

From: [Nate](#)
To: [WebMail - CCD](#)
Cc: [Octavio Cesar Martinez](#); [Joe Vinatieri](#); [Cathy Warner](#); [Brian Saeki](#); [Fernando Dutra](#); [Mary Ann Pacheco](#)
Subject: Public comment for Dec 10, 2024 meeting: Short Term Rentals
Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2024 1:26:37 AM

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Dear Whittier City Council Members and Managers,

My name is Nathan Tharp. I've been a resident of Whittier since 2016. I am a teacher and an STR owner. I supplement my income by renting out my house during my breaks so that I can afford to live in Whittier. The regulations that the city is considering will have a major impact on me and my family. They could force me to sell my house. Because both prices and interest rates are at their highest in a generation, losing my STR would be devastating for me. This is my home, my businesses, and my life.

As you consider action for STRs, I ask that you not fall for the irrational fears and made up stories I've witnessed among a small subset of vocal residents. The research I've done in Whittier indicates that:

1. STRs are not party houses. They are places where visitors to Whittier and family and friends of Whittier residents stay.
2. STRs are not owned by outside entities. They are owned by local Whittier residents to supplement their income so they can afford to live in Whittier. Most of them are younger and didn't have the benefit of buying a house 20 years ago when prices were low.
3. STRs are good for the local economy. I recently sank more than \$30,000 into local businesses with updates, maintenance and repairs, and my guests frequent Whittier establishments at a much higher rate than locals do.
4. Short term renters are way better than long term renters in terms of impact. Just ask anyone who's done both. My property has never been in better condition and is in better condition than most of the properties in my neighborhood- especially the rental properties.
5. STRs are not reducing affordable housing. They are making housing affordable for residents of Whittier like me. They make up less than 0.4% of the 27,500 households in Whittier. Also, the Airbnb bubble has popped. It's no longer profitable to run one except to supplement income.
6. The people who really benefit from a ban on STRs are the hotel chain owners who take their profits right out of the city.

The two actual concerns that affect other residents that I've heard or seen evidence of are noise disruptions and parking. And they come primarily from only 1 property that I know of. To solve this, the city can simply:

1. Ban parties, which can be defined as any more than 2 people per room bedroom + 2
2. Require necessary off-street parking

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And then avoid all of the redundant, over-regulations on small business owners. Let us do in our houses what we want, as long as it's not affecting anyone else. My neighbor's dog and the long term renters down the street are way more disruptive to the neighborhood than my short term tenants. Don't tax or manage us any more than you would any other small business, such as a landscaper, CPA, or computer repair technician. It would be ok to create a permit and require primary residence, but I am unsure of what actual problems these specifically address. I already have a business permit.

Most importantly, I ask that you please:

1. Do not allow a small number of vocal opponents who likely have small or no mortgages, prevent younger residents from being able to take advantage of a current business opportunity that helps us maintain ownership and benefits our economy.
2. Do not require a minimum night stay. That would devastate our businesses as most stays are 2-3 nights (since most of us use it as supplemental income).
3. Do not impose a tax that other small businesses are not subject to. This is unfair and draconian.
4. Do not take away existing business because they happen to be within a certain spacing radius. This is unfair as well and could terminate my business in particular, since I am with 1000' of the one problematic house I've heard of.

These are our homes, our businesses, and our lives. The Airbnb bubble has already burst; short term rentals have fallen significantly. Whittier is never going to be another New York or Anaheim. We are simply middle class earners trying to survive and own and maintain a home in Whittier.

Sincerely,
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