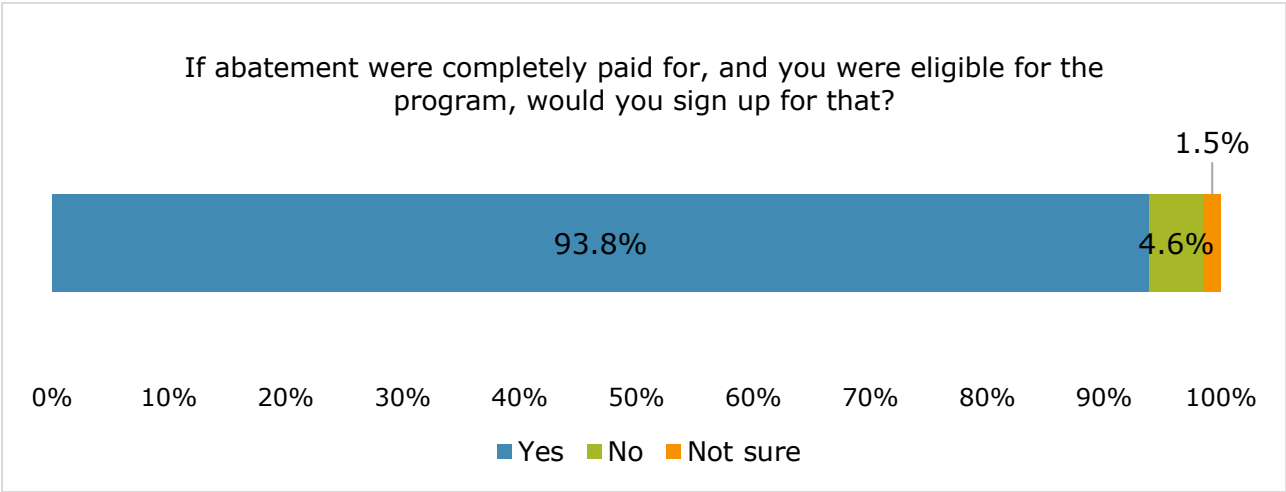
### Rehabilitation & repairs of existing housing

Both sets of respondents were asked if abatement were completely paid for and they were eligible, would they sign up for the program. In phase 1, six said yes but questioned the terms. They were then asked if their answer would change if they had to wait 6-8 months for abatement to be completed. Two said they would wait, two said their answer would change if they had to wait, and two said it would depend on the details. They were then asked what would encourage them to choose abatement. Many respondents said costs and low home values were barriers to choosing abatement. Two respondents expressed the belief that interim controls were sufficient for managing lead concerns.

Phase 2 respondents were asked about their desire to sign up for a program that completely covered costs of abatement and their eligibility was a given. Nearly all landlords interviewed in phase 2 said they would sign up (93.8%, n=61) (see Figure 44). When asked if their answer would change if they had to wait 6-8 months for abatement to be completed, a third of respondents said yes, their answer would change (32.3%, n=21). Several said it was simply too long or it would be cost prohibitive and a threat to security to keep a property unoccupied for that duration. Three-fifths of respondents expressed that they would be willing to wait 6-8 months for abatement to be completed (60.0%, n=39).

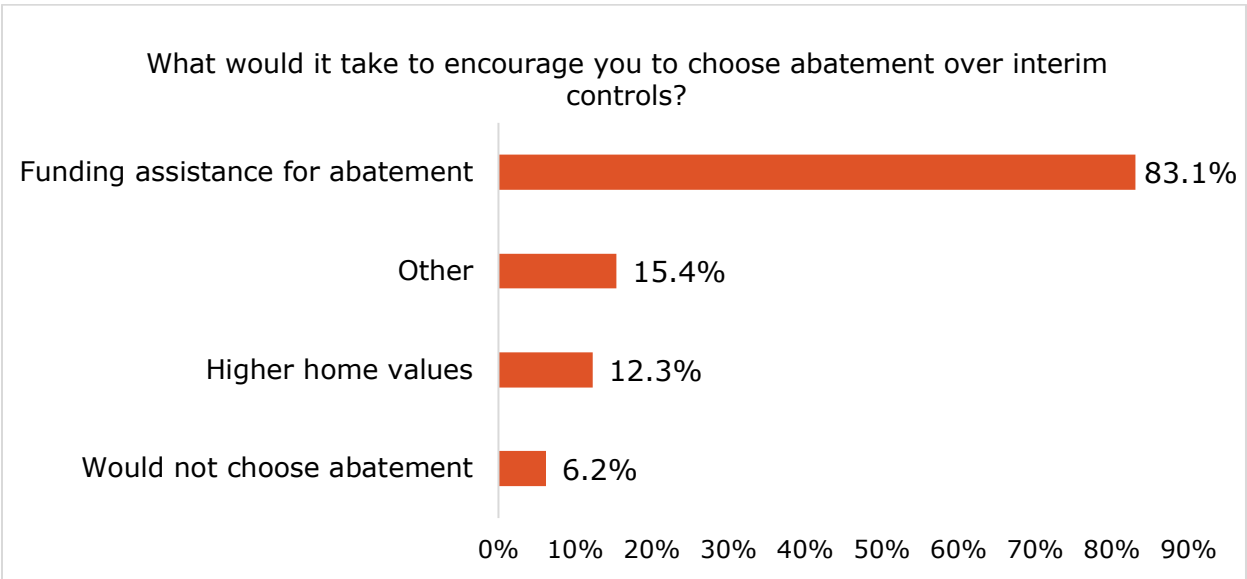


**Figure 44:** Willingness to apply for lead abatement funding programs.



When asked about encouraging factors that would motivate them to choose abatement over interim controls, a large majority of respondents said it would take funding assistance (83.1%, n=54). Other responses suggested concerns regarding cost, availability of contractors, and the length of time necessary to complete abatement. Four respondents said they would not choose abatement, or that interim controls were sufficient (6.2%). Eight landlords said higher home values would be the encouraging factor in choosing abatement over interim controls (12.3%) (see Figure 45)

**Figure 45:** Encouraging factors in choosing abatement over interim controls.



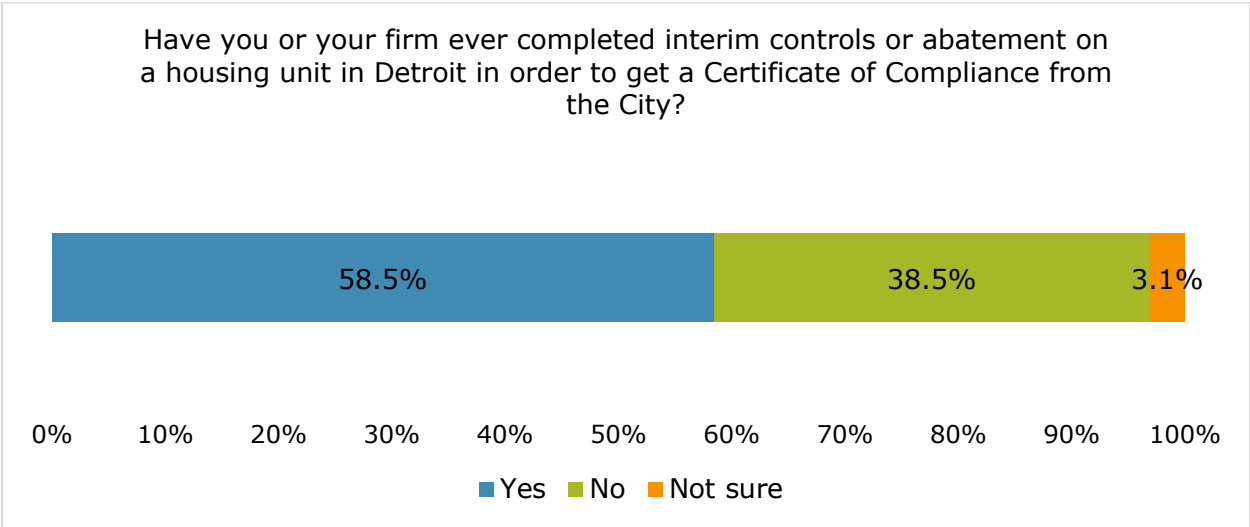
# Financing

## Cost of compliance

In phase 1, respondents were asked if they or their firm had ever completed interim controls or abatement on housing units in Detroit. All seven respondents reported completing interim controls or abatement on their rental units in the City. They were then asked the total cost they spent per property to go through the process. Answers varied greatly from less than \$1,000 to over \$150,000 per property. Of those who said they engaged in interim controls, costs per property ranged from less than \$500 to an estimate around \$200,000. Of those who said they went through a process of abatement, two respondents cited five-digit figures under \$25,000, and three estimates between \$100,000 and \$250,000. Other reported costs, such as tickets and fees, ranged from less than \$1,000 to more than \$1,500 per property.

Participants in phase 2 were also asked if they or their firm ever completed interim controls or abatement on housing units in Detroit in order to obtain a Certificate of Compliance from the City. Over half of the landlords interviewed gave an affirmative response (58.5%, n=38) (see Figure 46). Several noted they were in the process of this task, and two said they were not sure. Those that responded 'yes' to completing interim controls or abatement in order to get a Certificate of Compliance were then asked how much they spent on average, per property, to go through the process and get the Certificate of Compliance. Answers varied greatly and many respondents offered ranges instead of specific cost amounts. Twenty-four of the thirty-eight respondents who said 'yes' to performing interim controls or abatement in order to be compliant, and noted costs or a range of costs of \$10K or less. Eight respondents estimated costs greater than \$10K with the highest range reported being \$50K-\$100K.

**Figure 46:** Percentage of respondents who have completed interim controls or abatement for a Certificate of Compliance from the City of Detroit.



When asked, of the total cost, what the cost of interim controls was; the answers varied but ranges provided were overall less than those reported for total cost of compliance. Of the 29 responses provided, just one estimated costs greater than \$10K. When asked for total abatement costs, the estimate ranges were greater than those reported for interim controls but ranged greatly from a low of \$500 to a high of \$100K. Finally, respondents were asked if there were any other costs involved in their process to gain the Certificate of Compliance. Cost estimates provided ranged from \$135 to a high of \$6K. As with the other cost estimates, analysis is limited by the wide range given by the respondents.

Responses from Phase 2 participants were also analyzed after controlling for property type and rate of certified compliance. Of the 65 total participants, 22 own or manage only detached single-family homes. Of these 22 respondents, 13 (59.1%) reported completing abatement or interim controls to get a Certificate of Compliance from the City. Eight (36.4%) said they had not completed abatement or interim controls to obtain a Certificate of Compliance, and one participant was not sure. Of respondents who only own or manage detached single-family homes, completed remediation for a Certificate of Compliance, and provided a total cost estimate (n=11), the estimates ranged from \$135 to \$50,000-100,000. The range of total cost estimates is consistent with those reported by all participants, regardless of property type. The median estimate reported for detached single-family units is \$2,000, which is lower than the median total cost estimate for all participants, which is \$4,000. These median cost estimates are calculated by ranking responses based on the first number in the reported ranges. However, caution should be used when interpreting these cost estimates, due to the range of estimates reported by the respondents.

Of the 65 participants in phase 2, 21 report having a Certificate of Compliance for 100% of their properties, of which ten provided total cost estimates for remediation efforts to obtain a Certification of Compliance. These estimates ranged from \$135 to \$100,000. This range is consistent with the range reported by all participants, regardless of how many of their properties had a certificate of compliance. The median total cost estimate for participants with a Certificate of Compliance for 100% of their properties is between \$5,000 and \$6,000-7,000, which is slightly higher than the median total cost estimate for all participants (\$4,000). These median cost estimates are calculated by ranking responses based on the first number in the reported ranges. However, caution should be used when interpreting these cost estimates, due to the range of estimates reported by the respondents.

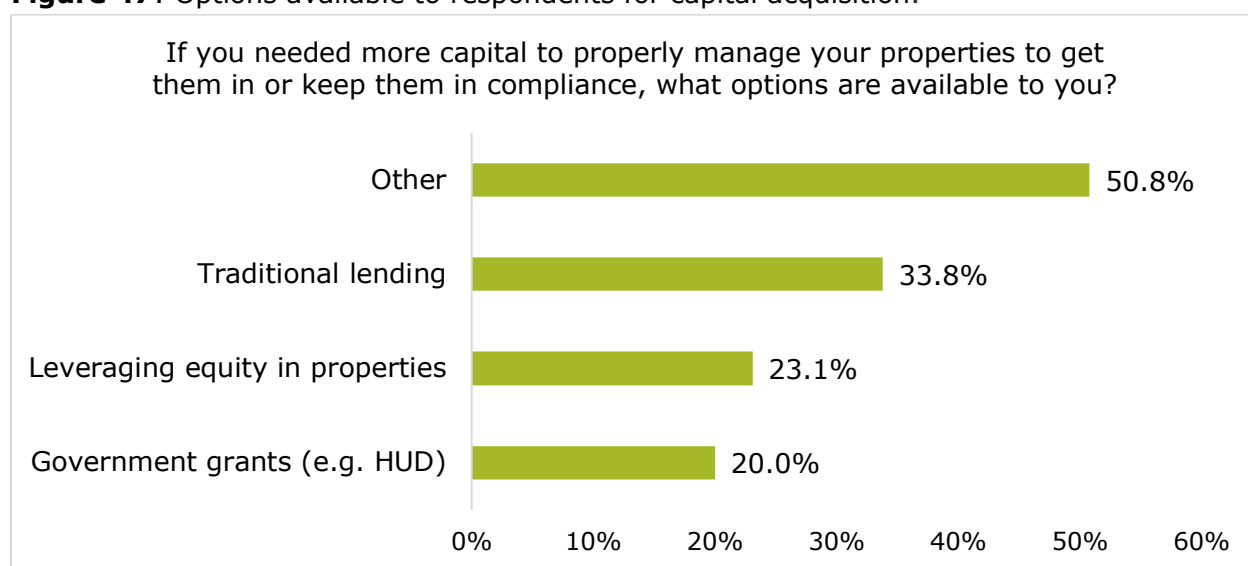
## Capital for managing & repairs to properties

Respondents were asked about the channels of funding available to them, and if they needed more capital to manage their properties or keep them in compliance. In phase 1, nearly all landlords expressed that they have few or no options available. Other responses included assertions that small developers and businesses are overlooked versus larger developers who get HUD dollars, and that they were pushed to leverage equity in their

properties, but noted associated risks involved with the latter. The responses from phase 1 guided the response choices available in phase 2 of this survey.

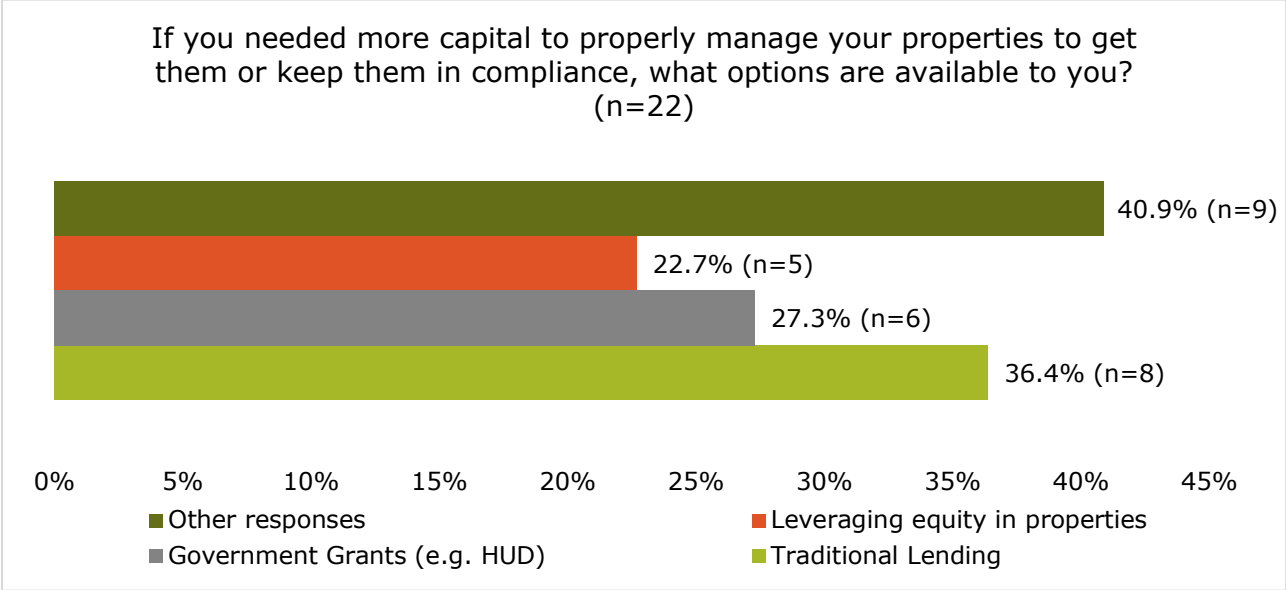
When asked of the avenues of capital available to them, a third of respondents in phase 2 identified 'traditional lending' as an option (33.8%, n=22). Nearly a quarter of landlords surveyed said 'leveraging equity in properties', and one-fifth reported 'government grants' (23.1%, n=15, and 20.0%, n=13, respectively). Half of respondents specified other avenues as their option if they needed more capital (50.8%, n=33) (see Figure 47); 11 said they would have to use their own personal income or savings, and three said they would use the rent they collect to manage and get their properties into compliance. Respondents were able to select more than one response option for this question.

**Figure 47:** Options available to respondents for capital acquisition.



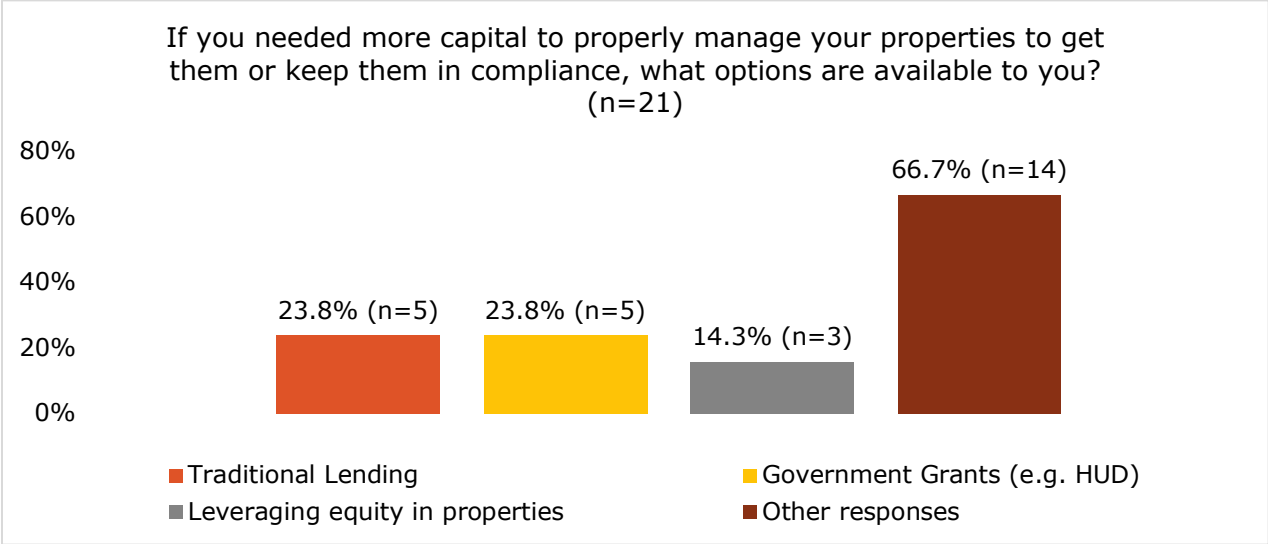
*Detached Single Family.* Over a third of respondents with only detached single-family units (36.4%, n=8) recognized traditional lending methods as their option if they needed more capital to properly manage their properties or to get or keep them in compliance. Over a quarter (27.3%, n=6) identified government grants as an option, and over a fifth (22.7%, n=5) agreed that leveraging equity in properties was an option if they needed more capital. Open-ended responses to this question mentioned 'personal loans', personal savings, using their own credit, 'get[ting] another job', or having no options (see Figure 48).

**Figure 48:** *Detached Single Family Subset:* Options available to respondents for capital acquisition.



*100% Certificate of Compliance.* Of the respondents who reported having a Certificate of Compliance for all of their units, less than a quarter (23.8%, n=5), pointed to traditional lending as an option available to them if they needed more capital to manage their properties, and a similar number identified government grants. In addition, three respondents (14.3%) mentioned 'leveraging equity in properties'. Nevertheless, two-thirds (66.7%, n=14) preferred to specify 'other' responses such as utilizing 'loans' and 'personal resources', with many reporting not having any options that they are aware of (see Figure 49).

**Figure 49:** *100% Certificate of Compliance Subset:* Options available to respondents for capital acquisition.

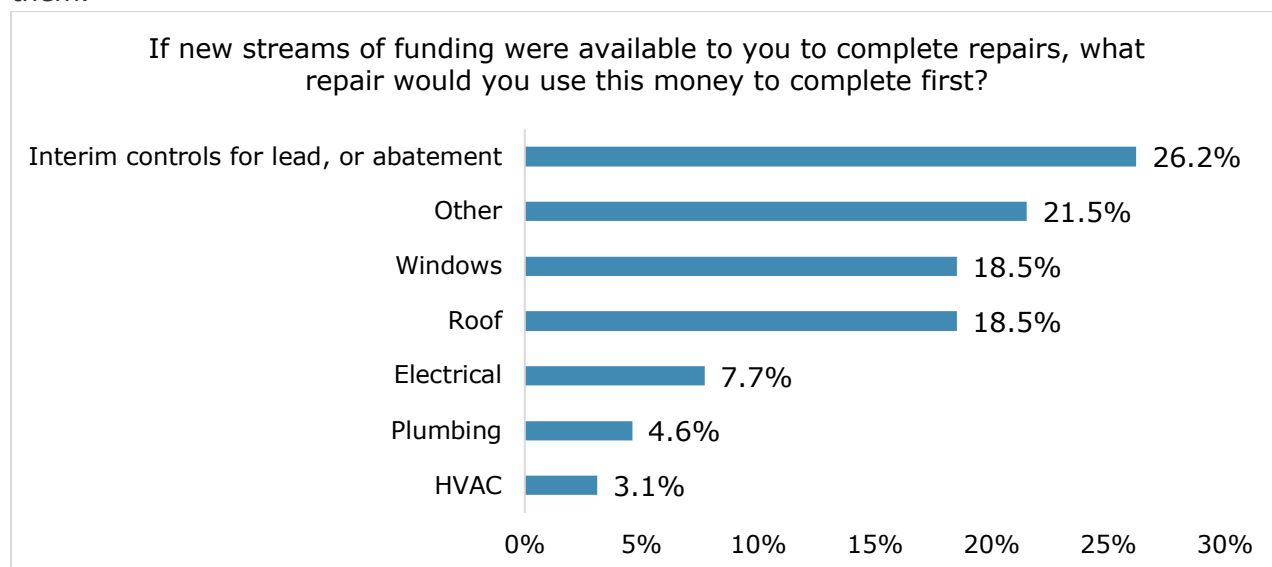


## Grant & loan opportunities for remediating lead in rentals

Finally, landlords interviewed were asked what single repair they would complete first if new streams of funding were available to them. Categories were developed from qualitative responses of phase 1 interviews. Phase 1 interview responses varied, but common mentions were window replacements and lead remediation.

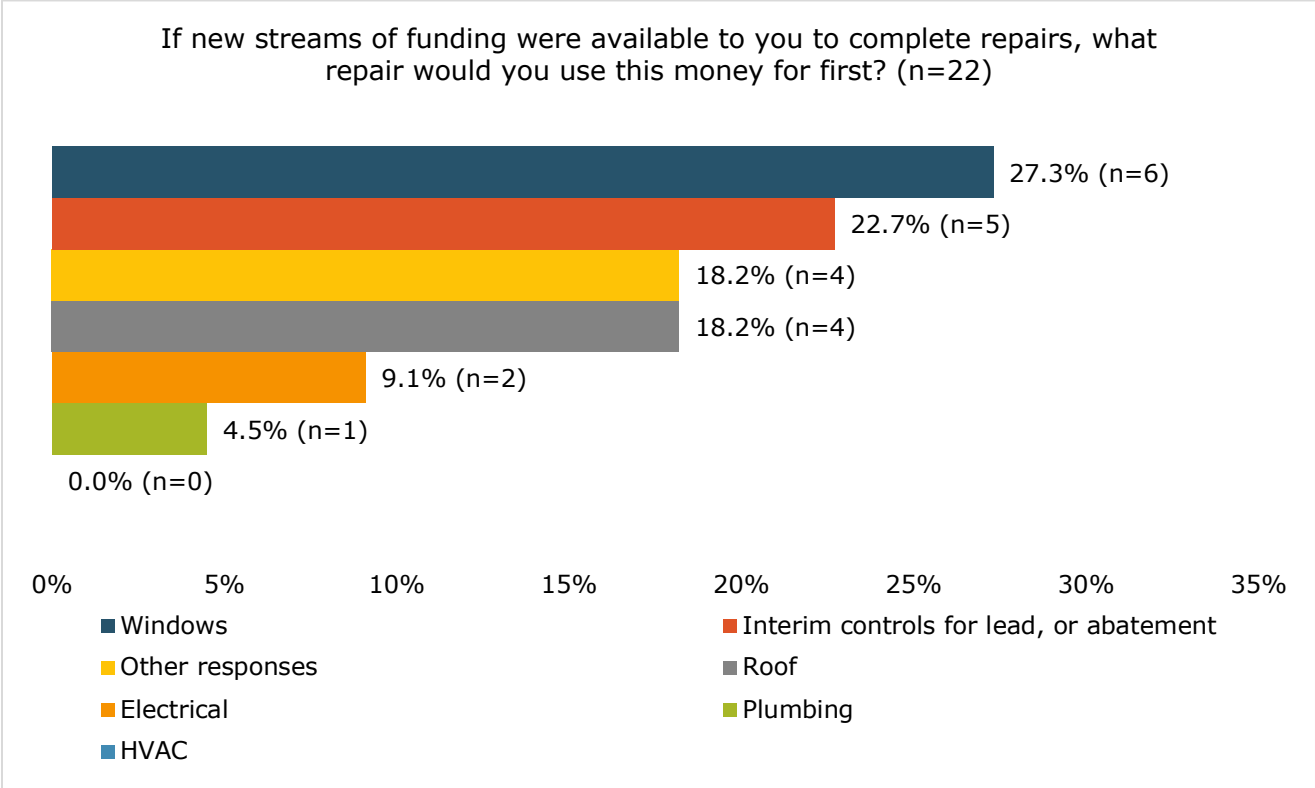
In phase 2, windows, roof, and controls for lead were the most frequently selected repairs. A quarter of respondents said they would complete interim controls for lead, or abatement, with windows and roof garnering nearly a fifth of responses, each (26.2%, n=17, 18.5%, n=12, and 18.5%, n=12, respectively). Over a fifth of landlords surveyed specified other areas towards which they would use repair funding (21.5%, n=14) (see Figure 50). Other repairs specified included furnace, landscaping, addressing asbestos, exterior work, and main water/sewer line improvements.

**Figure 50:** Repairs respondents would complete if new streams of funding were available to them.



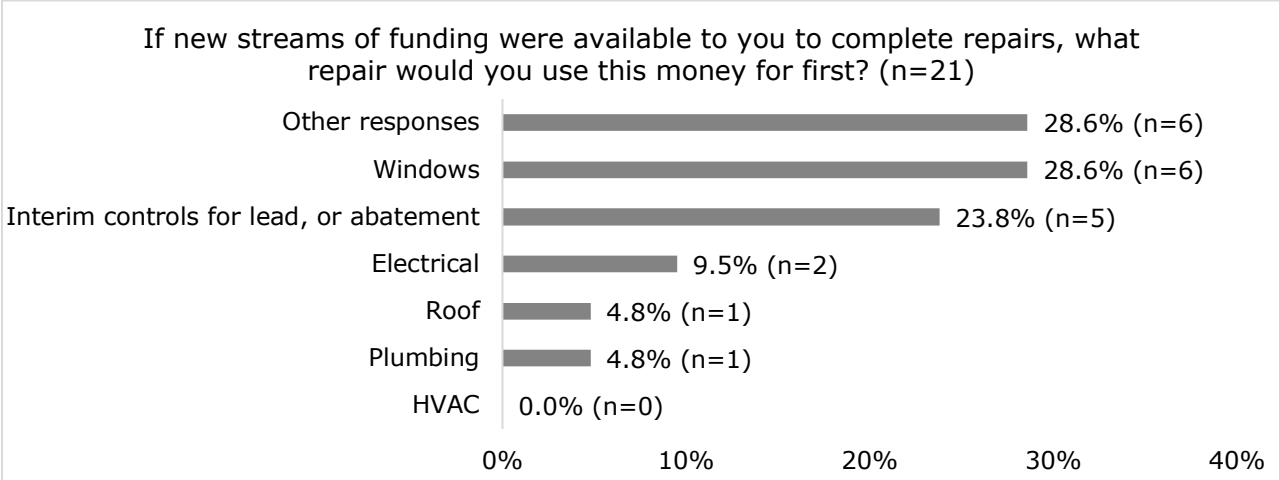
*Detached Single Family.* If new streams of funding were available, the top three repairs that respondents with only detached single-family homes would complete first are windows (27.3%, n=6), interim controls for lead or abatement (22.7%, n=5), and roofing (18.2%, n=4). Fewer respondents identified electrical (9.1%, n=2) and plumbing (4.5%, n=1) repairs, and nearly a fifth (18.2%, n=4) chose to specify other responses, including repairs to doors (see Figure 51).

**Figure 51:** *Detached Single Family Subset:* Repairs respondents would complete if new streams of funding were available to them.



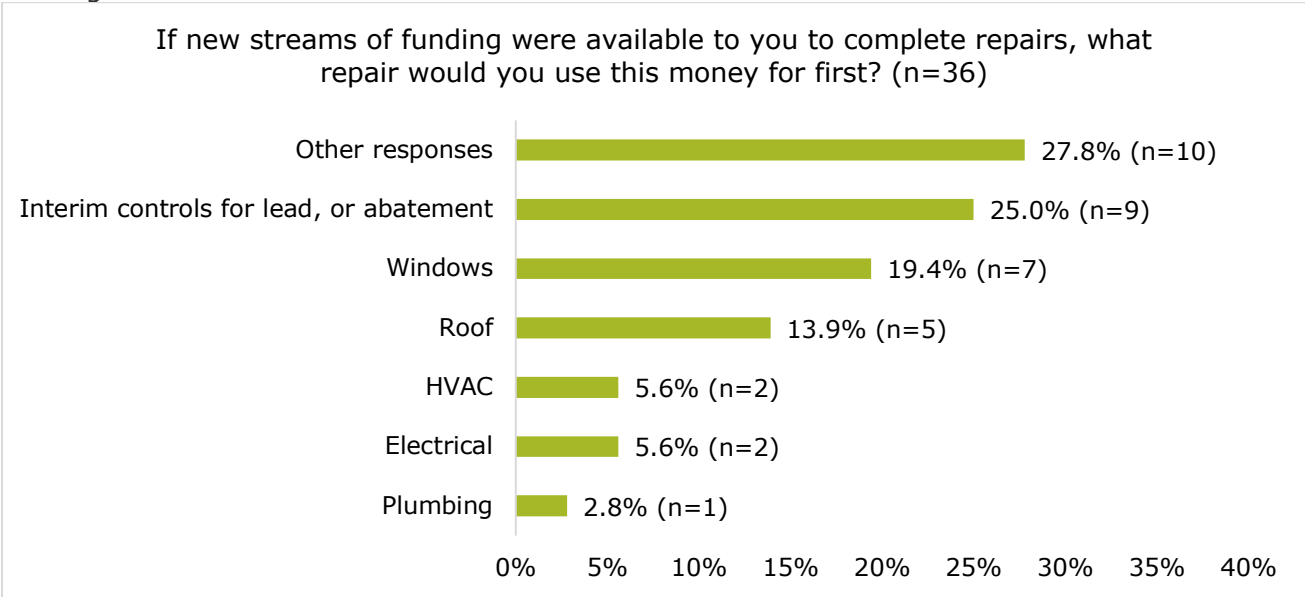
*100% Certificate of Compliance.* When asked what repair they would prioritize if new streams of funding were available, over a quarter of respondents who reported Certificates of Compliance for all of their units (28.6%, n=6) said they would address 'windows', and less than a quarter (23.8%, n=5) said they would address 'interim controls for lead, or abatement'. Less popular responses were 'electrical' (9.5%, n=2), 'plumbing' (4.8%, n=1), and 'roof' (4.8%, n=1). Over a quarter of respondents (28.6%, n=6) offered responses of their own, which included replacing doors (see Figure 52).

**Figure 52:** 100% Certificate of Compliance: Repairs respondents would complete if new streams of funding were available to them.



*Detroit Residents.* The top three repairs landlords and property managers living in Detroit would complete, if new streams of funding were available, are 'interim controls for lead, or abatement' (25%, n=9), 'windows' (19.4%, n=7), and 'roof' (13.9%, n=5). Less popular repairs among Detroit landlords and property managers are 'HVAC' (5.6%, n=2), 'electrical' (5.6%, n=2), and 'plumbing' (2.8%, n=1). A plurality of respondents living in Detroit, however, chose to specify their own responses (27.8%, n=10), with many specifying repairs for the exterior of the building, testing the 'main water line to see if there's lead in that', and concerns about asbestos (see Figure 53).

**Figure 53:** Detroit Resident Subset: Repairs respondents would complete if new streams of funding were available to them.





## Discussion

The findings of this survey indicate that landlords face difficulty working with the City. Many landlords describe working with the City and the compliance process as costly, burdensome, confusing and frustrating, especially around perceived ever-changing and unclear policies. While strained landlord-City relations were reported, landlords also expressed desires to minimize or eliminate lead from their rental housing. Key findings of the Detroit Landlord Survey are as follows:

- **Preparing Housing for Leasing.** Nearly all respondents were familiar to some degree with the City of Detroit's legal requirements for leasing rental housing (98.4%, n=60), and reported steps in their leasing process that are focused on the safety and livability of housing units. The largest number of respondents said they do repairs, renovations, and rehabilitation as part of their process before leasing a home (93.8%, n=61). Landlords described difficulty in complying with City requirements, but also expressed their desire to provide safe housing for their tenants.
- **Managing Repairs and Maintenance.** While many participants found obtaining a Certificate of Compliance to be difficult, expensive, and confusing, there was agreement at large on the necessity of lead and home inspections (55.4%, n=36 and 63.1%, n=41, respectively), as well as a focus on other home safety issues. With a majority of respondents choosing to complete repairs immediately or depending on the urgency of the repair notification, landlords prioritize the safety and livability of their housing units despite frustrations with City rental ordinances.
- **Communication and Partnership with the City.** One of the main frustrations illuminated in this survey is the difficulty landlords face when working with City departments (29.2%, n=19). While there was little consensus on what the City could do to better partner with landlords, landlords were eager in making suggestions to improve landlord-City relations (32.3%, n=21 provided alternative responses).
- **Lead Abatement and Interim Controls.** A majority of the landlords surveyed were not only familiar with lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit (98.5%, n=60), but also noted the presence of lead inspection or a risk assessment as a part of their process prior to leasing properties. When it came to terminology, many respondents were familiar with terms but not as familiar with their definitions. Of the 57 respondents (87.7%) who said they knew what abatement was, 32 described the complete removal of lead or anything hazardous. Similarly, there was little consensus on the costs of lead investigations, risk assessments, and home inspections. This suggests that while there is familiarity with lead requirements and remediation efforts, there was less understanding on actual implementation.
- **Compliance with Detroit's Rental Ordinance.** A majority of the landlords interviewed have or are planning to practice a form of lead remediation (84.6%, n=55). Most note the benefits of lead removal in the safety of the housing they

provide for tenants (87.7%, n=57, identified “addressing the risk to children or making housing safer” as a main positive in eliminating lead). While landlords perceive the benefits in lead removal, they also voiced frustrations in working with the City. Landlords' frustrations with the City and lead requirements centered around costs and extended towards general confusion about the process and enforcement efforts.

- **Rehabilitation and Repairs.** Respondents were in support of programs on lead abatement efforts, especially on the financial front (93.8%, n=61). The majority of respondents were not only in support of programs that help fund abatement efforts, but also reported financial assistance as a factor in their decision to choose abatement over interim controls (83.1%, n=54). Landlords expressed a desire to provide safe and healthy housing for their tenants but saw finances and low rents as hurdles in their path to do so. Additionally, many had not heard of local and state financial assistance programs related to lead remediation (75.4%, n=49).
- **Costs and Capital.** While the reported cost of compliance varied greatly, the range of cost estimates indicate that compliance with City ordinances is a costly process. Additionally, landlords' options for obtaining capital to fund maintenance and repairs suggest a lack of financial support resulting in landlords utilizing personal savings (16.9%, n=11), loans (33.8%, n=22), and other avenues of obtaining capital to fund maintenance and remediation projects.

Overall, landlords expressed desires to provide and maintain healthy housing for their residents. Efforts to help with financial burdens of remediation and repairs were viewed positively and garnered support from the individuals in this sample, including programs to complete abatement or repairs and financial support for these projects.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Data collection methods

The Center developed a survey in partnership with Building Community Value, for landlords with properties in the city of Detroit. Survey content sought to gather background information on respondents, as well as their experience with and understanding of lead regulations for rental properties Detroit. Additionally, the surveys asked participants about their leasing procedures, processes related to repairs or remediation, and financial components of preparing and leasing rental properties.

Interviews with landlords began in late 2021 and continued into the beginning of 2022, upon a request from BCV for an increased sample size. Phase 1 interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom, and phase 2 interviews were conducted over the phone. Interviews were conducted with voluntary participants referred to the Center by BCV. Participants were self-identified landlords or property managers with units in the city of Detroit.

## Appendix B: Detroit Landlord Survey Phase 1



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Intro

---

### *Introduction*

Thank you for agreeing to talk with us. Your responses will help to inform policies to better support landlords in providing quality housing to their tenants.

To this end, Building Community Value has asked us (Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University) to conduct interviews with landlords or property managers to understand their experiences managing residential rental units in Detroit.

Please think specifically about your properties in Detroit only as you answer these questions. Your experience, knowledge, and insight are extremely important. This interview is voluntary and confidential. This means that you do not have to participate, but we will ensure your privacy if you do. We never report the answers of individuals to anyone. All of the information we collect will be reported as group results. It should take approximately \_\_ minutes to complete the survey.

As a token of appreciation, Building Community Value will send you a \$50 Visa gift card, and I will ask you to provide your mailing address at the end of this interview if you wish to receive one.

---

## Block 1

---

### *Background*

---

1. Are you a landlord or property manager (or both) in the city of Detroit?

- Landlord
- Property manager



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Intro

---

### *Introduction*

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As a token of appreciation, Building Community Value will send you a \$50 Visa gift card, and I will ask you to provide your mailing address at the end of this interview if you wish to receive one.

---

## Block 1

---

### *Background*

---

1. Are you a landlord or property manager (or both) in the city of Detroit?

- Landlord
- Property manager

Both

2. How many housing units do you own and/or manage in the city of Detroit?

Number of units:

Notes:

3. How long have you been a landlord or property manager in Detroit?

Number of years:

4. What type(s) of properties do you own or manage in Detroit? (select all that apply)

Detached single family

Duplex/Flat

Multi-family (3 or more units)

Other: condo, townhome, rowhouse, 2nd floor apartment, etc.

Notes:

5. Approximately how many of your properties were built in each of these time periods?

	# of properties Answer	notes Answer
Before 1940	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
1940 through 1978	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
After 1978	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Notes:

---

---

6. Where do you reside?

- Detroit
  - Elsewhere in Southeast Michigan
  - Outside of Southeast Michigan
  - Out-of-state
  - Out-of-country
- 

7. Do you also own/manage properties outside of Detroit?

- Yes. If so what cities?
  - No
- 

**Block 2**

---

***Rental - General***

---

1. Can you walk me through the process of preparing to lease a home for the very first time in Detroit?

---

2. How familiar are you with the legal requirements for leasing rental property in the City of Detroit?

- Not familiar at all
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar

---

Notes:

---

3. How do you decide when to do a repair? (now vs. later vs. not at all)

---

4. Who is doing your repairs? (select all that apply)

- I am
- My staff
- Contractors
- Others (Please specify)

---

5. Who do you talk to regarding landlord topics? (frustrations, tips & tricks, etc.)

---

6. Where do you get information about being a landlord? (the City, other landlords, etc.)

---

6a. If from the City, which resources (websites, forums, individuals) specifically?



7. How difficult is it for you to comply with Detroit's rental ordinance - that is, to obtain a Certificate of Compliance?

- Very Easy
- Somewhat Easy
- Moderate
- Somewhat Difficult
- Very Difficult
- I do not know what's required

---

Notes:

---

8. What *should* be required of landlords to ensure the protection of families and children while providing rental housing?

---

9. What does the City not understand about the challenges that landlords face?

---

10. What other frustrations of landlords should the City be aware of? What should they work to address?

---

11. What is the number one thing the City should do tomorrow to better partner with landlords? What would that do/accomplish?

**Block 3**

***Lead***

1. How familiar are you with the lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit?

- Not at all familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar

Notes:

2. What is needed (required) prior to leasing?

3. How familiar are you with the lead requirements as it pertains to rehabilitation and repairs?

- Not at all familiar
- Slightly familiar

Moderately familiar

Very familiar

---

Notes:

---

4. Are there restrictions as to who can perform work on a property with lead in it?

---

5. Do you know what interim controls are?

Yes

No

---

5a. Can you please explain?

---

6. Do you know what abatement is?

Yes

No

---

6a. Can you please explain?

---

7. Do you know the cost of home inspections and Lead Investigation/Risk Assessments?

8. What type of remediation do you currently do or are planning to do?

- None
- Interim controls (cleaning and painting)
- Abatement (encapsulation, enclosure, removal)
- Not sure

Notes:

---

---

9. Currently, there are some programs to fund lead abatement for landlords – the State's Lead Safe Home Program, the City's High Impact Lead Grant – have you heard of either of these?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

9a. Have you used, or applied to, either of these?

- Yes
- No

9a.i How was your experience?

---

---

9a.ii Why have you not applied

---

---

10. If abatement were completely paid for (by the City, other funding, etc.) and you were eligible for the program, would you sign up for that?

- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
- 

10a. Would your answer change if you had to wait 6-8 months before abatement was completed?

---

10b. Why not?

---

11. What would it take to encourage you to choose abatement (over interim controls)?

---

12. What are your main frustrations as a landlord when it comes to lead?

---

13. What are the main positives for you as a landlord in eliminating lead in a rental unit?

3. If new streams of funding were available to you to complete repairs, what repairs would you use this money to complete first?

**Block 5**

**Mailing Address**

What is your mailing address?

Street	<input type="text"/>
City	<input type="text"/>
State	<input type="text"/>
Zip	<input type="text"/>

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## Appendix C: Detroit Landlord Survey Phase 2



# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

### Intro

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**Opt-ins:** Hello I'm \_\_\_\_\_, with the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University. Can I please speak with <<NAME>> ?

**Non Opt-ins:** "Hello, my name is \_\_\_ calling from the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University, can I please speak with <<NAME>> ?"

**If no individual's name included on record:** "...can I please speak with the person who is most involved with property management at << ORG NAME>> ?"

"I'm calling about a survey of Detroit landlord experiences we're conducting on behalf of a local organization called Building Community Value. An email was sent out a couple weeks ago inviting many landlords to participate in the survey. Do you remember receiving that message?"

**If yes:** "Great, do you have some time right now to complete the survey, or can we set up an appointment to complete it at a time that is convenient for you? (It takes about 25 minutes, depending on your responses)"

**If no:** "We are working with BCV to understand landlord's experiences in the City of Detroit about a variety of topics and your input would be greatly appreciated. As a thank you for your time, BCV will send you a \$50 Visa gift card for participating. Do you have some time right now to complete the survey, or can we set up an appointment to complete it at a time that is convenient for you? (It takes about 25 minutes, depending on your responses)"

**VM Message:** Hello, I'm calling from Wayne State about a survey of Detroit landlords we'd like to complete with ((RESP NAME)). We'll try calling again, or you can reach us at 313-577-8363. Thank you.

Enter Code number:

---

### ***Introduction***

Thank you for agreeing to talk with us. Your responses will help to inform policies to better support landlords in providing quality housing to their tenants.

To this end, Building Community Value has asked us (Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University) to conduct interviews with landlords or property managers to understand their experiences managing residential rental units in Detroit. As you answer these questions, please think specifically about your properties in Detroit only. Your experience, knowledge, and insight are very important.

This interview will last about 25 minutes. The interview is voluntary and completely confidential, meaning that you do not have to participate, but Wayne State will ensure your privacy if you do. Any information reported to Building Community Value (BCV) will be kept strictly confidential and will not contain identifiers.

As a token of appreciation, BCV will send you a \$50 Visa gift card, and I will ask you to provide your mailing address at the end of this interview if you wish to receive one. If you do, we will provide your name and mailing address to BCV so they can send you the gift card. No additional information about you will be provided to BCV with the address.

---

By continuing the survey you are agreeing to participate in the study.

I agree

---

Block 1

---

### ***Background***

---



1. Are you a landlord or property manager (or both) in the city of Detroit?

- Landlord
  - Property manager
  - Both
- 

1a. Would you say you are:

- Primarily a landlord
  - Primarily a property manager
  - Equally both
- 

2. How many housing units do you own and/or manage in the city of Detroit?

Number of units:

Comments:

---

3. How long have you been a landlord or property manager in Detroit?

Years:

Months:

Comments:

---

4. What type(s) of properties do you own or manage in Detroit? *(select all that apply)*

- Detached single family
- Duplex or Flat
- Multi-family (3 or more units)
- Other: condo, townhome, rowhouse, 2nd floor apartment, etc.

Comments:

5. Approximately how many of your properties were built in each of these time periods?

	# of properties Answer
Before 1940	<input type="text"/>
1940 through 1978	<input type="text"/>
After 1978	<input type="text"/>
Comments:	<input type="text"/>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>	

6. Where do you reside?

- Detroit
- Elsewhere in Southeast Michigan
- Outside of Southeast Michigan
- Out-of-state
- Out-of-country

7. Do you also own/manage properties outside of Detroit?

- No - I only own/manage properties in Detroit.
- Yes

7a. If yes, select all that apply

- Elsewhere in Southeast Michigan
- Outside Southeast Michigan
- Out-of-State
- Out-of-Country
- Comments:

---

**Block 2**

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***Rental - General***

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8. When preparing to lease a home for the very first time in Detroit, are any of the following steps part of your process? **(Select all that apply)**

- Determine financial needs, including for maintenance
- Purchase insurance coverage for the building
- Obtain a Certificate of Registration of Rental Property from the City
- Home inspection by a City-approved contractor
- Repairs, renovations, or rehabilitation
- Certificate of Compliance from the City
- Prepare leasing paperwork
- Publish rental listings
- Screen tenants
- Comments:

---

Are there any other steps you would like to add?

9. How familiar are you with the legal requirements for leasing rental properties in the City of Detroit?

- Not familiar at all
  - Slightly familiar
  - Moderately familiar
  - Very familiar
- 

10. When you need information about being a landlord or when you need advice, what one source do you use most often? **[Record one answer without reading the list. If it matches a list item, code it as such, but if not, include it as an "other" response.]**

- Other landlords
  - Business partner
  - Attorney
  - Internet resources or media
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Conferences or courses
  - City departments (in-person, or by phone or text with individuals)
  - City Website(s)
  - Other
- 

10a. Which City website?

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10a. Which City department?

- Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environment
- Housing and Revitalization Department
- Detroit Building Authority

- General Services
  - Water and Sewerage
  - Others (please specify)
- 

11. How difficult is it for you to comply with Detroit's rental ordinance - that is, to obtain a Certificate of Compliance?

- Very Easy
  - Somewhat Easy
  - Moderate
  - Somewhat Difficult
  - Very Difficult
  - I do not know what's required
- 

12. What percent of properties that you own or manage have a Certificate of Compliance?

13. In your opinion, what should be required of landlords to ensure the protection of families and children while providing rental housing? **(Record all selected)**

- Home inspections
- Lead inspections
- Lead Investigation/Risk Assessment
- Abatement of lead in rental housing
- Certificate of compliance
- Focus on housing units with small children
- Increase enforcement efforts
- Other responses:

Comments:

---

14. When do you decide to do a repair? (For example, whether to do a repair now vs. later vs. not at all)

- Immediately
  - When funds are available
  - Later
  - Not at all
  - Other responses:
- 

15. Who is doing your repairs? *(select all that apply)*

- I am
  - My staff
  - Contractors
  - Others (Please specify)
- 

16. Which of the following challenges or frustrations that landlords face is understood the least by the City? *(select only one)*

- The costs of being a landlord
  - That rents do not always cover costs of maintenance
  - The difficulty in working with City departments
  - That lead standards are unrealistic/difficult to pass
  - Other responses:
-

17. What is the number one thing the City should do tomorrow to better partner with landlords? **(select only one)**

- Revise/reduce fees
  - Improve information available for landlords
  - Hold City-led landlord trainings
  - Open a new City office for landlord assistance
  - Establish a fund to finance improvements required by ordinances
  - Other responses:
- 

**Block 3**

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**Lead**

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18. How familiar are you with the lead requirements for rental properties in Detroit?

- Not at all familiar
  - Slightly familiar
  - Moderately familiar
  - Very familiar
- 

19. What is needed or required prior to leasing? **(select all that apply)**

- Home inspection by a City-approved contractor
- Inspector provides a report of necessary repairs
- Home repairs approved by inspector
- Lead inspection/risk assessment
- Interim control or lead abatement
- Lead risk assessments or certification
- Certificate of occupancy
- Lead disclosure to the tenant

Anything else:

---

20. How familiar are you with the lead requirements as they pertain to rehabilitation and repairs?

- Not at all familiar
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar

---

21. Are there restrictions as to who can perform work on a property with lead in it?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/I don't know

---

22. Do you know what abatement is?

- Yes
- No

---

22a. Can you please explain?

---

23. Do you know what interim controls are?

- Yes
- No



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23a. Can you please explain?

---

24. Do you know the cost of home inspections?

- Yes
- No

---

24a. Can you give an estimate?

---

25. Do you know the cost of Lead Investigation/Risk Assessments?

- Yes
- No

---

25a. Can you give an estimate?

---

26. What type of remediation do you currently do or are planning to do?

- None
- Interim controls (cleaning and painting)
- Abatement (encapsulation, enclosure, removal)
- Not sure
- Comments:

---

27. Currently, there are some programs to fund lead abatement for landlords – the State’s Lead Safe Home Program, the City’s High Impact Lead Grant – have you heard of either of these?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

---

27a. Have you used, or applied to, either of these?

- Yes
- No

---

27a.i How was your experience?

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27a.ii Why have you not applied

---

28. If abatement were completely paid for (by the City, other funding, etc.) and you were eligible for the program, would you sign up for that?

- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
-

28a. Would your answer change if you had to wait 6-8 months before abatement was completed?

- Yes
- No

---

28b. Why not?

---

29. What would it take to encourage you to choose abatement over interim controls?

- Higher home values
- Funding assistance for abatement
- Would not choose abatement. (also select if respondent says interim controls are sufficient.)
- Other (specify)
- Comments:

---

30. What are your main frustrations as a landlord when it comes to lead?

- The prevalence of lead in Detroit housing stock
- Impractical testing requirements
- The lack of resources for addressing lead
- Other (specify)
- Comments:

31. What are the main positives for you as a landlord in eliminating lead in a rental unit?

- Addressing the risk to children or making housing safer
- Increased value of home
- Compliance with City ordinances (avoiding citations)
- Other (specify)
- Comments:

**Block 4**

*Finances*

32. Have you or your firm ever completed interim controls or abatement on a housing unit in Detroit in order to get a Certificate of Compliance from the City?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/I don't know

Please think about how much, on average, you spend per property to go through the process and to get the Certificate of Compliance.

	Average Cost Answer	Verbatim responses here, Answer
What is the total average cost of compliance (for all repairs)?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Of that cost, what is the total cost of interim controls?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
What is the total cost for abatement?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Average Cost Answer	Verbatim responses here, Answer
Are there any other costs? For example, tickets and fees?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Comments <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

33. If you needed more capital to properly manage your properties to get them in or keep them in compliance, what options are available to you? **(select all that apply)**

- Traditional lending
- Government grants (e.g. HUD)
- Leveraging equity in properties
- Other (specify)
- Comments:

34. If new streams of funding were available to you to complete repairs, what repair would you use this money to complete first? **(select one)**

- Windows
- Plumbing
- Roof
- Electrical
- HVAC
- Interim controls for lead, or abatement

Other (specify)

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**Block 5**

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**Mailing Address**

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What is your mailing address?

Street	<input type="text"/>
City	<input type="text"/>
State	<input type="text"/>
Zip	<input type="text"/>

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