

**Larimer County Short-term Rental Regulations**  
**Summary of Initial Public Discussion Draft Webinar - Estes Valley Focus**  
**November 1, 2022**  
**6:00pm – 8:00 pm, on Zoom**

**Attendance**

- County Team: Lesli Ellis (Community Development Director), Matt Lafferty (Principal Planner), Tawn Hillenbrand (Senior Planner), and Amy White (Code Compliance Supervisor)
- Community and STR owner attendance – 141 people

**Short-term Rental Draft Regulations Presentation**

The County Planning Team provided a brief presentation on the Short-term Rental (STR) regulations initial public discussion draft of suggested revisions. The presentation included the project timeline, including complete and current tasks, suggested revisions to short-term rental definitions, and an explanation of existing land use approval processes. Additionally, the team presented the draft document, focusing on the Estes Valley. The team briefly touched upon:

- The organization and layout of the initial public discussion draft document.
- Revisions made to the STR Use-Specific Standards applicable to properties located both in the Estes Valley and in unincorporated Larimer County outside of the Estes Valley.
- Revisions made to the Tables of Allowed Principal Uses, focusing mainly on the use tables specific to the Estes Valley.

The presentation also included a link to the project website (<https://www.larimer.gov/planning/short-term-rentals>) and the project email ([LUC2020@larimer.org](mailto:LUC2020@larimer.org)) where additional comments and/or questions can be directed.

**Participant Feedback and Questions**

Following the brief presentation on the initial public discussion draft, the County team opened the webinar for participant comment and feedback, during which many participants expressed appreciation for the event. Some expressed concern with the project timeline, suggesting more time for the project, while others had questions and feedback about compliance and enforcement of the regulations. Seven participants when speaking identified themselves as being affiliated with the Estes Valley Short-term Rental Alliance (EVSTRA) group, as noted in the summary of comments.

A summary of the specific comments and opinions during the event follows:

- The suggested driveway modification standards could eliminate most of the properties located in the area. Extend the deadline for community comment on the draft.
- The regulations should consider residentially zoned neighborhoods where STRs are a historic use and where HOA covenants support the use. This participant believes that the existing cap works, but language should clarify that the cap will not be impacted by transferability regulations. Ensure that illegal STRs are shut down.
- Further regulation may have unintended consequences, such as defunding workforce housing and childcare programs. Changes may lead to reduced funding for the Marketing District under the current lodging tax. The suggested revisions are confusing and may contradict the directions from the Town and County. (This speaker affiliated with EVSTRA.)
- Most of the regulations are appropriate and everyone wants safety; however, the suggested changes may force people out. This attendee indicated that they had previously sold a property because they did not want to deal with the approval process. (EVSTRA affiliation)
- There needs to be more accountability. Who do the neighbors contact in the event of an emergency? Many neighbors do not know who to contact when issues arise because they are located outside of the distance of notification. Guests are driving ATVs down the neighborhood roads or trespass across private property; guests can be confrontational. This attendee is in favor of transferability.
- For the ASR approval process, does that mean a committee decides, and how does accountability work? If the community does not like the current options, will there be additional options? Having only a few people make the decision doesn't seem logical.
- Policies should be geared toward the STR community. The County should create a STR liaison team to work with the community on the topic. There should be better or more focus on compliance complaints. Often management companies are not given the time to respond to a complaint before County Code Compliance team is called.
- This attendee's family has a history of vacationing in the Estes Valley, and they support life safety requirements and reasonable regulations, including re-certification annually or biannually; however, they don't think that re-inspections should not be required unless concerns arise. (EVSTRA affiliation)
- Transferability is critical especially when considering families and passing property on to their heirs. If the County is concerned about driveway modifications and emergency phone services, should this not also apply to owner-occupied properties as well? This attendee believes there should be a coalition with STRs and property managers. STRs accommodate visitors coming to RMNP, without them visitors may not be able to stay in the town.
- This attendee agrees with comments on enforceability and those unlicensed STRs that are causing problems. The suggested changes may come at a cost to owners, taking more time for the process. They prefer Option 1 on transferability.

- Hearing from all stakeholders is important. Also, there is confusion on who to contact about complaints. There should be one central regulatory body, for the Town and County that receives and manages complaints. (stated EVSTRA affiliation)
- This attendee supports regulations on parking, restrictions on RVs, and believes in being a good neighbor. There should be a limit on the number of guests, but there should be some flexibility on the 2 people per bedroom standard. Opposes the criteria that STRs shall not impact the character of the neighborhood because it is subjective. Better enforcement of the regulations needs to happen. (stated EVSTRA affiliation)
- Attendee is a full-time resident and homeowner. Concurs with many of the comments made by previous participants. Believes that neighbors should be notified of an approved STR. For the safety of the neighbors, there should be a centralized reporting system for complaints. Neighbors should not have to approach guests. Believes in the idea of character of a neighborhood. Would love to hear more homeowners speak up over those running these businesses.
- The attendee operates a STR. Seems unthinkable and unfair that an existing property could be subject to new standards especially regarding driveways modifications. Many property owners would have to reconstruct their driveways to meet this requirement.
- Neighborhoods in the Estes Valley are different than urban areas, such as having no sidewalks. Some of the requirements could change total yard area and create other challenges. The problem generalized tables is that no subdivision is like another due to the mountains and topography.
- As an owner of both a long-term rental and a short-term rental, the attendee has only received complaints on the long-term rental. Concerned that what was presented was not all the regulations and about language of the regulations. (stated EVSTRA affiliation)
- Many homeowners invest a lot of money into their homes to get an STR approval. Limiting transferability isn't fair in the opinion of this participant. In an area with a cap, transferability may just change who gets approval for the STR and where it is located. Due to the cap, the new owner would go to the bottom of the waitlist. Think through this more deeply and work toward consistency with the Town on topics like occupancy. (stated EVSTRA affiliation)
- The process should be more streamlined for properties located in the Accommodations zoning districts. Currently it does not look easier than those properties located in Residential zoning districts.
- This attendee believes that the new regulations may remove a by-right use and is under the impression that they could have 3 paying guests by-right.
- Transferability is important. This attendee owns a STR, has acted in good faith, and would like to pass the property and use on to their children. Code compliance complaints should be verified by two to three witnesses to build a nuisance complaint. Verifiability is important, without a STR homeowner might get robbed of an opportunity.

- How can the County enforce limiting a rental to a specific number of days per year? This would be better if applied to a new license rather than an existing. Would this change when the license is renewed? Most STRs are rented months in advance.
- There should be a specific place for people to send complaints and a place to address complaints. The police should not be called over something like a light bulb.
- The transferability requirement of notification in 30 days when property changes hands due to the owner passing away or sales feels too short. If the receiving ownership lives out of state, getting to the property in the winter may be difficult.
- Transferability restrictions are too strict and not every property is the same. A property has been a second home for a family for generations. The owner dies, the kids want to keep it, now they must submit for an STR, but they are in a residential area that is no longer able to get a STR or have the highest restrictions of the process. What happens?

During the webinar participants could submit questions to the Q&A section. Those questions submitted were not addressed during the webinar; however, a response to many of the questions are included in an amended FAQ document contained on the STR project website or are addressed in the webinar presentation.