



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island

Department of Community Development

10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809
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401-253-7000

July 1, 2026

Bristol Planning Board
10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809

RE: Short Term Rental Ordinance

Honorable Members:

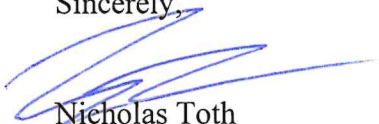
The Bristol Department of Community Development is proposing a set of regulations to govern the issuance of special use permits for Short Term Rentals. Attached is our draft for your review and comment, along with the following supplemental information:

- The goal of this ordinance is to ensure the stability and availability of long-term housing units in Bristol for rent and to own and to provide the town with the means of overseeing the current and future short term rentals within its jurisdiction.
- Other municipalities of comparable or smaller population to Bristol have seen the number of short term rentals explode to several hundred.
 - o Middletown has over 400 Short Term Rental Units for a population of just over 17,000, or nearly 5% of all housing units in the municipality
 - o Narragansett has over 1,000 for a population of roughly 14,000.
- Adoption of this ordinance at this time would ensure Bristol maintains control over its housing stock while the number of short-term rentals in Bristol remains relatively small.
- There are, as of 6/25/2026, 88 Short Term Rental units currently active with RIDBR in the town of Bristol (0.944% of total housing Units)
 - o This has fluctuated. 123 active registrations were found in June 2023 (1.32% of total housing units), and 164 Active Registrations in April 2026 (1.76% of total housing units)
- This ordinance is not being considered in a vacuum. A number of other communities in Rhode Island currently regulate short term rentals in some fashion, including:
 - o Providence
 - o Newport
 - o Narragansett
 - o Middletown
 - o Portsmouth
 - o Warwick
 - o Warren
 - o Westerly

- South Kingstown
 - New Shoreham
 - Barrington
-
- The Draft presented is based on the best practices of a number of other communities, especially Middletown, New Shoreham, and Westerly.
 - Regulation of Short Term Rentals has been identified as an item of concern for many residents though the Town's comprehensive planning process, and has been a goal of the town for several years.

We hope this helps to guide this Board's review process and starts the Town on the path to adoption.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Toth
Planner/HDC Coordinator
Department of Community Development
Town of Bristol