

About Streams

HousingLink’s database of publicly-funded affordable rental property in Minnesota

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ABOUT STREAMS

- **What is *Streams*?** *Streams* is a searchable database of publicly-funded (subsidized) rental housing in Minnesota. The intent is to maintain an unduplicated list of properties (and units), where a property will include all known associated addresses.
- **How current is *Streams*?** *Streams* currently includes all properties with start date (one of affordability start date, first finance closing, or other indication of a property's initial inclusion in Minnesota's affordable inventory) through 12/31/2024.
- **What types of housing programs are covered in *Streams*?** *Streams* aims to include any rental housing with a long-term rent restriction (or direct rent subsidy) that makes it affordable for those earning 80% or less of the area median income (AMI). This includes Public Housing, Project-Based Section 8, LIHTC (tax credit) properties, and many other programs funded at the state or local level. *Streams* does not specifically include emergency shelters or transitional housing.
- **How comprehensive is *Streams*?** Our goal is to have 100% coverage of Minnesota, but our data is only as complete as our data inputs and any feedback we get from affordable housing partners. We get Federal data from the [National Housing Preservation Database](#), state data from Minnesota Housing (Minnesota's state housing finance agency), and local data from local communities that report directly to the Metropolitan Council as part of their annual *Housing Production Survey*, in addition to additional inputs from local partners for affordable properties not included in our primary source data, and welcomes community review and feedback. If you see something wrong or missing in *Streams*, [please let us know!](#) We're always looking for extra partners in ensuring our completeness and accuracy.
- **How does *Streams* define "property"?** "We have found that different funders of affordable housing define and organize their investments in different ways, sometimes with multiple addresses within a single "property" record or with addresses that overlap those of another funder's development. Our intent for *Streams* is to reconcile all of our source data into an unduplicated list of properties (aka "developments") and units, with the potential for multiple addresses/buildings within any given "property."

HOW TO USE *STREAMS* (at a high level)

Broadly, you can retrieve publicly-funded housing data by

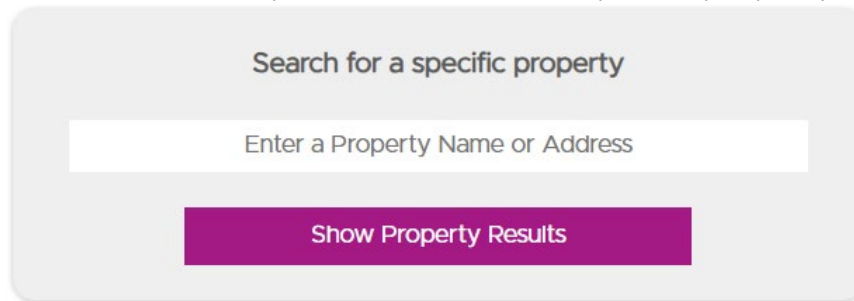
- Searching for a specific property name/address.
- Setting any of a number of specific filters to retrieve a "search results" property dataset.

When you click either of the two purple "show results" buttons ("Show specific property results" or "Show filtered property results") you were presented with a tabular view of results with a limited array of property level attributes (see below for attribute definitions). At this point, you can choose to:

- View/sort results within the tabular view.
- Export results to an Excel spreadsheet (with two options for level of detail – more on that later!)
- Click on an individual property name to get all known detail about that property.

STREAMS LANDING PAGE

Search *Streams* Option 1: Search for a specific property



Search for a specific property

Enter a Property Name or Address

Show Property Results


If you have a specific property in mind, this allows for a quick search for that particular property, either by property name or address. This search operates with a “contains” logic, where it will return a result if it contains your exact text string anywhere in the street address (not including city, state, or zip code). *TIP: less is more! Many street suffixes are abbreviated, so if you type in (for example) “Avenue” instead of “Ave” you might not find the property you’re looking for. Consider starting with a shorter part of the street address that you KNOW can’t be spelled any other way and you may return a small enough list of results that your property is quick to find (as opposed to having to try multiple iterations of a search to accommodate variations in how the address might appear in the database).*

Search *Streams* Option 2: Search using filters

Search using the filters below

Geography	<input type="text"/>	▼
Program	<input type="text"/>	▼
Affordability Began	<input type="text"/>	▼
Affordability Ends	<input type="text"/>	▼
Activity Type	<input type="text"/>	▼
Group Served	<input type="text"/>	▼

Show Filtered Property Results

 For definitions and "how to" information, see [About Streams](#).

This option allows you to search by any of a number of cumulative filters. That is to say, selections made in multiple filters are applied together in limiting your search results. For more information about the definitions of terms like “region” or “program” or “start date” see the [FIELD DEFINITIONS](#) section later in this document. For now, we’ll look how the individual filter dropdowns work.

Geography filter

Geography Type

County ▼

Geographies

▼

This filter works as a two-step process, wherein a user first selects a “Geography Type,” which may include one of the following options:

- City
- County
- Region (*one of seven statewide regions: see [FIELD DEFINITIONS](#) later in this document for more information*)
- US House District

- MN Senate District
- MN House District
- Minneapolis Ward
- St. Paul Planning District

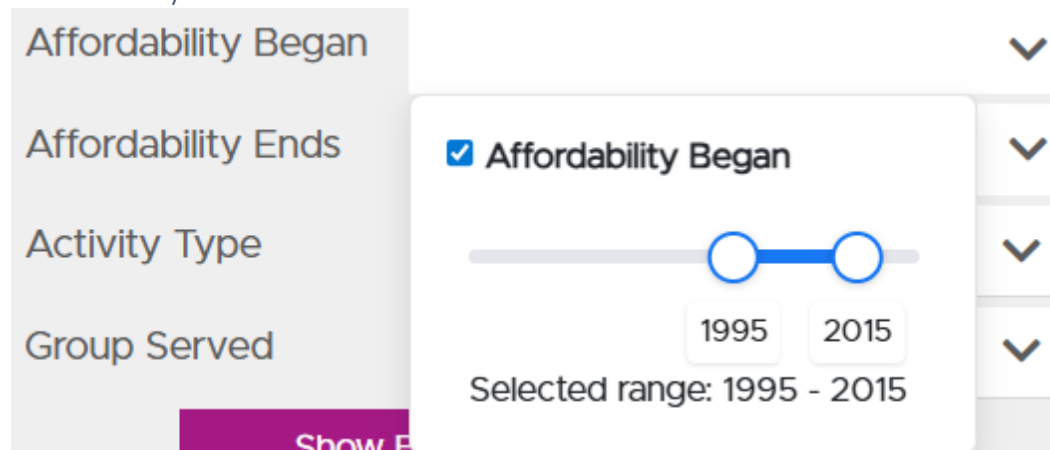
Upon making a “Geography Type” selection, the “Geographies” filter immediately below is pre-populated with available options for that type (e.g. for County: Aitken, Anoka, Becker, etc.).

Note on legislative districts: If you are not sure of your MN Senate or House district, you can search by address at the MN Legislature’s interactive [“Who Represents Me?”](#) tool.

Program filter

This selects the program(s) that ensure affordability for the property. Note that while primary federal programs such as Project Based Section 8, Public Housing, LIHTC, are available as options, very few state or local-level programs can be selected. This is due to the vast number of unique variations in program names we currently receive from state and local sources (over 2,400!). All program information we receive on every property *will* be included on each property’s detail page, and in any data download.

Affordability Period filters



This filter contains two slider bars. The top bar, “Year Affordability Began” (*pictured, above*), will return all properties with any program containing a start date contained within the range of years selected. The bottom bar, “Year Affordability Ends,” will likewise return all properties with any program containing an end date contained within the range of years selected. These two filters work with an “and” logic, meaning both conditions must be true for a property to be contained in the selected set. For more information about the meanings of “Start Date” and “End Date,” see FIELD DEFINITIONS later in this document. Selecting a checkbox initiates its corresponding slider, and un-checking the box clears and resets that filter.

Activity Type filter

This filter returns properties containing any program determined to either create “New” units or be involved in “Preservation/Stabilization” of existing structures, whether or not those

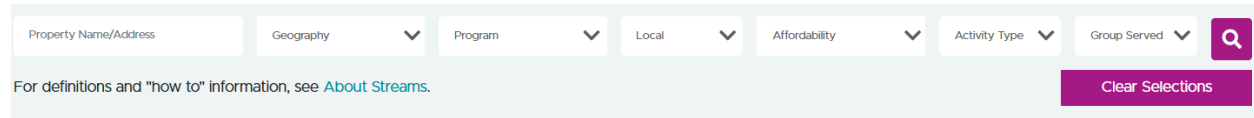
structures previously contained affordable housing. For more information about the meanings of “New” and “Preservation/Stabilization,” see FIELD DEFINITIONS later in this document.

Group Served filter

This filter returns properties if the property is designated to serve either of the two resident groups of “Seniors” or “Disabled.” For more on the definition of these two groups and how this information is obtained, see FIELD DEFINITIONS later in this document.

SEARCH RESULTS PAGE

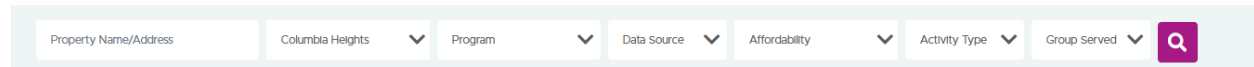
Upon conducting a search from the *Streams* landing page, you are presented with the results of your search on a new page. Let go through section by section.



The screenshot shows a search filter bar with the following elements: a text input field for "Property Name/Address", dropdown menus for "Geography", "Program", "Local", "Affordability", "Activity Type", and "Group Served", a magnifying glass search icon, and a purple "Clear Selections" button. Below the filter bar, there is a link: "For definitions and 'how to' information, see [About Streams](#)."

Search Filters

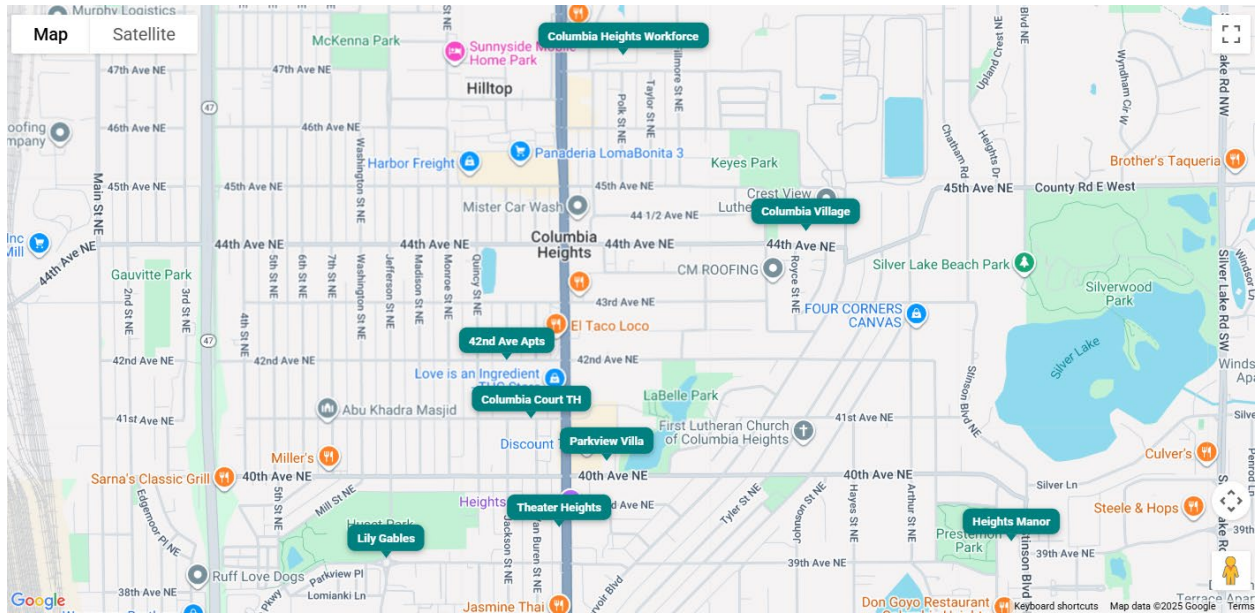
At the top of this page are the same set of filters from your initial search. Your initial filter selections are carried through, and at this point you may modify your criteria and search again using the button with the magnifying glass, or click “clear results” and start a new search.



The screenshot shows a search filter bar with the following elements: a text input field for "Property Name/Address", dropdown menus for "Columbia Heights", "Program", "Data Source", "Affordability", "Activity Type", and "Group Served", a magnifying glass search icon, and a purple "Clear Selections" button.

Map

The results of your search will be displayed on a map that is automatically zoomed out to the geographic extent of properties in your search results. If this total of properties is greater than 300, the results will simply be represented as pins on a map. If you either refine your selections or zoom your map in such that your search results in 300 properties or less, the pins will become markers labeled by property name (for ease of display, properties consisting of multiple addresses will be simplified to a single marker for per property). See a sample of the map with visible labels below.



If there are more than 300 results (and thus no pins appearing at all) or if pins are too crowded to read, simply zoom in. This may be done by expanding the navigation tool (the little compass arrow thing in the circle above the person icon in the lower left) or, if on a desktop, using CTRL+(mouse wheel).

Each property label is hyperlinked to a Property Detail Page (see below).

A Note on “Address Units”

As a result of limitations in source data, units within Streams are only conclusively known at the property level. However, there may be one or more addresses per property. In terms of Search Results, this can present a problem if only a portion of a property’s addresses are within the selected geography (a particular concern in cases of multi-jurisdictional scattered site projects). In a case such as this how many of the property’s overall units do we count for a particular set of search results?

Our solution to this issue is the same one we use for our research work, which is an equal apportionment of units for the property in question to each of its addresses (a figure we call “address units,” behind the scenes), and then only including addresses that specifically fall within the selected geography in both the *Search Results Summary Table* (see below) and the *Search Results Property List* (also see below). More specifically: For a fractional result, the apportioned “address unit” figure is rounded down in all cases except for a single arbitrary “primary address,” which gets to round up. We believe the benefit from not overcounting units (in some cases, dramatically) for these multi-address properties in geographic-based search results outweighs the marginal compromise in accuracy brought about by this estimation approach. **IMPORTANT:** Our full data extract, intended for those who “know their way around data,” opts back into full accuracy and completeness, as the downloaded spreadsheet will

include all units and all addresses associated with a given property, if any one or more addresses fall within the geographic search area.

Search Results Summary Table

Below the map is a summary of search results showing a total count of properties and total units, with breakouts by level of affordability.

Properties	Total Units	30% AMI	50% AMI	60% AMI	80% AMI	Total Aff Units
9	731	90	203	433	0	726

(see above for a note on “Address Unit” counts)

Export Results to Excel



Whether viewing on a phone or desktop, only a select set of attributes is visible on this page, but you have two options for the download of a more comprehensive dataset for your own use in analysis and sharing.

Flat Extract

This returns a “flat file” table that includes all property-level attributes (see glossary for field definitions), with the following accommodations:

- All addresses associated with the property are grouped in a single “Addresses” field, separated by commas.
- All federal programs are grouped together in a single “Programs” field, separated by commas. If a property contains additional programs indicated by data from state and local sources, it is grouped into an “other state/local” category. More detail is available through an individual property’s PROPERTY DETAIL PAGE or through the full data extract (also see below).
- Last start date indicates the last chronological start date found among programs financing the property.
- Last end date indicates the last chronological end date found among programs financing the property.

Full Extract

This returns a spreadsheet ideal for analysis and importation into a database, as it contains three tabs with many-to-one relationships and related by a common HSD-ID (i.e. Property ID). The tabs are:

- **Properties:** This includes property-level data on total units, affordability, bedrooms, and targeted populations.
- **Addresses:** This includes full address and geographic identifiers for all addresses within a property (i.e. development).
- **Programs:** This includes all programs contributing financially to the program, along with any known start and end dates.

For field definitions, see our FIELD DEFINITIONS, below.

Search Results Property List

Below the Search Results summary is a table with a select set of attributes for each property in the search results set.

We know more about each property than can fit on this screen! For full detail about any property you can either do an Excel data extract (above) or click on an individual property's name to visit a Property Detail Page. But a different set of key attributes are visible, and sortable, depending on your device:

For phone users: Your table includes columns for property name as well of count of units by affordability level (*HousingLink's Research Manager highly recommends using Streams from a desktop computer for best results!*)

For computer users: Your table includes unit counts by affordability level as in the phone user view, but adds a primary property address, counts for total addresses and programs, and a latest start and latest end date among all the programs within the property. Again, for a list of full addresses or program information as well as additional property-level data, you may download the dataset in Excel format (above) or view an individual property's detail page by clicking on its name.

(see above for a note on "Address Unit" counts)

PROPERTY DETAIL PAGE

Open clicking an individual property on the Search Results screen (either a pin on the map or a hyperlinked property name in the "Properties" list), you are taken to a page with detail on pretty much everything we know about that property.

Property Detail (left panel)

This is where we include key property-level details, including

Property Name and Address

Affordability: Total unit count by percent of area median income served.

Units by Bedroom (*if known*): Total unit count by bedroom, if known.

Known Property IDs: If provided by our data source, we will list any known property IDs here.

Groups Served (*if known*): If provided by our data source, we will list any known groups served by the property here.

Map (middle panel)

In the provided map you will the location of any address(es) for the selected property represented as bright purple pins, with any other *Streams* properties represented as gray pins.

Listings on HousingLink (right panel)

To the right of the map is a table reflecting the range of dates and rents for each bedroom size (if any) that have been posted to HousingLink’s “Housing Search” vacancy listing service for the property in question. Specifically, details shown are:

BR: Number of bedrooms.

1st Listing: First time a vacancy for this bedroom type was posted to our Housing Search.

Last Listing: Last time a vacancy for this bedroom type was posted to our Housing Search.

Low Rent: Lowest rent among all postings for this bedroom type to Housing Search.

High Rent: Highest rent among all postings for this bedroom type to Housing Search.

Last Rent: Most recent all postings for this bedroom type to Housing Search.

Programs (below map)

Below the map and general property detail is a table of all known programs (i.e. elements of financing) involved in funding a given property. This information is generally more comprehensively-known for federal projects (from the National Housing Preservation Database or NHPD) and state projects (from MN Housing), and less complete/well-known at the local level. For definitions of attributes in this table, see FIELD DEFINITIONS, below.

Addresses

Below the Programs table is a table of all known addresses associated with a given property. For definitions of attributes in this table, see FIELD DEFINITIONS, below.

FIELD DEFINITIONS

The fields defined below reflect the totality of the three-tab “full extract” download, but all fields in the search results table view and “flat extract” download are among them.

Properties tab

HSD-ID: “Housing Stock ID.” This is HousingLink’s unique property identifier. Properties may have one or more Addresses and one or more Programs, and the HSD-ID serves as a cross-reference for corresponding records in those respective tabs.

NHPD-ID (*National Housing Preservation Database ID*): This ID is the unique property identifier from the NHPD,¹ the primary source of federal data in *Streams*.

MN Housing-ID: This is the unique property identifier from MN Housing, the primary source of state data in *Streams*. MN Housing data primarily reflects properties in which the Agency has its own investment or is responsible for compliance.

MetC-ID (*Met Council ID*): This is the unique property identifier from the Metropolitan Council, the primary source of local data in *Streams* since 2023. The Met Council collects data each year as part of its Affordable Housing Production Survey of communities in the region.

HUD-ID (*US Department of Housing and Urban Development ID*): This is a the unique property identifier for HUD, however not all federally-assisted properties are managed by HUD (Rural Home is a USDA program and LIHTC is managed by the IRS).

PropertyName: Property name.

PrimaryAddress: Street address. Many properties have more than one address. In those instances, we have arbitrarily chosen a single “primary” address, to make geographic analysis at the property level a little simpler.

City: City in which the primary address for a property is located.

State: State in which the primary address for a property is located. This will be Minnesota in all instances!

ZipCode: Zip code in which the primary address for a property is located.

County: County in which the primary address for a property is located.

Region: Region in which the primary address for a property is located. For purposes of *Streams*, the state of Minnesota is divided into two regions: “Twin Cities” (which includes the seven metropolitan counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington) and “Greater Minnesota,” which includes all other 80 counties in the state.

SubRegion: Sub-region in which the primary address for a property is located. Sub-regions in *Streams* conform to [regional county groupings established by Wilder Foundation](#) as part of their [MN Compass](#) tool and include the Wilder’s regions of Central, Northland, Northwest, Southern, Southwest, Twin Cities, and West Central.

CensusTract: 11-digit US FIPS code for the Census Tract in which the primary address is located.

US_House: US congressional house district in which the primary address for a property is located.

¹ The [National Housing Preservation Database](#) (NHPD) was created by the Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) in 2011 in an effort to provide communities with the information they need to effectively preserve their stock of public and affordable housing.

MN_Senate: MN state congressional senate district in which the primary address for a property is located.

MN_House: MN state congressional house district in which the primary address for a property is located.

MinneapolisWard: Minneapolis City Council Ward in which the primary address for a property is located.

StPaulDistrict: St Paul Planning District in which the primary address for a property is located.

YearBuilt: Year property was originally constructed, if known.

TotalUnits: Total units in the property, including both affordable and market rate.

TotalAffordable: Some total of affordable/subsidized/income-restricted units at the property.

30Pct: Total units restricted to families at 30% of the area median income or below.

50Pct: Total units restricted to families at 50% of the area median income or below.

60Pct: Total units restricted to families at 60% of the area median income or below.

80Pct: Total units restricted to families at 80% of the area median income or below.

0BR: Total studio units in the property, if known.

1BR: Total 1 bedroom units in the property, if known.

2BR: Total 2 bedroom units in the property, if known.

3BR: Total 2 bedroom units in the property, if known.

4+BR: Total units of 4 or more bedrooms in the property, if known.

GFamily: An indication, if known, as to whether the property is specifically designated to serve families.

GSSenior: An indication, if known, as to whether the property is specifically designated to serve seniors.

GSDisabled: An indication, if known, as to whether the property is specifically designated to serve people with a disability.

EarliestStartDate: Among start dates for all programs associated with the property, the chronologically earliest date.

EarliestEndDate; Among end dates for all programs associated with the property, the chronologically earliest date.

LastStartDate: Among start dates for all programs associated with the property, the chronologically latest date.

LastEndDate: Among end dates for all programs associated with the property, the chronologically latest date.

Addresses tab

AddressID: HousingLink’s unique address identifier. A property may have one or more associated addresses.

HSD-ID: HousingLink’s unique property identifier, and will necessarily correspond with one property in the “Properties” tab.

Primary: This is merely a flag to indicate whether the address in question is one we have arbitrarily chosen as the “primary” address for the property (see “PrimaryAddress” in the “Properties” tab)

Address: Street address for the address in question.

City: City in which the address is located.

State: State in which the address is located (Minnesota!)

ZipCode: Zip code in which the address is located.

Region: Region in which the address is located. For purposes of *Streams*, the state of Minnesota is divided into two regions: “Twin Cities” (which includes the seven metropolitan counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington) and “Greater Minnesota,” which includes all other 80 counties in the state.

SubRegion: Sub-regions in which the address is located. Sub-regions in *Streams* conform to [regional county groupings established by Wilder Foundation](#) as part of their [MN Compass](#) tool and include the Wilder’s regions of Central, Northland, Northwest, Southern, Southwest, Twin Cities, and West Central.

County: County in which the address is located.

CensusTract: 11-digit FIPS code of the Census Tract in which the address is located.

US_House: US House district in which the address is located.

MN_Senate: MN Senate district in which the address is located.

MN_House: MN House district in which the address is located.

MinneapolisWard: Minneapolis City Council ward in which the address is located.

StPaulDistrict: St Paul Planning District in which the address is located.

AddressQuality: We use Google geocoder for *Streams* address matching. This number is the coded quality result for the given address, which includes the following response codes:

- 87 or 85: rooftop or street address level accuracy

- 79 or 77: range-interpolated between two points (such as intersections). Think of it as “somewhere along this block face.”
- 49: approximate placement on a longer road segment than block face
- 39: geometric center of an address component such as city or zip code

Latitude: “Y” coordinate in decimal degrees.

Longitude: “X” coordinate in decimal degrees.

Programs tab

HSD-ID: HousingLink’s unique property identifier, and will necessarily correspond with one property in the “Properties” tab.

ProgramID: A unique identifier for the program, if provided by the data source.

MNHsgProjectID: Properties from MN Housing may consist of one or more “Projects,” each of which constitutes a “round” of funding/financing, and may include multiple individual programs. Ultimately, this is a hierarchy of potentially multiple programs within a single “project,” and potentially multiple projects within a single “property.”

Source: This indicates the source of the data, but not necessarily the source of the funding.

Program: The name of the financial instrument contributing to the property and helping to ensure affordability.

SubProgram: Where applicable, a further classification with a given program.

StartDate: This generally corresponds to the beginning of the period during which the property is obligated to provide affordable units. In reality, data we receive is inconsistently provided and in order to have a start date we may need estimate start date based on anything from a first finance closing to a first occupancy date.

EndDate: This generally corresponds to the end of the period during which the property is obligated to provide affordable units, respective to the program in question. We only display an end date if it is explicitly provided to us.

Type: This can be either “New,” if our data source explicitly indicates the funding was associated with new construction. Otherwise, it is in the category of “Pres/Stab” (“Preservation/Stabilization”), which can include anything from a refinancing to extend an affordability period, to an acquisition of a market rate property and conversion to affordable.