

WHEELER CITIZENS FOR RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE TO CITY SURVEY ON SHORT TERM RENTALS

By

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November 2018

REMINDER OF SHORT TERM RENTAL DISCUSSION IN WHEELER

A discussion of Short Term Rentals (STR) is slated to be taken up at the regular Wheeler City Council Meeting on Tuesday November 20 at 7:00pm at Wheeler City Hall 775 Nehalem Blvd. Wheeler, Oregon. Apparently, there is at least one STR that has been operating in Wheeler and known to the City. The City has taken a supporting position on STR's and has begun to collect data based upon their questionnaire titled "Short Term Rental Survey" dated November 2018. The public's input is needed now. Please plan on attending the meeting and **please submit your opinion and survey to the Mayor and Members of the City Council well in advance of the meeting:**

City of Wheeler
P.O. Box 177
Wheeler, OR 97147

We suggest you answer the City's questions, but BE CAREFUL! Identify what you consider to be ambiguous and misleading statements in the questionnaire, and elaborate and explain. Be sure to sign your name and identify yourself and reference your letter to the comments section of the Survey form. The City does not respond to letters they deem "anonymous" even though they have relied upon input from anonymous, unidentified sources as the impetus for pursuing this action. The citizens of Wheeler are entitled to know who initiated this topic and how this issue came to be.

**THIS IS A GAME CHANGER FOR WHEELER SO PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO
PROVIDE YOUR INPUT.**

FIRST: READ ABOUT SHORT TERM RENTAL PROBLEMS ONLINE

Before you put pen to paper, please get educated. There is a great deal of information published. We suggest first reading this:

<https://hostcompliance.com/short-term-rentals-what-you-need-to-know/>

Then, if you have time Google "Short Term Rental Problems". Then peruse the STR ordinances for Manzanita and Cannon Beach keeping in mind Wheeler would need an enforcement ordinance, not a licensing ordinance.

THE CITY SURVEY

(THE QUESTIONS IN BOLD ARE BY THE CITY AND THE ANSWERS IN ITALICS ARE BY US)

1. **Property owners have a right to rent out their property as a short term rental.**
Strongly Disagree! Other cities have put restrictions on where STR's can be located, specifically in which Land Use Zones. For example, STR's in Wheeler are not permitted in Zone R1 residential. This concept is central to Oregon Land Use Law.
2. **The City needs to regulate the number and duration of short term rentals in Wheeler. DANGER: Regulation implies approval of STR's. This is a trick question.**
Strongly disagree with question because it is illogical. If STR's are prohibited in a zone there is no need to regulate them. But there is a need to identify STR's operating in violation of existing ordinance, and fine them accordingly. That is not regulation, its strengthening prohibition. It requires a separate STR ordinance that goes directly to the City's obligation to identify and fine violators and be responsive to citizen complaints.
3. **Short term rentals negatively impact property values. DANGER: This is another illogical, trick question.**
Research indicates this can be true, or not true. This is really a trick question based upon lack of research of the topic. Short Term Rentals can positively affect property values if properly maintained and managed, and policed. This creates a market for STR's for people from outside the City looking for investments. It also can displace affordable housing by inflating the price of the property making it unaffordable to most, which is contrary to State Policy and unacceptable to many people. STR's can have a negative impact by having vacancies for long periods during the off season which can lead to unauthorized occupancies and drug houses.
4. **I am concerned that short term rentals negatively impact safety and problems in the neighborhood.**
Strongly Agree. This year we were victims of a burglary that was over \$6000. The County Sheriff was located in Tillamook and took an hour to answer the call. He said that he was spread really thin because of a rash of burglaries, primarily in Nehalem, Manzanita and Bayside gardens. He said the problem with theft is related to drug use. Essentially, the County is not adequately staffed to deal with drug enforcement and burglary. We do not support a transient population that would occupy our homes, especially if managed online or from out-of-town.

We do not support an ordinance that would destroy the Wheeler community by replacing our neighbors with a transient population. We do support Neighborhood Watch groups where neighbors know each other and look out for each other. Neighborhood Watch groups are supported by police and the community.
5. **The taxes collected from short term rentals (TLT) are an important resource for the maintenance of the City's infrastructure, economy, and services. DANGER: Strongly Disagree and this is another trick question.**
This is a complicated question that depends upon looking at both sides of the balance sheet. First, the basic assumptions of an economic study need to be identified, then costs of implementation. Such costs would include increased City staff time, services, police costs, court costs for prosecuting violators, etc. Costs could be compared to gross revenues received from licensed STR's.

If the costs of implementation exceed the gross revenues, then STR's would not be feasible. The indirect social costs may be even greater as affordable housing are replaced by STR's and the community evolves into a commercial venture, often owned by out-of-town interests.

This question is way beyond the average person and has no place in a survey.

Final comment: The timing by the City is totally inappropriate, apparently chosen to restrict input, and elicit responses that can be interpreted in many ways by the City. Of 5 questions, we have identified three that fall into this category – a failing grade by any measure.

FURTHER COMMENTARY ON SHORT TERM RENTALS

The very short time permitted to the citizens to respond to their survey and the proximity to Thanksgiving, does not permit adequate responses to the topic of STR's. We will mention only that the following topics are key: (We received our water bill with the survey on November 10th, less than 10 days before the meeting)

- **Destruction of community – knowing your neighbor**
- **Destruction of Affordable Housing**
- **Rentals now owned by Public Officials**
- **STR Ordinance**
- **Conformance with the Wheeler Vision**

*****End of Newsletter*****

Wheeler Citizens for Responsible Development

Wheeler CRD was established in 2007. We not anti-development and never have been. It is and always has been supportive of development as represented and defined in the Wheeler Vision, and supported by the vast majority of citizens, not just of Wheeler, but of the community. If you would like to join our mailing list, please send us an email at wheelercitizens@gmail.com.

As of October 27, 2018, CRD had 132 networked subscribers, meaning two-way communication and participation when and if necessary. At any given time, a dozen or so offer opinion and input with backgrounds in government, legal, and "land use". We report factual information but reserve the right to offer commentary on any subject. We treat our list as confidential and as of this writing, available to only two members.