

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Fall of 2022, a survey of 500 residents of the City of Brevard was undertaken. Two hundred and sixty residents responded to the survey (a 52 percent response rate), and the results of their responses are presented in this report.

For the key question of this study “Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?” the most popular response was “Yes- Curtail STRs” (50 percent).

In other open-ended responses, the nuances of who is impacted by STRs were explored by respondents who acknowledged experiences of investors in STRs, visitors, and residents who live, work, and seek housing in Brevard. Affordability and availability of housing for working residents of Brevard to rent long-term or purchase was a common theme.

OVERVIEW OF THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In Fall of 2021, a resolution established the Short-Term Rental Task Force to “obtain data on short-term rentals in the City of Brevard, assess positive and negative impacts of short-term rentals and provide recommendations to the City Council for consideration”.

Short-Term Rentals (STRs)

The task force wanted to better understand short term rentals in the City of Brevard. As defined by the City, “A short-term rental (STR) is a private residential property that is rented, in whole or part, for periods of less than 30 days for compensation.” Short term rentals are highly contested and have received public attention. There are different opinions about how to define the problem, the solutions, and the public’s involvement in those processes.

Influences to Opinions on STRs

There are many experiences and elements of the context that could influence residents’ opinions about short-term rentals in Brevard. Some influences that the task force wanted to explore include: owning an STR or having a financial stake in them (perhaps through employment), living near to an STR, using an STR in Brevard or other locations, renting a home, and age.

METHODS

Sunny Side Consulting LLC was hired in Summer 2022 to create and conduct a representative survey of City residents which would provide insight into the public’s views and experiences with short-term rentals. Systematic research could help the task force understand the public’s views on short term rentals, and know that the results were more representative than general polling.

This study uses data from 260 respondents.

Participant Selection:

This study was intended to better understand the experiences and thoughts of *residents* of the City of Brevard. To compile a sampling frame, addresses of all who receive city utilities and voter registration addresses were collected. The utilities addresses were then sorted to exclude addresses where the location of the utilities service and the billing address did not match, with the exception of addresses where the billing address was a PO box within Transylvania County. This was intended to narrow the remaining list to *residents*- people who were living at the address enough to receive the bill to that address. Addresses to businesses, churches, or to residences in the extra-territorial jurisdiction were also excluded. After this initial sorting, any address that had been initially excluded but then matched a voter address was added back into the sampling frame. Voter registration indicates a resident who lives at the address, so even if their utilities bill did not go to the location of the utility service, their status as a registered voter indicates that they are a resident. The final sampling frame included 2767 addresses.

A random sample of 500 addresses was taken from this sampling frame using a random number generator. This means that each address had the same chance of being selected. Each address was assigned a random four-digit access code for entering the online survey, and access codes were checked for duplicates. Addresses were mapped and visually examined for representation of all parts of the city.

Survey Design:

The survey questionnaire was created through an iterative process with task force members. With members' input, 22 questions were selected for the survey. The survey was created online, and contained multiple choice and three short-answer questions about their experiences with short-term rentals in Brevard and their opinions.

The short-answer questions allow for better understanding of how and why Brevard residents are formulating their opinions and understanding their experiences with STRs. This is particularly important when social groups disagree about the causes or consequences of experiences that are important to them.

Data Collection

This survey used a three-step process of inviting participation from each of the 500 addresses. Mixed-modes of contact, where participants are contacted in multiple ways, can improve response rates. The data collection process roughly followed Dillman's Tailored Design Method.

First participants were mailed an invitation letter with a one-dollar incentive. Previous research suggests that monetary incentive is an effective way to boost participation, and that one dollar is enough. The invitation letter was printed on City of Brevard stationary and mailed in a City of Brevard envelope. The invitation explained the purpose of the study, asked for their participation, and provided the link to the online survey and their unique access code.

Next, after checking which access codes had not yet been used a second invitation letter was mailed to addresses that had not yet completed the online survey. This invitation letter did not include a monetary incentive.

Finally, remaining residences that had not yet completed the survey were visited by researchers in a door-to-door invitation effort on December 3 and 4 of 2022. Teams of two researchers visited the address and asked the resident to participate in the survey. This effort also included the option to complete the survey on paper.

Upon closing the survey on December 15, the results in this report come from 260 responses. This is a 52% response rate. While not part of this report, after data collection was completed, the online survey was opened to the public to solicit feedback from all interested stakeholders.

RESULTS: CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

This section describes some of the characteristics of the 260 respondents who participated in the study, including information on their residence, the people who live with them, and demographic characteristics. See Table 1 (continued on page 5) for these results.

Most respondents lived full-time at this residence. Most often they lived in one-family homes that are detached from any other house, and most residences were owned by the respondent or someone in their household. However, 17 percent of respondents rented their homes. Renters and homeowners also often lived with at least one other adult or child.

Respondents were predominantly White, more than half were women, and almost all had educational attainment beyond a high school degree. This is quite representative of US Census estimates for Brevard.

The median age of respondents was 65 years old. Almost half of respondents reported their employment status as “retired”.

The census estimates that in 2021 the median household income for Brevard was \$46,058, which helped inform the creation of the income categories for the survey. Incomes appear to be somewhat higher for respondents, but almost one-quarter chose to select “prefer not to answer” or skip the question.

Table 1: Descriptive Information About Respondents		
	Percent	Count
Residence Information		
A one family house detached from any other house	85%	220
Owned by you or by someone in your household	82%	211
Rented by you	17%	44
Full-time resident	98%	254
Average monthly housing cost	\$828	
Median monthly housing cost	\$800	

Persons per household		
No other adult lives with respondent	25%	62
One other adult lives with respondent	48%	119
Two or more other adults live with respondent	27%	67
Households with a child living with you	19%	46
Race/Ethnicity		
White	86%	208
Black	2%	5
Hispanic, Latinx	1%	2
American Indian	1%	2
Other	2%	5
Prefer not to answer	9%	21
Sex		
Female	55%	135
Male	37%	90
Non-binary	0%	1
Prefer not to say	7%	18
Age		
Average	61 years	
Median	65 years	
Education		
Did not graduate from high school	2%	4
High school graduate or GED	7%	16
Some college, associates degree, technical/trade school, or other post-high school education	25%	60
Completed a bachelor's degree	31%	74
Graduate work or graduate degree	37%	89
Household Income		
Under \$17,000	2%	5
\$17000-\$46999	20%	48
\$47000-\$99999	32%	76
\$100000-\$199999	18%	44
\$200000 or more	7%	16
Prefer not to answer	21%	50
Employment Status		
Retired	47%	118
Employed/Self-Employed Full Time	34%	85
Employed/Self-Employed Part Time	8%	20
Disabled	5%	13
Unemployed	2%	6
Other	3%	8

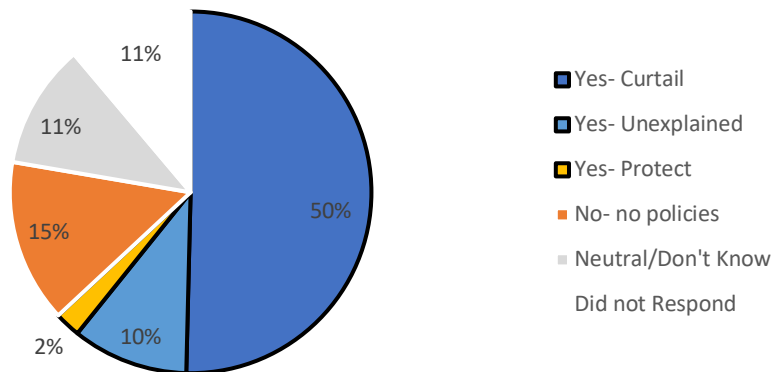
(Table 1 continued)

RESULTS: SHOULD THE CITY OF BREVARD ADOPT POLICIES TO PROTECT OR CURTAIL STRS?

Overall, 63 percent of respondents (164 people) wrote that the City of Brevard *should* adopt policies related to short-term rentals. Sometimes the response was a simple “Yes” without explanation. Most of the time, responses included further explanation which helped explain if their yes was indicating support for policies that protect or policies that curtail STRs. There is clearly support for the city to take action.

	Percent	Respondents
Yes	63%	164
“Yes”- unexplained	10%	27
“Yes”-Curtail STRs	50%	131
“Yes”- Protect STRs	2%	6
No- No policies	15%	38
Neutral/Don’t Know	11%	29

Figure 1: Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs? (All 260 respondents)



Two hundred and thirty one people responded to this question. The percentages in Table 2 and Figure 1 include that 11 percent of the overall participants are missing from this response. Sixty three percent of respondents to this question wrote in favor of policy creation, while 15 percent (38 people) were not in favor of any policies. Around 11 percent of respondents (29 people) wrote that they did not know, did not care, or were neutral about the decision to create policies about STRs. An additional 11 percent of survey respondents did not answer this question.

While the response of “Yes” without explanation indicates that the respondent is in favor of policy creation, it does not indicate what kinds of policies should be created or if those policies should act to protect or to curtail STRs. All responses of “yes” to overall policy creation are outlined in black on the graph. The responses that included explanation provide more insight into answering the key question guiding this task force.

If we are to only examine those who responded to the question (231 people), support for policies to curtail increases to 57 percent, while other categories change only slightly (yes-unexplained: 12 percent, protect: 3 percent, no policies: 16 percent, and neutral/don't know: 12 percent).

Yes- Curtail STRs: 50% (131 responses)

The most popular response was “Yes- Curtail STRs”. Most of these responses offered lengthy explanations for their reasoning or suggestions for particular policies. Many respondents offered specific suggestions for policies they would like to see the City of Brevard adopt to curtail STRs. This report will not comment on the feasibility or legality of specific policy suggestions. However, by analyzing the suggestions that were made, we can interpret the specific aspects of STRs that are of interest to respondents.

Among the explanations for their reasoning, many respondents cited concerns for affordable housing. These respondents made a connection between lack of affordable housing options in the community and increasing STR listings. An example response:

“I believe SOMETHING should be in place to prevent the town from being taken over by STRs. We have hotels. What we need is affordable rentals for locals. Those who were born or raised here are having a hard time finding/being able to afford to live here. We love our tourists but it seems that the rental market caters more to those who visit than those who live in and contribute to our beautiful town.”

Among the specific policy suggestions that discussed affordable housing many offered both “carrots” and “sticks” or suggestions to incentivize long-term rentals at affordable rates and discourage the decision to rent a home short-term.

“Should not protect. Possibly levy taxes to deincentivize properties being short term rentals as opposed to long term. Maybe incentivize long term rentals.”

“Curtail short-term rentals. Replace with affordable housing for people who are working in Brevard or for seniors who want to age in place and enjoy the ability to walk everywhere. Support housing initiatives that foster community.”

Policy suggestions that emphasized regulation and limits of STR listings in neighborhoods might suggest concerns for the character of the neighborhood or everyday living experiences. Some were specific about their own neighbors, while others offered multiple broad suggestions. For example:

“Curtail. They should be licensed, regulated, and taxed. Limits should be established on the number per neighborhood.”

A popular policy suggestion was to curtail based on STR owners’ residence. This reflected a concern for outsider influence, or outsider ownership of STRs. Some respondents implied that outsider ownership was associated with multiple STR listings, and less investment in the economic and/or social aspects of

the community. Ownership of STRs by individuals who live in Brevard were seen in a less negative light for the same reasons: that these owners might have fewer listings and more investment in the community.

“Yes. There should be limits set in place with permitting. You should not be able to earn income from a STR in Brevard unless you live here full time and are contributing to our local economy. The property owners that do not even live here but used the Covid timeframe to purchase real estate and set up STR are benefitting from our infrastructure without contributing to it.”

Yes- Protect STRs: 2% (6 responses)

A very small minority of the people who were interested in adopting policies wanted policies to protect STRs, just 2 percent. Most of these responses mentioned that in a town with a large tourist population there is a large demand for places for the tourists to stay during their visit. One respondent wrote:

“I believe they should be protected as they are meeting a need and I feel the owners should have the right to earn this income providing this service.”

No- No policies should be put into place: 15% (38 responses)

Almost one-fifth of respondents believed that the City of Brevard should not adopt any policies about STRs. Some of the concerns mentioned were that property owners should make their own decisions about how to use their own homes. For example:

“No. Property owners should be the decision makers when it comes to what they can do with their property. The city should not weigh in either way with this issue.”

Others expressed broader distaste for regulations or government action, which could be generally applied to the question about STRs:

“I do not favor government intervention of any kind.”

A few of the responses also expressed concern for future legal action against potential policies that might be adopted.

“Absolutely not. For one there will be law suits. loss of tax revenue, and a large drop in tourists. Brevard is tourists town and you must have options for people to stay or they will go to Mills River, Hendersonville, Waynesville... They will come hike bike and leave they will not go shower and come back to Brevard. They will stay and eat and shop near there STR. Also, it’s small business people you are hurting that’s who owns STR. People who live love and spend in this community. It’s absolutely a joke you are even questioning this, while you allow that awful looking eye soar City Camper to build.

Why don't you spend your time looking into what they have done in others city's with there so called resorts. Total trash after five years."

Neutral/Don't Know: 11% (29 responses)

Some respondents simply wrote "Don't Know", "No Opinion", or otherwise indicated that they did not have an opinion on the matter. In a few cases, part of the written response indicated support for a policy and another part indicated not supporting policy creation. Without clear direction, these kinds of responses were included in this category rather than making assumptions about the main intent of the response. Responses that were questions were also included here.

RESULTS: WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO STRS IN BREVARD?

There are many ways that respondents described their connection (or lack of connection) to short-term rentals in Brevard (see Table 3). Respondents could select all connections that they felt applied to their situation. The most common response was "I am a community member". While a vague statement, this allowed respondents who may not have related to any of the other options to feel they had a response option that expressed some part of their experience in Brevard.

Notably, 19 people, or 7 percent of respondents are owners of short-term rentals. Their experiences are explored in more detail on page 13.

Additionally, 32 percent of respondents (82 people) state that they are neighbors with short-term rentals. Ninety-two respondents reported staying in an STR, either in Brevard (29 responses), in another location (82 responses) or both. There were overlaps between categories, since respondents could select more than one. For example, five of the people who owned short-term rentals also reported they were neighbors with an STR, and five people who reported that they did not feel connected to STRs also reported that they were neighbors with an STR.

Table 3: What is your connection to STRs in Brevard?		
	Percent	Count
I am a community member	51%	130
I have stayed in a STR in another location	34%	86
I am neighbors with a STR	32%	82
I do not feel connected with STRs	27%	68
My family/friends stay in STRs when they visit Brevard	16%	42
I have stayed in a STR in Brevard	12%	31
I own a STR in Brevard	7%	19
I am considering becoming an owner/operator of a STR in Brevard	4%	11
Other	4%	11
I am employed in the broader tourism/hospitality industry	2%	4
I am employed in a field directly related to STRs	1%	3
I am employed to manage a STR	1%	2

There were not many respondents who had a financial stake in STRs through their employment, such as employment in the broader hospitality industry, managing an STR, or employment in a field directly

related to STRs (such as housekeeping or maintenance of the STR). Eleven people reported considering becoming an owner/operator of an STR in Brevard, so perhaps financial connections to STRs may grow in the future.

RESULTS BY DIFFERENT SUBGROUPS:

It is interesting to consider how responses to the key question, “Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?” may differ by experiences or identities of different subgroups of respondents. To better understand this, this report separates responses by a number of key subgroups: short-term rental owners, respondents who reported being neighbors to short-term rentals, people who have stayed in a short-term rental in Brevard or elsewhere, people who rent their residences, and adults age 65 and older and those who are younger than 65 (called “younger adult”).

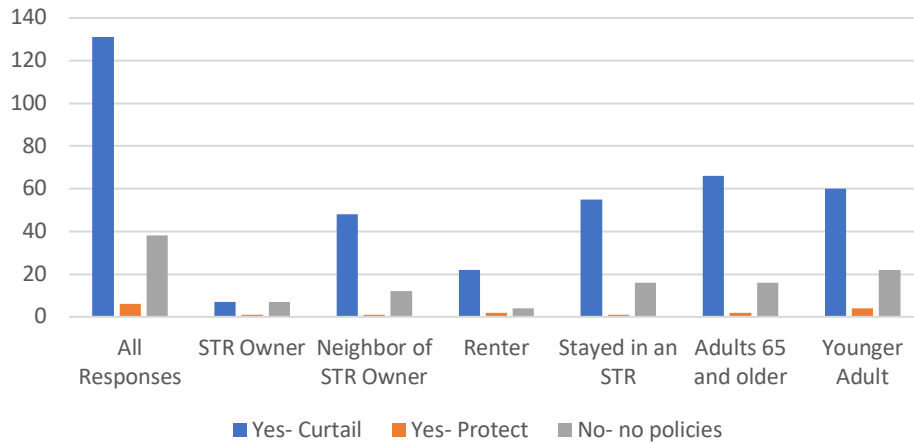
Three questions were examined by these subgroups: “Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?”, “Do you believe that living next to or near a short-term rental impacts your own property value?”, and “How would you feel having a short-term rental (or rentals) as your neighbor(s)?”. Results are presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6 as well as Figures 2, 3, and 4, and all include the comparison to all responses for reference.

For the key question, “Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?”, the three main responses were compared “Yes- Curtail”, “Yes- Protect” and “No- No policies”. Responses of “Neutral/Don’t Know” and “Yes” without explanation were not included, since these responses cannot be interpreted clearly.

As can be seen in Figure 2, for every subcategory except one, the most popular response was “Yes- Curtail”. Neighbors of STRs, renters, people who had stayed in an STR before, and people of all ages were in favor of policies that would curtail STRs in Brevard. Interestingly, even owners of STRs in Brevard were evenly split on the issue.

Table 4: Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?			
	Yes- Curtail	Yes- Protect	No- no policies
All Responses	131	6	38
STR Owner	7	1	7
Neighbor of STR Owner	48	1	12
Renter	22	2	4
Stayed in an STR	55	1	16
Adults 65 and older	66	2	16
Younger Adult	60	4	22

Figure 2: Should the City of Brevard adopt policies to protect or curtail STRs?



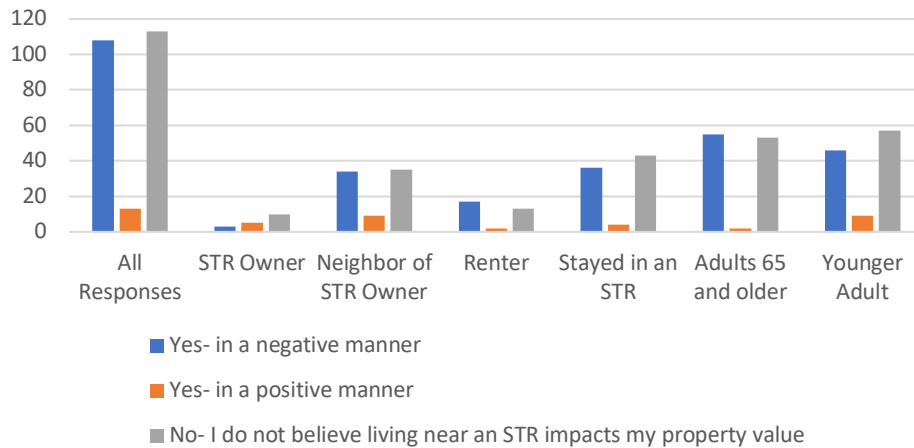
Discussions of property values can be vague because the implications of positive or negative impacts can be interpreted widely. For some, increasing property values are viewed as increases to an asset that could potentially be liquidated (upon the sale of the property) for monetary gain. For others, increasing property values are viewed negatively when the increase is accompanied by higher taxes and no intention to sell in the future. Relationships between increased property values and gentrification has been well documented in academic research. Decreasing property values can also be seen in a positive or negative light. The actual monetary effect of STRs on property values is outside the scope of this study. However, understanding residents’ opinions about property values can help clarify the context of their other opinions.

Table 5: Do you believe that living next to or near a short-term rental impacts your own property value?			
	Yes- in a negative manner	Yes- in a positive manner	No- I do not believe living near an STR impacts my property value
All Responses	108	13	113
STR Owner	3	5	10
Neighbor of STR Owner	34	9	35
Renter	17	2	13
Stayed in an STR	36	4	43
Adults 65 and older	55	2	53
Younger Adult	46	9	57

Respondents to this survey had mixed opinions about the effect of living near STRs on their own property values. Overall, almost half believed that living next to or near an STR did not impact their own property value. Among those who did believe that it impacted their property value, most believed that impact was negative. Very few reported a belief that living next or near an STR positively impacted their property value. Short term rental owners expressed a slightly different pattern, with most believing there was no impact, and among those who did believe it had an impact 2 more believed it would be

positive than negative. Again, how respondents interpreted positive or negative impact (as increasing or decreasing their property value and how they feel about that impact) could vary

Figure 3: Do you believe that living next to or near a short-term rental impacts your own property value?

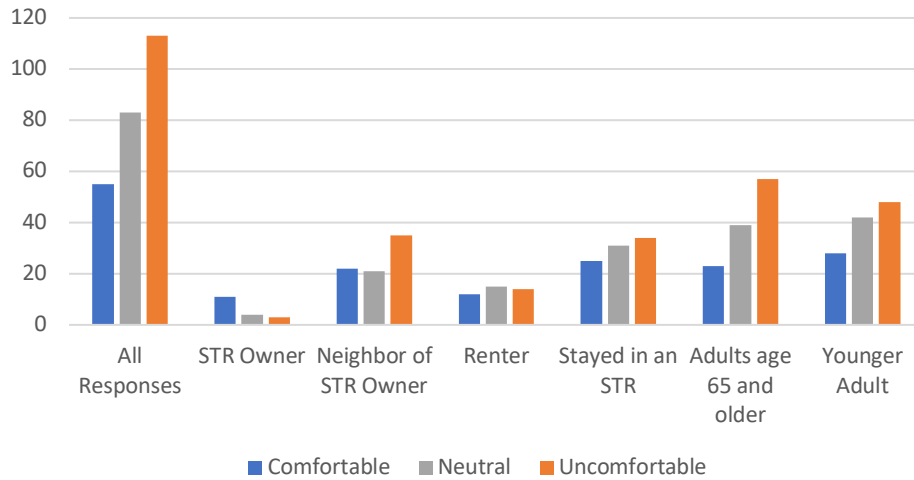


Respondents were asked how they would feel having a short-term rental (or rentals) as their neighbor(s), and could respond from “Very Comfortable” to “Very Uncomfortable” on a five point scale which is presented in the table. Figure 4 collapses “very comfortable” and “comfortable” into one category, and “very uncomfortable” and “uncomfortable” into one category to clarify interpretation.

	Very comfortable	Moderately Comfortable	Neutral	Moderately Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable
All Responses	29	26	83	67	46
STR Owner	11	0	4	1	2
Neighbor of STR Owner	11	11	21	25	10
Renter	5	7	15	8	6
Stayed in an STR	15	10	31	24	10
Adults 65 and older	10	13	39	31	26
Younger Adult	17	11	42	34	14

While overall results suggest that there is generally a greater discomfort with having an STR as a neighbor than being comfortable with it, the results by subcategories are a little more nuanced. STR owners are the only subgroup that reports greater comfort than discomfort with having an STR as a neighbor. People who are neighbors with an STR and people who are over 65 years old had clearly greater discomfort than comfort with the possibility of an STR neighbor. Younger adults and those who had stayed in an STR also reported greater discomfort than comfort, but also regularly reported feeling neutral. Renters’ most common response was neutral.

Figure 4: How would you feel having a short-term rental (or rentals) as your neighbor(s)?



RESULTS FOR STR OWNERS

Among the 261 respondents, 19 identified as owners of short-term rentals. Upon indicating that they owned an STR, these respondents were asked four additional questions. Characteristics of STR owners who are residents of Brevard are explored in Table 7 on page 14.

Short-term rental owners reported connections to STRs in ways outside of their ownership including staying in STRs in other locations and in Brevard, lodging their friends/family in STRs when they visit, and living next to an STR. Like overall responses, it was common for STR owners to report being a community member.

STR owners differed on some demographic characteristics from overall responses, but often were like the overall responses to this survey. STR owners reported higher incomes, with only one reporting an income at or below the median for Brevard. They also reported higher median housing costs. Most report employment, and like overall respondents they report high levels of education. Slightly more men than women reported STR ownership. All STR owners reported their race/ethnicity as White or preferred not to answer, and reported ages slightly lower than the median overall response.

All STR owners lived in one-family houses detached from other houses, and that home was owned by them or a member of their household. All STR owners who responded to this survey were full-time residents of Brevard. Since this survey is of residents of Brevard, this makes sense, but may not represent the experiences of all STR owners in Brevard.

Table 7: Owners of STRS	
	Count
Additional responses to connections to STRs in Brevard	
I am a community member	9
I am neighbors with an STR	5
I am considering becoming an owner/operator of an STR	1
I am employed in a field directly related to STRs	0
I am employed in the broader hospitality/tourism industry	1
I am employed to manage STRs	1
I have stayed in an STR in Brevard	6
I have stayed in an STR in another location	9
My family/friends stay in STRs when they visit me in Brevard	8
Income	
Income below \$47,000	1
Preferred not to answer	6
Employment	
Employed full time	10
Employed part time	1
Retired	4
Disabled	1
Other	1
Education	
Did not graduate from high school	1
High school graduate or GED	1
Some college, associates degree, technical/trade school, or other post-high school education	3
Completed a bachelor's degree	7
Graduate work or graduate degree	5
Sex	
Female	7
Male	8
Prefer not to answer	2
Race/Ethnicity	
White	16
Prefer not to answer	1
Monthly Housing Payment	
Median Monthly Housing Payment	\$1050
Age	
Under 65	11
Over 65	6
Median age	60 years

Short-term rental owners were asked to describe their STR in two ways. Most reported managing/hosting the STR themselves. Most also reported that they do not live at the property that they rent short-term. None reported living seasonally at the STR.

Figure 5: If you own a short-term rental, which of these statements most accurately describes your STR?

- I manage/host the short-term rental
- I employ someone else to manage/host the short-term rental

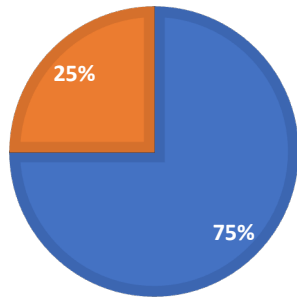
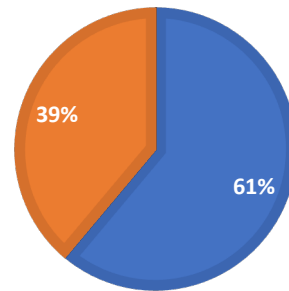


Figure 6: If you own a short-term rental, which of these statements most accurately describes your STR?

- I do not live at the property I rent short-term
- I live permanently at the property I rent short-term



Thirteen of the respondents reported owning 1 STR. Two people reported owning 2, one person reported owning 3, no respondent owned 4, and one owned 5 or more. Owners were asked what kind of STR they owned, and could check all that applied. Most owned detached single family homes.

Figure 7: How many short-term rentals do you own?

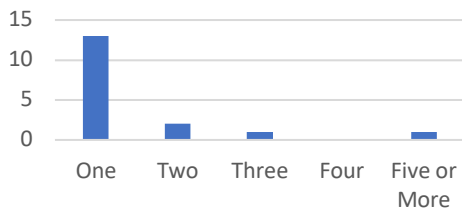


Table 8: if you own a short-term rental, what kind(s) do you own?	
	Count
Detached single-family home	7
Room, suite, garage apartment	4
Secondary house, cottage, cabin, ADU	3
Attached single-family home, townhome, row home, duplex, triplex	1
Apartment or condominium	0
Other	1

OTHER RESULTS

The survey also asked for respondents’ opinions to two other open-ended questions: “In the past 5 years, what have you noticed about short-term rentals in Brevard?” and “Brevard residents vary in their views on short-term rentals. What are your views?”. Both questions were intentionally open and somewhat vague, so that respondents could feel free to express any opinions and share any experiences that they wanted noted in the survey.

For the first question, “In the past 5 years, what have you noticed about short-term rentals in Brevard?” there were 207 responses. Among those, 136 responses stated that they noticed the number of short-term rentals in Brevard is growing. This was by far the most common response.

“There are more all the time”

Sometimes this observation was accompanied by descriptions of their experiences with short-term rentals near to their residences. Other responses cited their observation as rooted in larger discussions of housing in Brevard, or increased tourism.

“A family in my neighborhood was evicted from a rental property when a new owner bought the house and turned it into a short term rental. They were not able to find another house to rent in the area for a comparable amount to what they were paying previously. Another out of town individual purchased a home near me and tore it down and built 2 homes on the same lot, one of which is a short term rental. The houses are very close together, and in my opinion, unattractive. A third property in the neighborhood was purchased and a short term rental built in what was the side yard of the original house. That house is closer to the road and out of scale with the neighboring homes.”

There were a variety of other things people noticed, or noticed in addition to mentioning growth in the number of STRs. Forty-eight responses included a reference to affordable housing. Many of those also commented on housing (in general) being too expensive.

“There's too many of them, leaving no room for people to live here, and driving up prices of homes to live in or rent long term.”

Seventeen stated that they did not know much about STRs, or had moved to Brevard recently and did not feel informed enough to comment.

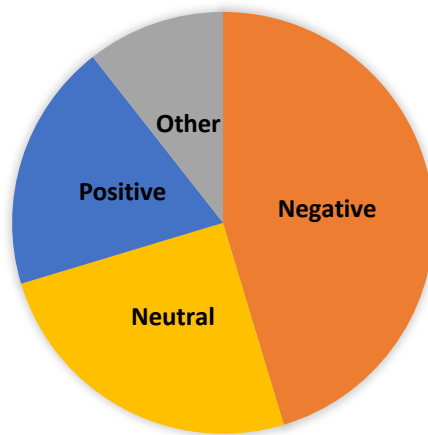
Thirteen pointed out positive influences of STRs that they noticed.

It's a great opportunity to make extra income and drives more tourists to the city. It gives tourists, family, and friends a place to stay. They love not staying in hotel. I get neighbors who want to rent it all the time for family members so they can be close.

For the second question, “Brevard residents vary in their views on short-term rentals. What are your views?” there were 236 responses. Of those responses most were negative (107 negative responses), 45 were positive, and 59 were neutral or offered both positive and negative aspects. (Others replied with “don’t know”, etc.) The classification of positive or negative does not necessitate a strong like or dislike of STRs, though many responses did state very clear preferences. Sometimes positive responses said “I’m ok with it” or “They don’t bother me” or negative responses included “I would rather not have them in Brevard in the residential neighborhoods”.

Many offered nuanced perspectives citing positive and negative aspects of STRs. They cited personal experiences and overall views. Sometimes both positive and negative aspects were discussed, and then the respondent summarized their overall opinion as “negative” or “positive”. Other times, they discussed both positive and negative aspects without stating an overall opinion—these were classified in the “neutral” category. Interestingly, when both positive and negative aspects were discussed, they often followed patterned ways of describing the positives and negatives.

Figure 8: Brevard residents vary in their views on STRs.
What are your views?



“As a tourist destination, STRs provided needed accommodation for those who come here. As a community, they may be detrimental to residential housing stock. I have no idea how to balance those opposing interests.”

“I feel that STR bring in needed income for owners but they also take away affordable housing options for low income households.”

For positive aspects of STRs, the most commonly cited opinions or experiences were related to *visitors* having a good experience in Brevard. STRs were cited as preferred vacation destinations to hotels, or were seen as a necessary supplement to limited availability in hotel offerings.

The second most common description of STRs in a positive manner was that STRs were positive for the *investors* who have decided to own an STR. People empathetically described their support for individual decision-making about what to do with your own property or properties, and the economic investment (for retirement or otherwise) that might motivate someone to purchase a home for an STR.

The most common negative opinions or experiences cited related to lack of affordable housing in Brevard (particularly long-term rentals) and lack of housing overall for *local people*. Concerns were raised about the ability for people to live where they work, live near family, prevent homelessness, and recruit to specific industries such as teachers, police, and people who work in the tourism sector. While there were some negative responses that also included concerns about noise, trash, and lack of connection with neighbors, these were often cited in addition to affordable housing concerns.

“I am not in favor of them. I know it benefits the owner of the property, but eliminating affordable rentals is detrimental to the community as a whole.”

It matters that respondents were considering three separate groups of people and their experiences in their evaluations of STRs: *investors* who own STRs, *visitors*, and *local people* seeking homes. Each of

these stakeholders are important to our community, and their needs are interdependent. As many of the nuanced/neutral comments noted: without housing for tourists, there would not be jobs in the businesses that are part of our tourism industry. Without housing for workers in the tourism industry, there will not be employees to run the businesses for the tourists to frequent. Both are true. Weighing the needs, interests, and potential risks and benefits for each of these groups separately could help piece out the nuance of any decision-making about STRs.

“STRs bring in tourists which continue to enable Brevard to thrive. However, there is also a need for affordable long-term rentals for the workers that Brevard also needs to thrive.”

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND LONG-TERM RENTALS

It must be noted that for all three of the questions that offered written responses, participants brought up affordable housing and long-term rentals again and again.

This suggests that residents perceive a connection between short-term rentals and larger discussions of housing affordability and availability. For many, it was part of their reasoning for curtailing short-term rentals. For even more, it was something they noted when stating their views about STRs or what they have noticed about STRs in the past five years.

The persistence and regularity of this perception (that STRs and housing affordability/availability) may warrant further research.

CONCLUSIONS

To assist the Short-Term Rental Task force in their mission to obtain data on short-term rentals, this report on a survey of 260 residents of the City of Brevard was conducted in Fall of 2022. As defined by the City, “A short-term rental (STR) is a private residential property that is rented, in whole or part, for periods of less than 30 days for compensation.” The many experiences and opinions of respondents were analyzed, including information from sub-groups such as STR owners, neighbors to STRs, people who have stayed in STRs, people who rent their homes in Brevard, and people of different age groups.

Results indicate that there is interest in the creation of policies about STRs in Brevard, and that the most common response was to enact policies that curtail STRs.

Additionally, respondents clearly perceived a connection between STRs and housing affordability and availability in Brevard.

Limitations

For each of the results, the count of responses is included since some questions were skipped by participants. When percentages are provided, it should be interpreted as the percent of the total sample of 260, so missing values were part of the percent. Percentages were also rounded to the nearest whole

number. Overall, most respondents answered every question on the survey. The survey question with the lowest response rate was “In the past five years, what have you noticed about short-term rentals in Brevard?” with 207 responses. Surveys were not excluded for missing data, data is not imputed, it is presented in a “raw” format.

All quotes from respondents are written in their original format and have not been edited for clarity or grammatical mistakes.

DISCLAIMER

This analysis was made based on the information provided by participants in the survey, and thus reflects participants’ individual interpretations of survey questions and understandings of their own experiences. No responsibility is assumed by Sunny Side Consulting LLC if participants have represented their experiences inaccurately in survey responses

This report does not comment on the feasibility or legality of specific policy suggestions offered by respondents.

No public written summarization or re-publication of this study may be made without prior written consent of Sunny Side Consulting LLC.

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