



**AGENDA ITEM: 12.1**

**AGENDA DATE: September 25, 2026**

**TO: Chairman and Members of the Board**  
**THRU: Michael A Kaigler, County Manager**  
**FROM: R. Jonathan Hart, County Attorney**

*Michael A. Kaigler*  
*R. Jonathan Hart*

**ISSUE:**

Amendment to Chapter 16, Article XIII, entitled Short Term Rental Ordinance as a part of the Chatham County Code Book. The effective date of the amended ordinance is July 1, 2026. Amend the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance to add section 4-1 Short-term Rental Districts. (NOTE: This item was tabled at the May 22, 2026, meeting. Please note, the Board of Commissioners held a workshop for Monday, June 15, 2026. This item was tabled at the June 26, 2026, meeting.)

**BACKGROUND:**

Chatham County's Short-Term Rental Ordinance amendments incorporates updates to the definitions, occupancy rates, a radius limiting Short-term rental homes, signage, increased fines for violations, parking restrictions, requirements of a local contact person, and updates to the application procedures based upon the complaints from citizens in the county related to the Short-term rental homes disturbing the safety, welfare, and economic development of neighboring homeowners.

**FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

Chapter 16, Article XIII: Short-term Rental Ordinance is being amended to address the complaints from citizens regarding absent Short-term Rental Owners that are affecting the safety, welfare and economic development of neighboring homeowners in the unincorporated Chatham County. Chatham County staff have received increasing complaints from citizens in Chatham County related to Short-term Rental properties related to noise complaints, overcrowded rental homes, nuisance complaints, parking violations, safety concerns, and property damages. The amendments to the Short-Term Rental ordinance intend to address the complaints from the neighboring homeowners by defining what type of property may be rented as there have been complaints about non-conforming structures being rented creating a safety concern for potential renters, specifying the occupancy rates as properties have been rented that do not have the septic capacity for the amount of guests and insufficient on-site parking for renters, requiring visible signage with a local contact person to notify owners of complaints, increased fines for violations,

and limiting the number of Short-term rental homes. The amendment to the STR ordinance will further require an amendment to the zoning ordinance to place a cap on police response neighborhoods, based upon public safety. The STR Districts will:

- a. Place a 5% cap on the number of non-owner occupied short-term rentals that are permitted within each district;
- b. Reduce and manage the number of emergency calls affecting public safety, building safety, and Department of Health enforcement and response calls required where no owner is available on-scene to address the immediate health, safety, and property concerns of neighbors and Chatham County residents; and

### **BLUEPRINT ALIGNMENT:**

Quality of Life, Goal 4: Provide effective and efficient government services while ensuring that processes and procedures are planned and executed with transparency.

### **FUNDING:**

No additional funding is required to amend the ordinance; however, the County Manager is reviewing additional enforcement options related to the fiscal year 2027 budget process.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the Amendment to Chapter 16, Article XIII: Short-term Rental Ordinance and approve an amendment to the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance to add Section 4-1, Short-term Rental Districts.
2. Do not approve the Amendment Chapter 16, Article XIII: Short-term Rental Ordinance and an amendment to the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance to add Section 4-1, Short-term Rental Districts.

### **POLICY ANALYSIS:**

Board action to approve the amendment to the Short-term Rental Ordinance will address the concerns of the citizens of the county as it relates to their safety, welfare, and economic development created by absent Short-term Rental owners, overcrowded rental units, and an ability to contact a locally designated person to remedy complaints as soon as possible.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the Amendments to Chapter 16, Article XIII: Short-term Rental Ordinance.

#AJ: AMENDED SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE - Redlined 9-22-26

#AK: 3 - STR Lists of Neighborhoods

#AL: 4 - Layout-Ordinance

#AM: STR Districts - Mapped(1 of 2)

#AN: STR Districts - Mapped(2of2)

#AO: AMENDED SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE - Clean Version 9-22-26

#AP: Opposition - Email from Ken Elwood

|                        |           |                    |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| R. Jonathan Hart       | Completed | 09/10/2026 4:00 PM |
| Marcus Lotson          | Skipped   | 09/10/2026 4:01 PM |
| Skip Step              |           |                    |
| Linda Cramer           | Completed | 09/10/2026 4:05 PM |
| Janice E. Bocook       | Completed | 09/14/2026 9:44 AM |
| Danielle Hillery       | Skipped   | 09/10/2026 4:06 PM |
| out of office          |           |                    |
| Michael A. Kaigler     | Completed | 09/10/2026 4:10 PM |
| Board of Commissioners | Completed | 09/11/2026 9:30 AM |