

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Daren Penry <drpenry@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 8:26 AM
To: CD Comment
Cc: Nadja Penry
Subject: Comment on STR potential revisions

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

September 8, 2024

Daren and Nadja Penry
158 Big Pine Drive
Leavenworth, WA 98826
DrPenry@gmail.com
Nadja.hptango@gmail.com

Dear Commissioners,

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on potential revisions to the Chelan County STR code.

As residents and Tier 1 STR operators during the last 2 years and having a Tier 2 STR operation interest for the future, we would like to offer comments on proposed changes. We only recently became aware of the upcoming revision decisions. We will speak to the highest priorities for decisions in our opinion in the interest of time. If you would like further comment on other revisions, please do not hesitate to ask.

3Bib: exclude infants under 24 months from two per bedroom occupancy limit.

We support this.

3Biia: excludes infants from nighttime occupancy limits.

We support this.

2Ai: changes Tier 1 to include not just an owner on site, but an owner/manager/operator.

We support this. We like to travel more than 15 days per year, and we would appreciate being able to hire other residents to work to stay at the house or property and support guests while we are away. We are

open to potentially offering low-cost housing for a local resident to support for longer periods of time potentially as well.

4H: Eliminate self-certification checklist and instead require annual inspection for 'life safety and applicable short-term rental or conditional land use permit standards'

We oppose this. The first-year inspection was very thorough. Not clear what safety issue might come up year 2, we didn't have any changes. The checklist was easy. Maybe consider a reinspection after a longer time period, like 3 years if there is a concern over time.

3O: Requires "proof of paid sales tax and lodging tax must be provided annually at time of renewal"

We oppose this. This adds busy work to STR owners, but we don't see any purpose to it. Airbnb, VRBO, etc. already builds this in automatic with booking. Most STR bookings are done through these methods. It's already being taken care of.

4Biva: Replaces discretionary hardship exemption for late permit renewal applications with late fees, and no commitment to process them on time.

We support this. We lost a permit because the notice never arrived in the mail year 2 and we were under the impression we could file for the permit before December 31 like the first year. Neither did we receive a phone call or an email in regard to the renewal. We applied for hardship, but the STR department was very strict and would not allow completion of our costly application. We would need to reapply completely.

4Bi: Allows permit renewal reminder notices to be sent by means other than mail, and makes explicit that these are a courtesy, and the bonus is always on the operator to renew.

We support this. We never received the courtesy notification by mail. Email (or phone call/message) is a more predictable tool for communicating with us.

One additional suggestion: We have an interest in being able to operate a Tier 2 STR as an option. As residents who have operated an STR enthusiastically, and positively (5 star reviews only), and have hosted wonderful guests in our county, we would like the opportunity to be able to take our STR to the next level and offer a Tier 2 for guests. In our area there is a 6% cap on rentals. We would like to ask that there be a flat 9% rental cap through the whole county so we could soon be considered for this additional opportunity.

We thank you for considering our opinions as you make recommendations for improvements to county STR regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Jivko Dobrev <jivko@live.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:18 AM
To: CD Comment
Cc: cvetelina_y@hotmail.com
Subject: Comments on Proposed changes to STR code

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Dear Community Development Team at Chelan County

As a STR owner (STR000398) I would like to voice my opinion on the proposed changes to the STR code:

- I support the removal of the 2 people per vehicle cap
- I strongly oppose the requirement for annual life safety inspections (4(H) p. 40) This creates unnecessary expenses and work while achieving nothing better than the self-certification. Implement a couple of random spot-check inspections and it will be enough. People strictly adhere to the code to avoid losing the hard-to-get STR licenses
- I strongly oppose the requirement for proof of paid taxes annually. Chelan County is not IRS or DoR and should not insert into the relationship of citizens and the aforementioned institutions
- W strongly support the excluding of children under age of 2 from the maximum occupancy count

Please let me know if you have questions
Thank you for taking my opinion under account
Jivko & Tsvetelina Dobrev
20649 Miracle Mile Lk
Leavenworth, WA 98826
(425) 301 2358
jivko@live.com

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Sonia Dociu <soniadociu@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:19 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Regarding STR proposed changes

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Hello-

I am writing today in concern to the changes proposed for STR.

Specifically:

I would like to state my support for the proposed change of children under two being in line with AirBnB policy for excluding children under two as headcount. The policy should match booking sites.

I'd like to oppose the need for an annual safety inspection. No report has shown any significant safety issues prompting this change.

I oppose proof of taxes as a requirement. Most STRs collect taxes through platforms like AirBnB, VRBO, or management companies.

I support eliminating the two person per vehicle cap.

Thank you for your attention.

Sonia Jackson

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Dan Mundle <djmundle@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:34 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR's Chelan county

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County commissioners,

I am a short term rental owner, and have a few comments regarding STR's.

I do not support only allowing 2 people per vehicle because most cars will have 4 occupants to save money on gas and convenience. And more cars will create more traffic and pollution.

Children under 2 should not be included in occupancy numbers.

Proof of taxes paid is a dept of revenue responsibility, and not a county issue.

Life safety inspections should not be required - that is required at the time of obtaining an STR permit, and our management company is diligent in making sure our property is safe.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Mundle
djmundle@msn.com

Jessica K. Thompson

From: lat71@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:37 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR Chelan County

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Hi—this is Laurie Topness, owner of a rental cabin near Fish lake. I read through the info and the one issue that stands out for me is the annual safety check. I would propose to have that required every other year or just continue with the self-check. Thank you!

Laurie Topness
22470 Humphreys Drive
Leavenworth 98826

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Janice Wakefield <janicew35@me.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 11:42 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Tier 1 Owner/Manager/Operator Short Term Rental Code Change

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I am in favor of this change if it is meant to allow for a long-term renter (in place of an owner/corporate officer/contract purchaser) to be personally present at the dwelling during the rental period.

I currently have a Tier 2 STR. I have always wanted to have an ADU to rent to a local person who would manage my STR (and do maintenance). It would provide a local resident with lower-cost housing as well as income.

In addition, this change to the Code would allow current Tier 1 owners to leave town for months at a time (such as snowbirds) and rent their homes to seasonal workers who would benefit from the monthly housing as well as the income from managing the STR.

Thank you,
Janice Wakefield

(i) Tier 1. Owner/Manager/Operator-occupied (as defined in 14.98.1363) short-term rentals where either (a) rooms are rented and the owner/manager/operator (to include title holders, corporate officers, and contract purchasers) is personally present at the dwelling during the rental period, or (b) the short-term rental is located within the same parcel as the owner/manager/operator's principal residence and the owner/manager/operator is personally present at the dwelling during the rental period, or (c) the entire dwelling is rented no more than fifteen total days in a calendar year; provided, that an on-site qualified person is there during the owner/manager/operator's absence. Portions of calendar days shall be counted as full days.

Jessica K. Thompson

From: A Byars <aebyars@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 11:46 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR Changes

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Hello,

I oppose the proposed changes to the STR that requires an annual life safety inspection. I would be fine with a life safety inspection at the time of the initial permit application though but not annually because that seems excessive. It would be a waste of time and expensive.

I also oppose the requirement to submit proof of payment of taxes. The state already knows that the landlord is renting their property so they will enforce the payment of those taxes. Adding in the county just adds more administration for the county and the landlord.

Thank you,
Alan Byars
15471 Cedar Brae Rd, Leavenworth

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Daniel Mellor <dm@danielmellorrealestate.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 4:15 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Proposed STR Code Changes

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To whom it may concern,

I'm very pleased to hear some proposed reforms to the STR code. I think the idea of Changing Tier 1 to include onsite managers would be especially beneficial to the community at large. The biggest complaint against STRs I typically hear is about affordable housing (not to say banning STRs makes housing more affordable). In this case there is a clear and obviously opportunity to create employment and housing opportunities within our communities while increasing oversight of local STRs. I strongly support this proposed change and believe the pros vastly outweigh any perceived cons.

Daniel Mellor

Jessica K. Thompson

From: E John Agnew <ejohnagnew@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 4:15 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Comments re: proposed changes to STR code.
Attachments: STR Letter Sep 9 2024.pdf → Attachment on next page.

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Please accept the following comments on the proposed changes to STR codes in Chelan County.

Thank you.

E John Agnew
PO Box 2007
542 Dempsey Road
Leavenworth, WA 98826
509-885-4814 (C)
ejohnagnew@gmail.com

E John Agnew
542 Dempsey Road
PO Box 2007
Leavenworth, WA 98826
509-885-4814

September 9, 2024

Chelan County Planning Commission
316 Washington Street, Suite 301
Wenatchee WA 98801

Re: August 28, 2024, Hearing for Proposed Amendments to the Short-Term Rental Provision in the Chelan County Code, specifically Section 11.88.290.

To the Planning Commissioners,

I served on the citizen's committee that resulted in the STR code currently in place. I have read and concur with the Residents Committee comments, but have a couple of things to add.

Two claims have been made about the current code: 1) That it was not meant to be the 'last word on STR regulations, and 2) That everyone wanted to have a couple of years of experience with the new code in place before making any changes.

I would agree these statements are true. There were many, many compromises made to get the code in place. The biggest of which was to allow Tier 2 and 3 STR's in residential zones AT ALL, as the previous code clearly prohibited them for many good, well documented reasons. So, certainly the assumption was NOT that the code would become more lenient, but that it very well may need to get more restrictive in order to reduce the numerous negative impacts on the overall housing stock and residential neighborhoods.

In terms the proposed changes, the two most egregious suggestions both would actually increase the percentage of single family homes converted to STR's. We know from previous research that the vast majority of Tier 2 and 3 STR's are owned by non-resident investors. Our lax enforcement of the existent code allowed several thousand homes in the county to be converted to investment vehicles for non-residents, contributing significantly to both the availability and affordability of single family homes, not to mention the ugly degradation of quality of life in residential neighborhoods.

If any code change has any chance of increasing the number of conversions to STR's it should be rejected out of hand. Changing the caps upward, or changing the requirement that Tier 1 STR's be owner-occupied, would create a loop hole which will surely result in the loss of more housing stock to these investment lodge properties.

Another proposed change, not counting children two and under in the residency cap of any STR, is very problematic. It is a way of circumventing the basic health code requirements of residences. Maximum residents was a big issue in the deliberations for the citizens committee because noise, parking, waste and fire safety are all tied to the number of residents allowed. There is no reason STR's should be occupied at a higher rate than the code allows for residential use.

Thanks for considering my views.

E John Agnew

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E John Agnew', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Luc Stokes <ljestokes7@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 5:38 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Proposed STR Code Changes

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Commissioners,

You have put forth potential updates/changes to the STR code and I wanted to comment on some of those proposals. I won't be able to cite the exact entry, so I will generally speak to the specific entry and then give my thoughts.

In regards to excluding children under 24yrs as occupants— I understand and am in agreement with your reasoning for limiting occupants based on the septic capacity. This keeps the property from being a burden on neighboring properties with noise and business. However, I think this is a reasonable change. As an STR owner we are often asked if an infant must be included in the total numbers and have had to turn guests away because of capacity. But an infant doesn't put a burden on the septic or neighbors and doesn't require their own bed even. I am in favor of this change and bring a better guest experience because it just makes sense.

In regards to changes to Tier 1 "owner on-site" status— Another logical change and additional housing opportunity for locals. I completely understand why this is a regulation. Having the owner on-site ensures that there is someone there who can tend to noise and inconvenience for the neighbors, and any immediate needs of the guest. However, allowing someone other than the owner (like a long-term renter/manager) to fill that role is doubly beneficial. It provides additional development opportunities for investors and consequently provides additional housing options for the community in which they could even offset their rent by helping with the management of the property. And still ensures the success of the spirit in which that regulation was created.

In regards to adding another on-site inspection annually— I'm not immediately opposed to this unless it's going to increase costs to the owner to pay for the inspection and/or increase the burden (waiting/scheduling/etc) to execute. I see this potential impacting both of those but am open to the conversation.

In regards to proof of sales tax paid— I am in favor of this one as long as you accept a copy of the sales and use/B&O tax report as sufficient proof. This is easy to download a copy of the return/report and submit it upon renewal. I am not in favor of this if you will require an additional report or document preparation.

The rest of the proposed changes I think are reasonable as written and don't require further comment.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

--

-Luc

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Denae & Dan Poss <posselines@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 6:14 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR Code

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Good evening,

- > I'm writing in support of looking at some key elements of the str code and considering if, now that some time has passed, some tweaks should be made.
- > The big one I want to speak to is the change to exclude kids under 2 from the headcount. Our home in Plain is aimed very specifically to groups of families, especially small children. I cannot tell you how many bookings we have declined over the last 3 years bc the group had an infant that put them over the headcount, or 2 babies, etc. We all know that children under 2 really are not a big impact to the septic, so I think that argument is not super valid. As someone who has a 5 year old and a 1 year old, I can assure you that when we rent Airbnb's we are in bed by 9, not rowdy and not the problematic type of groups we as owners and locals alike, want to avoid.
- > Most code throughout the country either excludes children of a certain age or allows for 2 per bedroom +1-3. The Chelan County code of 2 per septic bedroom is one of the most stringent in regard to headcount. I do believe these headcount restrictions have kept many tourists from being able to vacation in Chelan County. Whenever someone is looking for more than 12, I simply point them to Kittitas, as they have next to no options for home rentals if they have more than 12.
- > I don't know a single owner that wants to host a bachelor party of 18 guys in their 20's, but creating more opportunity of family groups I would think would be a positive all around.
- > Thank you!
- >
- > Dan and Denae' Poss

Jessica K. Thompson

From: jennie mellor <jmhmellor@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 9:02 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: proposed Chelan County STR code changes

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Dear Chelan County Planning Commission,

Thank you for considering changes to the current STR rules.

Particularly the proposed change to the Tier 1 rules that would allow non-owner managers/caretakers to live on the property. This presents opportunity for employment and housing in the county which seems in keeping with original code goals.

Also excluding infants under 24 months in the total guest count seems like a move that would keep STR's inline with other industry standards, and places in most cases, no additional burden on septic limits.

I am concerned about removing the self certification checklist for renewals. I would imagine the delays and backups in trying to schedule actual inspections would be costly and time consuming for owners and for the fire Dept. I do not know that the self cert has proved in adequate, but if it has shown to problematic, perhaps a compromise could be requiring an inspection every 5 or so years, staggered on a rotating basis.

We appreciate all the time and effort that has gone into making these codes and appreciate all your efforts to make them fair and equitable for all concerned parties.

Sincerely

Jennie and Joeli Mellor

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Tim Arnaud <timarnaud@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 9, 2024 10:44 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Chelan County STR code comments

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Hello,

My wife and I currently own and operate and also personally use a cabin in the Chiwawa pines area. We have always strove to respect our neighbors and in fact enjoy a very positive relationship with all of our neighbors, even six years into using our cabin as a STR.

My wife and I's comments are as follows for the new code proposals.

Excluding Infants under 24 months from bedroom count. We think this is a good thing to exclude. Infants under 2 years have a nominal impact on the septic system and their parents are in bed early or very quiet so as not to wake their little ones. I don't see a downside to allowing the headcount to allow infants.

Mandatory annual inspections: I think this is a tremendous expense for the county, for little gain. I know our cabin is kept up to all of the requirements listed in the codes and step through the self inspection form every year to ensure we comply.

Requiring proof of paying sales tax: Don't understand the intent of this change. Is the county not getting their money? Don't the platforms pay on time? The taxes are collected and paid by the platforms (VRBO, Aibnb etc) and they are responsible for sending money to the county. As an owner I don't want to track what the platforms are already doing. Extra work that is already being accomplished.

Signage changes: I have personally spent considerable time and energy making a very nice wooden sign with letters engraved with a router in my own shop. Took a lot of time and energy and money to comply with the original sign code and make it look nice and fit the look and feel of the area. To change it now would be a complete hassle. Incidentally as required by code, my phone number is posted on the sign. However in all the years it has been posted, my only call has been from someone wanting to rent the house!

Best Regards,

Tim Arnaud
2446 Salal Drive
Leavenworth, WA

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Vineeth H <vineeth.h91@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 7:36 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Feedback on Proposed Short-Term Rental Code Changes

External Email Warning! This email originated from outside of Chelan County.

Hi County Dept,

As a short-term rental owner in Chelan County, I'm writing to provide feedback on the proposed changes to the STR code. After reviewing the proposals, I'd like to express my support for and concerns about specific items:

- 1. Support: Excluding children under 2 from maximum occupancy count**
This change aligns with industry standards and other jurisdictions, making our regulations more consistent and fair.
- 2. Oppose: Annual life safety inspections**
While safety is paramount, the current self-certification process has been effective. Annual inspections would create unnecessary burdens and costs for responsible operators without clear evidence of need.
- 3. Oppose: Annual proof of paid taxes**
This requirement adds an administrative burden without clear benefits, as tax compliance is already monitored through existing channels.
- 4. Support: Eliminating the 2-people-per-vehicle parking cap**
This change would provide more flexibility for families and groups traveling together, improving the guest experience without compromising neighborhood integrity.
- 5. Support: Adjusting the county-wide STR cap to 6%**
A uniform cap could help balance tourism benefits with community needs across the county.

I appreciate the county's efforts to refine our STR regulations and hope you'll consider these points in your decision-making process. These changes have significant impacts on STR owners, our local economy, and the community at large. I believe that with thoughtful regulation, we can balance the needs of residents, visitors, and property owners.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Vineeth

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Tabler Rentals LLC <tabler.rentals@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 9:07 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: Proposed Changes for STR

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Hello,

As a short term vacation property owner and mother, I do not think infants under 24 months should be included in the guest count. We have a crib in a large walk-in closet for our infant and there is no reason why they should lower the guest count.

Additionally, I would like to discuss sales tax verification - AirBnB and VRBO submit the taxes for us, so why do we have to send that to the Coalition? It seems like something that we're not involved in so I would appreciate you not including that for renewals.

Thank you for putting the renewal process online - it's much better than missing a postcard in the mail and having to do everything over email.

Thank you for your time with this!

Heather Tabler
(206) 604-3345

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Rusty Gibbs <rusty@gibbs-graphics.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 11:12 AM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR babies

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Hi,

I just wanted to share my thoughts. Babies and Toddlers under 2 years old should not count towards the occupancy of an STR. That has been a silly rule that I think should disappear. Babies fly free on airplanes. They don't impact a home like grown children do.

Rusty

Jessica K. Thompson

From: Shelly Mottaz <shelly@mottazsalesnw.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 12:30 PM
To: CD Comment
Subject: STR studies

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To whom it may concern,

I apologize for the late entry. My Mother passed last week and I was attending to family affairs.

My biggest beef would be the loss of control of rising home prices and how it taxes permanent residents out of their homes. We have seen this happen in so many parts of our small, quaint towns and forces longtime families to leave as they cannot afford the increase . It can be avoided if we keep the ratio down...please consider.

Thank you,

Shelly

shelly@mottazsalesnw.com
Ph or Txt @ 425-870-9900