

CHATHAM COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

First Reading
Sept. 11, 2026



STR Ordinance Background



The County first approved a Short Term Rental Ordinance in 2021.

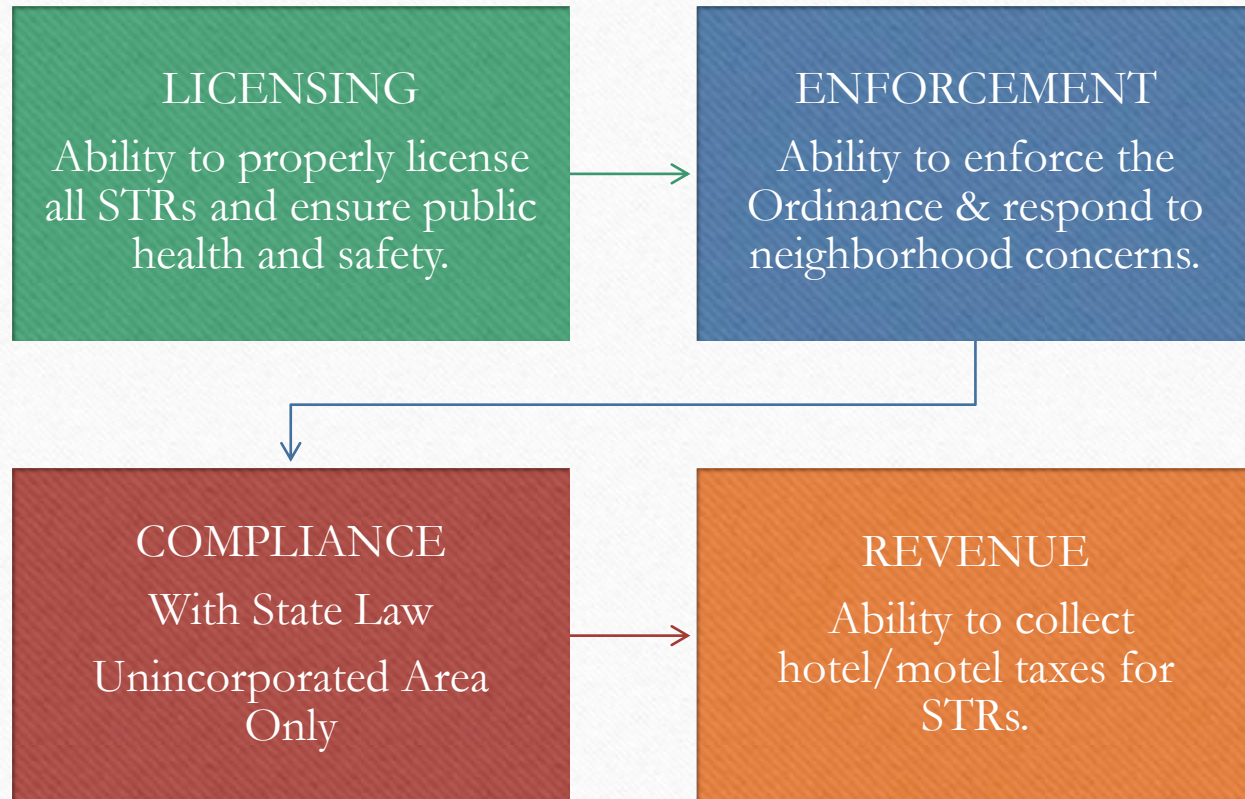


Ordinance amendments are proposed to balance local citizens concerns with the rights of property owners.

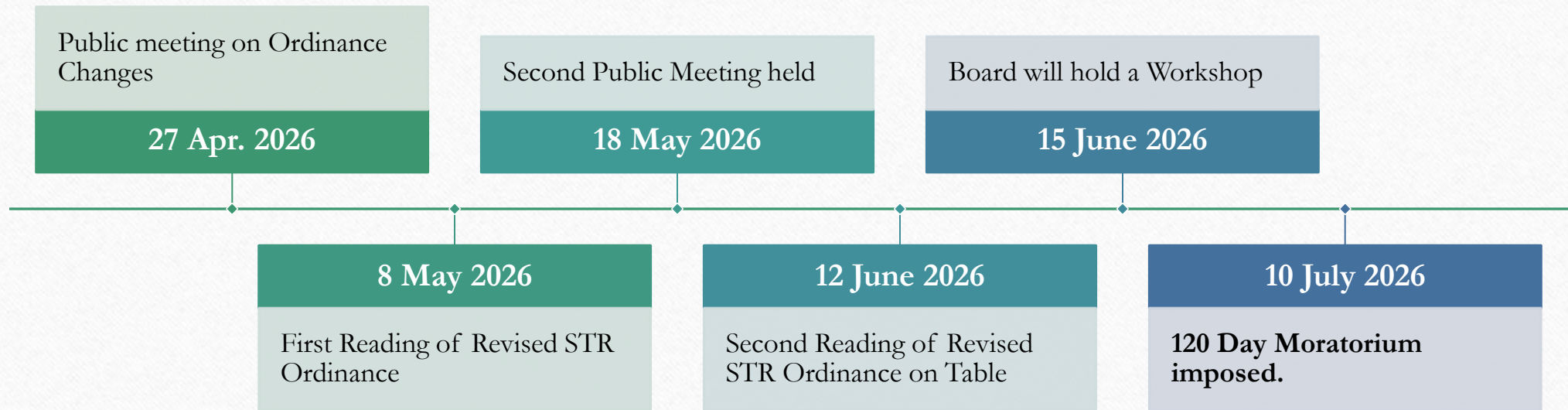


Neighborhoods with HOAs or POAs can prevent STRs through their bylaws and covenants.

County Goals for STR Ordinance



Ordinance Timeline



Short Term Rental Ordinance Contents & Changes

- Section 16-1304 Purpose
- Section 16-1302 Applicability *
- Section 16.1303 Definitions*
- Section 16.1304 License Requirement
- Qualifications/Requirements of Property Owners to Receive a License*
- Section 16.1305 Property owners, local contact person and responsible person *
- Section 16.1306 Qualifications Requirements of Property Owners to Receive a License
- Section 16-1307 Renewal of Short-Term Rental License
- Section 16-1308 Right to Audit
- Section 16-1309 Suspension of License
- Section 16-1310 Revocation or Denial of License
- Section 16-1311 Appeals
- Section 16-1312 Punishment of Violation of Ordinance*
- Section 16-1313 Effective Date

Key Focus Areas of Proposed Changes



OCCUPANCY & PARKING

How many persons can occupy/sleep in the STR
Impact of septic systems on licensing
No. of parking spaces



POSTED NOTIFICATIONS

Business License
Notifications for Renters
GIS/Maps available on-line of STRs in unincorporated area



DISTANCE REQUIREMENT REMOVED

Districts created to limit STRs



ZONING ORDINANCE DISTRICTS

Districts based on CCPD Police Response Neighborhoods

Occupancy Proposals

Current Ordinance: 2 adults per bedroom + 2 additional adults – no change

Private Utility/Septic System* : 2 adults per bedroom (aligns with CCHD standards)

Revise the definition of a Bedroom to align with International Residential Code.*

CAP for any STR: 15 persons based on Fire Codes

Parking Plan

Required onsite parking allows for one parking space per bedroom

Street parking does not count toward the required minimum.

Notification Requirements

Proposed
Ordinance
requires
notification
that lists:

- License
- 2 Points of Contact listed on the license
- Emergency contact information
- Parking rules
- Allowable occupancy rate
- Noise restrictions

Chatham County Zoning Ordinance



Section 4 of the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance to be modified



Board establishes Short-term Rental Districts and Boundaries



Districts align with Chatham County Police Response Neighborhoods



Number of STRs are capped

Density vs. Districts

Proposed Density
Requirements
Removed

Establishes STR
districts in Zoning
Ordinance

5% Cap in Each
District for Non-
homesteaded
Property

Requirements for Local Point of Contact



Proposed ordinance requires the application list two valid local points of contact



Proposed ordinance requires the local POC to respond to all public and regulatory inquiries within 3 hours



Response time requirement changed from 1 hour to 3 hours

License Enforcement

- Revocation - exceeding occupancy, license violations at other owned STRs, no response from local point of contact,
- Up to revocation – failure to post license, failure to post external sign
- 30 Day Suspension and possible Revocation/Denial of License
 - For public safety by CCPD Chief, CNT Director or Sheriff
 - For public health, welfare or interest upon inspection by County officials
 - For 3 Repeated Public Complaints of law or code violations by County Manager
- No short-term rental of property is allowed during suspension or revocation

ORDINANCE ADMINISTRATION

Building Safety & Regulatory Services (BSRS)

- Reviews and Issues Business Licenses per Ordinances
- Provides overall management of the STR program
- Utilizes a 3rd party vendor to “find” unlicensed STRs
- Investigate citizen complaints and cites property owners

Chatham County Police Department

- Provide after hours response to citizen complaints/public safety concerns after hours
- Issue citations
- Coordinate efforts with BSRS
- Power to Suspend a License for public safety (CNT, Sheriff)

ORDINANCE ADMINISTRATION

County Manager

- Review information provided from investigations
- Suspend or Revoke an STR license for public health, welfare or interest
- Suspend a STR license for violations to the County Code or State law
- Reinstate a revoked license upon remedy

Chatham County Attorney

- Coordinate efforts with BSRS, CCPD, County Manager
- Review investigations
- Prosecute violations
- Pursue legal remedies against STR Owners

Homestead Exemption

The Current and Proposed Ordinance includes language that removes Homestead Exemption for STR licensed properties.



Licenses issued for Homestead STRs where the license holder lives on site are not subject to zoning cap

THANK YOU

The Ordinance will be on the agenda for a Second Reading on
September 25, 2026.

Q&A