


MEMORANDUM



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DATE: May 6, 2025

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Patrick Prescott, Community Development Director 
VIA: Simone McFarland, Assistant Community
Development Director
Maribel Leyland, Housing Authority Manager
BY: Nikki Lotfabadi, Housing Services Assistant

SUBJECT: Budget Discussion Paper - Program for Rental Unit Data Collection

BACKGROUND

At the February 11, 2025, meeting, City Council requested information about a program to collect rental unit data (Data Program) funded by the general fund budget that would inform future tenant protection measures. This memorandum summarizes the framework of a proposed Data Program for Council consideration, discussion, and direction.

The newly established Housing Enforcement Unit has implemented key initiatives such as reviewing and investigating complaints regarding evictions, to enforce California Civil Code § 1946.2, known as the Tenant Protection Act, as well as Burbank's Residential Tenant Protections under Burbank Municipal Code §§ 5-4-100 to 5-4-105. During the Council-directed survey and community outreach conducted during the Fall of 2024, the most asked question was regarding available data - what Burbank's rental market data has available regarding rental rates, rate increases, evictions, along with other data deemed pertinent to tenant protections. Currently, this data is unavailable.

Numerous cities across California have adopted data collection through rental registration to understand the trends and status of their rental markets; however, for these cities, this data is collected in conjunction with some form of rent control being in place. Collecting and analyzing rental data before placing some type of rent cap and/or additional rental protections could provide a deeper understanding of the needs of both tenants and housing providers in Burbank. Staff researched several cities to understand the

parameters and funding for similar programs. This memo proposes a Data Program for Council's consideration, whether temporary or permanent—to align with current and future local and statewide housing initiatives and to inform future Council tenant protection decisions with detailed information about Burbank's rental housing market.

DISCUSSION

Staff researched communities across the State and found that the only cities with rental registry programs also have a local rent control ordinance. Eight cities, including Berkeley, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Oakland, Pasadena, Sacramento, San Jose, and Santa Ana, were reviewed. These programs underscore the value of data in managing rental markets and enforcing housing policies. Implementing a similar program in Burbank could offer critical insights into the local rental landscape to inform the Council to any additional tenant protections needed.

There are a variety of ways to collect data on rental and multi-family units from publicly sourced information, therefore, should the Council wish to collect data on rental units in the community, the following should be preliminarily considered:

- 1. Registered properties and information required;**
- 2. Process for collecting data;**
- 3. Education and outreach;**
- 4. Software/platforms and estimated cost; and**
- 5. Timeline for data collection/program and cost.**

Specific additional information for each of these considerations follow.

1. REGISTERED PROPERTIES AND INFORMATION REQUIRED

Should the Council proceed, staff recommends the following rental properties be registered:

- Single-family homes
- Units in multifamily properties
- ADU's and Junior ADU's
- Condos and Townhouses

Information from owners required to register could include:

- Rental property address
 - Number of units/unit numbers
- Name of owner of record
- Mailing address of owner of record
- Property Manager information

- Ownership information
 - Documentation of ownership
 - Ownership start date
 - Type of ownership (LLC, Corporation, Sole Ownership, etc.)
 - Owner's Federal ID Number or alternate identifier
 - Owner occupancy information (does owner occupy a unit?)

Individual units could require the following information:

- Unit address and number
- Billing information
- Start date of current tenancy
- Initial rent of current tenancy
- Current rent
- Date of last rent increase
- Amount of last rent increase
- Number of bedrooms
- Unit square footage
- Utilities provided
- Security deposit provided at start of tenancy
- Services included with rent (utilities, laundry access, parking, etc.)
- Reason previous tenant vacated (i.e., voluntary, eviction for just cause or at-fault, etc.)

2. PROCESS FOR COLLECTING DATA

Rental data collection represents a distinct and new project, separate from the City's existing business tax process currently under the Building and Safety Division of the Community Development Department. The project would entail securing and implementing a software system and vendor to collect the data. In addition, the city would need to monitor the data collection, follow-up as required if no response to inquiries, prepare reports on data collected and make presentations as appropriate.

3. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The proposed program requires education and outreach. Some firms can take on this component for cities; therefore, staff has included such costs in the total estimate. The Data Program would include education, outreach, workshops and online videos, etc. to ensure proper owner registration.

4. SOFTWARE/PLATFORMS AND ESTIMATED COST

Staff researched several technology providers to obtain information on what each has to offer. These companies specialize in developing digital platforms and software

solutions that improve public services, governance, and civic engagement. They often work with municipalities and government agencies to streamline operations, enhance data management, and support the implementation of city or regional programs.

Though all cities with rental registries surveyed also have a local rent control ordinance, staff learned that a streamlined data collection program without a local rent control ordinance is possible. If Council wishes to proceed, staff will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select the final vendor/platform. Staff estimates it will cost approximately \$200,000 annually for the software platform, education and outreach based on research conducted with different vendors and platforms.

| RENTAL UNIT DATABASE PROGRAM COST ESTIMATE | |
|---|------------------|
| Software/Platform | \$100,000 |
| Education and Outreach | \$100,000 |
| Total | \$200,000 |

5. TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION/PROGRAM AND COST

The following is a tentative schedule to implement and collect data if authorized by the Council:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| RFP and Contract Execution for Data Collection Vendor | July 1, 2025 – September 31, 2025 |
| Education and Outreach | October 1, 2025 – November 31, 2025 |
| Data Collection Program Kick-Off | December 1, 2025 |

Given the proposed timeline, rental data collection efforts can align with the annual business tax renewal season. Business tax renewals begin each December and specifically impact residential rental properties with three or more units. This concurrent timing offers an opportunity to integrate awareness efforts and ensure that registered residential rental property owners are informed of the City's initiative to collect rental data. Staff does not propose any changes to the Business Tax charged at this time but could come back to Council after the program is in place.

Council could decide to collect data for a designated period or continue the program indefinitely. Given the scope and complexity of the undertaking, additional staffing may

be necessary to coordinate with the technology provider and manage data collection, administration, and analysis. Should Council elect to move forward with the Data Program, staff will assess the resources needed to implement the program and return to Council if additional resources are needed.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff recommends authorization to release an RFP to onboard a vendor to implement a data collection program and conduct community outreach and education in the total of \$200,000.00 in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget.

CONCLUSION

The proposal for a Data Program aligns with the City's goals of enhancing transparency in the rental market and supporting effective tenant protection strategies. Existing programs in California cities demonstrate the effectiveness of such initiatives in tracking rental trends and supporting housing policies. The proposal could help Burbank better understand its local rental landscape to ensure more informed future decision-making.

If Council would like to proceed, staff recommends authorizing an RFP to onboard a vendor to implement a data collection program and conduct community outreach and education. Upon approval, staff will proceed with selecting a technology provider and begin outreach efforts for property owners. Additionally, staff will develop a timeline for implementation and return to Council should additional resources be needed to ensure a successful project.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – Survey of Rental Registries in Other California Cities

| City | Highlights of Parameters |
|----------------------|---|
| Santa Ana | “Rent Registry” created in 2022 in accordance to the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance. Requires all landlords with multi-family rental units to register and provide rental unit and tenancy information and submit notices. Allows the City to compile key data on rent-stabilized units, track allowable rent increases, monitor compliance with the City’s Ordinance, and communicate rental unit data on a regular basis to both landlords and tenants. |
| Pasadena | “Rent Registry” requires landlords of single-family homes, condos, ADU’s, multifamily properties with more than 2 units to register. The online portal is where landlords register their rental units, update rental unit information, update tenancy information, and pay the annual rental housing fee |
| Sacramento | “Rental Housing Registration/Inspection Program”. Inspections are required after property is registered. Exemption categories include rental properties that are less than 5 years old, or regularly inspected rental properties by another agency. |
| Oakland | “Rent Adjustment Program” sent registration notices to owners of residential properties in January 2025. The purpose of their registry is to help both owners and tenants understand better whether their rents are in compliance with Oakland’s Rent Adjustment Ordinance. Owners will be able to more easily calculate rent increases, and tenants can verify them. |
| San Jose | “Rent Registry” allows the city’s Rent Stabilization Program to collect data on rent-stabilized apartments, monitor changes in tenancy and rents, and track allowable rent increases |
| Berkeley | “Rental Housing Safety Program”, based on a city ordinance implemented in 2002, requires owners of rental properties to register and perform a safety inspection each year. Rental properties may be randomly selected for a proactive inspection. |
| Los Angeles | Beginning October 4, 2016, Los Angeles’ “Rent Registry Program” became effective. Requires annual registration of rental units subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO) consists of paying the annual registration fee(s) and completion of the Rent Registry registration requirements. |
| Beverly Hills | Rent Stabilization Program requires housing providers to register rental units subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO). The purpose is to collect data and information relative to apartment rentals so that the city can use that data to better understand the demographics in terms of vacancies, rent increases, etc. |