**Option 1: Rental Housing Registry**

During the early stages of the pandemic, public attention shifted to tenant protections and vulnerabilities in the face of mass job loss and a public health emergency. Officials issued eviction moratoriums, rent freezes, and other tenant protection policies, but lacked clear methods for enforcement. But this isn’t a new problem – illegal eviction, building code violations, and illegal rent hikes are commonplace in the U.S., yet municipalities lack access to data to enforce tenant safeguards. In many jurisdictions, leaders do not know how many rental units exist or have a cohesive method for tracking who owns those units.

We propose creating a **simple rental housing registry data system** that cities and other communities can deploy to track critical information about rental housing units. Our information service would function as a framework that incorporates best practices outlined by housing policy experts and tenant advocates, thereby minimizing startup time for resource-strapped municipalities and creating a degree of standardization in the rental industry. The primary purposes of this data system are landlord oversight, tenant right protection enforcement, tenant outreach, and greater insight for leaders and policymakers.

Expected functions and utilities (adapted from [this proposal](https://shelterforce.org/2020/12/18/we-need-a-rental-registry-now-more-than-ever/) and this [Twitter thread](https://twitter.com/nithyavraman/status/1283173659914297344?s=20&t=3TA54ZORk0-lwh7Wv8ffHA)) would include:

* **Landlord information:** unit ownership, landlord contact information, any outstanding violations against that landlord for any properties owned in that jurisdiction
* **Unit information:** current rent, rent increases, intent to file eviction proceedings (including a copy of the notice sent to tenants), current and past building code violations, tenancy status (i.e. vacant, leased, etc.)
* **Tenant outreach portal:** creates a way for tenants to connect to the data system and see the information provided by their landlord to municipality officials, as well as receive information directly from housing agencies and learn about their rights based on the type of unit within which they reside. PII should be masked such that privacy is protected.
* **Direct communication with tenants:** housing agencies can directly reach tenants, versus relying on public information campaigns or information passed on through landlords

**Team work plan**

* Literature review – Dominique, Shashank **(Thurs. Oct. 20)**
* Data flow diagram – Will, Shashank (ALL weigh in) **(Thurs. Oct 27)**
* ERD – Adhira, Surbhi, Dominique (ALL weigh in) **(Thurs. Nov. 3)**
* Data Viz Table – Will, Adhira **(Nov. 10)**
* Wireframe – Samantha, Dominique **(Nov. 10)**
* Powerpoint – Samantha, Surbhi (**Dec. 7)**
* Video presentation – ALL (**Dec. 10)**

**Option 2: Virtual Travel Management**

We want to create a new information sharing product to enhance communication between virtual travel agents and hotels. We aim to focus on daily rate and external reservation management.

Majority of hotels need to inform third party booking websites of their daily rates via phone or email everyday. Each third party website has their own negotiated discount with different hotels. After acquiring the discounted rate, third party websites decide what to charge their customers for that day.

**Expected Functions & Specific Settings for Use**

Some third party websites have to communicate with hotels through the use of emails, fax, and phone conversations with internal reservation or front desk at the desired property location. Reservations made through third party websites are not automatically transferred into a hotel’s complete reservation system.

We want to update this existing system to make it more efficient by creating an information service that would allow third parties to communicate with contracted hotels more effectively about daily rates, rate changes, and new or canceled reservations.

This would benefit travelers, Hotel owners and managers, and third party booking agencies. Hotels will be able to compete with other hotels nearby more efficiently if they are able to adjust their prices faster in a given day. This would provide fair and decent rates for travelers.

**Team Work Plan**

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