
From: Ross Levin [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 2, 2025 8:33 PM
To: Planning Commission Public Comments
Cc: Erick Gomez
Subject: 050-212-008

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

I appreciate the City of Atascadero's thoughtful engagement with the short-term rental (STR) discussion and your commitment to balancing community concerns with property rights and economic vitality.

As the owner of a fully licensed, tax-paying STR at [REDACTED], I respectfully urge the Council to include a **grandfathering clause** for existing, compliant short-term rentals like mine in any new ordinance.

Key Points of Support:

- **Compliance and Contribution:** Our STR has always complied with city rules and paid all applicable taxes. We've hosted families, local visitors, and repeat guests who support Atascadero's economy — restaurants, wineries, shops, and events.
- **No Complaints or Issues:** We have operated responsibly and received no neighbor complaints or citations. Penalizing responsible operators retroactively undermines the integrity of city permitting.
- **Stability and Property Value:** STR income directly offsets maintenance, insurance, and mortgage costs. Sudden changes to allowable use would have significant financial impacts and risk devaluing a legal investment.
- **Fairness and Precedent:** Grandfathering is a well-established legal and planning practice that recognizes prior compliance under previously existing laws. The city itself acknowledged this during its October 2024 meeting, where staff and Council members recognized the importance of treating current hosts fairly.
- **Business-Friendly Reputation:** Atascadero has long been respected for its business-forward, common-sense approach compared to more restrictive neighboring communities. Grandfathering supports that tradition while still allowing the Council to shape future policy for new applicants.

Final Thought:

I strongly support reasonable regulations for new STRs moving forward. However, I urge the Council to formally **grandfather in all existing, permitted STRs with no history of complaints or violations**. This preserves fairness, legal expectations, and economic stability — without penalizing those who have followed the rules from the start.

Respectfully,
Ross Levin MD

From: Krystle Levin [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 2, 2025 8:37 PM
To: Planning Commission Public Comments
Cc: Erick Gomez
Subject: 050-212-008

As the owner of a licensed short-term rental property in Atascadero, I respectfully urge the Council and Planning Commission to ensure that any new short-term rental regulations **grandfather in existing, compliant, and permitted STRs**. Properties like mine have operated legally, paid the required taxes, and maintained positive relationships with neighbors and guests alike.

It would be fundamentally unfair to change the rules for those who followed them in good faith. **Retroactively applying new restrictions**—such as owner-occupancy requirements or zoning prohibitions—could result in significant financial harm to responsible operators and undermine trust in the permitting process.

Short-term rentals are a vital part of Atascadero's tourism economy. They support local restaurants, wineries, shops, and services. Many visitors prefer STRs over hotels for family stays or longer-term travel. **Imposing overly burdensome requirements or eliminating existing operations would have a chilling effect** on investment, local business growth, and the city's reputation as business-friendly and forward-looking.

I fully support thoughtful regulation that ensures STRs are operated safely and respectfully. But that regulation should start **with new applicants moving forward**, not punish those who are already complying. Please **prioritize fairness and consistency by protecting existing permitted STRs**.

Thank you for your consideration.
Krystle Levin

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From: Jim Smith <JSmith@hbsb.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2025 4:24 PM
To: Planning Commission Public Comments
Cc: Tori Keen; Jason Anderson; Victoria Carranza; Catherine David; Greg Heath; Maggie O'Malley; Eric Pennachio
Subject: Public Comments - STR - Agenda, Aug. 19, 2025 - Agenda Item Number; not available

Dear Chairperson Keen and Members of the Atascadero Planning Commission:

This is sent in regards to Atascadero's proposed restrictions on Short Term Rentals ("STR"). My law firm represents interests of Ross and Krystle Levin. Mr. & Ms. Levin own the property at 12105 Santa Ana Road. The property is operated as a STR. My clients have never received any complaints from their neighbors or guests. Moreover, throughout the year since they have owned and operated the property as a STR, they received 28 reviews, all 5 Star. Those are all from out of town guests, most of whom, indicate they will be returning for another visit to Atascadero. Those guests are the ones who also pay TOT generating revenue for the City.

Because of the STR program, the Levins, who have two children, are able to afford and enjoy a home in Atascadero where, upon retirement, they hope to move. It is STR that makes their dream affordable. Requiring STR to be Owner occupied will effectively decimate STR in Atascadero. There are both pros and cons to STR. However, by any objective standard, the benefits for Atascadero far outweigh any detriment.

Benefits

- A. **Increased Tax Revenue / Generated By Visitors, Not the Citizens of Atascadero:** This benefit comes primarily in the form of TOT and Sales Taxes. This is a significant revenue generator; Not imposed on citizens of Atascadero.
- B. **Support for Local Businesses:** Local retailers, grocery stores, vineyards and restaurants are clear winners. Those renting STR do not sit in their Unit looking at the walls. They come to enjoy what Atascadero has to offer. Historically, they stay longer than do hotel guests and spend significantly more money.
- C. **Job Creation:** In addition to jobs created in the above industries, STR must be well maintained. By necessity, that requires employment of local gardeners, landscapers, contractors, pool maintenance, house cleaners and management companies, to name a few.
- D. **Diverse Accommodation Options:** Those staying in STR are generally looking to stay longer, not wanting to stay in a hotel room for a week. Rather than subject themselves to the confines of a hotel room, they will go elsewhere. The longer they stay, the more they spend. Additionally, per person, STRs are generally less expensive than purchasing hotel rooms for a family or group of individuals looking to enjoy Atascadero.
- E. **Higher Level of Maintenance:** STR must be maintained to high standards, both aesthetically and mechanically. Guests are not attracted to property littered with trash,

unkept landscaping, and nonoperational mechanical systems. You will find far more run-down long-term rentals and owner occupied homes than you will find run-down STRs.

Detriment

1. **Decrease in Rental Stock - Unfounded:** One of the most overused attacks on STR is that they decrease the workforce residential rental stock. By and large, STR have no impact on workforce housing. You need look no further than the listings for STR in Atascadero. The majority of property listed, by reason of acquisition cost, size and location, does not lend itself to workforce housing.
2. **Cost of Regulating Restrictions on STR.** It is not inexpensive to enforce STR restrictions. The budget in Santa Barbara exceeds one million dollars. Additionally, a large percentage of the housing stock in Atascadero is comprised of Common Interest. Developments. By law, Homeowner Associations may self-impose STR restrictions. Therefore, if STR are deemed a detriment to a community, let the community (i.e., Owner Assoc.) impose the restriction and cost to enforce.
3. **Adverse Impact on Vacancy Rates – Unfounded:** Paso Robles has a cap on non-hosted STR. The residential vacancy rate in Paso Robles is less than 5%. In contrast, Atascadero has no restrictions. Your vacancy rate is 5.1%. A healthy vacancy rate ranges between 5% & 8%.
4. **STR Generate a Nuisance – Unfounded:** Another misleading claim is STR create a “party house.” I suspect your very own statistics will establish that when comparing, on a percentage basis, long-term rentals to STR, long-term rentals have a far higher frequency of disturbance calls than do STR. However, no one is calling for long term rentals to be owner occupied. The obvious reason is, as with STR, the benefit of long term rentals outweighs the detriment.

Conclusion

The consequences of a STR rental restriction will have adverse consequences far exceeding any benefit to the Atascadero community. STR's are a benefit to Atascadero, contributing to the economy in a reasonable and sensible manner, far outweighing any perceived detriment. Your consideration of the position set forth above is appreciated.



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