

# Overview\* of Mayor Goodwin's STR Recommendations

with comments & suggested tweaks

(As Interpreted by Save Folly's Future - May 2022)

## 18 Recommendations (+ 3 of our own)

- 1.1 Owner Occupied and Non-owner Occupied STRs are both subject to the new rules.

Owner Occupied STRs do not typically produce the same type or level of problems, nor do they represent the same existential threat to the community as Non-Owner Occupied STRs. In the future, the two should be decoupled to allow for more economic potential for full time residents.
- 1.2 All current STR license holders can keep licenses and renew each year
  - a) STR licenses do not convey upon sale of property (except to select relatives)
  - b) Transfers or sales to grandparents, parents, spouse or children are allowed  
(Why not add siblings?)
  - c) Licenses that are inactive for 12 months (without a good reason) will be lost.
  - d) All new licenses after ordinance is enacted will be subject to "Cap System"
- 1.3. Every dwelling unit in the city will be subject to the new ordinance. Including all condo units and individual units within two family or multi-family buildings. (No exceptions)
- 1.4 Cap will be set initially at 900. Going forward the total percentage will be 37% of all dwelling units in the entire city. The specific number of STR licenses allowed will increase as more dwellings are created but the total percentage will remain at 37.
  - If there are more STR applicants than available licenses, a wait list will be created.
  - Licenses can be lost for late renewal or no activity for 12 months.
- 2.1 Additional Fees will be Introduced, **in addition to the usual Business License fee.**

For: Owner Occupied STRs - \$1,000      Non-Owner Occupied STRS - \$2,000

**Suggested Change:** Fees should be based on a percentage of previous year's income, similar to Business license fees. Less income = less additional fees and more income = more additional fees. (Suggest 2% or 3%)
- 2.2 Most STR infractions will change from criminal to civil to enable immediate issuance of fines. All Fines to be \$500. (For every infraction?)

"The Mayor recommends increasing the fines and immediacy of fines when there is a rental strike."

**Policy Changes:**

  - Change the STR ordinance to make all rental violations subject to \$500 civil tickets.
  - Each conviction shall constitute a strike.
  - After three strikes in a rolling 12 month period, the City will initiate a revocation hearing.
  - If local agents cannot appear on site or respond to an emergency within 30 minutes, it will be a ticketed offense. (30 minutes is not enough time for nights and weekends.)
  - Advertising for less than 3 nights will be a ticketed offense."

**Suggested Change:** A list of STR offenses with varying amounts should be created. Fees could range from \$50 to \$500 depending on the severity of the infraction. (For instance: Not taking in a trash container for 3 days does not merit a \$500 fine or a strike but might merit a \$50 fine.)

- 2.3 City will hire additional staff to oversee STR applications, issues, problems & complaints.  
Hopefully, a member of this staff will be “on call” 24/7 to answer telephone, text, or email complaints and respond accordingly.
- 2.4 Accommodation Tax accounts must be paid in full before a renewal is allowed.
- 3.1 Parking – Parking areas must be clearly marked. If there are not enough on-site spaces to meet parking requirements the number of overnight guests may be reduced. Alternative parking plans may be considered by city staff.
- 3.2 All properties must be managed by a state regulated property manager or realtor(or attorney.  
Added to be consistent with state law.)  
**Suggested Change:** This is OK for most STRs, but every STR owner should have the right to manage **their own property**; if they are able to respond within 30 minutes and do all the other things required by the city, just like the professionals.
- 3.3 The City Notification System will switch from sending a letter to a “real time” system.  
For Example: phone, text or email. ( Also necessary for the proposed 30 minute notification system to function properly.)
- 3.4 Noise - Will now be a civil matter and a fine can be issued on the spot. More than one noise violation will require owner to install noise monitoring equipment.
- 3.5 Minimum number of nights per booking = 3
- 3.6 Certificate of Occupancy must be in hand before new builds or major remodels can apply for an STR license. (or get on STR waitlist)
- 3.7 Building must meet the 2018 Property Maintenance Code by a third party inspection.  
( Inspection to include: fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, select maintenance items, etc.)  
The 2018 Property Maintenance Code is 65 pages long and contains over 30 pages of regulations. TOO much!  
**Suggested Change:** There could be a “Health and Safety Checklist” with between 25 and 75 items. A “Emergency Evacuation Plan” for each bedroom and “emergency egress window ladders” for two and three story bedrooms should be included in the checklist. Three stories is a long way to jump to escape from a burning building. (This may take several years to fully implement)
- 3.8 Septic System - Owner must provide documentation that the septic system is rated for 120 GPD (Gallons per Day) per bedroom.
- 3.9 Number of bedrooms to be rented can not exceed the official number recorded by the Charleston County Tax Assessor.

4.1 Quoted Directly: “Recommendation 1: The Mayor recommends developing a robust communications plan addressing all stakeholders to provide information on short term rentals. Policy: This could include a dedicated page on the website with a feedback form, a robust communication plan addressing all stakeholders to educate them on existing ordinances (STR and Noise) via the Sandspur and Folly Current, insert educational material into tax bills, how enforcement works with Public Safety, utilize TVPC to market beach as a family beach, and what tools they can appeal to Council for a Rezoning under a neighborhood preservation zoning overlay. Reasoning: Many stakeholders find the rules confusing or difficult to navigate. The City also wishes to be as transparent and helpful as possible. Public Information from the city about STRs for residents, licensees and tourists will be significantly improved.”

Hopefully this will include a paper booklet designed for those wanting info about STR licenses with everything needed to start and manage an STR. A second paper publication for residents and tourist with Do's and Don'ts in clear and simple language would also be very useful.

## Three Additional Recommendations From Save Folly's Future

**+1. Total Number of People Allowed** – The normal number is 25(No matter the size of the unit), but it's 49 with a Special Event Notice. (Special Event Notice = No extra fees, just give notice and a emergency telephone number. )

**This rule probably contributes to more  
Party House problems than any other factor**

**Suggested Change:** The total number of people allowed on an STR property at one time should be limited to twice the number of allowed overnight guests. For example: If the STR is licensed to sleep 12, then the total number of people allowed on the property at any given time would be 24. That's 25 less people and would go a long way to reducing problems at PARTY HOUSES.  
(Maybe offer up to 3 Special Events per year per STR for a FEE)

**+2. STR On-Site Identification Plaque** - Every STR should have a small sign or plaque that can be seen from public view with it's local registration number (1- 900)

**+3. STR on-line Register - Get on-line info for any Folly Beach STR.**  
**Find any STR by using the on-site plaque number or street address.**  
On-Line info to include: Plaque Registration Number (1 – 900), address, number of bedrooms, number of overnight guests allowed, total number of people allowed, name and contact info of property manager, number of recent fines, etc

\* This is an overview, minor details may have been omitted.