

ANN ARBOR CHARTER TOWNSHIP Planning Commission Special Meeting

**Wednesday, May 27, 2026, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Township Office, 3792 Pontiac Trail, Ann Arbor MI 48105**

Agenda

I. ROLL CALL, ESTABLISH QUORUM

II. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Reserved time for citizen participation on agenda items only. Citizens wishing to comment must state their name and address; each speaker has up to 3 minutes. Any written comments will be entered into the record but not read aloud. Public comments regarding non-agenda items is at the end of the meeting.

III. OLD BUSINESS

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Closed Session

Consider entering into closed session to discuss confidential attorney client opinion pursuant to Section 8(1)(h) of the Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.268(1)(h)

B. Master Plan Implementation Tasks

1. Short Term Rentals
2. Stormwater

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizens wishing to comment must state their name and address; each speaker has up to 3 minutes.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Ann Arbor Township Master Plan

	Ordinance Amendment	Timeframe	Associated Goal
1.	Short-Term Rentals. Address Short-Term Rentals in Zoning Ordinance.	Short-Term	Existing Residential Areas
2.	Renewable Energy. Revise Solar Ordinance to address issues arising from implementation of current ordinance language; simplify language where possible to encourage small-scale residential solar projects.	Short-Term	Climate Resilience
3.	Farming. Update all current ordinances related to “farming operations,” including among others the Sign Ordinance, and Farm Market Ordinance. Create Agricultural Tourism Ordinances (i.e., event barns, farm stays, festivals, etc.) to encourage entrepreneurship & improve farm sustainability/profitability.	Short-Term	Farmland & Farming
4.	Residential Clustering. Revise Clustering Ordinance to accommodate new policy objectives identified in the Master Plan.	Short-Term	Farmland & Farming; Mix of Housing
5.	Stormwater Management. Improve stormwater management measures (e.g., water retention, detention, infiltration) to account for increased stormwater runoff (ordinance & Land Development Standards).	Short-Term	Climate Resilience
6.	Accessory Dwelling Units. Create Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to enable lower-cost housing.	Medium-Term	Farmland & Farming; Mix of Housing
7.	Groundwater. Draft Groundwater Protection Ordinance.	Medium-Term	Groundwater
8.	Bicycles. Add ordinance requirement for bicycle parking facilities as a part of any new multiple-family residential, office, and/or commercial development project which abuts or is located within 500 feet of an existing or planned non-motorized pathway or paved shoulder designed for use as an on-road bicycle lane.	Medium-Term	Transportation Improvements
9.	Trees/Woodlands. Update Tree/Woodland Ordinance to incentivize ecological restoration, revise tree species lists.	Medium-Term	Natural Features
10.	Signs. Update Sign Ordinance to comply with Reed v. Gilbert decision; address temporary signs, farm-business signs, and sign lighting.	Medium-Term	Cooperative Relations with Neighbors
11.	Non-Motorized Transportation. Require non-motorized transportation facilities, such as sidewalks or paved shoulders in new residential subdivisions/site condominiums or non-residential developments. Require “public walkway/trail” easements along roadway frontages of new developments.	Medium-Term	Transportation Improvements
12.	Data Center Land Use. Conduct study of appropriate zoning provisions and other ordinances related to data center land use.	Medium-Term	Rural Character; Groundwater
13.	Green Development. Add incentives to use “green” building techniques in residential projects; combine Residential Clustering Ordinance with incentives to use “green” building techniques.	Long-Term	Climate Resilience; Mix of Housing
14.	Lighting/Noise. Better control light/noise pollution via new Dark Skies Ordinance; revise noise ordinance; ordinances to be specific and enforceable.	Long-Term	Rural Character; Existing Residential Areas

Short-Term = completed 12-24 months of plan adoption;
Medium-Term = completed 24-36 months of plan adoption;
Long-Term = completed more than 36 months of plan adoption.



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To: Ann Arbor Township Planning Commission
From: Sally M. Elmiger, AICP
Date: May 4, 2026
Re: Short Term Rentals

As part of the Master Plan update process, the Planning Commission identified Short-Term Rentals (STR) as a land use that should be addressed.

2025 Master Plan Goals and Policies

The implementation schedule (Page 80) lists drafting a new STR ordinance as a task to be accomplished in the first 12-24-months following Master Plan adoption. This ordinance is intended to address the Master Plan goals for existing residential areas. These goals are as follows (Pg. 42):

F.1 Protect Existing Residential Areas

Existing residential areas should be protected from potentially adverse impacts of incompatible development, such as unreasonable increases in traffic, activity or excessive noise and light. Where higher density residential development or non-residential development is close to existing residences, land use policies should be designed to create a secure and table environment for those residences.

F.2 Maintain a Diverse Mix of Housing

The presence of a wide variety of housing options in Ann Arbor Township encourages a vibrant community. The current mix with regard to density, unit size, location, and other features allows Ann Arbor Township to foster an inclusive sense of community and should be maintained.

The Master Plan policies related to residential land uses in the Township are listed on Pages 50-53 of the document. The Master Plan specifically states that Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are not intended to be used for short-term rentals (such as Air B&Bs), or Bed & Breakfast businesses operated out of the principal dwelling. It goes on to state the following:

Short-Term Rentals: *To protect the Township's housing stock for long-term residential use, the Township shall not permit renting residential units for less than a consecutive 30-day period.*

Definition of Short-Term Rental, Accessory Dwelling Unit, and Bed & Breakfast

For reference, we've provided definitions of these three types of accommodation below. Note that the definition for an STR is a general definition found in other communities' codes and could be amended. The definition for the Accessory Dwelling Unit is from the Township's 2025 Master Plan, and the definition for a Bed & Breakfast is from the Township's Zoning Ordinance.

Short-Term Rental: A dwelling or portion thereof that is used for rent for a stay of less than thirty (30) days. This definition does not include hotels/motels licensed and inspected by the State of Michigan, as defined by the Township Zoning Ordinance. There are generally three (3) types of short-term rentals:

1. Primary Residence Homestay, where owner lives in the home and is present during guest stay.
2. Primary Residence Whole House, where owner lives in the home, but is not present during guest stay.
3. Non-Owner-Occupied, often referred to as a vacation rental. This is not the primary residence of the owner, and the primary purpose of the home is for short-term rentals. The ownership and use of this property is for investment purposes.

Accessory Dwelling Unit: Accessory Dwelling Units (or ADUs) are additional living quarters, independent of the primary dwelling unit, that offer space for extended family members, or renters, as an accessory use of the single-family residential dwelling. The ADU can be attached to the primary dwelling, detached from the primary dwelling in an accessory structure, or integrated into the primary dwelling. ADUs are known as accessory apartments, garden apartments, granny flats, and mother-in-law suites, among other names. (Note the Master Plan limits ADUs on residential parcels of three acres or more.)

Bed and Breakfast: A bed and breakfast operation means a use that is subordinate to the principal use of a single-family detached dwelling unit, in which transient guests are provided with sleeping rooms and limited to breakfast meals on a short-term basis, in return for payments. (Note: B&Bs are Conditional Land Uses in R-C, A-1, A-R, R-1, R-1A and R-2. Sec. 74-602 requires that the operator is required to live in the principal dwelling during the time the B&B is active; minimum house floor area of 2,000 s.f.; maximum of up to six bedrooms rented with no more than 2 per room; maximum 14-day guest stay in 90 consecutive days; serving alcohol is prohibited; no parties/events.)

Options for consideration:

There are three options for the Planning Commission to consider

1. Outright ban all STRs
2. Ban Non-owner Occupied and Primary Residence Whole House but allow Primary Residence Homestay.
3. Ban Non-owner Occupied but allow Primary Residence Whole House and Primary Residence Homestay, with regulations.

Banning all STRs may not be wholly consistent with the 2025 Master Plan. The Master Plan implies that the use will be allowed, but at a minimum, limited to only allowing those renting the property for at least 30 consecutive days.

Primary Residence Homestay. Allowing STRs only as long as the owner lives at the house as their primary residence, and is present during guest stays, is similar to a B&B, except for the 30-day time period called for in the Master Plan.

Primary Residence Whole House. This option covers owners who live in the house as their primary residence but are not present during guest stay. Allowing whole-house short-term rentals in a primary residence, even when the owner is not present during the guest stay is a “middle-ground” position, as it helps to meet the goal of protecting Township housing from displacement of full-time residents or loss of long-term housing stock, while still permitting occasional, flexible rental use.

Some residents may rely on the ability to rent out their homes during vacations, University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University event weekends, work assignments, or other temporary absences to supplement household income. In an era of rising housing costs, this flexibility can help residents afford to remain in their homes and continue contributing to the community. By limiting this option to primary residences only, this ensures that the economic benefit goes to local residents, not absentee landlords or outside investors.

Regulating short-term rentals through the “primary residence” standard creates a clear, enforceable distinction between legitimate resident use and speculative investment activity. Township staff can verify compliance through homestead exemptions, driver’s license records, or other objective measures, making administration straightforward.

Non-Owner Occupied Vacation Rentals. Per discussions on this option with the Planning Commission, we understand that the Commission is concerned with investors, rather than full-time residents, buying up housing in the Township, and the potential for neighborhood disturbance. If allowing vacation rentals is something the Commission would like to discuss further, we can investigate this option and provide additional information.

Potential Regulations

Regulation of short-term rentals may be approached many ways, including location restrictions, occupancy, penalization for non-compliance and more. Although these regulatory options may differ as to what is appropriate for each community, any potential policies and subsequent regulation should be directly aimed at solving issues identified in Ann Arbor Township.

In addition to establishing policy to directly solve the community’s unique concerns, we recommended that regulations only be implemented if they can realistically be enforced based on staffing and funding. Listed below are options for the Planning Commission to consider:

Regulatory Consideration	Purpose	Enforceability / Staff Commitment / Resources
Increase nuisance and enforcement resources	Allow the Township to address nuisance and enforce upon complaints.	Enforceable on a case by case basis. Most nuisance complaints would have to be handled by the police, as they typically occur after hours.

Regulatory Consideration	Purpose	Enforceability / Staff Commitment / Resources
<p>Permit only Primary Residence Homestay or Whole House, and Ban Non-Owner-Occupied</p>	<p>Maintains neighborhood integrity by limiting rentals to owner-occupied primary residence.</p>	<p>Enforceable through ordinance adoption and licensing program.</p>
<p>Create registration and license program in addition to Rental Inspection requirement Options include: a. Require local contact person/agent b. Require safety inspections. c. Require quiet hours. d. Create a process for dealing with violators e. Ability to collect fees f. Require annual reports from hosting sites to be filed with the Building Department, which will share the information with Township Board.</p>	<p>Can require local contact person/agent. Can create a process for dealing with violators. Can revoke license for repeat offenders. Can establish fees to offset staff costs. Can monitor nuisance complaints with registered rentals.</p>	<p>Enforceable. Would require creation of licensing program usually administered by the Clerk's office or Building Department.</p>
<p>Clarify and enforce occupancy requirements Options include: a. Reexamine occupancy limits b. Apply occupancy limits to maximum number of guests c. Advertisements must list occupancy. Cannot advertise more than permitted occupancy</p>	<p>Maintains neighborhood integrity. Eliminate overcrowding. Can make owner certify that they are limiting rentals to occupancy limits.</p>	<p>Advertising restrictions may be easy to monitor and enforce. Monitoring and enforcing upon actual number of occupants in a short-term rental is difficult.</p>
<p>Do not allow advertisements on premise</p>	<p>Maintains neighborhood integrity. Eliminate visual clutter.</p>	<p>Enforceable.</p>
<p>Limit number of days to be rented out a year a. Also require minimum stay duration b. Neighbor notification of use and limits on stays and minimum stays</p>	<p>Maintains neighborhood integrity by limiting number of days for rental and reduce renter turnover. In theory, less rental turnover equates to less nuisance issues and better maintains neighborhood integrity.</p>	<p>May be difficult to enforce. Staff would have to monitor number of visitors during times house is rented. Could require owners to register all dates with Township. Time consuming.</p>
<p>Limit by Geography a. Location b. Spacing/distance from each other to limit clustering</p>	<p>Limit to specific area of Township. Maintains neighborhood integrity by limiting clustering of short-term rentals.</p>	<p>Enforceable through registration program and zoning. Based on type of short-term rental allowed, this may not be necessary.</p>

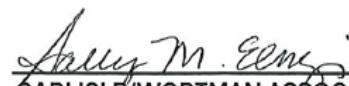
Enforcement Tools for Problematic Short-Term Rental Sites

When a short-term rental operator becomes a bad actor or creates ongoing problems, the Township has two distinct regulatory avenues available:

1. Revocation of the Short-Term Rental License
 - This is the most straightforward and timely option.
 - Because the short-term rental license is a regulatory license, rather than a zoning entitlement, its revocation can be handled administratively by Township staff.
 - This process allows the Township to act quickly in situations where operators are violating licensing conditions, local codes, or creating nuisance conditions.
2. Revocation of Conditional Use Approval
 - A more formal and complex remedy is the removal of the property's conditional use approval.
 - This process requires a public hearing before the Planning Commission, providing due process and opportunity for public input.
 - While slower and more resource-intensive, this option may be necessary in cases where the problems extend beyond licensing compliance and call into question the land use approval itself.

The Township thus retains both an administrative mechanism (license revocation) for rapid response and a zoning-based mechanism (conditional use revocation) that ensures full public review and due process. Together, these provide a balanced framework for addressing problematic short-term rental operations.

I look forward to discussing this information at your upcoming meeting.



CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.
Sally M. Elmiger, AICP, LEEP-AP
Principal