



**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**  
**PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**  
**LONG RANGE PLANNING**

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3015 H Street • Eureka CA 95501  
Phone: (707) 445-7541 • Fax: (707) 268-3792

Date: Meeting of October 5, 2023

To: Humboldt County Planning Commission

From: John H. Ford, Director of Planning and Building Department

Subject: **Workshop on the Draft Short-term Rental Ordinance**  
**Record No. LRP-2022-17963 & LRP-2023-18254**

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Please contact Cade McNamara, at 707-268-3777 or [cmcnamara@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:cmcnamara@co.humboldt.ca.us), if you have any questions about the Short-term Rental Ordinance.

## AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Contact</b>
October 5, 2023	Draft Short-term Rental Ordinance	Cade McNamara

**Project Description:** Inland and coastal zone ordinances to allow the use of residences for short-term rentals within the unincorporated areas of Humboldt County. The ordinance does the following:

- a) Creates two tiers of rentals consisting of units partially rented by the occupants of the residence and rental of the whole unit;
- b) Establishes performance criteria for the operation of short term rentals;
- c) Creates an Administrative Permit to authorize rentals which comply with the ordinance and allows approval of a discretionary permit when deviations from standards are requested;
- d) Creates a cap for the number of units allowed around the Humboldt Bay Area

The new ordinance would affect the following code sections:

1. Inland: Adds section 314-60.05, amends the tables in section 314-6 and 314-9, amends sections 314-37, 314-44, 314-55, 314-138, 314-141, 314-143, 314-153, 314-154, 314-157, 314-158, 314-163, 314-174 and 314-177 in Chapter 4 of Division 1 of Title III of the County Code for the inland areas of the County.
2. Coastal: Adds section 313-61.05, amends the tables in section 313-6, and amends sections 313-44, 313-50, 313-55, 313-141, 313-143, 313-154, 313-157, 313-163, 313-172, and 313-177 in Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title III of the County Code for the coastal areas of the County.

**Project Location:** All of the unincorporated areas of Humboldt County.

**Present Plan Designations:** All land use designations where residences are allowed as a principal use.

**Present Zoning:** All zoning districts where residences are allowed as a principal use.

**Environmental Review:** Exempt from CEQA

**State Appeal Status:** n/a for workshop

## SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE

### Recommended Commission Action

1. Request that staff provide introduction to the continued workshop.
3. Deliberate and comment on the draft Short-term Rental Ordinance.
4. Provide guidance to Planning & Building Staff on any desired amendments to the draft ordinance prior to a public hearing

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

During the Planning Commission Workshop held September 21, 2023, the Short-term Rental Workshop was opened. The Planning Commission heard a staff presentation of the draft Short-term Rental Ordinance and received public comment. However, there was no time for the Planning Commission to engage with questions or direction to staff. The Workshop was continued to the meeting of October 5, 2023. The next step is to walk through the ordinance section-by-section with time for questions and comments.

During the September 21 meeting, the commission made three specific requests: 1) provide the excel sheet that was included as part of the staff oral presentation; 2) provide the powerpoint slide deck for the September 21 meeting; and 3) organize the written public comments by theme. A PDF of the excel sheet can be found as Attachment 2; the powerpoint slides are included as Attachment 3; public comments are found in Attachment 8.

The comments are organized at several levels. Those comments that were included in the supplemental packet provided to the Planning Commission in advance of the September 21 Workshop are separated from comments that have been received between the Workshop and the date of publication of this staff report. Beyond this, the comments are split between themes which include Alternative Owner Builder (AOB), Housing Stock & Cap, Neighborhood Concerns, and Miscellaneous. The Miscellaneous category include wide ranging comments that often include many concerns making them difficult to categorize.

These written comments reflect a wide array of views and differ in focus somewhat from the oral comments received during the 5 community meetings. Oral comments made at these meetings were disproportionately attended by members of the public who own and operate Short-term Rentals. The oral comments found a center of gravity in the draft procedures and requirements of the ordinance. Members of the public shined a light on standards and processes that they found too broad and not tailored to the diverse communities of the unincorporated county. This feedback led to refinement of the proposed permitting process and targeted standards, including differentiation between urban and rural areas.

By contrast, the written comments gravitate more around the values which animate the ordinance – protection of housing stock, preserving neighborhood quality, providing residents with economic opportunity. Comments came from a mix of Short-term Rental owners, neighbors and members of the public concerned about housing within the community. The themes that were strongest in the written comments were housing stock (e.g., making the cap more stringent and even limiting Short-term Rentals to home-share only), and neighborhood character (e.g., amend the neighborhood concentration standards).

The staff report for the September 21, 2023 meeting has been included as attachment 1 and includes more context and information about the draft regulations.