



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Short-Term Rental Ordinance and Land Development Code Amendment

April 28, 2026

Presenter: Caitlyn Mars, Zoning and Weed Control Manager





ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Overview

Ordinance 2026-01
Short-Term Rental Licensing Program

LDC23-001: Land Development Code Amendment

Note: Fees will be brought forward on May 12 consent agenda





Timeline Overview

2023: Evaluation due to increased complaints – parking issues, parties/gatherings, number of STRs all on one street

- Legislative authority: C.R.S. 30-15-401(1)(s) to create an ordinance to govern and license STRs
- Researched other jurisdictions, BOCC input, public survey (234 responses).

2024–2025: Continued research and drafting regulations

- BOCC discussions
- Stakeholder referrals
- Resident feedback

Oct 2025 –Mar 2026:

- Planning Commission
- Revisions to include Legacy provisions and other revisions/additions
- Additional public comment period in early 2026 – specific outreach to identified STR owners



Public Outreach



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

2023

before drafting regulations – randomized notification postcards and open survey

2025

survey of draft regulations

2026

Email Notifications

Postcards and targeted outreach to identified STR hosts

Outreach only targeted property owners in unincorporated Arapahoe County



Common Concerns Noted



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Concerns for STR Regulation

- Negatively impacts responsible STR hosts, impacting investments made in properties as STRs
- Proposed fees are too high
- Administrative requirements burdensome
- Separation requirements and multifamily cap are not equitable or necessary
- Regulations are overly restrictive and may eliminate many STRs
- Restricting the number of STRs impacts local economy and workforce utilized to maintain the STRs
- Local Responsible Agent requirements are unrealistic and unnecessary
- Legacy provisions restricted to expire with sale of property negatively impacts resale value

In favor of STR Regulation

- Parking issues in neighborhoods saturated with STRs
- STRs being used for gatherings and large parties – weddings, showers, other “events” causing noise and other disruptions for neighbors
- Rental of upper area and basement of homes separately to different parties – revolving door or unknown neighbors
- Desire to ensure that homes are maintained and permits obtained when renovation work is completed
- Concerns of property values for residents living in the neighborhood
- Interest in having direct point of contact to report issues



Implementation



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

County Staff

Processing applications
Enforcement actions, as necessary

Host Compliance (Granicus)

Identification of STR advertisements
Mailing compliance letters
24/7 complaint hotline
Local Responsible Agent (LRA)
notification

SUPPORT





ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Ordinance No. 2026-01



Definitions



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Short-Term Rental: renting a lodging unit for less than 30 days at a time.

Renter: an individual or group staying in a Short-Term Rental Property, including their guests

Lodging Unit: any property or portion of property that is available for lodging except that the term excludes a Hotel Unit.

Vacation Rental Service: a person or entity that operates a website or any other digital platform that provides a means through which a Lodging Unit, or portion thereof, may be offered for Short-Term Rental

Affected Party: any person or property immediately adjacent to or within five hundred (500) feet of the Short-Term Rental property.

Bedroom: an area intended for sleeping that is at least seventy (70) square feet with a ceiling height of not less than seven (7) feet, two (2) means of egress (e.g. door and egress window), and has been inspected and permitted per applicable building codes at the time of construction.



Short-Term Rental License Required, Transferability



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

License required – Annual renewal

License shall be for only one Lodging Unit

Nontransferable

License shall only be issued to the Owner or lessee of the Lodging Unit serving as Owner or lessee's Primary Residence (Legacy Exemption)

Owners must authorize use, if not the applicant





ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

License Application, Term and Renewal, Responsible Agent, and Noticing Requirements

Applicants may be Owner, legally authorized agent of the Owner, lessee (with written consent of the Owner).

Application must include signatures from all Owners of record

License Term: 1 calendar year from date of issuance

Renewals submitted 60-120 days prior to expiration (allows staff time to process the influx each year)





License Application, Term and Renewal, Responsible Agent, and Noticing Requirements

Licensing Requirements

Required documentation:

Proof of primary residence (Legacy Exemption)

Designation of a Local Responsible Agent (can be applicant)

Insurance or host platform coverage - \$1,000,000.00

Parking plan: minimum of one (1) parking space for a studio or 1-Bedroom Lodging Unit; two (2) parking spaces for a Lodging Unit with two (2) or more Bedrooms

Life-safety compliance and renter signage documentation

After initial approval, licensee must send Good Neighbor Notice to all immediately adjacent neighbors advising them of the STR license approval within 14 days.



License Application, Term and Renewal, Responsible Agent, and Noticing Requirements

Change in Ownership



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

License expires:

- Change in ownership

- Licensed Lessee is no longer a lessee

Exceptions:

- One owner among several transfers interest to the other owners

- One lessee among several lessees no longer maintains permanent residency

Updated information in these situation must be provided to the County – no fee will be charged for updating ownership/lessee information covered by the exceptions





Responsibilities of Licensee and Local Responsible Agent (LRA)

LRA Definition: property management company or person designated by Licensee and authorized to manage the Short-Term Rental on a day-to-day basis including the ability to make repairs and respond to concerns.

Applicant may serve as the LRA or may designate a LRA

LRA contact information must remain current; any changes must be reported to the County

LRA must answer calls within 15 minutes and be able to arrive at the property within 60 minutes

Calls may come from nearby residents, renters or Host Compliance hotline

Either the licensee or LRA must be available 24/7 while the property is rented or occupied.

An alternate LRA option will be provided at time of application. Alternative LRA information will be provided on the Good Neighbor Notice.

Reasoning: Response time expectations ensure that operators have a designated contact who can address issues quickly, helping resolve complaints before they escalate.





Requirements and Limitations Primary Residence

Definition: The place in which a person's habitation is fixed for the term of the License and is the person's usual place of return. A person can only have one (1) Primary Residence.

Requirement: All new STR licenses will be required to show proof of primary residency when licensing.

Legacy designated applications are exempt from this requirement

Reasoning: Preserve long-term housing, prevent commercial STR conversions, and reduce neighborhood disruption.



Requirements and Limitations

Life Safety Standards



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Must comply with OWTS regulations and complete an inspection, when applicable

Use rooms only as intended, and maintain all structures in safe condition

Required: working smoke/CO detectors, fire extinguishers, labeled electrical panels, and safe plumbing. Hot tubs/pools must be maintained to prevent illness; adequate trash receptacles.

Prohibited: camping/RVs, use of unlicensed motorized vehicles, portable charcoal grills, and firearm discharge.





Requirements and Limitations

Occupancy & Large Gatherings

Occupancy shall not exceed 2 persons per bedroom + 2 persons

If on OWTS (Septic) occupancy would need to follow OWTS permit occupancy

Only one (1) Renter group at a time

STR properties may not host events or gatherings exceeding 100% of the permitted overnight occupancy limit.

Ex: 10-person occupancy → 20-person max gathering at property

Reasoning: Address neighborhood concerns; ensure safe occupancy.





Requirements and Limitations

Separation Requirements

500-foot separation requirement applied to all new STR properties measured from property lines (Legacy exemption)

No more than one hundred (100) licenses in Multi-Family Buildings or Structures available in the unincorporated Arapahoe County area, regardless of distance between rentals

Waitlist option will be offered once the cap is reached

Reasoning:

500-foot separation: Prevents clusters of STRs in residential areas, reducing parking, noise, and traffic impacts, which are the majority of STR complaints. Created a legacy exemption for this requirement.

Multi-family License Cap: Protects available long-term housing stock, reduces strain on shared building amenities, and avoids over-concentration in high-density areas.



Additional Requirements and Limitations



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

No Accessory Dwelling Unit may be used as a STR except when the property is nine acres or larger.

All STRs must meet applicable local, state and federal standards

Lodging Units utilized must have obtained a Certificate of Occupancy

Licensee must have Interior signage and Renter written instructions in the unit summarizing policies, occupancy limits, parking locations, and emergency contact information; details must also be provided to Renter electronically prior to stay.

Advertisements: must include occupancy limits and license number

Vacation Rental Services: shall remove a listing after notification by the County that a unit is not licensed



Additional Requirements and Limitations continued...



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Authority for Authorized Public Inspector to inspect as needed with advanced noticed and coordination with Licensee or their designee.

Licensees and Owners are responsible for any violations of the Ordinance

Taxes must be collected/paid by Licensee

Licensee/LRA/Owner(s) notifications – in-person, by mail



Legacy Designation



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Operating within the 6 months prior to the Ordinance effective date; documentation required

Exemptions including:

Primary residence

Separation rules (500-foot buffer or multi-family cap)

Applicants must apply for a License within 60 days of the Ordinance effective date. After deadline, the system will shut down to allow staff time to process and map all existing Legacy applications prior to processing any new applications (500-foot buffer and multi-family cap will need to be evaluated and mapped once all Legacy applications have been processed).

 ARAPAHOE COUNTY	Public Works and Development Zoning 6924 S. Lima Street Centennial, Colorado 80112 720-874-6711 STR@arapahoegov.com	Short-Term Rental Licensing Program LEGACY DESIGNATION
--	--	---

Please complete all applicable sections, sign, date, and upload this form along with all other required information through the County's Customer Access portal.

Are you applying for a Short-Term Rental License with a Legacy designation?

Yes No

Was the property marketed and used as a Short-Term Rental within 6 months prior to the ordinance effective date?

Yes No

Reasoning: Licenses are tied to the operator, not just the property. Legacy licenses will eventually become primary residences and long-term housing stock, if sold.





Sections 7-9: License Denial, Suspension and Revocation

Section 7: Application Denial - Application is incomplete, inaccurate, missing fees, or fails to meet ordinance requirements.

Section 8: Suspension & Revocation - Repeated violations, unresponsive Local Responsible Agent, unresolved safety/building code issues, or unpaid taxes/fees. Suspension continues until violations are corrected.

Revocation applies for repeated suspensions, false information, or operating during suspension; prohibits STR use for at least one year.

Section 9: Appeals - Applicants may appeal a denial, suspension, or revocation to the Board of Adjustment.





ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Sections 10-11: Fees and Violations, Penalties & Enforcement

Fees are set by Resolution of the BOCC; No License shall be issued prior to fees being paid

Section 11 outlines how violations of the STR ordinance are handled, including:

When warnings may be issued

When immediate enforcement is deemed appropriate

Each day of noncompliance counts as a separate offense

Establishes fine amounts



Land Development Code Amendment



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Establishes STRs as a permitted use in agricultural & residential districts, unless a development plan prohibits them. Mirrors ordinance requirements (spacing, licensing, ADU restrictions).

TABLE 3-2.1 PERMITTED USE TABLE																								
P = Permitted, A = Accessory, SR = Use by Special Review, SE = Use by Special Exception, T= Temporary Use/Temporary Use Permit Required, Blank = Not Permitted																								
	Agriculture and Residential ^[1]												R-MF	MU	Non-Residential ^[1]							PUD Districts ^[2]	Overlay	Use Specific Standard
	A-E	A-1	RR-A	RR-B	RR-C	R-1-A	R-1-B	R-1-C	R-1-D	R-2-A	R-2-B	R-M			B-1	B-3	B-4	B-5	I-1	I-2	FBI	O	PUD	SBC-O
Residential Uses																								
Household Living																								
Home Occupation, General	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A								A		3-3.12.A	
Home Occupation, Day Care	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A								A		3-3.12.B	
Home Occupation, Day Care Experienced Provider or Large	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE								SE		3-3.12.B	
Marijuana, Non-commercial use	<i>See Sections 3-3.5.C.2.a, and 3-3.5.C.3</i>												<i>See Sections 3-3.5.B, and 3-3.5.C</i>							<i>See Sections 3-3.5.B, and 3-3.5.C</i>		3-3.5		
Pets	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A							A		3-3.2.E	
Backyard Bees or Chickens					A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A									A		3-3.2.I3-3.2.I	
Temporary Residence	T	T	T																					
Short-Term Rental	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P								P Unless expressly prohibited by the approved PUD plan		3-3.2.J	



Referral Comments



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

South Metro Fire Rescue (SMFR): The ordinance’s primary residence requirement, combined with the absence of limits on simultaneous rentals, could result in STRs being classified as “lodging houses”, requiring sprinkler installation.

Incorporated occupancy restriction limiting to *only one renter group at a time*

Arapahoe County Assessor and Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Offices: Requested notification of properties approved/licensed to operate as a Short-Term Rental. No changes were recommended.

Public Health: On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) aka “Septic System”

Modified language in “Occupancy” section to ensure OWTS occupancy limits supersede the ordinance occupancy limits, when applicable

Modified language to clearly require septic system inspection prior to initial approval of STR license

Skyline Fire Protection District: Requested modification of “Authorized Public Inspector” definition to include local Fire Marshal or their designee.



Proposed Fees



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Arapahoe County Proposed: \$200 initial application fee & \$350 annual license fee

Douglas County: Application Review Fee for First Licensing Year: \$500; Application Review Fee for Subsequent Licensing Years: \$270; License Fee: \$130

City of Centennial: Annual license is \$150.00; and one time \$50.00 application fee.

Denver: application fee of \$50; annual license fee of \$100

Reasoning: Fees are set to recover the true cost of administering the program; aimed to be consistent with other neighboring jurisdictions





ARAPAHOE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS & DEVELOPMENT

Questions

