

RECEIVED ON: December 5, 2024

Whittier City Council:

I am writing to express my concern about your intent to allow short-term rentals (STR's) in the City of Whittier. Your city manager, along with one council member, had a meeting with a group of concerned residents. During the discussion, the city manager mentioned that in order for "you" to take notice, it would require many individuals to voice their concerns against them.

Many people have already spoken out against STR's, more than those who support them. Before you move to approve STR's, I ask that you consider the following suggestions:

**Instead** of focusing on the **potential revenue** that the city might gain from these short-term rentals (STRs), let's **conduct a study** on the **costs associated with monitoring and enforcing** our city's rules and regulations.

Ask yourself:

1. How much does it cost for two police officers to respond to a noise complaint/party complaint? (two would be the minimum because of officer safety)
2. What does it cost for code enforcement personnel to enforce our municipal codes? How much time, effort, and resources are involved? Do we have enough code enforcement to enforce STR's?
3. What does it cost our fire department to respond to these STR's?
4. What does it cost city staff to do research, process city permits, send out enforcement complaints, then enforce those complaints through legal means/in a court of law?

To make an informed decision, you should research the **cost v. net pay**.

I understand that some of you have been in contact with Air B&B and other special interests. I understand they have provided you with possible revenue outlooks, but you must know that those numbers are inflated.

There are many cities that have banned STR's. The most recent was the City of Santa Ana stating to, "...preserve the character of neighborhoods, address the negative impacts caused by these unpermitted business operations, and to open up much-needed housing supplies." Also take into consideration these other reasons:

- They reduce the number of housing availability for long-term renters
- They put an unnecessary burden on our city resources
- They can decrease the value of our homes and increase long-term monthly rents
- They are **costly** and **hard to regulate**
- They take business away from our local motels, hotels, and businesses<sup>1</sup>
- It keeps good families from moving into established communities
- Most importantly, **they reduce the quality of life** for residents<sup>2</sup>
- Many are unsafe and can promote illegal activity through unscrupulous short-term-renters

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<sup>1</sup> Read this article Myth and Fact about STR's

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc37b7c755be2603ca0b7b3/t/61ec2790f1d95744ebd35a46/1642866576774/Myth+vs+Facts+-+STRs+-+Jan2022.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Video on the effects of STR's on neighborhood and businesses <https://youtu.be/HAnw168hugA?feature=shared>

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I have read Ben Pongetti's report to you. Ben does not mention in his report that there's a majority of residents that oppose STR's in contrast to those he states support it. He does not mention the city costs associated with regulating STR's. How will it impact our general funds? Do you know how much it costs to go to court in order to place an injunction on an STR?

I would like to suggest the below additional restrictions:

- No STR's close to hospitals or schools
- Only 100 STR's
- DO NOT grandfather-in ANY STR. Doing so demonstrates favoritism to anyone that is already operating them in our city illegally
- Do not allow any STR with a police officer call out or complaint to renew
- STR's should ONLY be owner occupied PERIOD – Ben states it should be someone living 50% + 1, how do you prove that? It is impossible for the city to prove or disprove that someone lives in the home 50% +1
- Don't allow them to be near to a sober living facility or other assisted living facilities
- STR' must publicly provide the owners with contact information to surrounding residents (for transparency and accountability)
- **Allow residents to have a petition process to remove STR's in their communities (as seen in the City of Long Beach STR policy), IF** they are disruptive and problematic – Ben's report does not provide any recourse for residents to deal with problematic STR's – it also does not state how an STR can be suspended/revoked (one complaint, 2 complaints, police response, what is the standard?)
- Do not allow DEVELOPERS to have STR's. I have seen many vacant STR's in new developments
- Required parking – STR's should have designated marked parking, not just "demonstrate" they meet off-street parking
- Allow the police department to bill any STR owner for any calls for service (similar to a false alarm billing)
- Create a board or commission of Whittier residents oversee the approval and dismissal of STR's, like the personnel board and have an online complaint system for STR's

Lastly, I implore that you take this information into account BEFORE deciding. Our homes are NOT hotels, and we need to stop treating them as such.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Vallejo

PS: Senator Umberg is looking into a bill that would allow cities to regulate sober living facilities, please support it!