

ORDINANCE NO. *8**
ZONING CASE TR25-05A

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS BY AMENDING SECTION 118-633, "LEGEND FOR SECTION 118-631, SPECIAL LAND USE REGULATIONS" OF CHAPTER 118, "ZONING," OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, TO AMEND SPECIAL LAND USE REGULATIONS FOR SHORT TERM RENTALS RELATED TO CONTINUANCE AND DISCONTINUANCE OF OPERATIONS; PROVIDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE CUMULATIVE OF ALL ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; ESTABLISHING A PENALTY; PROVIDING FOR SAVINGS; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of North Richland Hills, Texas is a home-rule municipality located in Tarrant County, Texas acting under its charter adopted by the electorate pursuant to Article XI, Section 5 of the Texas Constitution and Chapter 9 of the Local Government Code; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Ordinance of the City of North Richland Hills regulates and restricts the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, and other purposes, and provides for the establishment of zoning districts of such number, shape, and area as may be best suited to carry out these regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Ordinance of the City of North Richland Hills does not authorize or provide for the operation of short-term rentals within the City, yet such uses have nonetheless operated without approval in single-family residential districts; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to understand the impact of short-term rentals operating within the City, the City has collected extensive community input through an electronic survey, physical surveys distributed at a dedicated town hall meeting, comments made during such town hall meetings, email communications submitted, and comments made during public hearings specifically regarding short-term rentals and the regulation of same; and

WHEREAS, the City also obtained input and comments from the operators of short-term rentals through the same methods mentioned for community input, as well as through two meetings held specifically for operators to attend and provide feedback and input on short-term rentals and the regulation of same; and

WHEREAS, residents have reported adverse impacts from increased traffic, reckless driving, on-street parking congestion, loud noise, and public nuisances associated with short-term rental activity; and

WHEREAS, short-term rentals have, in certain instances, been the source of large gatherings, parties, and events incompatible with the residential character of single-family districts; and

WHEREAS, the operation of unauthorized short-term rentals in single-family neighborhoods has generated complaints regarding excessive noise, late-night disturbances, and the disruption of residential quiet enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, many residents stated that they did not anticipate transient lodging operations when they purchased their homes, and view such uses as incompatible with their expectations of neighborhood stability and residential character; and

WHEREAS, the frequent turnover of short-term rental occupants undermines long-term neighbor-to-neighbor relationships and erodes the fabric of the community by reducing communication, familiarity, and trust among residents; and

WHEREAS, neighborhoods have expressed concern that the continual turnover of transient occupants diminishes the sense of safety, predictability, and accountability that is characteristic of stable residential communities; and

WHEREAS, mapping and analysis of the input from residents demonstrates that the negative impacts associated with short-term rentals are widespread and concentrated in single-family neighborhoods across the City; and

WHEREAS, the City has reviewed data and information from other cities' experiences with short-term rentals and used this data and information to develop a regulatory structure; and

WHEREAS, further the American Planning Association has acknowledged that there are many reasons for regulating short-term rentals, including the potential for the transformation of peaceful residential communities into "communities of transients" where people are less interested in investing in one another's lives, the potential for knowing or unknowing violation of local rules resulting in public safety risks, noise issues, trash problems and parking problems, the so-called "party house" issues, less availability of affordable housing options and higher rents, negative impact on local service jobs, lost tax revenue, and to alleviate tension between operators and neighbors; and

WHEREAS, the City Council is also aware of many articles, stories, and examples related to the public perception of the negative impacts of short-term rentals; and

WHEREAS, the City also obtained and reviewed a study published July 14, 2021, that found that a higher presence of Airbnb listings predicted higher levels of violent crime, a correlation between higher presence of Airbnb and increased violent crime the following year, a correlation between higher presence of Airbnb and increased violent crime over a two-year period (Ke L, T. O'Brien D, Heydari B (2021) *Airbnb and neighborhood crime: The incursion of tourists or the erosion of local social dynamics?*); and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Zoning Ordinances of the City of North Richland Hills is to promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare in accordance with a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, zoning regulations are established with reasonable consideration for the character of each district and its suitability for particular land uses, with a view toward conserving property values and encouraging the most appropriate use of land; and

WHEREAS, the proliferation of short-term rentals in single-family neighborhoods threatens these purposes by introducing uses inconsistent with the character and intended stability of such districts; and

WHEREAS, zoning regulations are further intended to lessen congestion in the streets, provide safety from fire, panic, and other dangers, ensure adequate light and air, prevent overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentration of population, and provide for adequate transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements; and

WHEREAS, unregulated short-term rental activity contributes to congestion, on-street parking conflicts, and increased demand on public services, thereby frustrating these zoning objectives; and

WHEREAS, enforcement of land use regulations in single-family districts presents unique challenges when properties are used for transient lodging, requiring additional municipal resources to address violations; and

WHEREAS, short-term rentals may contribute to the reduction of housing available for long-term occupancy, thereby impacting the balance of residential supply and demand and the affordability of housing within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that short-term rentals are more appropriately located in commercial districts where hotels and similar transient lodging facilities are permitted by right; and

WHEREAS, short-term rentals may also be accommodated within multi-family zoning districts, where density, design, and shared facilities render the use more compatible with its surroundings; and

WHEREAS, short-term rentals may additionally be appropriate in certain mixed-use or transit-oriented development districts, where a planned integration of residential, commercial, and lodging uses is anticipated; and

WHEREAS, the use of single-family residences by individuals for short periods of time may negatively impact the residential character of many neighborhoods by reducing communication and accountability between permanent residents by partially substituting permanent residents with transient visitors; and

WHEREAS, the regulation of the use and operation of such short-term rental property is intended to prevent the further erosion of pre-existing and stable single-family neighborhoods, and further advance the City Council's goal of creating exceptional quality of life for the community; and

WHEREAS, the rise of substitute land uses for residential property contributes to the shortage of affordable housing, both ownership and long-term rental; and

WHEREAS, restricting short-term rentals to such districts ensures that the use occurs only where impacts are consistent with surrounding land uses, infrastructure capacity, and the City's adopted comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, by limiting short-term rentals to districts specifically suited for such use, the City preserves the stability, safety, and quality of life in single-family residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that regulation of short-term rentals is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents, preserve the integrity of residential communities, preserve the availability of traditional residential long-term housing supply, and implement the purposes of the zoning ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that regulation of short-term rentals is necessary to safeguard the life, safety, welfare, and property of short-term rental occupants, neighborhoods, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that regulation of short-term rentals is necessary to minimize the adverse impacts resulting from increased transient rental uses in neighborhoods that were planned, approved, and constructed for single-family residences; and

WHEREAS, based upon the review of community feedback, data analysis, zoning principles, and the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council concludes that adoption of this Ordinance is in the best interest of the City and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the City Council concludes that the adoption of this Ordinance is in the best interest of maintaining the stability, quiet, and repose of lower-density residential districts for single-family owners; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of North Richland Hills, Texas held a public hearing on February 5, 2026, and the City Council of the City of North Richland Hills, Texas, held a public hearing on February 9, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the City has complied with all requirements of Chapter 211 of the Local Government Code, the Zoning Ordinance of the City of North Richland Hills, and all other laws dealing with notice, publication, and procedural requirements for amending the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the proposed ordinance amendment promotes the health, safety, morals, and the general welfare within the City of North Richland Hills and is in the best interest of the City of North Richland Hills.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS, THAT:

SECTION 1: Section 118-633, "Legend for section 118-631; special land use regulations," of Chapter 118 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and replacing subsections (e) and (f) to read as follows:

"e. Continuance of Operation. For properties located in zoning districts where short-term rental uses are not permitted by right, the operator of a property used as a short-term rental prior to October 13, 2025, that comes into compliance with the requirements of Article XII, Chapter 18 of this code, including obtaining a permit and paying all hotel occupancy taxes owed for the property or otherwise entering into a payment arrangement for said taxes with the City, on or before February 28, 2026, may continue to operate so long as the operator maintains compliance with all the requirements of Article XII, Chapter 18 of this code.

f. Discontinuance of Operations.

1. The operator of a property used as a short-term rental who is unable, fails, or refuses to timely obtain a permit for operation as

a short-term rental pursuant to subsection e., shall discontinue the short-term rental use on or before February 28, 2026, or thirty (30) days from the notice of permit denial, whichever is later.

2. All short-term rental uses located in zoning districts where short-term rental uses are not permitted by right and issued a permit under Article XII, Chapter 18 of this code shall discontinue the short-term rental use within thirty (30) days after the revocation or denial of the renewal of the short-term rental permit. A short-term rental use that is discontinued under this subsection shall not be resumed.
3. All short-term rental uses located in zoning districts where short-term rental uses are not permitted by right shall be subject to the abandonment provisions contained in Section 118-153(i) of this code. A short-term rental use abandoned under this subsection shall immediately discontinue the short-term rental use upon the effective date of the abandonment. A short-term rental use that is abandoned under this subsection shall not be resumed."

SECTION 2: This Ordinance shall be cumulative of all provisions of ordinances and of the Code of Ordinances, City of North Richland Hills, Texas, as amended, except when the provisions of this Ordinance are in direct conflict with the provisions of such ordinances and such code, in which event the conflicting provisions of such ordinances and such code are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3: It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Ordinance are severable, and if any section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this Ordinance of any such unconstitutional section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase.

SECTION 4: Any person, firm or corporation violating any provision of the Zoning Ordinance and the zoning map of the City of North Richland Hills as amended hereby shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon final conviction thereof fined in an amount not to exceed Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00). Each day any such violation shall be allowed to continue shall constitute a separate violation and is punishable hereunder.

SECTION 5: All rights and remedies of the City of North Richland Hills are expressly saved as to any and all violations of the provisions of any ordinances governing zoning that have accrued at the time of the effective date of this Ordinance; and, as to such accrued violations and all pending litigation,

both civil and criminal, whether pending in court or not, under such ordinances, same shall not be affected by this Ordinance but may be prosecuted until final disposition by the courts.

SECTION 6: The City Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to cause the publication of the descriptive caption and penalty clause of this Ordinance as required by law, if applicable.

SECTION 7: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon publication as required by law.

AND IT IS SO ORDAINED.

PASSED AND APPROVED on the 9^h day of February, 2026.

CITY OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS

By: _____
Jack McCarty, Mayor

ATTEST:

Alicia Richardson
City Secretary/Chief Governance Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Bradley A. Anderle, City Attorney

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Cori Reaume, Director of Planning