Actionable Issues:

High rates of eviction for voucher holders, inability to access housing after eviction (voucher discrimination)
- Research (AFH, Urban Institute)
- 1 on 1, interviews, direct rep
- Tenant story forms

Over 70% of 22,000 annual eviction filings in Philadelphia are against Black women.
- Research (ACLU, Reinvestment Fund)
- Community forums

Highest rates of eviction occur in: North Philly, Germantown, University City
- Research and Data (ACLU, Reinvestment Fund)
- Surveys
- Community forums and community ed

5-7% of tenants are represented in eviction court, while 85-90% of landlords are represented in over 22,000 eviction filings per year
- 1 on 1, interviews, direct rep
- Community forums
- City Council Hearing
Surfacing Problems

- Research, national trends, data from AFH (focus groups, surveys)
- Meetings with tenant organizers and activists
- Tenant Story Forms during client intake
- Community Meetings, Townhalls, Forums
- City Council Hearings
- Artmaking and cultural event
- One on One Interviews and Direct Representation
- Community Education and Workshops

Racial Equity Considerations:

- Actively engages Black people and POC
- Reveals racial inequities
- Focuses on systemic change
- Advances positive racial impacts
- Expands public awareness of systemic racism
Targets, Allies, Adversaries, and Champions

- City Council
- Tenants’ Union, Organizers, Activists
- Mayor and Administration
- Landlords
- Div. of Housing and Comm Development
- Fair Housing Commission
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Courts
- Medical and Healthcare workers

Strategic considerations: new administration, new vs. senior CC Members, election year, “vote trading,” leveraging political controversy, budget season, wave of pro-tenant housing legislation, growing resistance against tax abatement
RTC Legislation Key Events

2015
- New Mayor, City Council members
- Tool built to allow Phila tenant advocates to analyze eviction data

2016
- Matt Desmond’s Evicted published
- Key Reports on eviction data published in Philly
- NYC drafted/introduced RTC legislation
- Phila begins AFFH process, AFH plan

2017
- Helen Gym introduced resolution to hold hearings on eviction crisis and RTC
- City Council dedicated 500k to expand legal counsel
- Mayor’s Eviction Prevention Task Force established

2018
- Phila Eviction Prevention Project implemented
- Stout report comes out
- Eviction Task Force Recommendations released, implementation begins
- PEPP funding expands to $850k

2019
- Election Year
- City inreo’d Tenant Legal Defense Fund!
- Tenant eviction rep up from 5 to 10%
- RTC Legislation Introduced!
- PEPP funding expands to 1.5mil!
RTC Legislation

- Introduced by Councilmember Helen Gym in May 2019, had several co-sponsors, passed unanimously in December 2019

- According to WHYY, "Every candidate who responded to a survey by Reclaim Philadelphia, a progressive political group, indicated they would support the right to counsel. A handful who did not respond to Reclaim’s questions, including Domb and 2nd District candidate Lauren Vidas, also expressed support for the idea. Second District Councilman Kenyatta Johnson co-sponsored the legislation."

- Modeled after New York City and Newark’s RTC legislation

- Guarantees a lawyer for tenants facing eviction and with income up to 200% of FPL

- Includes a provision for community education

- Separate legislation introduced to create a funding mechanism – Low Income Tenant Legal Defense Fund

- Implementation will prioritize lowest income and/or zip codes with highest rates of eviction – correlates with areas of racially concentrated poverty