



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

www.washoecounty.us

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: December 10, 2019

DATE: November 15, 2019

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Kelly Mullin, AICP, Senior Planner, Planning and Building Division,
Community Services Department, 328-3608, kmullin@washoecounty.us

THROUGH: Dave Solaro, Arch., P.E., Assistant County Manager
328-3600, dsolaro@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Recommendation to take possible action to initiate amendments to Chapter 25 (Business Licenses, Permits and Regulations), Chapter 50 (Public Peace, Safety and Morals), Chapter 110 (Development Code), and Chapter 125 (Administrative Enforcement Code) to create the necessary code language to facilitate the Board's policy direction regarding short-term rentals as provided during their regular meeting of November 12, 2019. Short-term rentals are a type of temporary lodging of brief duration operated out of private residences such as homes, apartments and condos. They are commonly made available through property management companies and online booking services, and are also referred to as vacation rentals that are generally booked for fewer than 28-days. The amendments may include, but are not limited to, the establishment of definitions, standards, location limitations, defining unpermitted short-term rentals as nuisances, occupancy limits, parking requirements, safety/security considerations, signage, noise thresholds, trash/garbage collection rules, insurance requirements, county staffing levels, Tahoe area considerations, permitting requirements, enforcement process, fees, fines, and penalties associated with short-term rentals, as well as the resolution of discrepancies that may arise within existing WCC chapters as a result of any new code language. (All Commission Districts.)

SUMMARY

On November 12, 2019, the Washoe County Board of Commissioners (Board), provided policy direction regarding staff recommendations for short-term rentals (STRs) in unincorporated Washoe County. Although direction was provided, official action was not taken to initiate the necessary code amendments. The current request is a housekeeping item to ensure the required code amendment processes continue.

Pursuant to WCC Sections 2.030 and 110.818.05, the Board is asked to initiate amendments to Chapters 25, 50, 110 and 125 to create the necessary code language to facilitate the Board's policy direction. The amendments may include, but are not limited to, the items listed in the subject of this staff report.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe, secure and healthy communities.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On November 12, 2019, the Board heard an update on staff's recommendations regarding short-term rentals and provided policy direction.

On February 26, 2019, the Board determined that by adopting changes to WCC Chapter 25 in 2007 to allow transient lodging and associated room tax, the use is allowed within Washoe County (although it is not yet defined within Chapter 110). Further, the Board identified it did not want to ban short-term rentals in unincorporated Washoe County. In order to resolve potential conflict between the two WCC chapters, the Board directed staff to start the process of establishing regulations for STRs to properly administer their use.

On July 10, 2007, the Board adopted changes to WCC Chapter 25 relating to transient lodging.

BACKGROUND

On November 12, 2019, the Board provided policy direction regarding staff recommendations for STRs in unincorporated Washoe County. The original staff report for that item is available online at <https://bit.ly/2Kp5PoT>. Although direction was provided, official action was not taken to initiate the necessary code amendments. The current request is a housekeeping item to ensure the required code amendment processes continue.

FISCAL IMPACT

Specific fiscal impact associated with direction from the Board will be defined in future staff reports for Board action. Direction at this time will result in the use of additional staff time to create proper ordinances. This item is a priority item of Commissioner Berkbighler, is linked to the Economic Impact strategic goal, and has been factored into the current work plan.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Board initiate amendments to Chapters 25, 50, 110 and 125 to create the necessary code language to facilitate the Board's policy direction of November 12, 2019. This includes, but is not limited to, the categories listed in the possible motion below.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

“Move to initiate amendments to Chapter 25 (Business Licenses, Permits and Regulations), Chapter 50 (Public Peace, Safety and Morals), Chapter 110 (Development Code), and Chapter 125 (Administrative Enforcement Code) to create the necessary code language to facilitate the Board's policy direction of November 12, 2019. This may include, but is not limited to, the establishment of definitions, standards, location limitations, defining unpermitted STRs as nuisances, occupancy limits, parking requirements, safety/security considerations, signage, noise thresholds, trash/garbage collection rules, insurance requirements, county staffing levels, Tahoe area considerations, permitting requirements, enforcement process, fees, fines, and penalties associated with short-term rentals, as well as the resolution of discrepancies that may arise within existing WCC chapters as a result of any new code language.”

Attachment A: Letter from Interim County Manager requesting code amendments