

quorum. The members of the boards, commissions and/or committees may be permitted to participate in discussion on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance unless item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that body, board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the above Notice of Meeting was posted on the bulletin board at Wimberley City Hall, a place convenient and readily accessible to the general public at all times, and to the City's website, www.cityofwimberley.com, in compliance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, on Thursday, May 7, 2026 by 6:00 p.m., and remained posted for at least 3 business days preceding the scheduled time of said meeting.



Nathan Glaiser
Director of Planning & Public Works

The City of Wimberley is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Please contact City Secretary Tammy Heller at (512) 648-2403 two business days in advance of the meeting for appropriate arrangements.





City of Wimberley

221 Stillwater, Wimberley, Texas 78676

REGULAR PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
WIMBERLEY CITY HALL – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
221 STILLWATER, WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676
THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 - 6:00 PM

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

2. CALL OF ROLL

The following members were present: Chris Sharp, Ben O’Kane, Anne Ulfelder, Vance McCracken, Jerry Lunow, and Mac McCullough. Commissioner Matt Joyce was absent.

3. CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

No citizens signed up to speak during Citizens Communications.

4. MINUTES

4.1 Consider approval of the February 12, 2026 Regular Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the February 12, 2026 meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes was made by Commissioner Sharp and seconded by Commissioner McCullough. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5. PUBLIC HEARING AND POSSIBLE ACTION

5.1 Hold a public hearing and consider possible action on a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new door to be installed at 13904 Ranch Road 12 Suite 2, Wimberley

Michael Creecy, the property owner taking over the former Los Olivos restaurant space, presented his request to install new custom steel doors. Nathan Glaiser, ACM/Director of Development Services, explained that the property is in the historic district and requires a certificate of appropriateness for door replacements.

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:05 p.m.

Commission members examined the proposed design, which featured 4-foot pivot doors with significant steel framing and glass panels, along with large wooden handles. Several

commissioners expressed concerns about the modern appearance of the doors in relation to the historic district's character.

Commissioners questioned what the new doors would look like, noting they appeared quite different from existing doors in the area. They also asked about the reason for changing the doors, and Michael explained he was opening a new restaurant and needed to replace the existing doors regardless.

The discussion centered on whether the proposed steel doors were too modern for the historic district. Michael referenced similar doors at other local establishments like Nada Mucho and The Let Go, saying there was precedent for such designs. However, commissioners felt the amount of visible steel and the contemporary aesthetic made the doors stand out too much.

Commissioners suggested that if the door color matched the existing window frames, it would better integrate with the building's appearance. After significant discussion, the commission and applicant reached a compromise: the doors could maintain the proposed design but would be made from steel that would be allowed to naturally patina and rust, matching the existing architectural elements on the building, or alternatively be painted to match the window frame color.

Michael agreed to this modification, preferring the natural patina option to avoid future maintenance issues with paint. The wooden handles would remain mahogany to match those used at The Let Go.

Motion to approve a certificate of appropriateness for a new door at 13904 Ranch Road 12, Suite 2 was made by Commissioner Sharp and seconded by Commissioner Ulfelder with the caveat that the color be natural oxidized steel. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5.2 Hold a public hearing and consider possible action on a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior modifications at 101 Old Kyle Road, Wimberley

Nathan Glaiser presented the application for Society Candle Shop's exterior modifications. The scope of work included removing and replacing pine siding with Hardy plank cement board, removing rotting roof beams and replacing with cedar beams, repairing and replacing damaged corrugated metal roofing, repainting to match existing colors, removing an AC unit from the gable peak and repairing the wall, and fixing roof drainage on the porch.

Staff recommended approval, noting that Section 3.3 of the design guidelines specifically allows Hardy plank as replacement material for wood siding as long as profiles match. The proposed work aimed to match the existing building exactly with like-for-like replacements.

Concerns were made about where replacement air conditioning would be located, wanting to ensure no new HVAC units would be placed in prominent front-facing locations. Nathan clarified that the application only requested removal of the existing gable-mounted unit, with no mention of replacement in the application.

The commission agreed to approve the modifications with the understanding that any new exterior HVAC units would need to comply with design guidelines requiring them to be hidden from public view.

Motion to approve the certificate of appropriateness for exterior modifications at 101 Old Kyle Road was made by Commissioner McCracken and seconded by Commissioner Ulfelder. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5.3 Hold a Public Hearing and consider making a recommendation to City Council on the approval of the General Land Office Resilient Communities Program (GLO-RCP) Comprehensive Plan

Nathan Glaiser provided an update on the comprehensive plan process. The main development was the scheduling of a joint Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council meeting for April 9, 2026, where Langford (the consulting firm) would present the most updated version incorporating feedback from previous meetings, including input from the Community Center Townhall presentation.

The commission discussed logistics for the joint meeting and confirmed they had not received any updated materials from Langford since their last interaction. No formal action was taken on this matter.

6. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

6.1 Announcements

Commissioner Vance McCracken provided an update on the Short Term Rental Committee's work. The committee had nearly finished their work and was in the final draft stage but had encountered scheduling difficulties that delayed their next meeting until April 9, 2026, at 4:00 PM. The committee received a 120-day extension from City Council at their last meeting. McCracken indicated they would circulate their final draft to key stakeholders including Anne Ulfelder, the mayor, mayor pro tem, and city administrator before finalizing and presenting to Planning and Zoning, likely in early summer.

6.2 Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Mac McCullough proposed inviting Debbie Howard, a community member with expertise in elderly and affordable housing, to present to the commission at a future meeting. McCullough explained that Howard brings forward-looking ideas about housing solutions for elderly residents and affordable housing options and suggested her input would be valuable given anticipated future development pressures in Wimberley.

The discussion expanded to consider various housing challenges, including protection of affordable housing from conversion to short-term rentals, which had been discussed in the STR committee. Commissioners showed interest in exploring grants for affordable housing studies, with several suggesting they could research available opportunities or consult with Langford about potential funding sources.

Chairwoman Ulfelder requested that staff formally investigate grant opportunities for affordable housing studies. Commissioner McCullough agreed to provide more detailed information about Debbie Howard's background and qualifications for a future presentation.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Anne Ulfelder adjourned the Regular Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6:50 p.m.

RECORDED BY:

Planning & Zoning Commission
Staff Liaison

APPROVED BY:

Planning & Zoning Commission
Chair





City of Wimberley

221 Stillwater, Wimberley, Texas 78676

JOINT PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WIMBERLEY CITY HALL – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
221 STILLWATER, WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026 - 6:00 PM

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jim Chiles and Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Anne Ulfelder called the Joint workshop to order on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

2. CALL OF ROLL

City Secretary Tammy Heller conducted the roll call. Council Members Present: Mayor Jim Chiles, Place 1 Rebecca Minnick, Place 3 Chris Sheffield, Place 4 Bob Clark, and Place 5 David Cohen. Planning and Zoning Commissioners Present: Vance McCracken, Jerry Lunow, Chris Sharp, Ben O'Kane, Anne Ulfelder, and Mac McCullough. A quorum of both governing bodies were present.

3. CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

No citizens signed up to speak during the citizens communication period.

4. WORKSHOP

4.1. Hold a joint Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council workshop to discuss and make recommendations to Langford Community Services regarding the most recent draft of the Comprehensive Master Plan Update, including confirmation of board responsibilities and process for adoption

Jerri Conrado with Langford Community Management Services introduced the team, including resiliency planner Celeste Alvarez, Frank Broussard, and Kevin Coleman, Director of Planning and Mitigation. Conrado noted that chief planner Tim Jenkins had recently resigned but assured the council that all work was on track. The team also included David Baker and Nick Dornak for the OneWater study.

Resiliency Goals and Objectives

Celeste Alvarez presented the resiliency goals and objectives that must be integrated into the comprehensive plan as part of the Resilient Communities Program grant. These goals were derived from the Hays County hazard mitigation plan and public input received through workshops and the portal. The goals cover various hazards including flood, wildfire, windstorms, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, drought, land subsidence, expansive soils, severe winter weather, and cyber threats.

The flood resiliency section includes six objectives focusing on improving infrastructure to reduce flood risk, enhancing early warning systems, promoting flood insurance awareness, mitigating high-risk properties, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and enhancing floodplain management expertise. The team incorporated specific feedback from the portal, including comments about pursuing community rating systems for flood insurance.

Council members asked about the timeline for reviewing these goals. Conrado requested feedback by the end of April to ensure compliance with GLO requirements before final plan approval.

The Junction Analysis

Frank Broussard presented a detailed analysis of development constraints in the Junction area. The study revealed significant limitations due to the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone location, which restricts impermeable surface development. The area faces challenges including:

- Unsuitable soils for concrete slabs and dwellings
- Petroleum storage tank contamination concerns at the 7-Eleven location with multiple monitoring wells indicating potential leaks
- Limited septic system suitability, with surface application systems being the only viable option
- Generally unsuitable conditions for most types of development

Broussard identified one small area north of the Junction that might be more suitable for development, though still challenging due to topography. The analysis suggested that RV parks or tiny homes might be among the few viable development options, as RVs wouldn't count as impermeable structures under Edwards Aquifer regulations.

Council members discussed the implications, with some suggesting this could address affordable housing needs through RV accommodations, though infrastructure challenges would remain significant.

Trails Plan

Celeste Alvarez presented a conceptual trails plan building on the existing Wimberley Valley Trails plan and the city's transportation plan. The proposed network creates circular connections linking downtown to key areas including Woodcreek, with possibilities for sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure.

The plan includes conceptual shuttle routes to reduce downtown congestion, including service from Airbnb locations on Old Kyle Road and cross-river connections. However, council members noted that some proposed routes, particularly on County Road 1492 and River Road, face significant feasibility challenges.

The trails plan incorporates cultural arts and environmental education components through interpretive signage and "way stations" that could highlight Wimberley's history, ecology, and cultural assets. The team emphasized this was a conceptual framework for the 20-year planning horizon rather than immediate implementation requirements.

OneWater Study

David Baker and Nick Dornak presented key findings from the comprehensive water study, emphasizing the critical water challenges facing Wimberley Valley. Baker described the situation as an "existential crisis," noting that the community relies entirely on the Middle Trinity Aquifer, which is being overused, particularly during drought conditions.

Key concerns include:

- Jacobs Well has experienced almost 500 days of zero flow over the past 2.5 years
- The valley is 44 inches behind in rainfall
- One foot of water level change stops Jacob's Well from flowing
- Aqua Texas leaks more water than flows from Jacob's Well
- The area is designated as a Priority Groundwater Management Area

The study recommends several strategic initiatives:

Public Utility Authority (PUA): The primary recommendation is establishing a regional PUA involving Wimberley, Woodcreek, and Hays County. This would provide access to state funding, enable regional water planning, and create a framework for potentially acquiring private utilities. The PUA would not be a taxing entity but could issue bonds and access various state funding programs.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR): The county has hired HDR Engineering to study ASR feasibility, which would involve storing treated water underground during abundant periods for use during drought.

Conservation Measures: Implementing aggressive conservation standards, particularly targeting outdoor water use which represents about 60 percent of residential consumption.

GBRA Water Secure Pipeline: The team presented both pros and cons of the proposed surface water pipeline from Kyle to Wimberley. While this could provide water supply diversification, concerns include the high cost (potentially 800 percent rate increases), potential to spur unwanted development, and questions about long-term sustainability versus land conservation investments.

Council members engaged in extensive discussion about these options. Mayor Pro Tem Minnick and Mayor Chiles indicated ongoing conversations with county officials about PUA formation, though they noted political complexities and "powerful opponents" to navigate.

David Cohen questioned the PUA's authority over entities like Aqua Texas, with Baker explaining that while direct regulatory authority might be limited, the PUA could provide leverage through access to capital and coordinated regional planning.

Zoning Requirements

Kevin Coleman explained that the General Land Office (GLO) requires adoption of some enforceable measure furthering the plan's objectives following plan adoption. While originally

described as "zoning change or equivalent," the specific requirements are still being clarified with GLO as Wimberley was among the first communities through this grant process.

Timeline and Next Steps

The team outlined the remaining timeline:

- April 30: Deadline for feedback on resiliency goals and objectives
- June 1: Delivery of semi-final plan for review (95 percent complete)
- 60-day review period for council and planning & zoning commission
- August target for final adoption through public hearings
- December 31, 2026: Final grant deadline with option for up to 2-year extension if needed

Conrado emphasized that the plan will be formatted as a "living document" with digital functionality, GIS mapping capabilities, and organized appendices to make the extensive research more manageable while maintaining comprehensive documentation.

Council members expressed concern about the volume of material to review, requesting better organization with executive summaries and clear implementation guidance. The team committed to providing both printed and digital formats optimized for usability.

The workshop concluded with appreciation for the comprehensive work and commitment to meet the review timeline for final adoption by August 2026.

5. CITY COUNCIL/BOARD REPORTS

No reports were given during this agenda item.

6. ADJOURNMENT

As this was Anne Ulfelder's final meeting as Planning and Zoning Commission Chair before joining the City Council, Mayor Chiles asked her to close the meeting. Commissioner Ulfelder adjourned the Joint Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council workshop meeting for April 9, 2026 at 7:45 p.m.

RECORDED BY:

Tammy Heller, City Secretary

APPROVED BY:

James T. Chiles, Mayor

Ben O’Kane, PZC Vice Chair





AGENDA ITEM:	1. Hold a discussion regarding the recommendations provided by the Short-term Rental Committee and provide a recommendation to City Council.
SUBMITTED BY:	Nathan Glaiser
DATE SUBMITTED:	05/04/2026
MEETING DATE:	May 14, 2026

AGENDA FORM

ITEM DESCRIPTION/SUMMARY

The Short-term Rental Committee was created to review the City of Wimberley's current short-term rental regulations. They have met multiple times over the past 5 months to analyze the current short-term rental environment and to make recommendations for changes to the City's Zoning Code regarding STRs. The final recommendations are attached. The Planning and Zoning Commission must review and discuss the recommendations and then provide a report and recommendations to City Council.

REQUESTED ACTION

Motion
Discussion

FINANCIAL

None

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NA

ATTACHMENT/S

1. STR Report, 1 May 2026

Report of the Short-Term Rental Committee
Wimberley Planning and Zoning Commission
1 May 2026

At the July 2025 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission (P & Z), Chair Anne Ulfelder asked Vance McCracken to assemble and chair a committee to research the short-term rental (STR) situation in Wimberley and to produce a report of its findings. In due course the STR Committee (the Committee) comprised of the following members was established: Helena Hauk, Courtney Mecklenburg, Vance McCracken, Rebecca Minnick, and Ben O’Kane. Nathan Glaiser provided City support.

At its October meeting the Planning and Zoning Commission passed, after considerable discussion, a motion to recommend that the Wimberley City Council (Council) approve a short-term rental conditional use permit (CUP) for a property zoned R-3 on River Road. When Council considered the case, there was also substantial deliberation and public input, which prompted Council to place a 120-day moratorium on applications for STR CUP’s, pending the findings of the Committee. Should more time be required, Council offered to extend the moratorium.

In the meantime, Langford Community Management Services, Inc., the firm employed by the City of Wimberley (City) to produce its new comprehensive plan, was in the process of preparing its first draft. As of this date the Committee is proceeding without guidance from the plan.

Preliminary

Until the moratorium, P & Z and Council considered applications for CUP’s for both owner-occupied short-term rentals (STR1’s) and non-owner-occupied short-term rentals (STR2’s) by gauging whether any negative impacts on the neighborhood outweighed the benefits of another STR in the community and the benefits to the applicant. This depended on the willingness and ability of neighbors to point out unique circumstances of the case and to voice objections or support, and on the judgement of the members of the two boards, which varied over time as their members rotated on and off. In the last five years Council has approved 60 STR’s and denied about 15. One of the aims of the Committee is a system for considering STR CUP applications that require less judgement on the part of P & Z and Council while offering more clearcut outcomes for applicants.

Having researched Wimberley’s STR environment and the problems faced by similar Texas tourist towns – and their attempts to mitigate them – the Committee believes that this examination of Wimberley’s STR’s is well-timed. The number of STR’s in a community can reach a critical mass that overwhelms services and infrastructure, reduces available housing for residents, inflates the purchase price of housing, and puts tourism out of balance with the lifestyle of the locals. Wimberley has not yet experienced major problems in this regard, but now is the time to become proactive, in the interests of the entire community. This report offers an assessment of the current economic situation relating to STR’s, which will change

over time in ways that we cannot now foresee. Because of their economic importance to Wimberley, the City would be well advised to review STR's every few years or as circumstances dictate.

This report attempts to describe the current configuration of the STR market ("Lay of the Land") and offers recommendations that might enhance the role that STR's play in Wimberley ("Recommendations"). The term "STR's" will include: a) hotels, and b) residences (residential STR's) that offer short-term rentals, unless otherwise noted. Although it is the latter that is more commonly thought of as STR's, the state and local hotel occupancy taxes and a number of statistics apply to both and cannot be disambiguated. This report covers the City and excludes the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

Lay of the Land

The Committee has identified five types of participants in Wimberley's short-term rental market.

- a) Wimberley's tourism office is headquartered at the Wimberley Visitor's Center and is an arm of the City. Its purpose is to promote tourism in Wimberley. Its website showcases about 117 residential STR's in Wimberley and the local hotels – plus a unit or two in San Marcos, RV parks, and several sites with different names at the same addresses.
- b) HdL Companies. This is a national firm that the City has retained to administer short-term rentals and to collect the hotel occupancy tax. It conducts audits and frequently performs "data scraping", whereby it compares publicly disseminated material meant to attract STR customers with the tax collected from those properties.
- c) There are various types of rental agents that match tourists with residential STR's. Airbnb and Vrbo show available properties on online maps, but it is difficult to identify exactly how many each has within the City limits. The Committee's best estimate is 130 and 100 properties respectively. Hill Country Premier Lodging – Texas, which has a local presence, claims about 125 properties for rental in Wimberley and the ETJ. Vacay Hill Country, Emerson Rents, and Bliss Vacation Rentals, among others, also offer Wimberley properties. There is an unknown – undoubtedly very large – amount of duplication of properties listed by these agents.
- d) There are seven hotels in Wimberley with a total of 114 rooms:

7-A Ranch	28
Blair House	12
The Bygone Hotel	16
Creekhaven Inn	16
Hotel Flora and Fauna	13
Square Inn	8
Wimberley Inn and Bar	21
- e) Residential STR's comprise a confusing variety of units, whose categories overlap. Therefore there is no hard number for residential STR's in Wimberley, a difficulty compounded by the fact that individual residents may or may not make their units

available for rental at any given time. In fact, they may be dormant for years. Here are the best breakdowns that we can provide:

- City records show that there are 72 properties that have the CUP's that qualify them as STR2's and 28 as STR1's, although not all are active. The total of 100 are on properties zoned as follows:

R3 (residential, 0.22 - 0.45 acre)	10
R2 (residential, 0.45 – 2 acres)	26
R1 (residential, 2+acres)	14
RA (residential agricultural)	23
C3 (commercial high impact)	6
C2 (commercial moderate impact)	2
C1 (commercial low impact)	16
SC (scenic corridor)	2
NS (neighborhood services)	1
- There are 26 properties that are allowed to make short-term rentals without a CUP because they were grandfathered in 2016, when Wimberley adopted regulations on STR's. The City maintains a list of these, but the status of each is nebulous, and according to City staff, they must prove up their grandfather status if they wish to open an STR.
- There are eight properties zoned L1 (lodging – up to 15 units) that do not require CUPs in order to operate STR's, and that are currently paying tax. There is one property zoned PR1 (participant recreation) that does not require a CUP. It too is paying tax.
- A small number of STR2 owners, such as Vacation Property Masters, have between three and ten units in their portfolios.
- There are 70 STR's that have paid the hotel occupancy tax within the last year and that also have CUP's. There are 40 STR's that have paid the hotel occupancy tax within the last year but do not have CUP's.

The question arises as to which of the 40 properties currently pay the hotel occupancy tax but do not have CUP's. If all 26 grandfathered properties, the eight L1's and the PR1 are included, this leaves only five. These could be Wimberley Planned Development Districts (WPDD's), which have specifically tailored functions that might include making short-term rentals. But it is likely that the breakdown is otherwise and that a few properties are providing STR's without the necessary authority. Nevertheless, they are paying tax.

A more fiscally sensitive question is: How many properties are leased as STR's without payment of tax? The Committee relies on the confidence that City staff has in the efforts taken by HdL to compare the individual tax remissions with active solicitations for guests. We are assured that tax evasion must be very low. Therefore, the Committee is operating on the assumption that the number of active residential STR's is 110, the number of taxpayers in 2025.

Monthly occupancy rates for the residential and hotel STR's together were provided by Hill Country Premier Lodging – Texas. They averaged 33.2% for 2024 and 34.5% for 2025. In March, July and October of 2024 the percentages peaked in the low 40s. In 2025 they peaked in

the high 40s in March and July and at 32% in November. Although all these numbers seem low, it must be remembered that tourist demand is primarily for three-day weekends. Extrapolation would suggest that for the weekends the occupancy rate is a reasonable 75%. One assumes that upward rate adjustments and the nature of renting out rooms in one's home make the economics work for the homeowners and hoteliers. These occupancy statistics suggest that there is no shortage of STR units in Wimberley, as does the slight fall in hotel occupancy tax revenue between the fiscal years of 2024 and 2025. The sense of the Committee strongly confirms this.

The impact of STR's on Wimberley occurs in many ways. The hotel occupancy tax collections in the City's fiscal years 2024 and 2025 suggest that the annual contributions to the local gross domestic product (GDP) of short-term rentals were \$10.53 million and \$10.41 million respectively. There are no statistics for the gross domestic product of Wimberley, but by extrapolating the calculations of the Federal Reserve of St. Louis for the 2023 per-capita GDP of Hays County to Wimberley's population of about 2,900, the short-term rental revenue appears to comprise about 7% of the town's GDP.

Tourism is a key economic driver in Wimberley, and its success rests in large part from the money spent by people who spend several days in STR's rather than by day-trippers. The contribution of short-term rental income is also a plus for the homeowners who participate and for the hoteliers and their staffs.

There are also downsides to residential STR's. The most recited is the usually apocryphal party of beer-drinking rabble-rousers who rented the house next door for the weekend. They were noisy, indecent, and out of control, and they left trash everywhere. This has surely happened at some time in Wimberley, but City staff report that in recent years there have been almost no complaints of any kind to the City about STR's. More common problems include parking and trespassing issues (especially on the riverfront), and renters who cannot reach the homeowner or his representative in the event of an emergency or a malfunction.

The Committee has perceived a systemic dilemma in the growing tendency for investors, particularly including those who are not resident in Wimberley, to purchase R3 property and convert it into STR's as a purely commercial venture – a far different circumstance from that of a homeowner who wishes to rent out her second home while she is away. There are no firm statistics on this point, but the ratio of 28 STR1's to 72 STR2's noted above reveals the preponderance of non-resident STR's. No applications for an STR1 have been received since 2024. One of the resulting downsides of STR2's held for investment is the removal from the housing inventory of units that would otherwise be used by residents as low-cost housing, a commodity that Wimberley notably lacks. Moreover, when several such purchases occur in an area, it hollows out the neighborhood as a viable community whose residents know and care for each other.

City staff has mapped the 100 STR CUPS. They are randomly scattered, with the downtown area having the highest concentration, followed by Flite Acres. However, the most significant concentration occurs in the ETJ, in the area encompassed by High Mesa Drive, located just west of the City boundary.

The Committee has not identified deterioration of the community’s infrastructure that it can attribute solely or primarily to short-term renters.

The ratio of residential STR’s to total housing units in a community is an indication of the extent to which traditional private residences are being made available to temporary paying guests. A high ratio may be cause for concern that residential properties are in short supply, thereby squeezing out some local residents, particularly lower-income workers and retirees, either as owners or renters. It may also indicate the transformation of a community from an average mix of economic uses to one in which tourism dominates. Research shows that the home values in high-ratio communities rise as entrepreneurs convert residential housing to STR’s¹. One reason for this is that the preponderance of the growth of STR’s is housing in which there is no full-time resident. In Wimberley terms, STR2’s, not STR1’s, replace residences, and the economic benefits arising from renting such properties allow their purchase at higher prices than a resident would pay.

There appear to be no guidelines from urban planners as to what level of the STR/total housing units ratio begins to be problematic. But comparing the STR count of 110 for Wimberley, as discussed above, with its total housing units yields a ratio of 7.6%. Is this too high, too low, or about right for our community? This is a matter of opinion. The ratio for the United States in 2024 was 1.6%². Here are the ratios for some selected Texas cities, some of them tourist towns, some not³. The necessary caveat with all these numbers is that every community has difficulty in establishing with confidence the number of STR’s, but the total numbers of dwelling units seem to be much more reliable.

Austin	1.5%
New Braunfels	2.2%
Galveston	4.2%
Granbury	6.4%
Rockport	13.4%
Fredericksburg	32.4%
Port Aransas	43.8%

Considering Wimberley’s position in this lineup, the Committee holds that this is an appropriate time to restrict modestly the supply of the growth in the number of STR’s through regulation. The experiences of other Texas communities indicate that the current balance in Wimberley between the economic benefits of STR’s and their negative impacts can be

¹ Mid-America Regional Council, “Is the Growth of Short-Term Rentals Fueling the Region’s Housing Crisis?”, October 28, 2024, <https://www.marc.org/news/economy-housing/growth-short-term-rentals-fueling-regions-housing-crisis>

² Congressional Research Service, “Short Term Rental Markets: A Primer”, https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/IF/PDF/IF12920/IF12920.1.pdf

³ The numbers of STR’s are taken from the airroi website, “What are the Best Places to Invest in Airbnb in Texas, United States?”, <https://www.airroi.com/airbnb-data/united-states/texas>. The numbers of dwelling units are taken from the United States Census Bureau, “2024 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates”, <https://data.census.gov/>

maintained if action is taken now rather than proceeding to accept unlimited STR CUP applications after the moratorium expires.

Recommendations

1. For the reasons described above, at this time there seems to be a very adequate supply of STR's in Wimberley to meet demand based on occupancy data. Therefore, some of the problems arising from STR's, also outlined above, can be ameliorated by modestly restricting the opportunities for new STR's. However, it appears that these problems arise to a much less degree from STR1's, and the committee would leave the zoning ordinance relating to STR1's as it is currently written, except that it would remove one of the restrictions. The committee recommends that the zoning ordinance be changed as follows:
 - a) Section 9.03.073 (c), relating to Single-Family Residential 2 zoning. Eliminate the conditional use STR2 in (8), and alter (1) to allow STR1's in both the main building and an accessory building.
 - b) Section 9.03.074 (c), relating to Single-Family Residential 3 zoning. Eliminate the conditional use STR2 in (7), and alter (1) to allow STR1's in the main building.

The proposed elimination of STR2's in zone R3 (0.22 – 0.45 acre) would ease some of the problems that occur because of the proximity of R3 lots to each other and the issues of septic, parking and overall density that sometimes arise in R3 neighborhoods due to STR's. R2 zoning would be similarly treated for a slightly different reason, which is that these lots are small enough to be purchased by investors for conversion to STR2's. If investors wish to purchase lots zoned other than R2 or R3, the committee believes that the procedure for CUP applications as currently stated in the ordinance is sufficient to allow informed decision.
2. The Committee recommends that local ordinances be altered to allow STR's on properties zoned C1, C2, and C3 (i.e., without the requirement of obtaining a CUP). This would allow for any growth in the number of STR's to occur outside residentially-zoned properties. An increased concentration of STR's in commercial zones, particularly the downtown overlay, would also enhance existing walkability. However, the committee would also include in this recommendation a cap of thirty units for commercially zoned lots, which would be compatible with the maximum number of units allowed in L 2 zoning
3. The Committee proposes the creation and institution of an annual survey of all the residential STR's, to be completed online or by mail, and administered by City staff. It would ask for the CUP number, the number of guests who can be accommodated, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, the number of parking slots, problems encountered, etc. The reason for this would be 1) to collect missing data such as operating authority (see above); and to gently remind STR owners that their

operations are both important and regulated. See the addendum for a sample survey and cover letter.

4. The Committee recommends that the City actively solicit information on problems arising from residential STR's, record all complaints from the public, and report to P & Z on a regular basis. This may include posting information in various public fora about how residents may file complaints. It may mean making arrangements to regularly collect data on STR-related complaints filed directly with the County Sheriff's office. The purpose of this recommendation is to help City staff, P & Z, and Council assess more accurately than is currently possible the problems generally occurring in the STR market, the neighborhoods that are most problematic, and which STR sites tend to generate a proportionately large number of complaints. Such procedures would be very helpful in guiding future decisions as to the most effective regulation of STR's.

Addendum
Annual Survey of Residential STR's

Dear Lodging Owner,

Thank you for being a vibrant part of Wimberley's lodging and business community. You and your property play a critical role in creating and maintaining the character of our unique town. We greatly value your implementation of our Hotel Occupancy Tax program and appreciate your compliance with our safety requirements.

To better serve you, to provide you with the best value and to better track the effectiveness of our overnight guest data, we are launching our first annual Lodging Owner Checklist and Survey.

Your responses will be key in City calendar and event planning, budget allocations, City infrastructure priorities and overall collaboration.

We will provide you with the results of these surveys when the tallies are complete. We will also provide this information to our City Council, our Hotel Occupancy Tax Committee and City leadership.

Please complete the attached checklist and survey for our records. You may complete these forms online at {internet link} or complete the attached form and return to {mailing address}.

Thank you for your honest and prompt responses.

Sincerely,

Jim Chiles, Mayor

Tim Patek, City Administrator

Michele Woods, Tourism Director

Lodging Owner Property Checklist

Please check which of the following apply to your property:

- My property's fire extinguishers are up-to-date and easily accessible to my guests.
- My guests have immediate contact information for me or my property manager in the event of issues with their accommodations.
- My guests are provided with a complete list of emergency contact phone numbers.
- My guests are provided with emergency evacuation instructions.
- My guests are notified of my property's occupancy permit requirements.
- My guests are notified of my property's boundaries so as not to disturb neighbors.
- My guests are notified of city parking regulations.

Lodging Owner Occupancy Survey

This survey enables us to gather data regarding your experiences in the City's lodging market. Please fill in the blanks with data from your property and guests.

During 2025 through January 2026 my highest occupancy was ___% and occurred on _____ {month, day, year}.

In 2025 through January 2026 my lowest occupancy was ___% and occurred on _____ {month, day, year}.

The highest season of my overall occupancy was (circle one):

winter spring summer fall

The lowest season of my overall occupancy was (circle one)

winter spring summer fall

The most popular city event for my guests in terms of length of stay and advance reservations was _____.

Feedback I get from my guests on their top three reasons for visiting Wimberley are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Any concerns directly conveyed to me or my staff about guest experience in Wimberley (guest experience only)

Please note any concerns of you or your staff about working with the City.

Other comments or compliments (optional)
