



Town of Hilton Head Island

Land Management Ordinance Task Force Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 2026, 5:00 PM

1 Town Center Court, Hilton Head Island, SC
Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

The meeting can be viewed on the [Town's YouTube Channel](#), the [Beaufort County Channel](#), and Spectrum Channel 1304.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Adoption of the Agenda**
3. **Approval of the Minutes**
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 26, 2026
 - b. Regular Meeting Minutes of May 7, 2026
4. **Workshop Discussion**
 - a. Continued Discussion of Land Management Ordinance Amendments
5. **Public Comment**
6. **Adjournment**

FOIA Compliance: Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the Town of Hilton Head Island will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. Auditory accommodations are available. Any person requiring further accommodation should contact the Town of Hilton Head Island ADA Coordinator as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event.

Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Civility Pledge:

"I pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of my city or town."



**Town of Hilton Head Island
LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TASK
FORCE MEETING
Thursday, March 26, 2026, 5:00 PM
Minutes**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

In attendance: Chair Councilman Steve DeSimone, Vice Chair Councilwoman Tamara Becker, and Members Councilwoman Patsy Brison, Town Manager Marc Orlando, Lavon Stevens, Louis Johnson, Gregg Russell, Edwina Dunlap, Ciaran Storan, Brian Kinard, Lola Campbell, Mike Alsko, James Wedgeworth, Eric Brehm, Ray Warco, Peter Kristian, Courtney Struna, Bill Dix, Cliff McMackin, and Judd Carstens.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker made a motion for the adoption of the agenda. Councilwoman Brison seconded the motion. Member Wedgeworth was not present for this vote. The motion passed unanimously, 18-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes

a. Regular Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2026

Councilwoman Brison motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 5, 2026 with the condition that comments provided by Task Force Member Dunlap that were read into the record be included. Member Kristian seconded. Member Wedgeworth was not present for this vote. The motion passed unanimously, 18-0.

4. Workshop Discussion

a. Previous Meeting Recap and Continued Discussion of Land Management Ordinance Amendments

Chair Councilman DeSimone opened the discussion by detailing that the meeting would begin with a brief recap of the prior session. He noted that this meeting would cover sections included on Attachment A, starting with additional information from item B2, Zoning Map Changes.

Marc Orlando, Town Manager, clarified the desired outcomes of the Land Management Ordinance Task Force in reference to the amendments being addressed and the Town's expectations of Task Force Members regarding priority code edits. He stated that the Task Force is providing input on high-level direction rather than specific edits. That guidance will be given to code writers, who will then prepare the draft for the LMO Task Force's review and recommendation. The Town's goal for the LMO is to simplify its

structure, eliminate redundancies and conflicts, and improve predictability. Additional priorities include strengthening environmental protections, right-sizing redevelopment, enhancing neighborhood character through quality design, and to improve transparency and refine the review process.

Trey Lowe, Interim Planning Director and LMO Official, reviewed items the Task Force covered in recent sessions, current topics for discussion and revisions to the review table. Councilwoman Brison questioned the source of the feedback provided on the revised table. Mr. Lowe expressed that any relevant comments received outside of meetings will be shared with all members moving forward.

Shea Farrar, Principal Planner, and Mr. Lowe reviewed the zoning of properties on and around Jonesville Road, outlining existing development in the area and identifying properties owned by the Town. Task Force Member Dunlap noted that the consensus reached at the last meeting, to rezone Jonesville to RSF-3, appeared to have shifted and asked what factors drove the change in position. Denise Grabowski, Facilitator, acknowledged that there are two conversations that need to be had in sequential order to succinctly address the table. The first being whether Jonesville Road zoning should permit multifamily uses and the second being a decision on density. Task Force Member Carstens noted that a shift from a residential multifamily zoning to a single family zoning like RSF-3 would change allowed use of those properties, removing options including convenience stores, open air sales and other commercial services currently allowed. Member Stevens asked that the Task Force not only consider future uses but also what Native Islanders have used the land for in the past and if a zoning change would still protect the character of the neighborhood culturally. Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker proposed that, as the entirety of Jonesville Road is single-family housing, there should be no room for uses that may exacerbate existing traffic and congestion concerns in that area, and, as such, the zoning should be updated to reflect RSF-3 zoning. It was noted that nearby communities contain smaller commercial businesses with similar RM-4 zoning that also serve comparable Native Islander populations. The members were polled regarding the appropriate density for Jonesville Road, resulting in equal favor for 3 or 4 dwelling units per acre density and disapproved of a 6 dwelling unit per acre density. Mr. Orlando asked that the Task Force consider that allowing multifamily uses permits two single-family homes to exist on the same lot and duplexes. Members were also polled on whether multifamily should be allowed on Jonesville Road, and the majority conceded that multifamily zoning should not be removed from the allowable uses in that area.

The Task Force then discussed amending Bradley Circle zoning from RM-8 (Moderate Density Residential) to RSF-8 zoning district. Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker explained the history of zoning on Bradley Circle since 2014 and stated that the three remaining lots still listed as RD (Resort Development) would not be affected by this amendment. Furthermore, she communicated that the entirety of the area is developed as single-family residences, less the three empty lots, and, as such, multifamily should not be an allowed use. Mr. Lowe clarified that the discussion should remain around whether multifamily and mixed-use zoning is reasonable within Bradley Circle, and, when polled, the members

were largely in agreement that multifamily should be removed from the allowable uses on Bradley Circle.

The final item of discussion that the Task Force addressed was an assessment of the Resort Development (RD) district use and design standards. The focus of the consideration should provide direction related to the district's intended purpose, permitted uses, and development form standards, with attention given to height, density, mass, and transitions where the district is located adjacent to lower-density residential development. Ms. Farrar reviewed in detail the purpose of the district, allowed uses, and development form standards. Task Force Member Carstens, Design Review Board Chair, provided background for the Task Force on the reasoning behind the locations of the Resort districts. Councilwoman Patsy Brison shared some history of the Resort District and, in particular, the change in height allowed in the district which occurred in 2014. She shared a citizen concern about building height limits, setback standards and buffer requirements and the request to review those elements and whether they are effective at maintaining island character and preventing mass and scale issues. Generally, the Task Force was in agreement that there were no uses currently allowed in the Resort District deemed inappropriate; however, individual members did call into question certain uses, including Bed & Breakfast, Light Commercial, and Mixed Use. Concerns were acknowledged regarding mass and scale in the district.

5. Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

Members of the public addressed the Task Force. A draft proposed amendment for conversion of hotels to workforce housing was presented to the Task Force with a request to advance this topic from future considerations to amendments for discussion immediately. Additional comments included the potential incorporation of Windmill Harbor into the Town of Hilton Head and the need for additional public oversight of Town fund allocations. Concerns were also expressed that a prohibition or moratorium on future timeshares could reduce revenue from a core hospitality sector that supports the Town. Speakers raised environmental concerns, particularly regarding tree and wildlife protection associated with development on Marshland Road and redevelopment of Port Royal Plaza. Concerns were expressed that proposed zoning changes for Jonesville Road could reduce property rights for Native Islanders, while others believed that without a zoning change there may be a negative impact on future quality of life.

6. Adjournment

Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker motioned to adjourn the meeting. Task Force Member Kristian seconded. Member Johnson was not present for this vote. The motion passed unanimously, 18-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 pm.

The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov



**Town of Hilton Head Island
LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TASK
FORCE MEETING
Thursday, May 7, 2026, 5:00 PM
Minutes**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

In attendance: Chair Councilman Steve DeSimone, Vice Chair Councilwoman Tamara Becker, Councilwoman Patsy Brison, Judd Carstens, Cliff McMackin, Bill Dix, Courtney Struna, Peter Kristian, Ray Warco, James Wedgeworth, Mike Alsko, Tom Henz, Lola Campbell, Brian Kinard, Edwina Dunlap, Barbara Banazsynski, Louis Johnson, Lavon Stevens, and Town Manager Marc Orlando.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Councilwoman Patsy Brison moved to adopt the agenda. Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker seconded. Lavon Stevens was not present for the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 17-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes

a. Regular Meeting Minutes of April 13, 2026

Councilwoman Patsy Brison moved to adopt the minutes of April 13, 2026, with the condition that the minutes of March 26, 2026 be amended to include comments she made regarding the Resort District. Peter Kristian seconded. Lavon Stevens was not present for the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 17-0.

4. Workshop Discussion

a. Continued Discussion of Land Management Ordinance Amendments

Chair Councilman Steve DeSimone opened the discussion with a reminder that the Task Force serves in an advisory capacity, with all recommendations subject to further committee and Town Council review. He noted that some public concerns expressed to him were based on misunderstandings of prior discussions. Trey Lowe, Interim Planning Director, LMO Official, and Development Services Manager, clarified that no recommendation had been made to expand the Mitchelville Zoning District across Mitchelville Road to RM-8 or RM-12 parcels, stating that earlier conversations were exploratory and intended to gather community feedback.

Mr. Lowe presented an overview of current subdivision regulations, noting that standards are currently fragmented and scattered throughout the Land Management Ordinance, creating administrative challenges and confusion. Shea Farrar, Principal Planner,

explained that existing regulations have contributed to monotonous home design and layout, excessive clearing, limited tree preservation, minimal usable open space, and poor pedestrian connectivity. A consolidated chapter of subdivision standards would cover environmental preservation, usable open space, pedestrian mobility, infrastructure, and development that promotes designing with natural site conditions in mind, rather than maximizing density alone.

Task Force members supported stronger environmental protections, improved neighborhood compatibility, and better organization of subdivision standards.

The Task Force reviewed the RM-4 Zoning District and its current sliding scale density structure. RM-4 is the island's second-largest zoning district with most parcels under three acres in size. Members discussed concerns about predictability, neighborhood character, parcel consolidation for increased density, and protections for Gullah Geechee historic communities and family-owned properties. Town Manager Marc Orlando emphasized that stronger subdivision standards could improve development outcomes regardless of density. Several members supported exploring a more context-sensitive approach to density rather than adopting a flat standard.

Facilitator Denise Grabowski presented polling results showing that most participants opposed replacing the current sliding scale with a flat six-units-per-acre standard but supported pursuing a more nuanced, context-based density approach. Councilwoman Patsy Brison suggested reviewing the RM-4 district and potential areas therein where an RM-6 Zoning District might be appropriate. There was support around the room for this consideration.

Members expressed concern about the pace and complexity of the LMO update process and requested greater clarity on how Task Force feedback would translate into future code language. Mr. Orlando stated that staff would prepare a summary of Task Force direction and areas requiring further discussion for the following meeting.

5. Public Comment

The floor was opened to public comment. Feedback included concerns about overdevelopment, infrastructure and growth management, environmental protection and island character, preservation of culture in historic communities through equity and inclusion, and a desire for greater community engagement.

Multiple speakers cited concerns about the impacts of changes to the RM-4 sliding scale density system, subdivision design, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, and changes to neighborhood character. Speakers questioned whether the island's roads, bridges, and public infrastructure can support continued development and tourism growth. Frequently referenced was preserving Hilton Head Island's natural environment, tree canopy, wetlands, open space, and overall character.

Comments emphasized protecting the Historic Mitchelville community and broader Gullah Geechee neighborhoods from overdevelopment and incompatible land uses. There were

Town of Hilton Head Island Land Management Ordinance Task Force

Meeting Minutes

5/7/2026

Page | 2

references to cultural preservation, generational ties to land, and maintaining community identity through fairness and representation for Gullah Geechee and native island residents. Speakers discussed concerns about displacement, unequal development opportunities, rising taxes, and the need for policies that support long-term family land ownership and economic sustainability. There was a strong desire for zoning and land use decisions to reflect direct community input and neighborhood-specific priorities.

6. Adjournment

Chair Councilman DeSimone thanked all residents who signed up to speak and emphasized that Council members and Town leadership are listening to community concerns. It was noted that all Council Members, including the Mayor, were in attendance to hear public input. Staff members document concerns raised by residents, and those comments are incorporated into ongoing discussions and considerations. Residents were encouraged to continue attending meetings and sharing their perspectives, with appreciation expressed for the respectful and heartfelt comments provided during the session.

The next meeting was announced for May 21, 2026, with discussion focused on short-term rentals.

Vice Chair Councilwoman Becker moved to adjourn the meeting. Peter Kristian seconded. Lavon Stevens, Lola Campbell, and James Wedgeworth were not present for the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 15-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:01pm.

The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov



TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Land Management Ordinance

Task Force

TO: Land Management Ordinance Task Force
FROM: Trey Lowe, Interim Planning Director
CC: Marc Orlando, ICMA-CM, Town Manager
Ben Brown, Interim Deputy Town Manager
DATE: May 21, 2026
SUBJECT: Land Management Ordinance Amendment

BACKGROUND:

The Land Management Ordinance (LMO) Task Force held its first meeting on January 6, 2026, marking the beginning of a comprehensive review of the Town's LMO policies and regulations. Since that time, the Task Force has convened multiple times to evaluate and discuss a range of topics, including wetland protection, tree preservation and mitigation, land use classifications, zoning map changes, neighborhood character overlays, and residential zoning districts. Through deliberate discussion and member input, the Task Force has provided direction on several key issues which will be summarized at the May 21, 2026 LMO Task Force meeting, to include staff recommendations and proposed LMO code amendments.

In addition to these issues, the regulation of short-term rentals (STRs) on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive in the Single-Family Residential District-5 (RSF-5) Zoning District, and on Jonesville Road, has emerged as a topic warranting further discussion. While STRs are currently regulated through the Town's Municipal Code, those provisions are primarily operational in nature and do not fully address the separate land use question of whether additional LMO regulations should be considered to address the location, concentration, mass, scale, and future expansion of STRs in these areas.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS:

The purpose of this briefing is to provide the Task Force with a concise overview of existing conditions, observed trends, and policy considerations related to STR activity and neighborhood character on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive in the Single-Family Residential District-5 (RSF-5) Zoning District, and on Jonesville Road.

The objective is to support Task Force discussion on whether current impacts are primarily:

- Operational enforcement issues, or
- Cumulative land use and development intensity issues requiring ordinance-level consideration.

1. Island-Wide STR Context:

The Town currently regulates STRs through Title 10, Chapter 2 of the Town of Hilton Head Island Municipal Code. Under the Municipal Code, STRs are governed through the Town's permit and enforcement framework. These regulations apply to privately owned residential properties used as vacation homes and STRs for periods of less than 30 days. In addition to the Town's annual business license, each property must obtain a separate STR permit. Permits are valid from May 1 through April 30, are property-specific, and are non-transferable.

Existing STR Regulatory Framework (Attachment 1):

- STR licensing and permit requirements
- Annual business license requirements
- Property-specific, non-transferable STR permits
- Maximum of six exterior parking spaces
- Required site plan identifying parking and trash locations
- Guest notice requirements for parking, trash, noise, and related rules
- Required posting of noise rules
- Permit identification in advertisements
- Inspection authority
- Nuisance, noise, parking, trash, and occupancy enforcement
- 24/7 rapid response hotline
- Dedicated STR enforcement staff

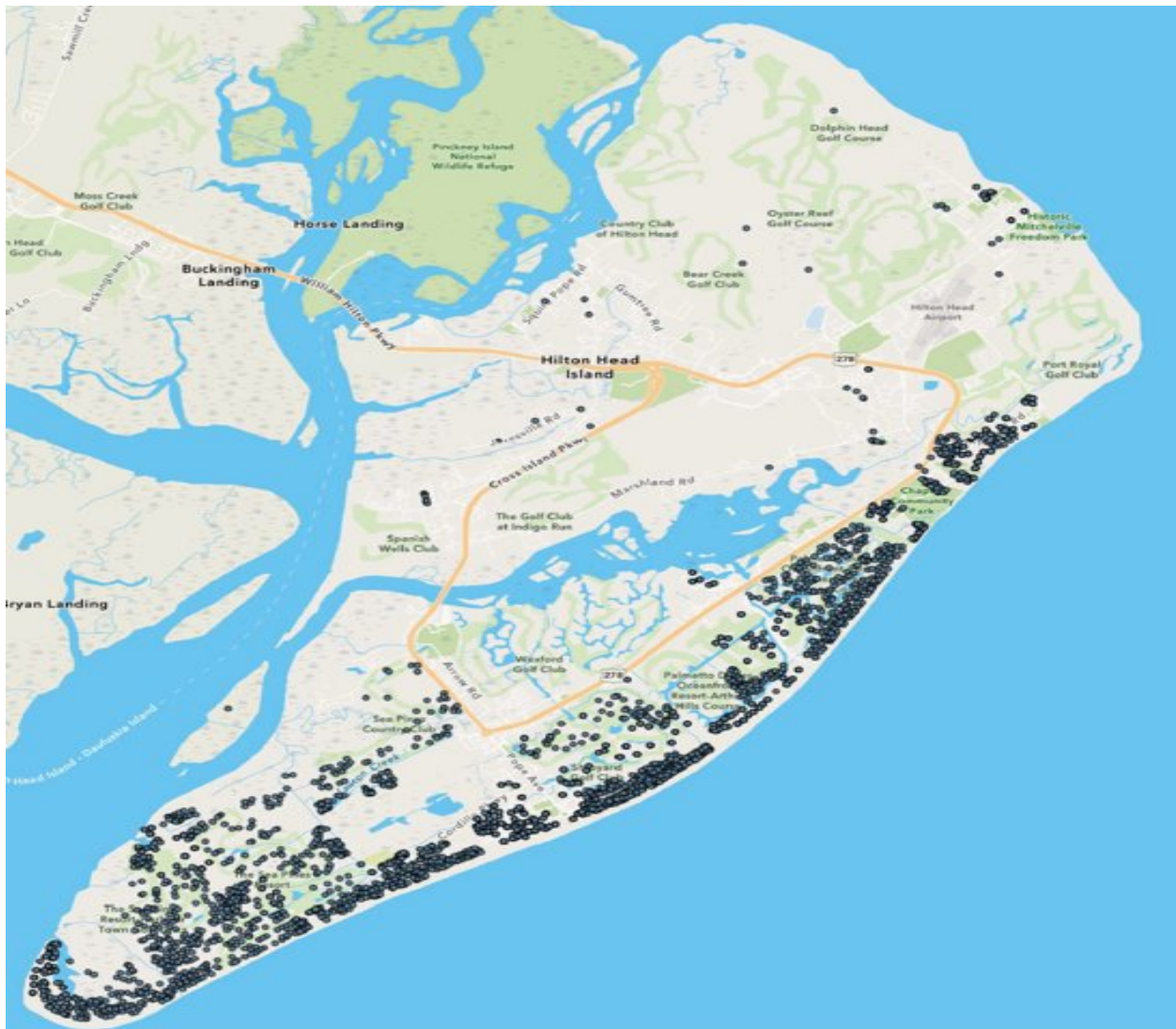
These tools primarily regulate licensing, behavior, and operational impacts. They provide limited mechanisms to address cumulative STR intensity, clustering, neighborhood-scale conversion patterns, or the relationship between STR use and redevelopment. Currently, STRs are not an identified use in the LMO and are not subject to any specific land use regulations. Homes are typically permitted as single-family residential uses, which are subject to LMO standards for use, height, setbacks, density, etc. consistent with other residential developments.

The LMO is the appropriate location for regulations that address issues related to land use compatibility, the location and concentration of uses, and mass and scale. The following analysis focuses on whether STRs create land use impacts that are not fully addressed by the current operational ordinance in specific areas of concentration and

community concern which is limited to the single-family residential neighborhoods on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive in the RSF-5 Zoning District and Jonesville Road.

Town permit data indicates an estimated 7,300 STR units Island-wide, concentrated primarily in resort, villa, beach adjacent, and tourism-oriented areas. STRs are a structural component of Hilton Head Island's tourism economy and visitor accommodation system. Of the Town's \$233,284,719 budget proposed for 2027, approximately 35% of the General Fund budget revenues come from tourism related taxes and fees. Also, a portion of the transfers across budget categories are also tourism related, which add up to around 23% of the total budget. So, in total, about 43% of the Town's total budget is supported directly by tourism related funds. This does not include the higher rate of property taxes (6% vs 4%) for homes that are not used as primary residences. Figure 1 shows the Island-wide distribution of existing STR permits.

Figure 1. STR Map - Island-wide



2. Landward Side of North & South Forest Beach Drive in RSF-5 Zoning District:

This study area includes the single-family residential neighborhoods on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive in the RSF-5 Zoning District and excludes the parcels on the seaward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive in the RSF-5 Zoning District as well as the parcels in the Resort Development (RD) Zoning District and the Coligny Resort (CR) Zoning District. This area is characterized by:

- Historically single-family residential development.
- Increasing redevelopment into larger homes.
- Mixed long-term residential and STR use.
- High seasonal variability in occupancy.

The existing condition of the study area is summarized below:

- Current Housing and Development Trends:
 - The continued replacement of older homes with larger structures.
 - Increased bedroom counts and occupancy capable designs.
 - Expansion of parking demand, outdoor amenities, and group use features.
 - Development patterns indicate increasing intensity per parcel relative to the historically defined neighborhood scale.
- Current STR Concentration & Use Pattern:
 - Localized clustering.
 - Strong seasonal peaks in occupancy and turnover.
 - Properties that function as high-capacity group rentals.
- Current Neighborhood Stability Indicators:
 - Mixed owner occupancy and investor ownership patterns.
 - Seasonal fluctuation in residency.
 - Continued presence of long-term residents, though perceived stability varies significantly by street.
- Current Operationally Impacts:
 - STR related enforcement remains focused on noise, parking, occupancy, and nuisance complaints.
 - Enhanced enforcement tools have improved compliance outcomes.
 - Peak seasonal impacts remain concentrated in high-intensity areas.
 - Operational enforcement improvements have mitigated some impacts but do not address underlying intensity or form.

Following a review of the STR enforcement heat map in Figure 1, which depicts the location of actual code enforcement responses, and comparison to the Town's Official Zoning Map, the most intense hot spots align with the Forest Beach Drive single-family

residential areas in the Residential Single-Family District-5 (RSF-5) Zoning District that are identified in the zoning map in Figure 2. Permit data further reinforces this pattern.

Figure 1. STR Enforcement Map – Forest Beach Drive Area

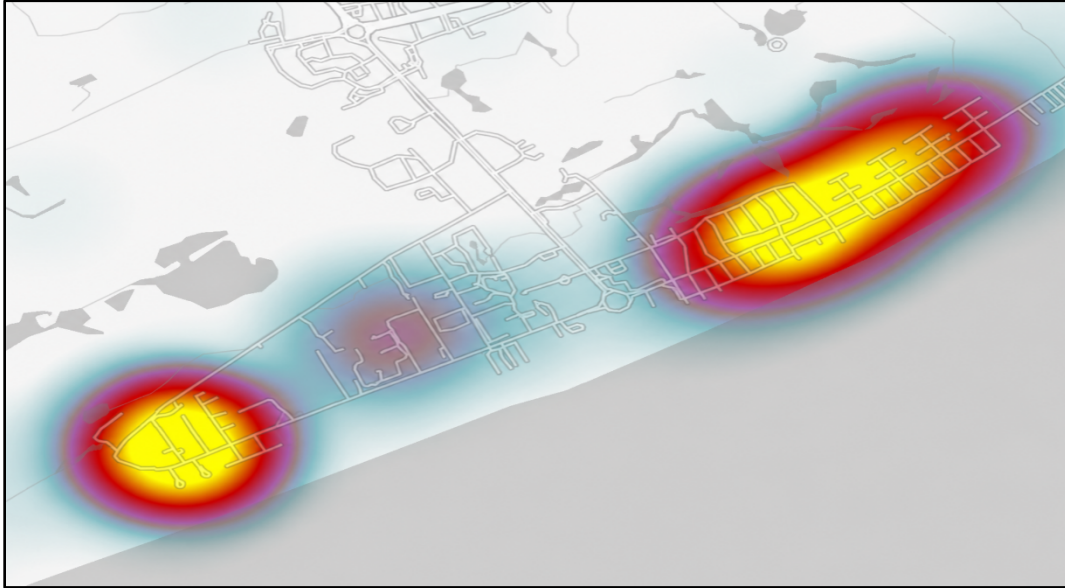
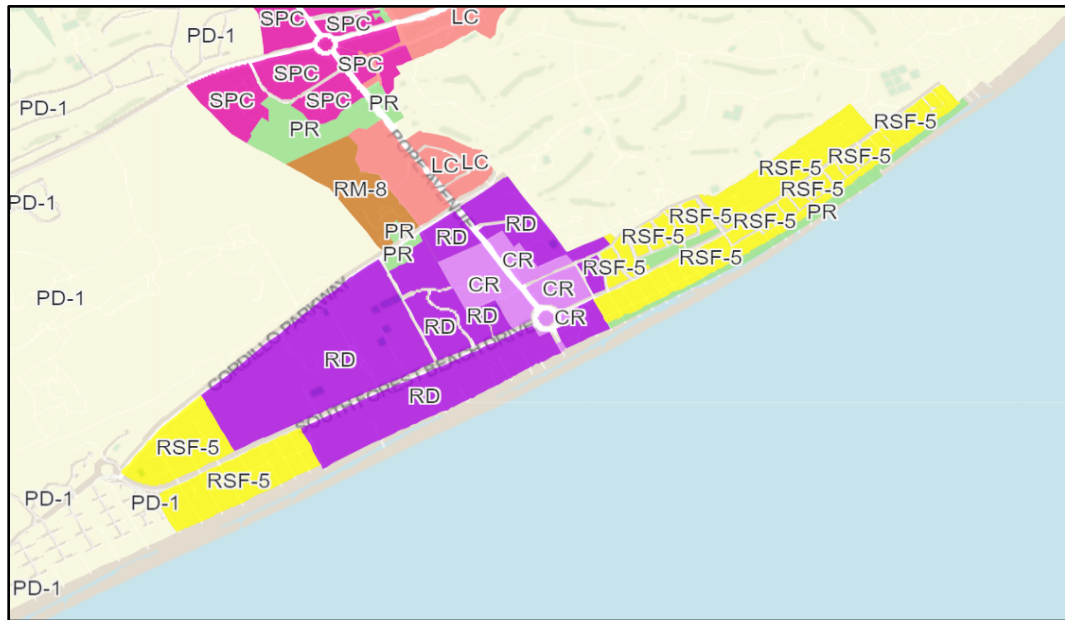


Figure 2. Residential Zoning Map – Forest Beach Drive RSF-5 Zoning District



In addition to the concentration data and enforcement pattern, concerns regarding neighborhood compatibility, the scale and intensity of STR use, parking, occupancy, and related impacts warrant discussion on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive on the single-family residential parcels in the RSF-5 Zoning District. Table

1 provides a summary of the number of STRs in these areas. Please note that data reflects licensed inventory, and unlicensed activity may not be fully captured. Occupancy levels vary seasonally and are not continuously measured.

Table 1. Forest Beach Drive/RSF-5 Zoning District
STR and Housing Unit Summary

Area	Total Housing Units	Licensed STRs	Licensed STRs (%)
N Forest Beach (Landward Side)	187	88	47.1%
N Forest Beach (Seaward Side)	237	201	84.8%
N Forest Beach (Total)	424	289	68.2%
S Forest Beach (Landward Side)	91	43	47.3%
S Forest Beach (Seaward Side)	85	58	68.2%
S Forest Beach (Total)	176	101	57.4%
N & S Forest Beach (Total)	600	390	65%

Taken together, these factors support additional review of whether the Town should consider STR regulations through the LMO amendment process for properties on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drives in the RSF-5 Zoning District.

Other coastal jurisdictions have addressed similar conditions through:

- STR density caps or geographic limits
- Bedroom-based occupancy controls
- Overlay districts for high-intensity zones
- Design standards to preserve residential scale

Staff is not recommending policy changes at this stage but is seeking input for policy direction. The purpose of this review is to assist the Task Force in determining whether current conditions are adequately addressed through operational enforcement tools, or whether they reflect a broader land use compatibility issue related to cumulative development intensity and neighborhood character on the landward side of North and South Forest Beach Drive on the single-family residential parcels in the RSF-5 Zoning District in this area.

3. Jonesville Road:

This study area includes the parcels located along and accessed off of Jonesville Road, all within the Low to Moderate Density Residential (RM-4) Zoning District. The area is characterized by:

- Established single-family residential development with a more localized neighborhood scale.
- Predominantly long-term residential occupancy with limited but increasing STR activity.
- A lower intensity residential character relative to major beach oriented STR areas of the Island.

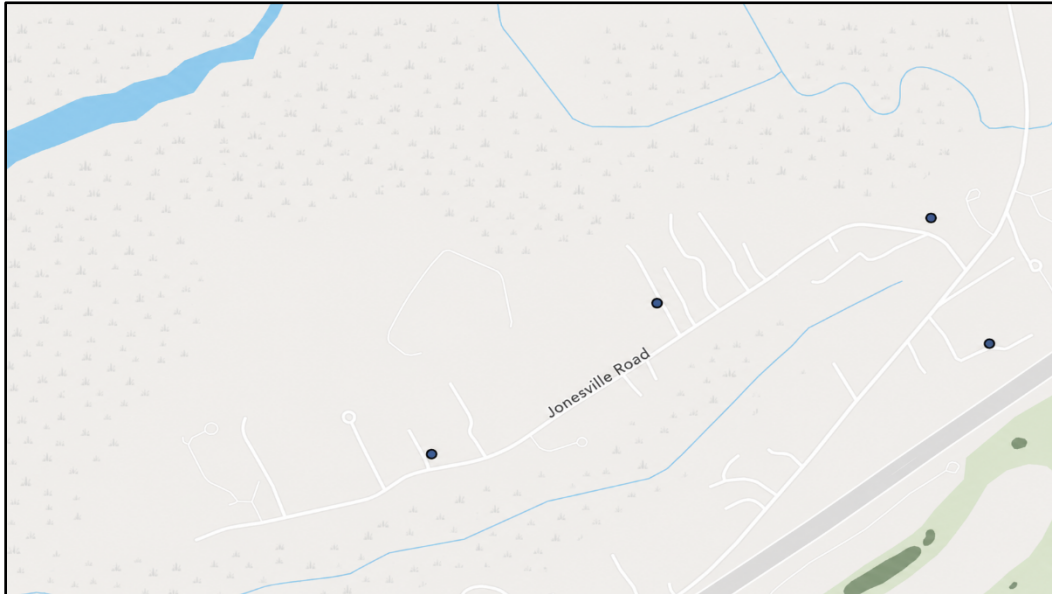
The existing condition of the study area is summarized below:

- Current Housing and Development Trends:
 - Incremental redevelopment and renovation of older single-family homes.
 - Construction of newer homes that are generally larger in scale than the original neighborhood development pattern.
 - Development patterns generally remain residential in character, though some areas are experiencing gradual increases in overall building intensity and massing.
- Current STR Concentration & Use Pattern:
 - Limited and dispersed STR presence compared to established resort and beach-oriented neighborhoods.
 - STR activity is generally less concentrated and more integrated within primarily owner-occupied residential areas.
 - Seasonal occupancy fluctuations occur but at a lower operational intensity than major visitor accommodation areas.
- Current Neighborhood Stability Indicators:
 - Predominantly stable long-term residential occupancy.
 - A continued presence of owner-occupied housing throughout much of the study area.
 - Neighborhood character remains largely residential and lower intensity in nature.
- Current Operationally Impacts:
 - Operational impacts associated with STR activity are generally lower in frequency and scale than high-tourism areas.
 - Reported concerns primarily relate to parking, noise, trash management, and occupancy during peak periods.
 - Current impacts are more closely associated with incremental changes in neighborhood intensity rather than concentrated transient accommodation activity.

Jonesville Road currently reflects a much lower level of STR activity, with 3 licensed STRs out of 184 total housing units, or approximately 1.6 percent of the total housing units. The

3 blue dots on Jonesville Road in Figure 4 represent the location of the 3 licensed STRs currently on Jonesville Road.

Figure 4. STR Location Map – Jonesville Road



Along this road, the basis for further consideration is different. Rather than responding to an already established concentration pattern, the Town has received requests from neighborhood residents to proactively prohibit STRs prior to any future expansion in the number of such uses in the area. As such, Jonesville Road presents a separate policy question regarding whether a proactive approach should be considered for Jonesville Road before STR activity becomes more established.

Staff is not recommending policy changes at this stage but is seeking input for policy direction. The purpose of this review is to assist the Task Force in determining whether STRs should be restricted along Jonesville Road.

REMAINING PRIORITY AMENDMENTS AND REVIEW PROCESS:

The goal of the LMO Task Force is to reach consensus on proposed amendments, not unanimous approval of each individual amendment. Following Task Force consensus, recommendations will proceed through the required public hearing and review process, including:

- Gullah Geechee Land & Cultural Preservation Task Force;
- Planning Commission;
- Community Development & Public Services Committee; and
- Town Council consideration via ordinance.

QUESTIONS PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

Should you have questions prior to the meeting, please contact Trey Lowe, Interim Planning Director, at TreyL@hiltonheadislandsc.gov, and copy Chairman DeSimone at SteveD@hiltonheadislandsc.gov and Town staff as appropriate. Trey Lowe can also be reached at 843-341-4690. Providing questions in advance assists staff in preparing any additional information needed to support Task Force discussion and direction.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 – Short-Term Rental Flyer
2. Attachment 2 – Relevant Code Sections

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

SHORT-TERM RENTAL (STR) PROGRAM

PROGRAM GOAL

The Town's short-term rental program is designed to protect both residents and visitors by promoting:

- **Balance:** Safeguarding residential neighborhoods while supporting tourism
- **Accountability:** Ensuring short-term rental operators meet clearly defined standards
- **Responsiveness:** Addressing issues quickly and effectively
- **Quality of Life:** Preserving Hilton Head Island as a premier community and destination



REQUIREMENTS FOR SHORT-TERM RENTAL OWNERS

To legally operate a STR, owners must:

- Obtain a Town Business License
- Obtain a Short-Term Rental Permit
- Remit Town accommodations tax of 1% and beach preservation fee of 2%
- Remit South Carolina accommodations tax of 2% and sales tax of 5%

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

During rental periods, owners or agents must:

- Be available by phone at all times
- Respond within one (1) hour to complaints
- Provide parking rules and instructions

Additional standards:

- Bedrooms must meet building and safety codes
- Bedrooms must be intended primarily for sleeping, not common areas

REQUIRED INFORMATION TO DISPLAY FOR GUESTS IN SHORT-TERM RENTAL PROPERTY

- Owner/Agent contact information
- Display the following statement inside the dwelling regarding noise restrictions "it is unlawful to unreasonably disturb the peace and quiet of those in their homes and public places. Nighttime hours are between 10:01 p.m. and 6:59 a.m., though Town noise regulations are enforced twenty-four (24) hours each day as established in Title 17, Chapter 4 of the Town Code"
- Trash disposal instructions
- Swimming pool/ hot tub safety rules (if applicable)
- Town provided outreach and awareness materials related to applicable town requirements

SHORT-TERM RENTAL PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must provide:

- Site plan for single-family home showing trash location and number of designated 9' x 18' parking spots (maximum of six spots allowed)
- Rental advertisement showing the Short-Term Rental Permit number
- Homeowners Association approval letter (if applicable)
- Permit issued to a person (not a business entity)
- Valid Certificate of Occupancy
- Compliance with Fire and Safety regulations
- Annual Fee: \$150 per-bedroom

FIRE AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

- Fire extinguishers:
 - At least one per level
 - One in the attached garage
- Smoke alarms:
 - Inside and outside every bedroom and sleeping area
 - At least one on every level
 - Must be interconnected
- Carbon monoxide alarms (gas appliances or attached garage)
- Combustible Gas Alarm if gas appliances
- Escape routes: Minimum of two (2) exits per sleeping room
- Exterior gas grills must have a 60-minute automatic shut-off timer
- Property, 3,600 sq ft or more, must install a monitored fire alarm system (compliance deadline for this requirement for existing permit holders is May 1, 2027)

SHORT-TERM RENTAL RAPID RESPONSE HOTLINE

Phone: **843-341-6864**

- Accepts complaints related to noise, parking, or trash
- Complaints are logged and routed in real time
- Owner/ Agent contacted immediately
- Community Code Enforcement notified
- Escalation to Beaufort County Sheriff's Office if necessary

Submit an online complaint at:

str.govos.com/complaint/?cityid=244

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

- Property inspections conducted
- \$250 fee for late permit renewal
- Violations:
 - Notice of violation
 - Administrative citation and fine
 - Magistrate court summons
 - STR Permit and/or Business License suspension or revocation for multiple violations



For More STR Information:
hiltonheadislandsc.gov/business/short_term_rentals/index.php

LMO Task Force - 05-21-26 Meeting

Attachment 1

Relevant Code Sections:

- Town of Hilton Head Short-Term Rental Ordinance

Town of Hilton Head Island Municipal Code

Title 10- Business and Professional Licensing; Franchising and Regulation

Chapter 2 - SHORT-TERM RENTALS¹

Sec. 10-2-10. Purpose and intent.

It is the purpose and intent of this chapter to establish regulations for privately owned residential property that is rented to transient occupants for periods of less than thirty (30) consecutive days in the municipal limits of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina ("town"), to promote the health, safety and welfare of residents of and visitors to the town and to minimize the potential adverse effects of short-term rental uses on surrounding residential properties and neighborhoods, and to preserve the character, integrity, and stability of residential neighborhoods in which short-term rental properties are located. This chapter is not intended to regulate hotels, motels, hospitals or interval occupancy uses [as defined in section 16-10-103(2), Municipal Code of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (1983)].

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25, eff. 5-1-26)

Sec. 10-2-20. Compliance dates.

- (a) *Adoption date.* The date which the town council officially approves the ordinance establishing this chapter ("Adoption Date").
- (b) *Compliance date.* Unless otherwise established in this section, any application for a STR permit issued on or after May 1, 2026, shall be issued in compliance with the terms, regulations and requirements established in this chapter.
 - (1) *Compliance exception.* The requirements established in section 10-2-60(b)(3) shall be effective and compliance shall be enforced as stated in this section.
 - a. *Prior to adoption date.* Any application for a renewal of a STR permit issued prior to, and valid on, the adoption date shall comply with the requirements established in section 10-2-60(b)(3) no later than May 1, 2027.
 - b. *After adoption date.* Any application for a STR permit, where said application is not regulated by section 10-2-20(b)(1)(a), received after the adoption date shall only be approved if the STR property is in compliance with section 10-2-60(b)(3) as of May 1, 2026.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-30. Definitions.

The following terms are defined terms and when capitalized in the text of this chapter, mean:

- (1) *Agent* means an individual designated by an owner to act on the owner's behalf in connection with a STR property or STR, to respond on behalf of the owner to complaints, and receive written notices.

¹Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), adopted Oct. 21, 2025, repealed ch. 2, §§ 10-2-10—10-2-70, which pertained to similar subject matter and derived from Ord. No. 2022-08, §§ 1—7, adopted May 17, 2022; Ord. No. 2025-09, § 1 (Exh. A), adopted June 3, 2025.

-
- (2) *Bedroom* means a room within a STR property that is designated, designed and used as a sleeping area rather than a living, dining, or common space. The room must meet building and safety codes and be primarily used for sleeping and typically contains at least one (1) window, a door, a closet, and a bed or other sleeping furniture. As used in this chapter, "bedroom" has the same meaning as "sleeping area" in the National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code (NFPA 72).
 - (3) *Natural person* means an individual human being, as distinguished from a legal or business entity such as a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust, or other juridical person.
 - (4) *Official* means the officer, employee or agent designated by the town manager to administer and implement the requirements and regulations of this chapter.
 - (5) *Owner* means the owner of record and includes any individual, firm, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, cooperative non-profit membership, corporation, joint venture, association, estate, trust, business trust, receiver, syndicate, holding company, or other group or combination acting as a unit, in the singular or plural, who or which owns one (1) or more STR properties.
 - (6) *Short-term rental ("STR")* means the advertising, offering, leasing, use and/or operation of any STR property or permitting the occupancy of any STR property or any other property by a lease or any other form of agreement for periods less than thirty (30) consecutive days.
 - (7) *Short-term rental permit ("STR permit")* means an annual permit that an owner must obtain from the town for each of an owner's STR properties.
 - (8) *Short-term rental property ("STR property")* means any residential property in the municipal limits of the town, that, in whole or in part, is advertised, offered, leased, used, operated, and/or occupied under a lease or any other form of agreement for a STR.
 - (9) *Short-term rental tenant ("STR tenant")* means any individual, or group of individuals, occupying all or any part of a STR property, however described, in any agreement for a STR. For purposes of this chapter, STR tenant includes the terms lessee, renter, or any other term used in any agreement for a STR between the owner and any person or group of individuals.
 - (10) *Written notice* means any notice required or authorized by this chapter. A written notice may be delivered by personal service to the owner, or by certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the owner at the address for the owner shown on the current STR permit application or the most recent address provided in writing to the official by the owner. The written notice will be deemed to have been delivered on the date of personal service as documented on an affidavit of service, or on the date that the certified mail return receipt is signed for by, or on behalf of, the owner.

An owner may authorize the delivery of any written notice authorized or required by the chapter in the form of electronic mail in the STR permit application. By authorizing delivery of written notice by electronic mail, the owner acknowledges that any written notice delivered by way of electronic mail to the electronic mail address shown in the STR permit application, or the most recent electronic mail address provided to the town by the owner in writing complies with the requirements of this chapter and any other law regarding delivery of legal notices. The written notice by way of electronic mail shall be deemed to have been delivered on the date the electronic return receipt is received by the official.

An owner may designate an agent to act on the owner's behalf and authorize written notices to be delivered to the agent by providing the necessary information on the STR permit.

The defined terms include the plural of any term set out in this section 10-2-30.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-40. Short-term rental permit.

- (a) *STR permit generally.* A STR permit shall be obtained prior to a property being advertised, offered, used, and/or operated as a STR.
- (1) STR permits issued for calendar year 2025 to expire December 31, 2025, shall be extended and deemed valid until April 30, 2026. In all years following 2025, STR permits shall be valid for the twelve (12) month period of May 1 to April 30 and shall only be valid for the period which the STR permit is issued, irrespective of the date on which the STR permit is issued.
 - (2) A separate STR permit must be obtained for each STR property. If multiple units, regardless of building type, are located on one (1) parcel of land, then a STR permit is required to be obtained for each individual unit.
 - (3) A STR permit shall not be valid if a Certificate of Occupancy has not been issued by the town for the STR property.
 - (4) STR permits are non-transferrable and non-refundable and are only valid for the owner, agent, and the STR property described in the STR permit.
 - (5) The owner shall notify the town, of any changes to the contact information provided on the STR permit application.
 - (6) The application fee and late fees for a STR permit shall be set each year by the town council in the annual budget ordinance.
 - (7) The STR permit application shall be made on a form published by the town, must be delivered to the town with the application fee, and must include the following:
 - a. A STR permit application for a single-family detached residence or any residence that does not have community trash facilities or shared parking must include a site plan showing compliance with the requirements of section 10-2-60(d) and 10-2-60(e); and,
 - b. A copy of at minimum one (1) advertisement for the STR; and,
 - c. If applicable, a letter from the homeowners or property owners' association approving the use of the STR property as a STR; and,
 - d. An affidavit signed by the owner affirming compliance with the requirements of this chapter; and,
 - e. Provide information as required in section 10-2-60(e).
 - (8) Review of a STR permit application shall be conducted by the official, and the STR permit shall be granted unless the owner fails to demonstrate compliance with this chapter and applicable Town Code requirements and regulations.
 - (9) Any false, inaccurate, or untrue statements or information provided with the STR permit application shall be grounds for revocation or suspension of the STR permit and imposition of penalties, including denial of future STR permit applications.
- (b) *Application by agent.* A STR permit application submitted by an agent must be signed by the owner.
- (c) *Natural person required.* If the owner of the STR property is held in the name of a trust, entity, legal partnership or business, the STR permit application must designate a natural person who has legal authority to act on behalf of said owner.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-50. Licenses, permits, payment of fees and taxes fees required.

Prior to a property being advertised, offered, used, and/or operated as a STR, the owner shall first and on a continuing basis thereafter:

- (1) Obtain and maintain a valid and current STR permit for the property and town business license; and,
- (2) Pay all applicable fees associated with any STR permit application and town business license; and,
- (3) Pay all sales, use or any other similar taxes in connection with any STR and/or STR property, and,
- (4) Pay all ad valorem taxes and government fees for any STR property; and,
- (5) Ensure there are no outstanding fines, late fees or any other similar charges arising from any STR or the operation, occupancy and use of any STR property.

Upon identification of delinquent fees, fines or any other monies required by this section to be current and are due to the town, the official has the authority to establish payment plans, revenue procedures, and reduce or waive penalties. The authority provided in this section shall not conflict with any other Town Code section, and if a conflict occurs then this section shall be superseded by the conflicting Town Code section.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-60. Regulations for short-term rentals and short-term rental properties.

- (a) *Response to complaints.* Following the town's receipt of a complaint against a STR or a STR property, the town shall contact the owner or agent as soon as practical following receipt of a substantiated complaint. The owner or agent shall be available in accordance with the requirements established in this section.
 - (1) The owner or agent of any STR shall be available during the occupancy of any STR to respond to a complaint or any other matter related to the behavior of any STR tenant or the operation of the STR.
 - (2) The owner or agent of any STR shall be available by telephone at all times during the occupancy of any STR and capable of being physically present at the STR property, or taking other responsive action as required within one (1) hour of notification by the town of a complaint or any other matter related to the STR property.
- (b) *Fire and life safety.* During any STR and while in possession of a current and valid STR permit, the STR must remain in compliance at all times with the requirements established in this section, regardless of whether a STR tenant or any other individual is occupying the STR property.
 - (1) Maintain fully operable smoke, carbon monoxide, and, if propane is used inside the STR property, combustible gas detectors in the STR property in such number and in such locations as required by this chapter and any other applicable building, fire or safety code; or any other code, regulation or law.
 - (2) Maintain at minimum one (1) fully operable and charged fire extinguisher in the STR property. Additional fire extinguishers must be in the STR property and located in the STR property as required by any applicable building, fire or safety code; or any other code, regulation or law.
 - (3) Any STR property measuring three thousand six hundred (3,600) square feet or more that does not have a fire suppression system shall have a fire alarm system installed. For purposes of this section the STR property square footage shall be determined by the Beaufort County tax record; and if a tax record does not exist for the STR property, then the town's building records will be used to determine the square footage of the STR property. The fire alarm system shall be monitored by a supervising station (i.e., monitoring company) meeting the intent of the National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code (NFPA 72). The fire alarm system shall include a functioning automatic smoke detection system that activates an occupant notification system. Single- or multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in all of the following locations:

-
- a. Bedrooms and sleeping areas; and,
 - b. Every room in the path of the means of egress from the bedroom or sleeping area to the door leading from the bedroom or sleeping unit; and,
 - c. Each story within the STR property, including basements. For STR properties with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one (1) full story below the upper level.
- (4) Equip any exterior gas-fired grill at any STR property with an automatic shut-off timer allowing no more than sixty (60) minutes of gas flow.
- (5) Maintain unobstructed escape routes in the STR property in the event of fire.
- (c) *Noise regulations.* A STR shall remain in compliance with all applicable town ordinances including, but not limited to, title 17 chapter 14. Any activity which unreasonably disturbs the peace and quiet of those in their homes and public places is strictly prohibited. During any STR the occupants, whether a STR tenant or other occupant, shall adhere to the regulations placed on nighttime hours (between 10:01 p.m. and 6:59 a.m.), though town noise regulations are enforced twenty-four (24) hours each day.
- (d) *Trash regulations.* Each STR property shall have a designated trash storage area that is fenced or screened so that trash containers are not seen from public streets and neighboring property, except during designated pick-up times. Outdoor trash containers must remain secured with a lid at all times to avoid spills and prevent pests from disturbing the trash contained within the containers.

Trash containers shall not be placed curbside for more than twenty-four (24) hours prior to scheduled pick-up times and will be removed no more than twenty-four (24) hours after pick-up.

- (e) *Parking regulations.* During any STR and while in possession of a current and valid STR permit, the parking regulations and requirements established in this subsection shall be followed.
- (1) The only parking permitted at a STR property shall be those areas:
- a. Identified in the STR permit application as the location of off-street parking spaces; and,
 - b. Shown on an approved site plan that are located off-street parking spaces within a driveway, be arranged in a row and aligned parallel to one (1) another, and not block any sidewalk, pathway, or other pedestrian access crossing the driveway; and,
 - c. Approved by the town to provide the minimum number of parking spaces as required by section 16-1-101, et seq., Municipal Code of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (1983); and,
 - d. In compliance with the regulations established in this section and shall not exceed six (6) exterior parking spaces on any one (1) STR property. The parking space maximum established in this subsection does not include those parking spaces located inside of a garage.
- (2) The areas identified for the parking of vehicles must be improved with either a pervious or impervious surface. Parking areas must include a space at least nine (9) feet by eighteen (18) feet for each vehicle allowed to be parked at the STR property. Areas for parking must comply with all other applicable requirements of section 16-1-101, et seq., Municipal Code of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (1983).
- (3) No expansion of a driveway or construction of new parking areas shall be permitted for the primary purpose of increasing the parking capacity of a STR property without prior written approval by the town.
- (4) No vehicles associated with the STR property shall be parked in a place not designated for parking, off-site, on-street (including adjacent rights-of-way or access easements), in a required buffer (excluding in driveways crossing a required buffer), or on any unimproved surface on the STR property. No vehicle

shall park anywhere in conflict with the parking plan approved by the town in the STR permit application.

(f) *Inspections and compliance regulations.*

- (1) Any STR property is subject to inspection by the town to verify compliance with the provisions of this chapter. Prior to entering the STR property, the town shall provide a forty-eight (48) hour written notice using the contact information provided in the STR permit application.
- (2) The owner is responsible for inspecting the STR property to ensure continued compliance with this chapter and all other applicable zoning, building, health and life-safety code requirements.
- (3) In addition to the requirements of this chapter, any STR property must also comply with all other statutes, ordinances, regulations or private covenants applicable to the STR property. Nothing in this chapter is intended to authorize waiver of or limitations on compliance with any other applicable statutes, ordinances, regulations or requirements.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-70. Advertisement and display requirements.

- (a) *Advertisement requirements.* Any advertisement for a STR shall list the STR permit number and contain the same information provided to the town on the STR permit application including, but not limited to, the number of bedrooms, and maximum number of vehicles permitted at the STR property.
- (b) *STR property displays.* Upon receipt of necessary approvals and receipt of a STR permit, and prior to any occupancy, the STR property shall display in a prominent location the following:
 - (1) Contact information for the owner or agent responsible for responding to complaints and any other matters in accordance with section 10-2-60(a); and
 - (2) Noise restrictions, whereby the following statement shall be on display "It is unlawful to unreasonably disturb the peace and quiet of those in their homes and public places. Nighttime hours are between 10:01 p.m. and 6:59 a.m., though town noise regulations are enforced twenty-four (24) hours each day as established in title 17, chapter 4 of the Town Code"; and,
 - (3) Instructions for managing trash disposal at the STR property. In accordance with section 10-2-60(d), the instructions shall include the location of the trash containers, location for trash containers to be picked up, and the designated pick-up times for the trash containers; and,
 - (4) If applicable, notice of the existence of any swimming pool or hot tub at the STR property and the location of safety equipment related to the swimming pool or hot tub; and,
 - (5) Town-provided outreach and awareness materials related to applicable town requirements.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-80. Violations and penalties.

- (a) *Violations.* It shall be a violation of this chapter to enter into any agreement, lease, offer, advertise, operate, occupy, or use any property for a STR without first complying with the requirements of this chapter. A violation has occurred for any failure to comply with the requirements established in this chapter.
- (b) *Administrative citations and fines.* Violations of any provision of chapter are subject to an administrative citation as established in Hilton Head Island Code, Section 1-5-11.
 - (1) Penalties and fines. Administrative fines for violations of this chapter are as follows:
 - a. Two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for first infraction;

-
- b. Five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for a second infraction within one (1) year of the first infraction; and,
 - c. One thousand dollars (\$1000.00) for a third or any subsequent infraction within one (1) year of the second or any subsequent infraction.
- (2) Failure to pay an administrative fine with thirty (30) days of being issued shall result in a twenty-five-dollar (\$25.00) late fee.
- (c) *Other penalties and remedies.* Violations of this chapter are also subject to the penalties and remedies authorized under title 12 chapter 3, parking; section 1-5-11, administrative citation; section 1-5-10, general penalty; continuing violation, section 10-1-150, business and professional licenses; suspension or revocation of license, section 9-1-111, et seq. These remedies are in addition to any other remedies available in this Code or at law or in equity for a violation.
- (d) *Parking violation and towing.* The public safety director code enforcement officer, official, or the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office may immobilize, tow, or impound any vehicle parked in violation of this chapter if, in their sole discretion, deem it necessary for public safety purposes. Any and all charges or fees associated with towing or immobilization shall be the expense of the owner of the vehicle.
- (Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)

Sec. 10-2-90. Suspension or revocation of str permit.

- (a) *Suspension.* A STR permit may be suspended when the public safety director or official determines:
- (1) A STR permit has been mistakenly or improperly issued or issued contrary to law;
 - (2) Any condition upon which the STR permit was issued has been breached;
 - (3) The STR permit was obtained through fraud, misrepresentation, a false or misleading statement, or evasion or suppression of a material fact in the STR permit application;
 - (4) An owner is delinquent in the payment to a fee, fine, or tax as established in section 10-2-50;
 - (5) The operation of a STR property has been declared a nuisance;
 - (6) More than two (2) convictions for violations of this Code arising from any activities at or connected with a STR property occur within any twelve-month period; or,
 - (7) More than three (3) administrative citations arising from any activities at or connected with a STR property occurring within any twelve-month period.

The public safety director or official is authorized to issue a written notice to the owner that the STR permit is suspended for a period of one-year and may be revoked, pending a single hearing before town council for the purpose of determining whether the suspension should be upheld or whether the STR permit should be revoked.

- (b) *Revocation.* The written notice of suspension and proposed revocation shall state the time and place at which the hearing before town council is to be held and shall contain a brief statement of the reasons for the suspension or proposed revocation of a STR permit.
- (1) The hearing before town council on the suspension and proposed revocation of a STR permit shall be held by town council within thirty (30) days after delivery of the written notice described in this section 10-2-90. The hearing shall be held upon written notice at a regular or special meeting of town council. The hearing may be continued to another date by agreement of all parties. At the hearing, all parties shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to present testimony and evidence, and to cross-examine witnesses. The proceedings shall be recorded and transcribed at the expense of the party so requesting. The South Carolina rules of evidence and procedure prescribed by town council shall govern the hearing. Following the hearing, town council by majority vote of its members present, shall render a written decision setting out its findings of fact and conclusions. The written final decision shall constitute the final decision of town council. The written final decision shall be delivered to the owner in the same manner as any other written notice under this chapter unless a different person and method of delivery is requested by the owner at the hearing.
 - (2) The written decision of town council may be appealed to the circuit court in the same manner as appeals are made from the decisions of other administrative bodies of the town. An appeal, in and of itself, does not stay the effect of town council's decision.

(Ord. No. 2025-20, § 1 (Exh. A), 10-21-25)