

Evaluating Tacoma's Landlord Fairness Code

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Landlord Fairness Code Study Workgroup

- Tacoma Housing Authority
- Tacoma For All
- Tacoma-Pierce County Affordable Housing Consortium
- LandlordSolutions
- Spinnaker Property Management
- Tacomaprobono Community Lawyers
- City of Tacoma- Community and Economic Development Department-
Housing Division
- Pierce County Human Services
- The Evergreen State College
- University of Washington - at Tacoma

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Project Goal

- Evaluate the effect of Tacoma's Landlord Fairness Code on:
 - Rents
 - Rental application fees and process
 - Rent defaults
 - Evictions
 - Management of tenant disruptions
 - Number of rental housing units
 - Homelessness

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Data Sources

- Tenant Survey
- Landlord Survey
- Tenant and Landlord Listening Sessions
- Pierce County Superior Court Records
- Pierce County Assessor Records

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Roadmap

- Wave 1 of tenant survey data collected and analyzed
- Landlord survey data collected and analyzed
- Wave 2 of tenant survey data collected
- Tenant and landlord survey reports in process
- Landlord listening sessions in process
- Tenant listening sessions scheduled
- Future work
 - Web scraping Pierce County Superior Court eviction filings
 - Analysis of tax assessor property ownership data

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Tenant Survey Methods

- Online survey
- Distributed via email listservs provided by workgroup participants
- Open May 26-June 16
- Main questionnaire items:
 - Rent and rent change
 - Landlord effectiveness at managing noise and disruptions
 - Experiences with rental application fees and process
 - Frequency of late rent payment
 - Experience with eviction
 - What else would you like us to know about your experiences as a renter in Tacoma or with Tacoma's Landlord Fairness Code? (Open-ended)

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Tenant Survey Respondents

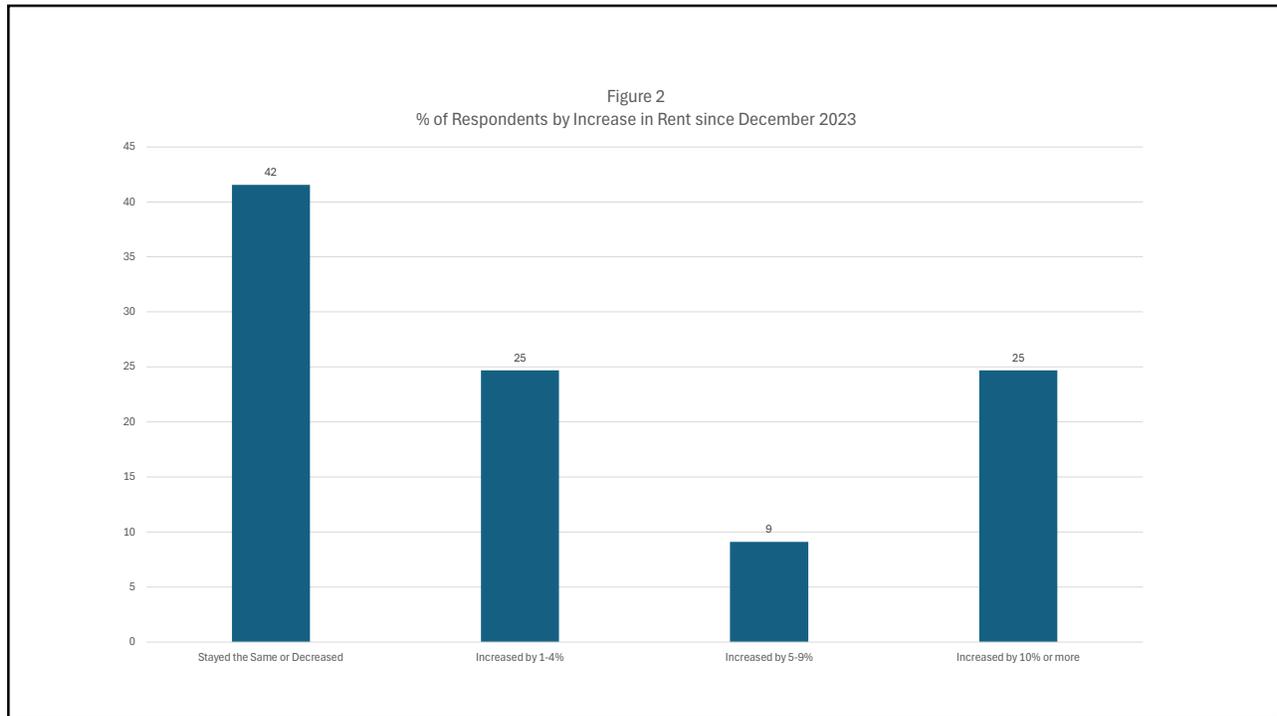
- 77 usable responses received
- Representative of Tacoma renter population in terms of household size
- Over-represented White Non-Hispanic renters
- Under-represented Black and Asian Non-Hispanic renters
- Over-represented younger renters
- Median income of respondents: \$50,000 - \$75,000

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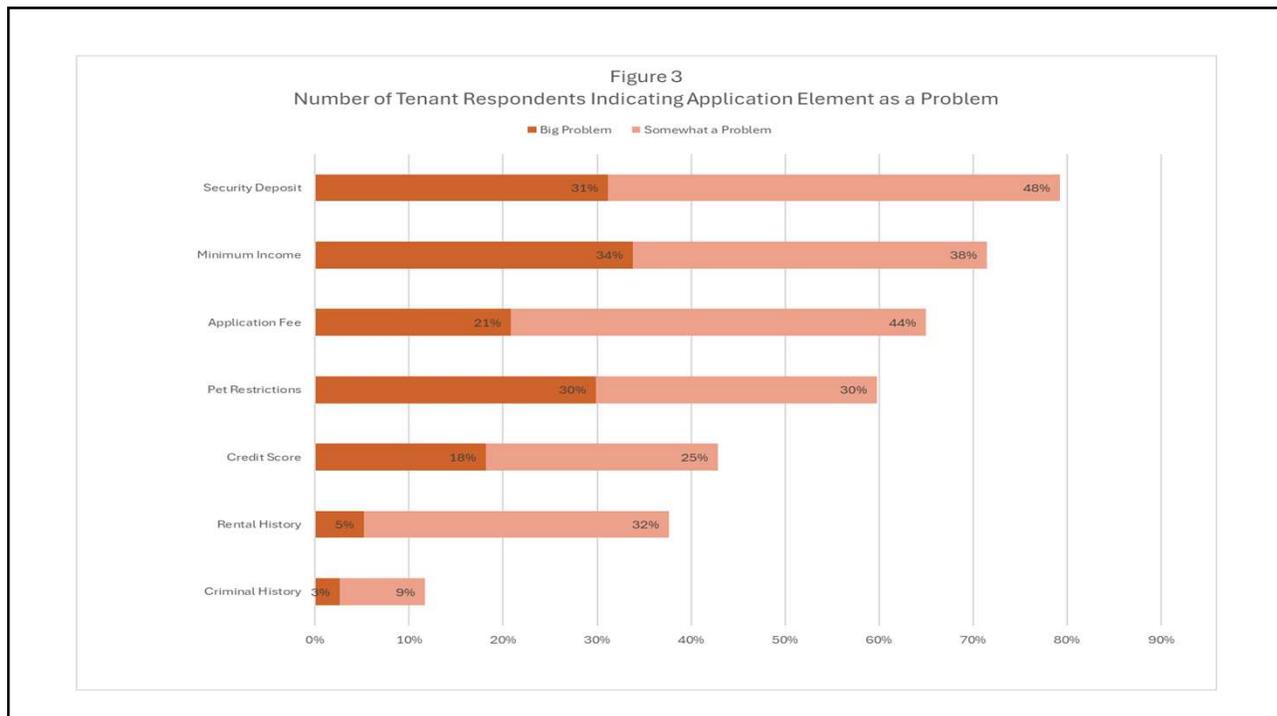
Tenant Survey (Preliminary Findings)

- Overall rent increases are consistent with those for the Western U.S.
- No significant change in perceived problems with rental application process
- More tenants report making rent payments late
- Few respondents indicated having an experience with eviction
- Most respondents reported that their landlords were “somewhat effective” or “very effective” at addressing problem behavior by tenants

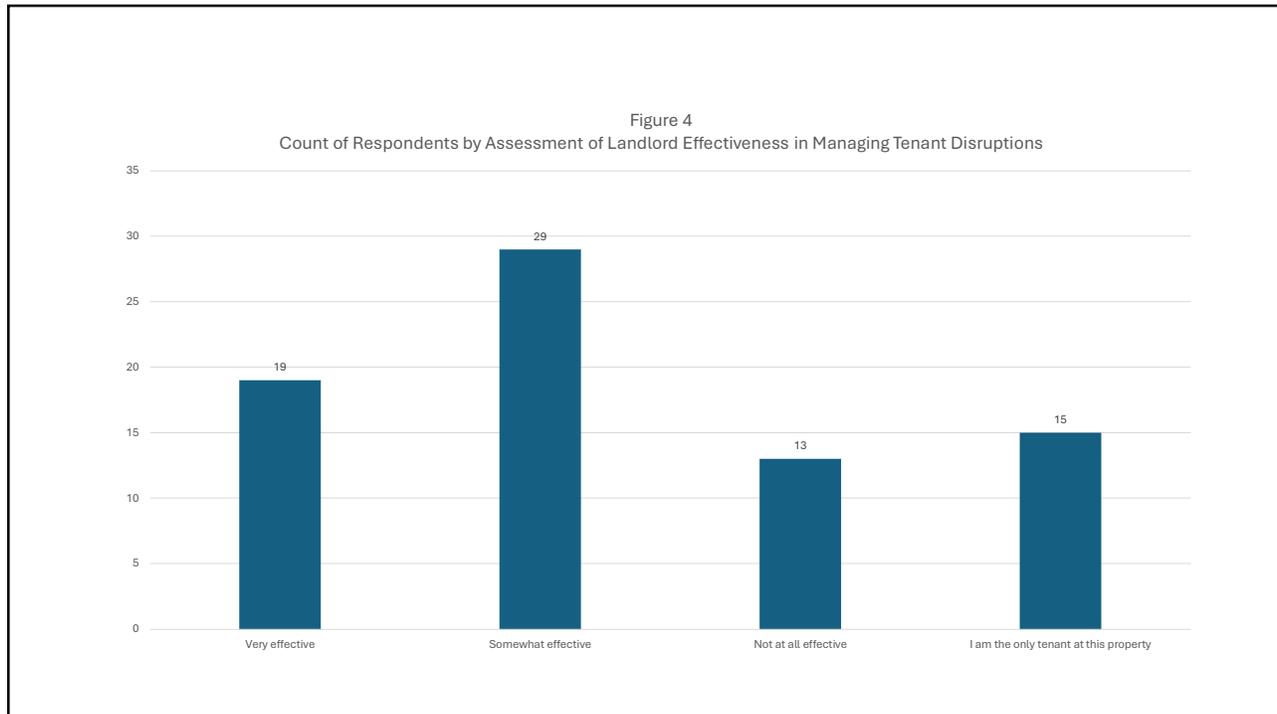
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Landlord Survey Methods

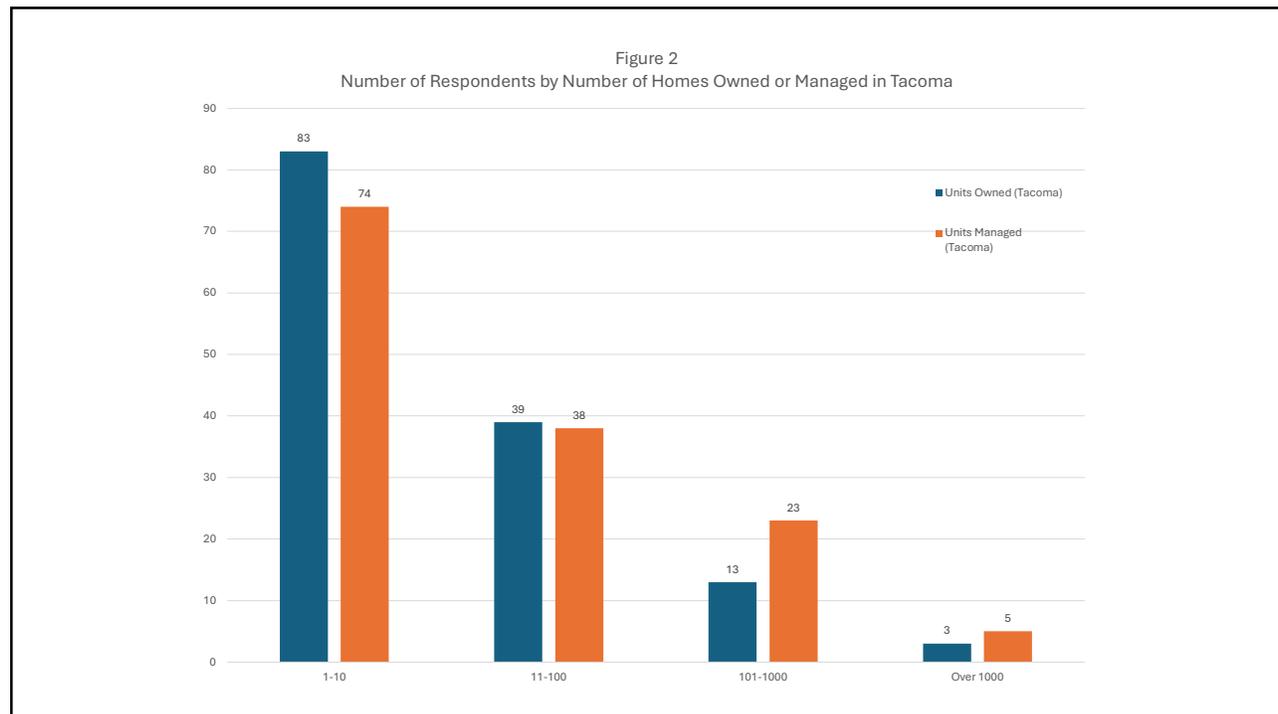
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- Main questionnaire items:
 - Rent and rent change
 - Landlord effectiveness at managing noise and disruptions
 - Experiences with rental application fees and process
 - Frequency of late rent payment
 - Experience with eviction
 - Plans for buying/selling rental properties over the next five years
 - What else would you like us to know about your experiences as a landlord in Tacoma or with Tacoma's Landlord Fairness Code? (Open-ended)

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Landlord Survey Respondents

- 166 usable responses
- Nearly all indicated they are a property owner, manager, or both
- About half indicated they are a for-profit firm; another 40% indicated they are individual owners
- Wide range of business sizes reported
- Over half indicated at least one tenant using a subsidy

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Landlord Survey (Preliminary Findings)

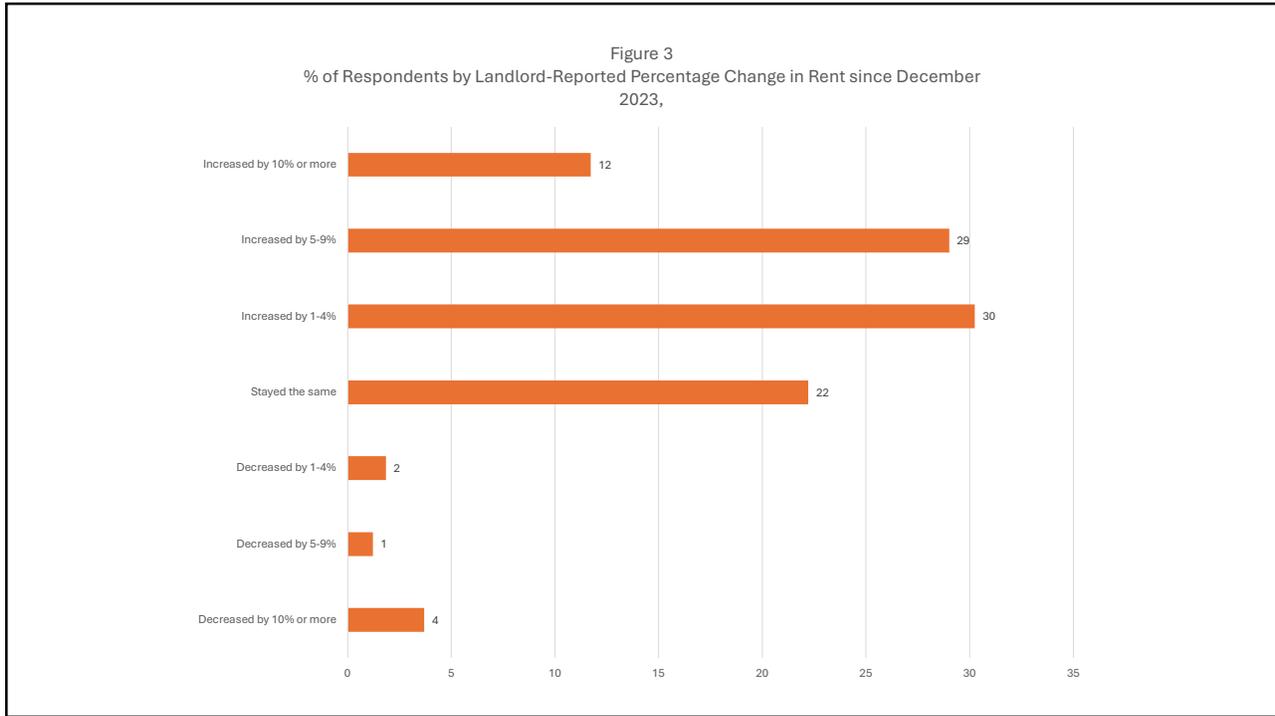
- Rent increases consistent with those reported in the tenant survey and with regional averages
- Most landlords reported making their rental application process more restrictive
- Most landlords reported that rent defaults have increased at least somewhat
- Landlords reported significantly more lease terminations and evictions in 2024 than they did in 2023

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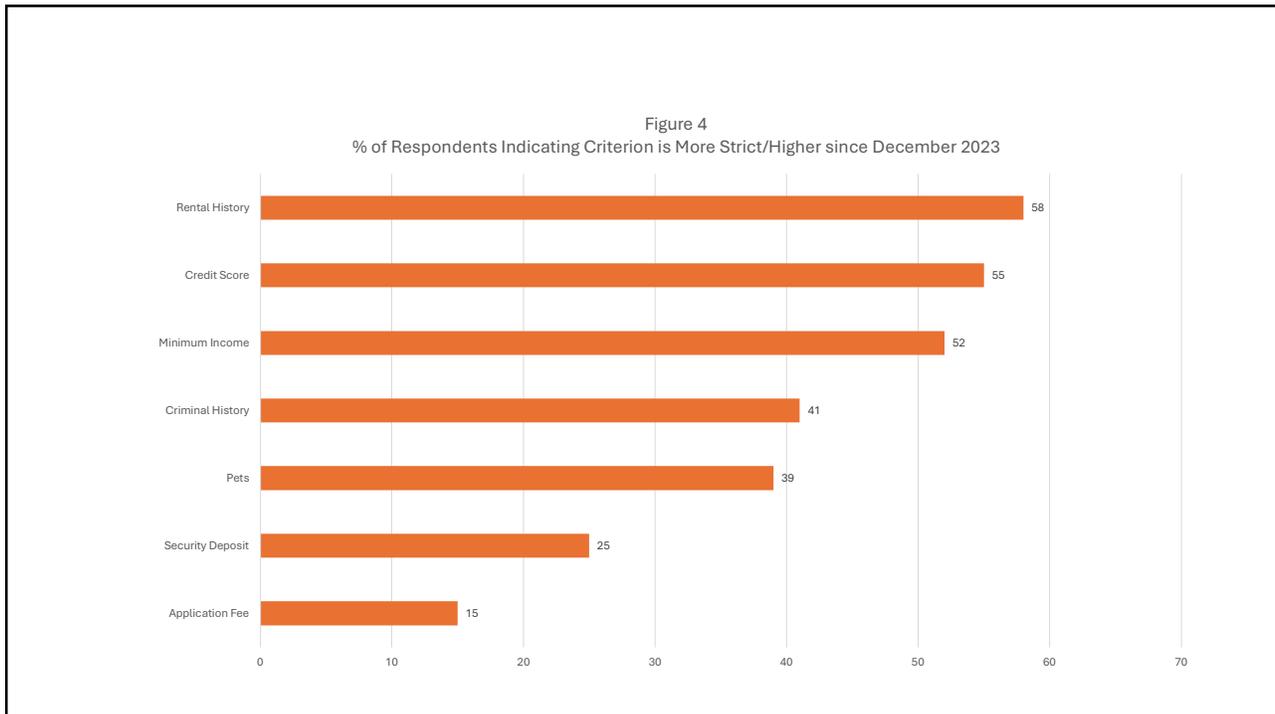
Landlord Survey (Preliminary Findings cont.)

- Most landlords reported that they felt less effective at managing tenant disruptions since December 2023
- Most landlords reported that they were at least somewhat satisfied with their working relationship with their tenants
- Most landlords indicated that they plan to have fewer residential rental properties in Tacoma in 5 years

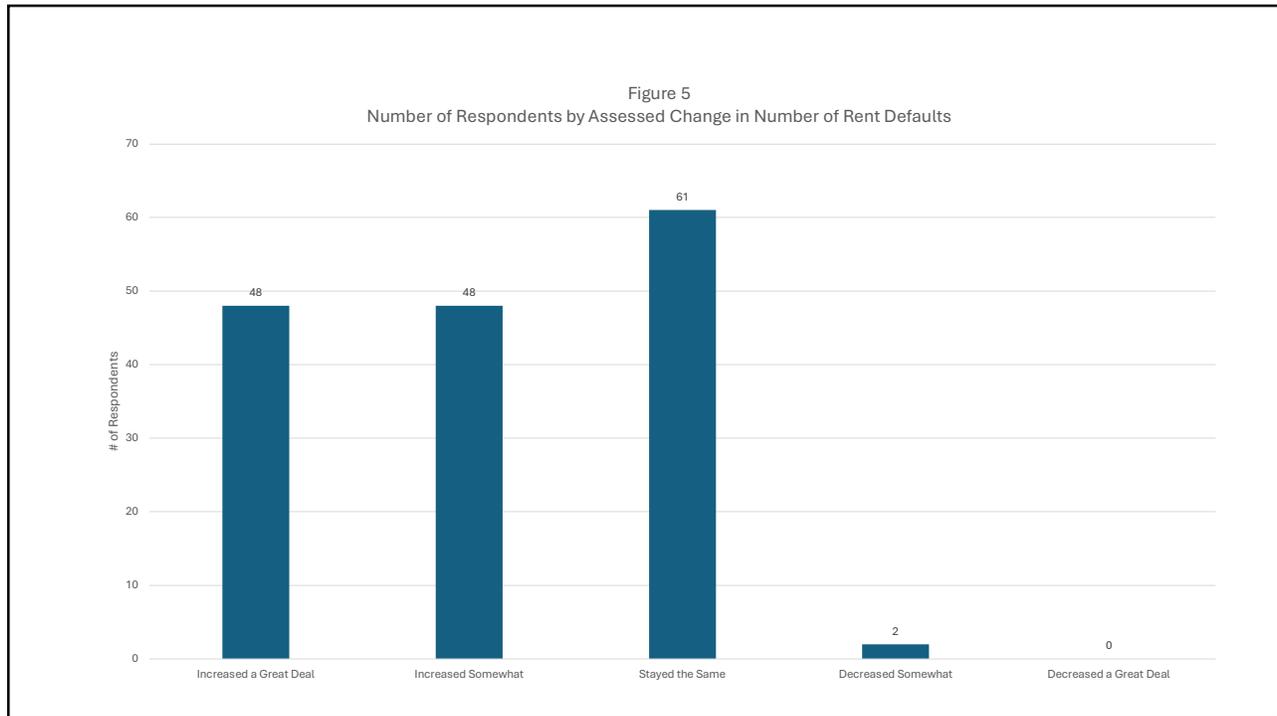
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Table 8
Average Number of Terminations and Evictions in 2023 and 2024

	2023 Mean	2024 Mean	2024 Mean > 2023 Mean?
Termination for Unpaid Rent	5.2	10.0	Yes (p < 0.05)
Termination, Vacate or Comply	2.3	4.1	Yes (p < 0.01)
Termination for Nuisance	0.6	1.1	Yes (p < 0.05)
Termination, Other	0.2	0.5	Yes (p < 0.05)
Total Number of Terminations	8.3	15.8	Yes (p < 0.01)
Evictions Served	5.8	10.5	Yes (p < 0.05)
Evictions, Court	1.9	3.0	Yes (p < 0.01)

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Next Steps

- Survey reports are in preparation. Anticipated 10/31
- Listening sessions are being scheduled. Separate reports will be prepared with those findings
- Considering:
 - Possibility of offering the survey in the future
 - Integrating superior court and tax assessor data