

April 11, 2023
Study Session

Public Comments

Agenda Item 1 – Strategic Planning

Written Comments Received By 12pm on 04/11/2023



Study Session
Tuesday, April 11, 2023

From: Caitlin Quinn [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 9, 2023 6:54 PM
To: Public Comment
Cc: _City Council
Subject: Study Session Meeting -- April 11, 2023

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Mayor Bigstyk, City Council Members, and City Staff,

I am excited and inspired by the strategic planning process the City has been engaging in to establish its 2023-24 fiscal year Implementation Action Program to drive the City's work plan.

Organizational and fiscal safety, improving and stewarding our aging infrastructure, protecting and developing affordable housing, climate change adaption and mitigation strategies, broadening public communications and collaboration, ensuring that public safety resources meet the needs of the community. These are all noble and vital goals, and lying at the center of each is the beating heart of **community**. All of these goals are created to build and enhance community, and none of them will be possible to achieve without it.

But community only exists where there are neighbors. Neighbors who are invested in the place in which they live. Who send their children to local schools, who shop year-round at local supermarkets, who have a favorite coffee shop they patron regularly, and, ultimately, who care about and look out for other neighbors.

Pacifica has been overrun by unhosted short-term rentals set up by corporate investors, most of whom do not live in Pacifica or even in the Bay Area—some not even in the state of California.

Creating a new, robust short-term rental ordinance for Pacifica simply MUST be part of the City's 2023-24 work plan—and it must be placed in a highly prioritized position on that plan. And this new ordinance must have essential elements such as a primary residence requirement for owners, a limit on the number of nights an unhosted STR can operate, allowing for only ONE property to be owned or operated in the city by any individual or entity, and requiring a new homeowner to wait six months before offering up their property as an unhosted STR. These ordinance elements are all MISSION CRITICAL in order to protect Pacifica homes from being purchased by corporate investors and then flipped into "unregulated hotels." Unhosted short-term rentals in Pacifica are bleeding our neighborhoods of actual neighbors, putting in their place transient tourists who, sadly, often have little respect for the neighbors around their "private hotel," and treat us all like insects who are expected to go underground and hide while they have their parties, take up our street parking, walk all over our properties, and overflow trash bins (with nary a thought to recycling or composting) that frequently spill over into our yards and streets, leaving us insects to clean up the mess.

Hotels have staff and management teams to steward their guests. The property owners of unhosted STRs leave those jobs to their unlucky neighbors, as well as to the city's already-stretched police department and City administrative personnel. All jobs we end up fulfilling for these non-local property owners free of charge because they are nowhere on the scene when their guests violate "no party" and "no smoking" rules, engage in unruly and/or noisy behavior, or leave trash lying around. Our reward? Harassment by and rude treatment from the tourist-guests--and often even from the STR property owner and/or their feckless management company. (When I told the property manager of the unhosted STR next to my home that their guests' 3 a.m. "checking ins" and "checking outs" were waking me up, she told me that I needed to see a doctor to get put on sleeping medication so that I would sleep through their noise. Seriously...I am not kidding. She not only said it once, but doubled-down on it.)

Please rescue Pacifica's neighbors and neighborhoods from unhosted STRs before it's too late by creating a strong ordinance in line with what our sister coastal cities like Half Moon Bay, Santa Cruz, and Trinidad have done. Before we have no more community left to care about and collaborate with on all the incredible elements of this new strategic plan.

Let's please develop affordable housing for the families who want to come to Pacifica and bring their talents and energy to our community--and let's please **do it in concert with protecting and replenishing Pacifica's anemic housing stock by abolishing the allure of "easy money"** Pacifica homes now represent to greedy STR corporate investors, thereby allowing families who actually want to live here to purchase or rent these homes. And let's please also rescue Pacifica's many multi-unit buildings from their current fate as Airbnb-hotels and transform them back into apartments for long-term renters, many of whom were evicted from these same places in order to create hotel rooms for tourists. Let's build that Housing Development Fund by slapping vigorous, stinging fines on "bad actor" unhosted STR owners/operators, giving them the opportunity to give something back to this City instead of constantly taking from it.

Finally, thank you for being willing to "consider the use of and appropriate roles for volunteers." Pacifica is a magical place, full of incredibly smart and skilled individuals. Everyday when I walk my dogs and meet a new Pacifican, I am amazed anew at the wealth of talent and know-how that exists in our sleepy little coastal city. There are many of us who are ready, willing, and able to roll up our sleeves and go to work for you. We have passion, drive, and also know how to collaborate. I, for one, have worked my entire career in non-profit. Translation: I know how to get things done with next to no resources, and what it feels like to be worked like a rented mule.

We are here for you, City of Pacifica, and our name is Community. Take care of us, and we'll take care of you.

Thank you, truly, for all you do for this City and its proud residents.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Quinn
West Sharp Park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

From: Caitlin Quinn [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 11:51 AM
To: Public Comment
Cc: _City Council
Subject: Study Session Meeting -- April 11, 2023

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Mayor Bigstych, Council Members, and City Staff,

A quick addendum to my previous letter, please.

Given the crucial conversation about Pacifica's Housing Element and the need for more affordable housing in our city, I want to respectfully remind you of the study Purdue University did some time back on the relationship between a city's housing availability and prices and the presence of short-term rentals in said city: <https://business.purdue.edu/news/features/2023/short-term-rentals.php>.

Spoiler alert: the study found that the presence of short-term rentals unequivocally raises housing prices AND leads to housing shortages. Further, when Airbnb enacted its "One Host, One Home" policy, thereby limiting the number of short-term rentals operated by corporate investors in a particular city, long-term rents decreased.

In addition, when the City of Irvine passed a complete ban of short-term rentals in 2018 to encourage more affordable housing, the new ordinance "led to a 2.7% decrease in long-term rental prices on average" and also resulted in "... \$1,212 in average savings on rent for Irvine residents per year."

I hope this information is helpful to the conversation at hand.

Thank you again for your hard work on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Quinn
West Sharp Park

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

From: Erin Macias [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2023 10:20 AM
To: Public Comment
Subject: Strategic Planning - STRs

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Council and Staff,

I would like to comment in advance of the meeting to ask you to prioritize the STR ordinance for the 2023-2024 work plan.

Across the state, there is an echo “affordable housing” and what easier way to address a housing problem than by adding existing housing stock back into the rental market where is it accessible to families and residents who work and live here? While short term rentals generate some revenue, what is the overall cost to the community?

Adverse impact on schools: reduced enrollment = reduced state and federal funding and reduced fundraising

Reduced affordable housing stock = higher rents for teachers, service workers, first responders and city workers

Excessive landfill generated weekly

Neighborhood safety issues: violent crime is documented here and criminals use STRs to conduct short term business dealings

Nuisance issues: parties, parking, garbage, illegal activity, blatant disrespect for the neighbors and community they are visiting

Adverse impact on hotels with visitor serving plans for our community

Discourages hoteliers from investing in our community

STR’s are not what they were marketed to be... initially they were designed to assist people from remaining in their homes and the ordinance was designed for those businesses or for people who like to travel or work overseas for a few weeks per year.

Today, more than 90% of STRs are unhosted with calls for service being placed to PPD and Code Enforcement with no solid codes on the books to abate the neighborhood concerns.

Thank you for your willingness to prioritize this important community problem.

Warmly,
Erin Macias

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

From: Kate Chınca [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2023 3:02 PM
To: Public Comment
Cc: _City Council
Subject: Short Term Rentals

[CAUTION: External Email]

Good afternoon!

Caitlin Quinn has shared the letter she has just written to all of you regarding short term rentals.

It is truly beautifully written and to try to add anything more is just a waste of your time to read.

However, I would just like to share one more thought on the subject. The night before Easter, there was a parade of cars coming up Aspen Drive heading to the STR on our street. They were not terrible people, making noise and a huge mess. What I will tell you is that the next day they left and I counted 8 cars (there were more the night before but all of them didn't stay over) and to my best counting abilities, 21 adults and children poured out the next day. We were only grateful that they were respectful even though the top part of our street had no parking whatsoever. If you were planning an Easter brunch up there...good luck.

Please know that I am personally appreciative of the consideration you have given to the concerns of your citizens and making room to work on these rentals. I have been very impressed by the handling of this situation by our Council.

Many thanks to all of you!

Best wishes,

Kate Chınca
[REDACTED]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

From: Cindy Abbott [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 9:43 AM
To: Beckmeyer, Sue; Bier, Mary; Bigstyk, Tygarjas; Boles, Christine; Vaterlaus, Sue; Public Comment
Subject: Fwd: 2023-2024 City Council Goal Setting: Please include Short Term Rentals in the upcoming workplan

[CAUTION: External Email]

Once again I am reaching out to request that City Council prioritize a robust Short Term Rental Ordinance update in the year ahead. Several city council members over the past many months have expressed support for doing so, please don't wait any longer.

The cap will not have the impact needed to resolve the take over of neighborhoods by interests who are operating commercial short term rentals without regard for neighbors, regulations or affordable housing. A moratorium can still be considered. (And staff time in the City and at the California Coastal Commission not wasted by working on a cap that won't alleviate the issues.)

See more details below from prior outreach to you.

Thank you for moving a robust update forward!
Cindy Abbott
West Sharp Park

From: Cindy Abbott [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 3, 2023 9:35:39 AM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@pacifica.gov>; Bigstyk, Tygarjas <tbigstyk@pacifica.gov>; Bier, Mary <mbier@pacifica.gov>; Vaterlaus, Sue <svaterlaus@pacifica.gov>; Beckmeyer, Sue <sbeckmeyer@pacifica.gov>; Boles, Christine <CBoles@pacifica.gov>
Subject: 2023-2024 City Council Goal Setting: Please include Short Term Rentals in the upcoming workplan

Dear Mayor Bigstyk and City Council Members,
I am again reaching out to request that City Council **place a robust update to the Short Term Rental Ordinance on the City's work plan for 2023-2024.**

The "Cap" on short term rentals should be considered as only a starting point to contain the detrimental impact of what has grown into being a significant commercial enterprise (only on occasion the individual homeowner trying to maintain living in their property, which I support) reducing housing stock in the city, creating a nuisance with safety, noise, trash and lack of care for neighborhoods and the City as long-term residents who give so much more back to Pacifica are reduced.

Pacifica has a history of being underfunded and historically looking to and welcoming support from community members to take on important subjects. Having served on various task forces for the City of Pacifica over the years, I recognize that staff support is still required to provide structure for a task force. The bulk of the work though can be done through other resources if the City opens up and shows a willingness to receive this volunteer time. Community members are ready and willing to take on this task. And there is no lack of Ordinances put in place in other coastal communities for reference.

Please recognize the strong input given by the City of Pacifica Planning Commission at their January 17, 2023 meeting, where they too urged the City Council to enact stronger law and regulation on short term rentals.

Below are a few of the remarks submitted for the Feb 13, 2023 City Council meeting, with my full public comment letter attached.

Many other jurisdictions - from locally, to State, throughout the country and abroad are taking on the negative impact of short term rentals. Please don't let Pacifica fall behind. Thank you for your consideration.

Cindy Abbott

West Sharp Park

150 Cap a Good Start, Though More is Needed

While I support the cap of 150 STRs and exclusion of ADUs to be used as STRs, the current proposal does not address:

- the removal of long-term housing as residential properties are being converted to full time short term rental units, eliminating housing stock and full time residents who could have kids in our schools, contribute to community organizations, and neighborhood safety;
- the impact of hosted versus whole house un-hosted short term rentals, whereby no one is actively at a property to ensure visitors are complying with City Ordinances or being good neighbors;
- the potential continued deterioration of housing in the coastal neighborhoods of Pedro Point and West Sharp Park, as there isn't a requirement for the proposed 150 STRs to be equitably dispersed by neighborhood (as the City of Pacifica has done with cannabis shops);
- if a "tiny home" is considered an ADU or junior ADU or if they can be permitted to operate as an ADU;
- an operating requirement to provide visitors with the City's waste management policies regarding recycling and composting;
- how business entities are in effect ignoring the City's zoning regulations by turning residential neighborhoods into commercial districts; or
- how the increase in STRs is impacting the hotel business in the City of Pacifica.

Enforcement Not Addressed Nor does it clearly address how enforcement will work.

Today neighbors don't have a means to check if a short term rental is operating legally: City of Santa Cruz has a link to check their registry on the city website³ ; and, other cities require STRs to include the City license number on platform (AirBnB, VRBO, etc.) postings. Though the staff report indicates limited complaints, residents are concerned with reporting the situation to the Police due to the City's limited staffing and many priorities; maintaining good relations with neighbors; and receive little support or relief from property managers or STR online platforms.

CC Commissioners Strive for Balance, Support For Coastal Neighborhoods/Residential Zoning

The staff report that went to the Planning Commission, commented that, "The CCC has found that outright bans or undue restrictions on STRs are inconsistent with the Coastal Act policies prioritizing public access and visitor-serving uses". This doesn't share the full story of CCC discussions about STRs. At the October 14, California Coastal Commission meeting, the Coastal Commission and City of Half Moon Bay agreed to bring their program back at a future time as they worked through a final few items. Input from the commissioners was requested by HMB City staff to help guide further discussions between their staff and the CCC's. Showing strong support for housing and concern for coastal neighborhoods, members of the CCC offered the following comments.

- Commissioner Catherine (Katie) Rice noted that “every residence that has been a long term (residence) that turns into a STR is a loss. Every community is a unique situation (i.e., this is different than the Malibu discussion alternate options such as hotels are limited).
- Commissioner Linda Escalante aligned with Commissioner Rice, reflecting that every housing unit that is lost is cumulative/additive.
- Commissioner Mike Wilson aligned with the City of Half Moon Bay’s compromises, indicating concern with the increasing change of residential properties to STRs. Commissioner Wilson noted, “This is primarily a zoning change, moving to add business/commercial operations in residential neighborhoods.” Further, he noted that the Coastal Act and prior CCC discussions have maintained that housing is a primary consideration (not only visitor serving accommodations).
- Commissioner Meagan Harmon stated, “short term rentals fundamentally undermine coastal communities.”

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

From: Deb Wong [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 10:51 AM
To: Public Comment
Subject: City Study Session, April 11

Importance: High

[CAUTION: External Email]

Dear Mayor Bigstych and City Council Members,

I think it is really important for City Council members to prioritize the **short-term rental ordinance** for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Some of these transient residents are driving us NUTS! We didn't count on living next to a hotel-motel type situation when we moved here. We live out by the pier, admittedly a "tourist destination", but the disrespect, noise and trash left by some (not all, but some) of these "tenants" are making life difficult for us tax-paying citizens of Pacifica.

Thanks much, and I appreciate for your service to our community, whether I might agree with your decisions, or not.

All the Best,
Deb Wong

[REDACTED]



CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Pacifica. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.