

Washoe County Board of County Commissioners provides direction for evolution of short term rental codes:

Washoe County began permitting short-term rentals (STRs) in May 2021 and is approaching 500 permits issued to date. The Community Services Department approached the first summer season as a pilot to see what issues may arise and how the code might be amended to better serve resident/owners of STRs. Based on public meetings with [residents](#) and [STR owners](#), the Community Services Department [presented](#) suggested revisions to the STR code. Commissioners discussed the [suggested revisions](#) and determined to:

- Include minimum insurance requirements in affidavit rather than a certificate of insurance
- Clarify requirements for parking where parking is unassigned
- Revise method for calculating maximum occupancy
- Replace “wildlife resistant carts” with bear-proof boxes
- Work on technology innovation to improve the overall STR program
- Postpone action on adding fee for additional building inspections
- Postpone action on increasing inspection permit fee for North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District

The Board provided further direction to staff, including further partnership with the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, which collects the lodging tax on STRs. Commissioners also suggested looking again at the fee structure after another summer season to ensure that expenses and revenue are balanced and truly reflect the cost of staff time and resources.

“We had a rough summer this year. The wildfires didn’t help us really evaluate the program to the full extent, would it be fair to say we need another year to fully evaluate the ramifications of this program?” Commissioner Alexis Hill asked.

Ninety-six percent of the STRs in Washoe County are located in the Lake Tahoe Basin, which is in Commissioner Hill’s district, District 1.

“I want to say thank you so much to the team. Everyone has worked so hard to work with the STR owners over the duration of this process,” Hill said. “I hear nothing but positive things from the residents, even from those who have issues with parts of the policy. I want to be sure that the County Manager and staff hear my appreciation for implementing this. We have improved the life safety on this issue, especially since so many of these reside in my district.”