

The Key Components of effective STR Regulation

1. Is it enforceable?

Is the regulation you're considering enforceable? If it isn't then it shouldn't be included in the STR Ordinance.

2. Special Use NOT Conditional Use

Requiring a special approval for those planning to operate an STR will provide the City with a level of general oversight with latitude that may not exist when relying on a conditional use permit (CUP). With a CUP, when a list of very specific conditions are met a permit MUST be issued by the City. A special use provides more leeway. With a CUP review by the planning commission is required, quite possibly inundating them with applications. A special use instead requires only staff level review..

3. Hard Cap

Certain destination cities across the country have faced the problem of too many STR's. They've reached the point where there are more STR's in a neighborhood than permanent residents. Should a sudden influx of STR's occur in the future, having a hard cap will prevent disaster. The cap should be high enough to allow all those STR's currently operating to continue to do so, but it's there to prevent a catastrophe down the road.

4. Owner Occupancy

Owner occupancy is the single most important and easily enforceable STR policy that the City can adopt. Owner occupancy does not mean that the owner is present while the rental is taking place. It simply means that the home being rented is the primary residence of the landlord. Requiring owner occupancy solves many of the problems posed by absentee owners (inability to contact and cite, property maintenance, unavailable to respond to complaints, etc.). It also helps to maintain the "feel" of Sandy neighborhoods.

5. Administrative Enforcement

Operating an STR can be very lucrative for the owner. An average rental here in Sandy can bring in \$100-500/night. Owners operating at these rates may not respond to the current code enforcement process that may or may not result in a small fine after an extended period of time. A \$25 fine issued by a judge 3 months after a citation is issued will probably not deter someone who is regularly receiving \$200/night from short-term renters. What's required is a fine that is commensurate with the lucrative nature of STR's. Without these fines, the City won't have a leg to stand on in terms of enforcement.