



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 2/6/2025

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File #: 25-208

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**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Public Hearing

**SUBJECT:**

Amendment to Short Term Rental Ordinance  
Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 000-000-000  
Record No.: PLN-2025-19159  
Countywide

An amendment to the Short-term Rental Provisions of the Inland and Coastal Zoning Regulations to amend subsections 60.05.9.1.1 (to clarify requirements for Category 3 roads for Homeshares), 60.05.10.2.4 (to allow certain Short-term rentals in Agriculture General Zones), 60.05.10.3.1 (to clarify requirements for Category 3 roads for Short-term rentals.) and 60.05.10.6 (to clarify separation between Short-term rentals.) This Zoning Ordinance Amendment applies to the entire County.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt the resolution (Resolution 25-\_\_\_), which does the following:
  - a. Finds the proposed amendments to the Inland and Coastal Short-term rental ordinances are exempt from environmental review; and
  - b. Finds the proposed project complies with the General Plan, Local Coastal Program and Zoning Ordinance; and
  - c. Recommends the Board of Supervisors Adopt the amendments to the Short-Term rental ordinance.

**DISCUSSION:**

The proposed modification to the Short-term Rental ordinance is the result of applying the ordinance and encountering some unexpected regulatory consequences. The nature of the changes are minor and are intended to align the ordinance with the objectives the County was intending to achieve in

adopting the ordinance. The proposed changes are shown in underlined/stricken text and are described as follows. The number references are to the inland ordinance, but the coastal ordinance is identical, except for the Agricultural General Allowance.

- A. Category 3 Roads. (60.05.9.1.1.3 and 60.05.10.3.1.3 Access.) The current language requires STRs to be on roads “built to a Category 3 road”. There are very few roads in Humboldt County built to the standard of a Category 3 road. When the Category 3 road was chosen as a factor, the focus was that the road would function at the capacity of a Category 3 road. This change is to address situations where a neighbor may oppose an STR on the technical basis of whether the road was built to a Category 3 road. The changes clarify the objective that the road’s functional capacity is that of a Category 3 road.
- B. Allowance for AG Zones. (60.05.10.2.4 Resource Zone Districts) Currently the STR ordinance allows STRs in Resource Zones (AG, AE, TPZ) provided they are a Farm stay. This requires them to provide some educational opportunities about the agricultural use of the property. AG is a unique zone in that it has been used to allow the creation of smaller residential lots. Many applications for STRs have been in AG zones where there is no agricultural use and thus cannot provide a Farm stay opportunity.

The change is intended to address the smaller lots in the AG zones to be approved without the need for a farm stay. The proposal would allow STRs on AG zoned parcels of less than 5 acres subject to all other provisions of the ordinance. Parcels between 5-10 acres would require a Special Permit and parcels over 10 acres would require it to be associated with a Farm stay.

It is important to note there is not an AG Zone in the Coastal Zone and so this provision does not apply to the Coastal Zone.

- C. Neighborhood Concentration (60.05.10.6.2). The initial change associated with this section is that the reference to “As the Crow Flies” was found to be highly restrictive. Counting 10 parcels in a line can go well outside the neighborhood of a proposed Short-term rental. The proposed change would not allow two STR’s within 300 feet of each other without approval of a Special Permit. The other changes are to standardize language and provide clarity relative to land use density.

The Coastal Version of the Short-term rental ordinance has not been certified by the Coastal Commission and is thus not effective. Staff anticipate this amendment can be incorporated into the Coastal Commission consideration.

#### **Environmental Review:**

This is covered by the commonsense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that

there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

The project was referred to County Counsel and Public Works

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Planning Commission could choose not to recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment, or to modify the amendments proposed based upon public input and Commission discussion.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Resolution
  - A. Proposed Modifications to the Inland Short term rental ordinance
  - B. Proposed Modifications to the Coastal Short-term rental ordinance
2. Existing Short Term Rental Ordinance

Please contact John Ford, Planning Director, at [jford@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:jford@co.humboldt.ca.us) or 707-268-3738 if you have questions about this item.