

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chelan County Short-Term Rental Task Force
FROM: Chelan County Board of Commissioners
DATE: 25 January 2021
SUBJECT: Instructions for Task Force Dialogue

Thank you for agreeing to serve in this important process to address a difficult issue that affects many in our County. To make your time and effort as efficient as possible, we provide these instructions on the framework and scope for your upcoming discussions.

First, the Chelan County Comprehensive Plan, with its attendant codes and policies, is the foundation for the work of the Task Force. In all your deliberations, you should refer to our adopted codes and the language in the Comp Plan to address any ambiguities or uncertainties related to short-term rentals.

Second, the Chelan County Planning Commission—and the Board of Commissioners—devoted considerable time, analysis, and resources into the development of the draft ordinance that you are to provide recommendations on. This draft is also based on comments received from several hundred constituents. That draft code should therefore also be used as the basis to begin dialogue; the final two versions of the ordinance (8 December and 22 December) should be used as a starting point.

Through the public comment process, we are satisfied that the majority of our constituents—including those who represent both the STR owners and the neighborhoods—are in support of strict operational standards (septic compliance, noise, contact person availability, etc.) and enforcement. Those sections of the draft ordinance are established, so the Task Force should not address that part of the draft ordinance. You may discuss how the standards can be reached, but not whether to do them.

Third, there are specific issues which have broader implications and therefore are important in our goal to have an equitable and practical ordinance. The most important issues for the Task Force to consider are listed here, in priority:

- Which areas should short-term rentals be allowed—and how should we address the issue of having rentals in residential zones?
- In those zones that will allow short term rentals, what are the limitations (for example, should a minimum lot size be a criterion for limiting rentals in specific zones)?
- How do we address the issue of “grandfathering” in existing rentals, and whether we should allow transferability of permits?
- What should be the “cap” on the number or percentage of rentals within a given area (i.e., zip code or subarea)?
- How do we get to that cap, in the present, and in the future?
- How do we put a cap on the occupancy levels for Tier 1, 2, and 3 rentals?

We believe that you already have a reasonable understanding of these issues, but we encourage you to consult (individually or collectively) with our Community Development Director Jim Brown or our Technical Consultant Lisa Grueter for any background information or data that you may need. They are there to serve you.

Fourth, we ask that the Task Force complete its work by 23 April 2021, allowing Jim and Lisa adequate time to prepare the report with your recommendations and conclusions to the Board of Commissioners by 7 May 2021. As he has a strong background in consensus-based group dialogue, we are authorizing your facilitator Michael Nash with considerable latitude to manage the group in the way that he sees best. Mike will set the group rules, operating procedures, and communications plan, if needed. He has the authority to ask a member not to participate if he believes it is in the best interests of the group and its charge.

Last, and perhaps most importantly, we appointed you because we believe that you have the temperament and ability to listen, to engage, and seek consensus. It is our hope that you will be able to provide consensus recommendations on the issues described above. You may receive unwarranted criticism from some in our community, but please bear in mind that we will support you in this important effort. We also remind you that your report to us will be recommendations, and not necessarily incorporated verbatim into the final code. That is the role of the Board of Commissioners.

Copies to:

Jim Brown, Community Development Director
Michael Nash, Task Force Facilitator
Lisa Grueter, BERK Consulting