



**MINUTES NO. 2026-04-WS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OF MADISON, ALABAMA
May 11, 2026**

The Madison City Council met for a public work session on Monday May 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Madison Municipal Complex, Madison, Alabama. Noting that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Council President Maura Wroblewski.

THE FOLLOWING ELECTED OFFICIALS WERE IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Ranae Bartlett	Present
Council District No. 1 Maura Wroblewski	Present
Council District No. 2 David Bier	Present
Council District No. 3 Billie Goodson	Present
Council District No. 4 Michael McKay	Present
Council District No. 5 Alice Lessmann	Present
Council District No. 6 Erica White	Recused
Council District No. 7 Kenneth Jackson	Present

City Officials in attendance were: City Clerk-Treasurer Lisa D. Thomas, Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer Kerri Sulyma, City Attorney Megan Zigarelli, Assistant City Attorney Shelby Morris Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren, Information Technology Director Chris White, Information Technology Support Technician Wes Baugh

The published purpose of the work session was short-term rentals.

SHORT TERM RENTALS

City Attorney Megan Zigarelli stated there have been several developments including a recommendation from the planning commission on where to locate short term rentals and how to regulate them. The legal and planning department have been doing research on the various questions the Council had. There was a planning commission recommendation to allow short term rentals city wide, with a vote of 5-2 in favor along with accompanying regulations for various health, safety and welfare aspects. The planning commission also recommended a cap on short-term rentals. There are three key decision points for the council's feedback on.

- Where should short-term rentals be located
- Capping the number of short-term rentals
- How long is a short-term rental

Assistant City Attorney Shelby Morris discusses proposed ordinance key points

- Operational permit and business license required,
- \$350.00, application fee, including inspections and annual renewal
- 1-million-dollar liability insurance
- No outstanding taxes or code violations
- Lodging only, no parties or events, or food service
- No signage, no exterior alterations, house numbers must be visible
- One parking space per bedroom and no overnight street parking by guest
- Safety equipment required, smoke, co2 detectors, fire extinguisher and egress windows
- Local contact person, over 21, available 24/7, and onsite within 30 minutes
- Neighbor notification, adjacent property owners, permitting and additional items are not reliant on the notification
- 3 strikes enforcement provision,
- 3 substantiated complaints in a 12-month period would be a 6-month suspension,
- If there are 2 suspensions in 2 years, there will be a 12-month suspension.
- 3 suspensions within a 3-year period there would be a permanent revocation
- Appeals would go to the city council within 15 days

Assistant City Attorney Shelby Morris discusses proposed application

- Completed and notarized application
- Owner-operator and local contact person info, emergency contact
- Property survey showing parking
- Floor plans of bedrooms
- Exterior photos
- Proof of ownership, deed or lease
- Government ID
- Proof of insurance
- HOA confirmation
- 14 acknowledgements, covering compliance, insurance, parking, inspection
- The permit is non-transferable
- Guest rules and regulations
- 2 people per bedroom, plus 2 additional
- No amplified outdoor music
- No fireworks
- No noise audible beyond property line
- No events, parties, ticketed gatherings, commercial use, or subletting

Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren discusses the options where short-term rentals could be allowed

- Mixed use areas
- Multifamily district
- Single family subdivisions

The planning committee supported a 5-2 vote to allow short term rentals city wide with the caveats mentioned.

Currently In Madison, an occupant of an accessory dwelling unit must be related to people living in the main dwelling. If short term rentals are allowed in single family homes the requirement of the occupant of an accessory dwelling no longer makes sense.

City Attorney Megan Zigarelli discusses the next major point of capping the number of short-term rentals. The planning committee recommended a cap but did not indicate a specific number. With the research provided, here are some options:

- Cap the number at the current number operating in the city, anywhere from 65 to 150.
- Selecting a percentage of the housing supply, 1 percent of the 23,000-housing supply in the city would be around 230. This would allow for growth.
- No cap to the number of short-term rentals. The market and permitting process would regulate themselves.

City Attorney Megan Zigarelli discusses the last major point, what is the maximum length of stay for a short-term rental.

- 30 days is the most chosen. Research shows the average short-term rental in Madison is about six nights.
- 60-90 days to capture corporate housing
- 180 days is the maximum for the application of lodging taxes. This is the number chosen by the cities of Huntsville and Mobile.

DISCUSSION

Council Member Goodson discusses Oakland Springs and Town Madison and whether short-term rentals are allowed. He states Town Madison does not allow them and inquires on Oakland Springs from Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren. Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren states they allow them in the neighborhood center area where the Argento apartment project is. They do not allow them in single-family homes or townhouses.

Council Member McKay discusses where short-term rentals could be located. If the council does not allow them in single family homes. What does the council do with the ones currently operating? Grandfather them in? City Attorney Megan Zigarelli responds if that is the direction council decides then we would ask for guidance to craft the regulations accordingly.

Council President Wroblewski discusses the fees to be charged. The proposed fee is \$350.00; instead suggested a \$500.00 fee and an additional \$250.00 for the inspection and for that to happen twice a year. These inspections and applications will require time and may require a new person to be hired. Radon testing should be done annually. People in the neighborhood should be notified and get permission for a short-term rental to be in the neighborhood. But legally the council is unable to do that because it would give a neighbor too much control over the short-term rental.

If the council does not allow short-term rentals in single family homes, what is the legality for the current operators. City Attorney Megan Zigarelli responds if that is the direction council decides for health safety and wellness reasons, then the regulations would be crafted accordingly and other issues that may flow from that. Currently just seeking consensus and direction on how to write these ordinances.

Council Member Bier discusses how the council can best regulate short-term rentals. Supported a cap and suggested lowering the cap from 1% to .75%, which is about 170 homes. This amount is what is currently in Madison City and has been beneficial with the lodging tax revenue.

Council Member Lessmann inquired about amending caps. City Attorney Megan Zigarelli responds yes, we could amend it later. Discussion continues into the number of days that would define a short-term rental.

Assistant City Attorney Shelby Morris gave a clarified answer on short-term rentals listed at 180 days. If there are apartment complexes having leases for four or five months, would now be considered short term leases and would fall under the new business licenses category and short-term rental regulations, meaning building inspections and such.

Council Member Goodson asks about collecting lodging tax. Assistant City Attorney Shelby Morris responds, Alabama State law is 180 days or less.

Council Member McKay is aligned with Council Member Bier because the regulations would need to be there heavily and since Madison already has short-term rentals and are working. The three major topics are all related and unable to be separated. With HOA's saying no short-term rentals then that condenses your possible locations for short-term rentals. District 4 around Mill Road is not an HOA area. Is there a lottery for who else gets in? City Attorney Megan Zigarelli states the general direction was first come first serve and who applies and meets the criteria. But are open to suggestions and direction.

Council Member McKay wants to make sure as revenue increases and if staff needed to be hired that it would not become a wash. With regulations would support it in residential areas.

Council Member Lessmann states it would give the council a little more control of the situation and is open to allowing short-term rentals with stipulations.

Council Member Goodson asks Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren about the fees, the fees are there to cover the costs not make profit. Planning Director Mary Beth Broeren responds yes that is correct, and to address Council Member McKay's comment about hiring additional staff, if the 1% or .75% cap is adopted the inspections are not significant in the context of all the inspections that building and fire personnel inspect every year. If there was no cap, then one could be concerned.

Council President Wroblewski asks what the procedure would be if the council banned short term rentals in single family homes, since there are somewhere between 60-80 out there? City Attorney Megan Zigarelli responds if they are not allowed and the council all confirm that through a public hearing, then staff would work on an enforcement and notice plan pursuant to the requirement of the zoning ordinance. Council Member Jackson states there are other cities that have prohibited short-term rentals in residential areas and devised a way to carry out that process. Mayor Bartlett states yes, other cities go to court. Council President Wroblewski states that would be a financial burden.

Council Member Bier asks the council about any council members not supporting short-term rentals in single-family homes? Council Member Jackson states that in the survey 75% of residents do not support short term rentals in single family neighborhoods, even when regulated 70% still said no. In a poll the majority of respondents opposed permitting short-term rentals city wide. Public comments and emails, residents living near short-term rentals

already have expressed frustration with disruptive guests coming and going late at night. The three strikes could mitigate those issues, but that process won't be quick and neighbors will suffer. Council Member Jackson doubts most residents want to risk peace, even temporarily, for tax revenues.

Council Member Bier appreciates the survey. The council's job is to be well informed on what is happening in the city, the pros and cons, and that revenue isn't nothing. That survey is one data point. If the council stops short term rentals and loses \$300,000.00 in lodging taxes and that does not include local sales tax. When people stay, they shop at the grocery store, they go out to eat, then all of that revenue is gone. The council's job is to look at this as whole. If council was having major issues today, then council should shut it down and go through the courts, but there is not. There is a massive market demand for people who want to stay in homes.

Council President Wroblewski agrees, there are already have short term rentals, so get some control over them and limit the cap to the current number operating.

Council Member Jackson asks the council, does the council believe most residents want this? Mayor Bartlett states the survey did not distinguish between if residents already live in an HOA which restricts them. Council Member Jackson says the feedback and sentiment seems to be city wide about the same. Council Member McKay stated if the city loses this revenue, the council will have to cut services. Departments heads will have to cut budgets and residents will be unhappy.

Council Member Jackson asks the council, would residents want a short-term rental next to their house? Council Member Lessmann, there are currently short-term rentals and no control over them.

Council Member Bier before this came up how many complaints did council get on short-term rentals in Madison? Council President Wroblewski states one in ten years.

Council Member Jackson, the current short-term rentals could continue if they go above the days we disallow, like under 30 days. Council Member Bier states the average short-term rental is six days. Also, TDY is under 180 days, and insurance is underwriting a property if its under 180 days it's considered short term.

City Attorney Megan Zigarelli, says it sounds like council as an consensus emerging allowing short term rentals conditionally in residential areas in the city with a cap, approximating the current number of short-term rentals operating in the city, or .75%, appears more research is needed on the 180 days and reaching out to other communities about handling the apartment issue.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to discuss, the work session adjourned at 5:59 p.m..

Minutes No. 2026-04-WS, dated May 11, 2026, read, approved and adopted this 26th day of May 2026.

Council Member Maura Wroblewski
District One

Council Member David Bier
District Two

Council Member Billie Goodson
District Three

Council Member Michael McKay
District Four

Council Member Alice Lessmann
District Five

Council Member Erica White
District Six

Council Member Kenneth Jackson
District Seven

Concur:

Ranae Bartlett, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa D. Thomas
City Clerk-Treasurer

Amy Rumley
Recording Secretary