

**Who is Impacted by Short-Term Rentals in Pierce County? Community Impact Analysis &  
Engagement Strategies**

Anna Templeton, Bahja Ali, Nardia Duarte, Liam Hunter

University of Washington - Bothell

BPOLST 513 Practicum in Policy Studies

Professor Jin-Kyu Jung

March 13, 2026

## Introduction & Purpose

The purpose of this project is to identify which communities in Pierce County are most affected by short-term rentals (STR) and to assess how this information can guide future community planning, infrastructure investments, and service provision that align with actual community needs. The need for STR analysis was originally highlighted in 2023 in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. In Winter 2026, Pierce County Planning and Public Works partnered with the University of Washington Masters of Policy Program to research STR impacts as consultants and researchers. Our research will be utilized by Pierce County moving forward to develop engagement methods for 2026 and 2027 as they continue to work with the community to build STR policies.

As community partners with Pierce County, our team (Group 2 of the BPOLST 513 MAPS Practicum) will produce deliverables that directly support the goals outlined in the 2025 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan<sup>1</sup> by (1) compiling data on what communities are impacted by short-term rentals and (2) identifying how future community planning can utilize this information to recommend infrastructure and services that are concurrent with actual community needs. This includes recognizing the economic role of short-term rentals while ensuring protections for neighboring properties, environmental resources, and critical infrastructure (*LU-80.8*), considering the unique needs and characteristics of various communities (*LU-80.8.1*), evaluating potential limits on short-term rental units to preserve residential housing supply while supporting tourism-dependent economies (*LU-80.8.2*), and considering the development of appropriate

---

<sup>1</sup> Pierce County. (2025, February 15). *Pierce County Comprehensive Plan*. Pierce County WA. <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/140621/Pierce-County-Comprehensive-Plan---2025-02-15?bidId=>

facilities for tourist use, recognizing that short-term rentals may be desirable for certain communities (*ED-1.7.1*).

In coordination with these goals, we've developed three research questions that uniquely correspond to each deliverable we've created. The three research questions are:

- 1) Who is directly and indirectly impacted by short-term rentals?
- 2) Are there common characteristics among communities that have a high density of short-term rentals?
- 3) How does academic literature and STR public comments inform engagement methods for future comprehensive planning?

To answer these questions we've developed three forms of analysis; A Gig Harbor STR dataset and protocol aimed to determine initial trends through a pilot data collection, A content analysis in the form of word mapping to visualize community perceptions of STRs, and finally a 5-step engagement process for STR-related discussion developed through cross-referencing academic literature. These three analyses are simultaneously our outcomes and deliverables that will serve to inform future engagement strategies and information collection by Pierce County Planning and Public Works.

### **Data & Methodology**

#### ***Short-term Rental Data Collection Protocol:***

There is currently no uniform, countywide dataset for short-term rentals (STRs) in Pierce County. This makes it difficult to evaluate how STR's are impacting individuals and communities. To address this need, we developed a pilot STR data-collection protocol. In our conversation with Pierce County, Gig Harbor was identified as a key area of interest. In addition, its geographical boundaries made it easy to identify during data collection. For these reasons, Gig Harbor was

chosen as our main area for our pilot program. The data used in this pilot study draws on a combination of sources, each selected for its ability to provide accurate, transparent, and spatially precise information for identifying short-term rentals (STRs) in Gig Harbor. Using these sources, we created a standardized dataset and protocol.<sup>2</sup> We manually verified each listing's location, attributes, and parcel information using map coordinates and county GIS records. Listings were included only if they fell within the adopted community plan boundaries. Ultimately, our goal was to create a publicly accessible database suitable for manual verification and sufficiently detailed.

Airrio offers real-time, platform-verified STR listings across Airbnb and Vrbo. It includes key operational metrics—occupancy rate, guest capacity, average daily rate, and listing URLs—which directly support the study's goal of understanding STR activity. Airrio aggregates active listings, which reflect the current STR market.<sup>3</sup> Google Maps provides precise geolocation data through latitude and longitude embedded in URLs. This allows each STR to be accurately mapped and ensures accurate assignment to census tracts. Pierce County Public GIS was used to obtain parcel numbers and land-use information. It was also used to verify whether a listing falls within city limits or community plan boundaries, and to perform parcel-level matching for zoning and land-use analysis.<sup>4</sup> Together, these sources ensure the dataset is accurate, transparent, and replicable—making them well-suited for a pilot study and ideally scalable for countywide use.

***Content Cloud Data Collection Protocol:***

To supplement the spatial and quantitative analysis of short-term rentals, we conducted a content analysis of public comments submitted during the City of Gig Harbor's short-term rental

---

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>3</sup> Airroi. (2025). Airroi.com. <https://www.airroi.com/>

<sup>4</sup> PublicGIS. (n.d.). Matterhornwab.co.pierce.wa.us. <https://matterhornwab.co.pierce.wa.us/publicgis/>

policy process. In total, we reviewed approximately 165 public comments submitted across three public comment periods between March 2022 and February 2023. These comments provide insight into how residents, property owners, and other stakeholders describe the perceived impacts and regulation of short-term rentals

Before analysis, the comment transcripts were prepared through a series of text-cleaning procedures. These steps included removing common stopwords and administrative language, standardizing plural and singular forms, and consolidating synonymous terms. These preparation steps allowed the analysis to focus on meaningful language patterns rather than formatting differences across submissions.

Following text preparation, words were grouped into three thematic categories representing the most common types of concerns raised in the public comments:

- **Policy & Regulation:** terms related to governance mechanisms, including ordinance, permit, zoning, and regulations.
- **Ownership & Market:** terms reflecting property ownership and economic relationships, such as property, owners, investors, and rent.
- **Impacts & Attitudes:** terms associated with community experiences and perceived neighborhood effects, including community, housing, neighborhood, and noise.

Word frequency analysis was then conducted across the full corpus of comments to identify recurring patterns in stakeholder language. Content clouds were generated using the WordArt visualization platform to visually represent the relative frequency of terms within each thematic

category. Larger words in each visualization indicate higher frequencies within the dataset, allowing dominant stakeholder concerns to be quickly identified.<sup>5</sup>

This visualization approach draws conceptually on Jung's (2014) formulation of "code clouds," which treats word frequency visualization as a form of qualitative geovisualization. Rather than serving as purely quantitative outputs, these visualizations function as descriptive summaries that support interpretive qualitative analysis of stakeholder discourse.

### ***Literature Review:***

The impact of short-term rental (STR) services like Airbnb on housing supply, affordability, and community stability has been the subject of intense discussion. An increasing number of studies look at the regulatory issues raised by these platforms and assess the best ways for local governments to address them. The influence of STRs on housing markets, the efficacy of regulatory measures, and the social and community ramifications of STR proliferation are the three main themes highlighted in our literature.

Allen (2017) uses New York City as a major case study to investigate the regulatory issues raised by platform-enabled short-term rentals. The study examines how STR hosting affects rental supply and how local governments seek to regulate these activities by synthesizing municipal data, legal statutes, case law, and policy discussions. According to Allen, STR platforms can take homes out of the long-term rental market, especially in areas with high tourist demand. For long-term tenants, this decrease in available housing may lead to higher rents and lower vacancy rates. The study also concludes that current housing and zoning laws often fall short of addressing the specific

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendices C–E.

challenges posed by STR markets because they were largely designed before the rise of digital hosting platforms.

Regulations such as limitations, registration requirements, and occupancy limits may have little effect in the absence of reliable data from hosting platforms and vigilant monitoring by local governments. Although the study offers a comprehensive legal and policy analysis, it relies primarily on regulatory and descriptive data rather than causal econometric estimation. As a result, although the mechanisms that connect STRs to housing pressures are clearly understood, the extent of these effects is not accurately quantified.

Hoffman and Schmitter Heisler (2021) offer a cross-national comparative study of the impact of short-term rental platforms on housing markets and governmental reactions. The authors contend that STR platforms create a new kind of "rent gap," in which a house becomes more valuable as a short-term tourist asset than as a long-term dwelling, based on case studies, empirical data, and housing theory. This dynamic encourages property owners to convert rental units into STRs, which might reduce the supply of long-term housing and raise rents. According to the authors, effective policy solutions usually combine demand-side measures, such as taxes and tourism management, with supply-side controls, such as principal residence requirements or rental day caps. The study places less emphasis on generating accurate quantitative estimates of STR impacts, even though it provides strong theoretical framing and policy comparisons.

Using platform listing data and a difference-in-differences research approach, Valentin (2021) investigates the efficacy of STR laws implemented in New Orleans. Regulations decreased STR activity in the communities where they were implemented, according to the study, but many listings moved to neighboring regions with fewer limitations. Therefore, rather than lowering the total supply, rules frequently reallocated STR activity geographically. Because localized limits

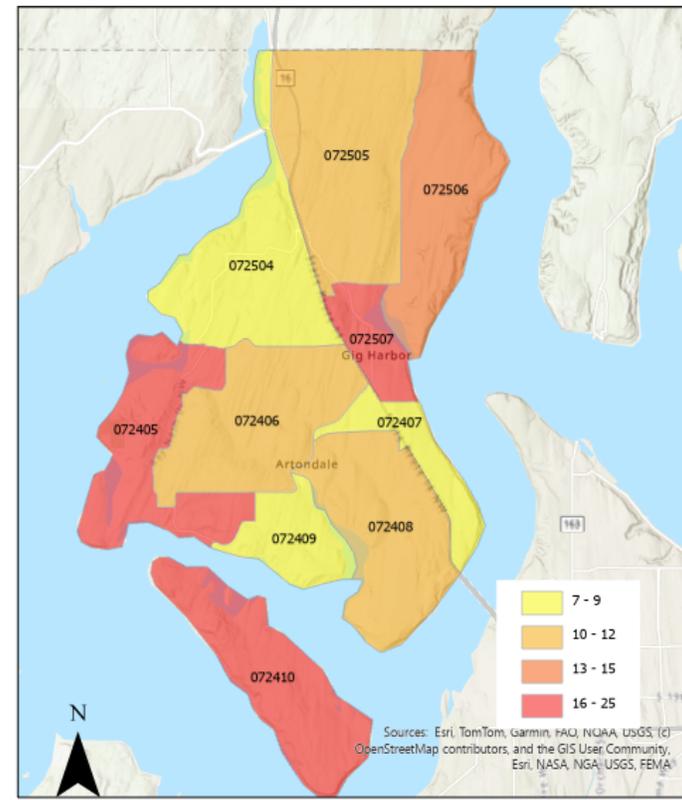
may allow hosts to move listings rather than leave the market, these findings underscore the importance of enforcement capabilities and coordinated rules across jurisdictions.

The social and community effects of STR expansion in high-amenity rural areas are investigated by Theophilus and Ulrich-Schad (2025). The study concludes that STR development can worsen community cohesion and increase seasonal population churn using a mixed-methods methodology that incorporates housing metrics, community surveys, and qualitative interviews. Locals report reduced social ties and a shift in local services toward visitors rather than long-term residents. Additionally, the data indicate that although STRs add to the strain on housing affordability, they often interact with broader patterns, such as second-home ownership and amenity migration. These results highlight the importance of considering neighborhood well-being alongside housing market metrics when assessing STR policies.

For comprehending the impacts of short-term rentals, the evaluated studies offer a number of significant advantages. When combined, they use a variety of research techniques, such as mixed-methodology community research, quantitative causal methods, and comparative policy analysis. A solid theoretical framework and comparative viewpoint are provided by Hoffman and Schmitter Heisler (2021) to assist in explaining how STRs alter housing markets and why local policy responses vary. By measuring how rules impact STR participation and regional patterns using causal methodologies and platform listing data, Valentin (2021) provides rigorous empirical evidence. In the meantime, Theophilus and Ulrich-Schad (2025) provide a crucial social component by analyzing the impact of STR expansion on residents' well-being and community cohesion. Together, these studies offer a more thorough understanding of the complex effects of STR platforms by fusing housing market analysis with social and spatial viewpoints.

## Interpretation of Outcomes

### *Results from Pilot Study & Analysis:*



*Figure 1: Distribution of Airbnb Units in Gig Harbor*

The STR dataset reveals that Gig Harbor’s census tracts have relatively few Airbnb units—typically between 6 and 21 listings per tract. These listings are concentrated in high-value, low-density, and predominantly homeowner neighborhoods, where owner-occupancy rates often exceed 80% (e.g., Tracts 724.05, 724.06, 724.10).<sup>6</sup> These areas also have older, wealthier, and predominantly White populations.<sup>7</sup> The map also illustrates that many tracts with higher STR counts are located along the shoreline or within established suburban neighborhoods characterized

<sup>6</sup> BPOLST 513 Group 2 . (2026b). Airbnb Location Data - Pilot Gig Harbor . <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wawr1GtCsRfatX22DS53TkCGj3ANiJ4pP60swrB5j5w/edit?usp=sharing>

<sup>7</sup> 2020 Census Tracts. (2020). Arcgis.com. [https://gisdata-piercecowa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ac9b13920886449f8022f433c8fd1b09\\_0/explore](https://gisdata-piercecowa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ac9b13920886449f8022f433c8fd1b09_0/explore)

by large lots.<sup>8</sup> Compared to more renter-heavy cities like Tacoma, Lakewood, or Puyallup. The average Gig Harbor resident will be better protected from STR-related housing pressures. However, the data also reveal small areas of vulnerability: tracts with lower owner-occupancy (e.g., 724.07 at 64% and 725.07 at 60%) and higher tourism-sector employment (up to 14%) may experience greater exposure to STR-driven competition for housing. In this context, even though the typical Gig Harbor resident is buffered by income and homeownership, the average renter, service-sector worker, or first-time homebuyer may face a very different housing landscape—one where STR activity can meaningfully constrain already limited housing supply.

Census Tract Number	Number of Airbnb Units	Housing Vacancy	Housing Occupied	Housing Count	Owner-Occupied Housing Units	Total Population	% of people in Tourism and Hospitality Employment
724.05	18	106	1638	1744	82.50%	4381	6.95%
724.06	10	121	2420	2541	88.07%	6895	6.94%
724.07	6	148	2147	2295	64.47%	5049	14.07%
724.08	12	136	2573	2709	67.68%	6377	1.01%
724.09	9	54	995	1049	85.07%	2520	6.30%
724.1	21	153	1509	1662	87.65%	3921	3.78%
725.04	8	93	1534	1627	79.88%	5048	2.19%
725.06	18	110	1491	1601	85.77%	3676	3.22%
725.07	17	175	1659	1834	60.02%	3197	8.09%
725.08	8	72	1700	1772	85.71%	4430	4.44%
725.09	4	180	2465	2645	76.70%	6438	5.45%

*Table #1: Gig Harbor STR's & Housing Dataset Overview (Social Explorer & Pierce County PublicGIS & Pilot Dataset)*

This aligns with LU-80.8.1 in Pierce County's comprehensive plan, which directs planners to consider the unique needs and characteristics of different communities when evaluating STR regulations. Gig Harbor's landscape and demographic profile create distinct characteristics that underscore why a community-driven approach is necessary rather than a one-size-fits-all policy. The maps also highlight variation within Gig Harbor. Tracts such as 724.07 and 725.07 are located

---

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix B

closer to more urban and commercial areas. They also show lower owner-occupancy rates and higher employment in tourism-related sectors. These areas may experience more direct impacts on housing from STR activity. At the same time, other parts of Gig Harbor may want an increase in tourism-related activity. This is supported by waterfront recreation and park locations.<sup>9</sup> This aligns with the intent of ED-1.7.1, which encourages the development of appropriate facilities for tourist use and recognizes that STRs may be desirable in certain communities. Gig Harbor's coastal landscape makes STRs a natural fit in some neighborhoods, even as other areas require more careful monitoring to protect housing stability.

### ***Cloud Data & Analysis:***

<b>'Policy &amp; Regulation'</b>			<b>'Ownership and Market'</b>			<b>'Impact and Attitudes'</b>		
<b>Terms</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Terms</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Terms</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Ordinance	137	11.3	Property	82	6.8	Community	64	5.3
Regulations	92	7.6	Business	59	4.9	Housing	61	5
Residential	86	7.1	Owners	58	4.8	Home	52	4.3
Permit	74	6.1	Investors	41	3.4	Neighborhood	46	3.8
Limits	68	5.6	Rent	38	3.1	Parking	34	2.8
Commercial	44	3.6	Hotel	29	2.4	Noise	26	2.2
Zoning	22	1.8	Corporations	24	2	Affordable	7	0.6
Enforcement	18	1.5	Investment	9	0.7	Affordability	5	0.4
Registration	14	1.2	Purchase	8	0.7			
Owner-occupied	12	1						
<b>Total</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>24.4</b>

*Table #2: Gig Harbor Word Mapping Frequency Table (N = 1,210)*

*Percentages are rounded to 1<sup>st</sup> decimal place, therefore does not total 100%*

<sup>9</sup> BPOLST 513 Group 2 . (2026a). Air B&B Gig Harbor. Arcgis.com.  
<https://uw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=c42df8420e3742a4aa0b3979c686ff4a>

The content cloud analysis reveals several consistent patterns in how residents discuss short-term rentals. Content clouds generated for the three thematic categories—Policy & Regulation, Ownership & Market, and Impacts & Attitudes.<sup>10</sup>

Across the full set of public comments, regulatory language appeared most frequently, accounting for 46.9 percent of all coded terms. The most prominent words in this category were *ordinance*, *regulations*, and *residential*. The prominence of these terms indicates that many commenters are engaging directly with specific governance mechanisms, such as zoning definitions, permitting systems, and regulatory limits on short-term rentals.

Ownership- and market-related language represented the second-largest category, accounting for 28.8 percent of coded terms. Words such as *property*, *business*, and *owners* appeared frequently in the dataset, suggesting that many residents frame the debate around questions of property ownership and economic control. While some comments referenced investors or corporations, the dominant framing focused on how individual property ownership intersects with the use of homes as short-term rental units.

The third category, Impacts & Attitudes, accounted for 24.4 percent of coded terms. Words such as *community*, *housing*, and *home* appeared prominently in the dataset. This pattern suggests that many residents describe short-term rentals in terms of neighborhood identity and residential stability rather than tourism alone. Additional terms, such as *parking* and *noise*, further indicate that everyday neighborhood conditions are frequently cited concerns in the public discussion.

---

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix C (Policy & Regulation Content Cloud), Appendix D (Ownership & Market Content Cloud), and Appendix E (Impacts & Attitudes Content Cloud).

Taken together, these patterns suggest that public discourse surrounding short-term rentals is structured around three interconnected themes: regulatory governance, property ownership, and perceived community impacts. Rather than expressing generalized opposition to short-term rentals, many commenters appear to engage directly with specific policy mechanisms and neighborhood-level concerns, reflecting a nuanced understanding of how STRs shape everyday residential life. Together, the data and public comments point toward a balanced policy approach: one that protects vulnerable residents, supports tourism where appropriate, and recognizes that STR impacts are deeply shaped by geography, demographics, and community identity.

### **Conclusion & Recommendations**

#### ***Limitations:***

The Gig Harbor dataset and pilot program was inherently limited by the unique geographical markers of Gig Harbor in comparison to the majority of Pierce County. It is important to consider how the median household income of Gig Harbor is higher than that of all of Pierce County combined, with a majority of the population consisting of majority home-owners. With the heightened home-ownership in comparison to other areas, Gig Harbor citizens will likely support STR policies that favor or protect STRs as a business whereas other cities may see a larger disagreement towards STRs based on the amount of renters, service workers, or newly-built homes. While our dataset and program focus entirely on Gig harbor, the takeaway is not meant to be simply the data, but rather the process as a whole. In this sense, our limitations and struggles should be holistically considered as research is further conducted.

A few limitations should be considered when interpreting the content cloud analysis. A significant number of public comments lack detailed geographic information about where each commenter lives, so we are unable to determine whether respondents reside in the specific

neighborhoods most affected by short-term rentals. In addition, word-frequency visualizations highlight commonly used terms but do not capture sentiment or the full context in which those terms appear. Finally, participation in public comment periods is voluntary, so the dataset may reflect the views of individuals more engaged with the issue than the broader population. Despite these limitations, the content cloud analysis still provides a useful overview of the dominant themes and language patterns that appear in the public discussion of short-term rental regulation.

There were a number of limitations with the literature we reviewed that need to be noted. The regional specificity of many studies may restrict how broadly their conclusions may be applied to other housing markets. The housing dynamics found in suburban or mixed urban-rural communities, for instance, may not be well reflected in studies carried out in tourist-heavy cities or amenity-driven rural locations. Furthermore, rather than offering accurate empirical estimates of the effects of short-term rentals (STRs), other research place more emphasis on conceptual frameworks or comparative policy discussions.

***Recommendations for Protocol at the County Level:***

To scale our pilot study into a countywide program, Pierce County should adopt a standardized data-collection framework to create a more consistent, easier-to-analyze dataset. This includes selecting consistent STR data sources—such as AirROI, AirDNA, or Inside Airbnb—and developing a countywide data dictionary that defines each variable, its format, and acceptable values to ensure uniformity across staff and future updates. We recommended dividing the data collection by geographic level, such as community plan areas or census tracts. Integrating data with Pierce County Public GIS and planning systems to streamline parcel matching and spatial verification. Incorporating community feedback data—including complaints, noise reports, and parking issues—would allow the County to link STR activity to residents' lived experiences and

better assess neighborhood impacts. Finally, establishing a quarterly update schedule, rather than relying on one-time data pulls, would ensure that the STR database remains current, actionable, and aligned with evolving policy needs.

***Engagement Recommendations:***

The literature on short-term rentals (STRs) consistently finds that platform-enabled hosting can reduce long-term housing supply and create affordability pressures in certain housing markets. Allen argues that STR platforms such as Airbnb can shift housing units away from the long-term rental market, particularly in high-tourism areas, contributing to higher rents and reduced housing availability for residents. His legal analysis also emphasizes that traditional housing and zoning regulations are often insufficient for addressing platform-mediated hosting and that effective regulation requires enforceable policy tools such as host registration systems, data-sharing agreements with platforms, and clear enforcement mechanisms (Allen).

Similar to this, Hoffman and Schmitter Heisler place STR expansion in the context of larger housing market dynamics, explaining how the commercialization of housing for tourists can result in a "rent gap," wherein property owners are encouraged to turn long-term residences into more lucrative short-term lodgings. According to Hoffman and Schmitter Heisler's comparative analysis, successful policy solutions frequently incorporate a variety of regulatory measures, including taxes, occupancy quotas, and primary residence requirements, while customizing regulations to the features of regional housing markets.

The significance of community involvement, geographical coordination, and enforcement in STR governance is further highlighted by empirical and community-based research. Valentin's quantitative study of STR regulation in New Orleans reveals that, rather than completely eradicating STR activity, regulatory interventions may cause it to relocate to less controlled

regions, highlighting the possibility of spatial displacement when regulations are spatially restricted. These results imply that in order to stop regulatory arbitrage, coordinated or county-wide regulatory strategies could be required (Valentin). Research reveals wider community repercussions linked to STR expansion in addition to effects on the housing market.

The stakeholder engagement framework, which is shown in the table below, provides Pierce County with a five-step procedure for creating an open and efficient short-term rental (STR) policy. In order to involve residents, renters, hosts, housing activists, and community groups early in the conversation, the approach starts with stakeholder identification and outreach. In order to uncover place-based consequences including housing affordability, noise, and neighborhood stability, a public hearing phase should be carried out through town halls, surveys, and workshops.

In order to facilitate educated public discourse, the county offers clear information on housing trends, STR density, and regulatory choices in the third step, which emphasizes on data exchange and public education. Building on this input, the county can next proceed with developing draft policies and soliciting public input, enabling interested parties to examine the regulations and offer feedback prior to final adoption. Lastly, permits, complaints, and housing indicators should be continuously monitored and evaluated in order to evaluate the efficacy of the policy and permit modifications over time. When combined, these actions offer a methodical engagement process that fosters openness, fosters community trust, and guarantees that STR laws take into account the various demands of Pierce County's neighborhoods.

Steps	Purpose	Key Characteristics(How, What, Impacts	Pierce County Implementation
1: Stakeholder ID & Outreach	Include all affected groups early	Early outreach; identify residents, renters, hosts, advocates; builds legitimacy & trust	Map stakeholders by region; email registered hosts; partner with housing orgs; multilingual outreach <sup>11</sup>
2: Public Listening Phase	Gather concerns & priorities	Town halls, surveys, workshops; identify noise, affordability, displacement issues; surface place-based impacts	Regional meetings (urban + rural); online survey w/ zip codes; structured facilitation <sup>12</sup>
3: Data & Public Education	Ground debate in evidence	Share STR density, rent trends, vacancy data; increases transparency & reduces polarization	Publish dashboard; simple infographics; explain regulatory options. <sup>13</sup>
4: Draft Policy & Feedback	Refine enforceable regulation	Public review of draft rules; primary residence reqs, caps, licensing; improves buy-in & clarity	30–60 day comment period; targeted host & advocate sessions; legal review <sup>14</sup>
5: Ongoing Monitoring	Adapt & evaluate policy	Track permits, complaints, affordability, adaptive management; maintains trust	Annual STR report; complaint dashboard; 12–18 month review cycle <sup>15</sup>

*Table #3: STR Engagement Framework Table*

This table outlines a five-step stakeholder engagement framework designed to guide local governments in developing and implementing short-term rental (STR) regulations. The framework highlights key stages of the policy process, including stakeholder identification,

<sup>11</sup> Hoffman, L., & Heisler, B. (2021). Airbnb, short-term rentals, and the future of housing.

<sup>12</sup> Valentin, M. (2020). Regulating short-term rental housing: Evidence from New Orleans.

<sup>13</sup> Valentin, M. (2020). Regulating short-term rental housing: Evidence from New Orleans.

<sup>14</sup> Allen, D. (2017). Disrupting affordable housing: Regulating Airbnb and other short-term rentals.

<sup>15</sup> Theophilus, M., & Ulrich-Schad, J. (2025). Your neighborhoods are new every week: Short-term rentals, housing, and community wellbeing.

public listening, data transparency, policy drafting, and ongoing monitoring. For each step, the table summarizes the purpose, key characteristics of effective engagement, and potential implementation strategies for Pierce County. The framework draws on existing scholarship on housing policy and STR governance to illustrate how inclusive engagement, evidence-based discussion, and iterative policy evaluation can support more legitimate and effective regulatory outcomes.

***Conclusion:***

STR-related research struggles primarily due to a lack of datasets, databases, and the mapping of all listings. As public listings remain across a multitude of advertisement platforms and systems, creating a uniform system for this is by no means a simple task. Our dataset and protocol, which we created, is an attempt at building this uniform database in a simplistic and replicable manner. Focusing on Gig Harbor for both the pilot program and content analysis, we managed to create a small-scale but in-depth analysis of STRs within Pierce County. Utilizing this information, we hope that the Planning and Public Works department is able to expand our research to develop engagement strategies in the latter half of this year.

Ultimately we found that the most impacted populations were Renters, Service workers, and First-time Buyers. Additionally, communities with high densities of STRs tend to have lower Tourism & Hospitality workforces within Gig Harbor. When addressing these issues and findings through community engagement, the most important strategy is to include public opinions early and throughout every part of the process including but not limited to policy integration and education.

## References

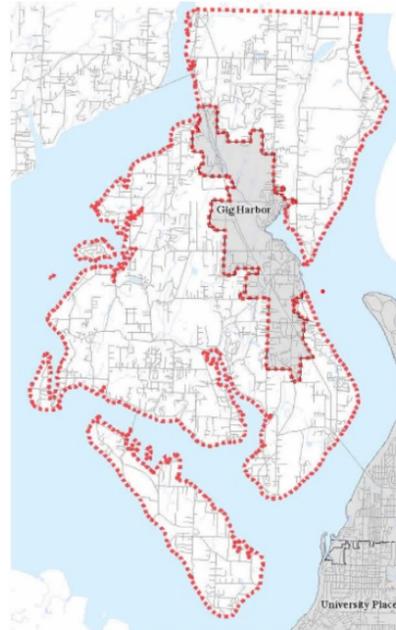
- 2020 Census Tracts. (2020). Arcgis.com. [https://gisdata-piercecowa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ac9b13920886449f8022f433c8fd1b09\\_0/explorate](https://gisdata-piercecowa.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ac9b13920886449f8022f433c8fd1b09_0/explorate)
- Airroi. (2025). Airroi.com. <https://www.airroi.com/>
- Allen, D. (2017). *Disrupting affordable housing: Regulating Airbnb and other short-term rentals*.
- BPOLST 513 Group 2 . (2026a). *Air B&B Gig Harbor*. Arcgis.com. <https://uw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=c42df8420e3742a4aa0b3979c686ff4a>
- BPOLST 513 Group 2 . (2026b). *Airbnb Location Data - Pilot Gig Harbor*. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wawr1GtCsRfatX22DS53TkCGj3ANiJ4pP60swrB5j5w/edit?usp=sharing>
- City of Gig Harbor. (2022, March). *Comments Received 03.02.22 PC Study Session*. <https://cityofgigharbor.app.box.com/s/htbe7hsq14ubwrz5hzkrk0kqcsrd7wx5>
- City of Gig Harbor. (2022, March). *Summary Comments Received 03.02.22 PC Study Session*. <https://cityofgigharbor.app.box.com/s/kepo7vnuzc7cry7s7ahy96tjlx4hcy0>
- City of Gig Harbor. (2023, February). *02.02 - 02.13.2023 Comment Period*. <https://cityofgigharbor.app.box.com/s/5gy67agw5ip6djrkpd9wtmobbdlrwnag>
- City of Gig Harbor. (2023, February). *Comments 02.14-02.27.2023*. <https://cityofgigharbor.app.box.com/s/42pq7cmhukznhjrlu88uf4xp0lvs0914>
- County WA. <https://www.piercecountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/140621/>

- Hoffman, L., & Heisler, B. (2021). *Airbnb, short-term rentals, and the future of housing*.
- Jung, J. (2014). Code clouds: Qualitative geovisualization of geotweets. *Canadian Geographies / Géographies Canadiennes*, 59(1), 52-68.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cag.12133>
- Pierce County. (2025, February 15). *Pierce County Comprehensive Plan*. Pierce  
Pierce-County-Comprehensive-Plan---2025-02-15?bidId=  
PublicGIS. (n.d.). Matterhornwab.co.pierce.wa.us.  
<https://matterhornwab.co.pierce.wa.us/publicgis/>
- Social Explorer*. (2025). *Single Location Demographic Report*. Social Explorer.  
<https://www.socialexplorer.com/my-home>
- Theophilus, M., & Ulrich-Schad, J. (2025). *Your neighborhoods are new every week: Short-term rentals, housing, and community wellbeing*.
- Valentin, M. (2020). *Regulating short-term rental housing: Evidence from New Orleans*.

## Appendix A

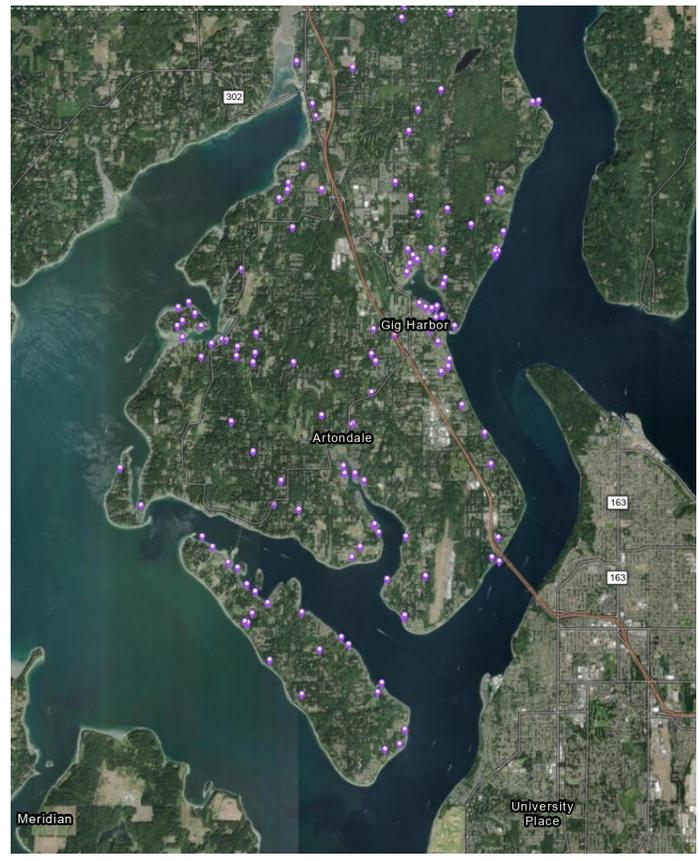
### Pilot Short-Term Rental Listing Compilation Protocol

- 1) Navigate to Market Atlas on [Airrio](#) (no login required)
  - a) Home page -> Resources -> Market Atlas -> Try Market Atlas -> Search: “Gig Harbor, Washington, United States”
- 2) Prepare dataset for variable collection:
  - a) Variable ID
  - b) Coordinates X
  - c) Coordinates Y
  - d) Occupancy Rate
  - e) # Guest
  - f) ADR
  - g) Listing URL
  - h) Listing Name
  - i) In/Out of City Limits
  - j) Google Maps Link
  - k) Address
  - l) Tax Parcel Number
- 3) Cross-Reference [Adopted Community Plan](#) for Gig Harbor Community Plan boundaries
  - a) Boundaries shown in the [image](#) to the right
- 4) Select each listing (shown as a red dot on Airrio Market Atlas) that falls within the boundaries specified in “Step 3”.
- 5) Document descriptive data
  - a) Data Accessed (*for multiple entries in a singular sitting, list data accessed at the first entry of the session*)
  - b) Occupancy Rate
  - c) Number of Guests allowed
  - d) Average Daily Rate
  - e) Tiny Url (URL of current screen pasted into [tinyurl.com](#))
- 6) Take address or relative location markers such as street intersections and find the equivalent location in [google maps](#).
  - a) After selecting the relative location within google maps, copy the URL for the webpage and identify the Longitudinal (x) and Latitudinal (y) coordinates located within the web address (**Keep in mind that: negatives are significant & google maps places formats this as YX**) example shown below, highlighted in green:
    - i) [https://www.google.com/maps/@47.6413758,-122.335132,13z?entry=ttu&g\\_ep=EgoyMDI2MDIwNC4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D](https://www.google.com/maps/@47.6413758,-122.335132,13z?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI2MDIwNC4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D)
    - ii) X = -122.335132



- iii)  $Y = 47.6413758$
  - iv) Optional Steps for more accurate data
    - (1) Use the listing photo to identify key characteristics from Airbnb listings (This helps identify an exact location)
    - (2) Compare images with Google Earth/google maps 3D view
    - (3) Take note of the address
    - (4) Enter that address into Pierce County's Public GIS to find information about tax parcel number and what community the listing falls under.
- 7) Repeat steps 5 and 6 for each listing located within the boundaries established from step 3 and 4.

### Appendix B



Airbnb Location Data \_ Pilot Gig Harbor \_  
Airbnb: 200' Waterfront classic home ~ AC  
on a Private Raf

Table Add to new sketch Zoom to

Address if Available	153 Maple Ln NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335
ADR	\$276
Google Maps Link	<a href="#">View</a>
Guest	6
ID	46
In/Out of City Limits	Out
Listing Name	200' Waterfront classic home ~ AC on a Private Raf
Listing URL	<a href="#">View</a>
Notes	
Occupancy Rate	43.30%
Parcel Number	4995000920
X	47.3323248
Y	-122.6669642

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wawr1GtCsRfatX22DS53TkCGj3ANiJ4pP60swrB5j5w/edit?usp=sharing>

# Appendix C

## Policy & Regulation Content Cloud





## Appendix E

### Impacts & Attitudes Content Cloud

