



San Antonio City Councilman [Mario Bravo](#) is pushing for the creation of a task force to reexamine a policy governing operators of short-term rental properties marketed on technology platforms such as Airbnb (Nasdaq: ABNB), Vrbo and Booking.com (Nasdaq: BKNG).

The group would review, develop and recommend changes to the city's existing short-term rental ordinance and could establish procedures for compliance among landlords, namely that hotel occupancy taxes are collected and that proper permitting is in place.



The move by Bravo could compel city leaders to take a new look at a municipal ordinance approved in 2018 addressing short-term rentals. The renewed interest stems from concerns that too many property owners are skirting city tax and permitting rules in the short-term rental market.



“This was an ask that came from the community. It came from short-term rental owners and from neighborhood leaders,” said Bravo, whose District 1 stretches from Loop 410 in North San Antonio to the King William area south of downtown, home to numerous short-term rental properties.

Bravo has filed a formal council consideration request seeking the creation of the task force. He has the support of multiple council colleagues, including [Jalen McKee-Rodriguez](#), [Adriana Rocha Garcia](#), [Teri Castillo](#) and [John Courage](#), who have also signed the formal request.



Bravo said one of the concerns is that nonpermitted operators are reducing the availability of needed housing stock in multiple neighborhoods and skirting occupancy taxes. Backers of the task force contend that's created unfair competition for STR owners who are abiding by the existing ordinance.

That ordinance requires STR operators to obtain nontransferable permits for their properties at a cost of \$100 for three years. It also limits the number of such rentals on residential blocks and creates a mechanism for the city to ensure such operators pay applicable taxes.

There were 1,805 STR applications received in fiscal 2019 and more than 1,900 for fiscal 2022. The city received nearly \$182,000 in STR permit revenue and more than \$1.3 million in hotel occupancy tax revenue in fiscal 2019. The fiscal 2022 figures are \$231,510 and \$3.8 million, respectively.



The ordinance covers Type 1 properties that are owner or operator occupied as well as Type 2 housing that is not owner or operator occupied. Bravo said some of the requests from the community for such a task force came from members of the former camp.

The ordinance includes a density clause restricting the permitting of Type 2 rentals to no more than one-eighth of the total number of single-family, duplex, triplex or quadraplex units on a given residential block. And while the city has contracted with an outside company called Host Compliance to assist with enforcement oversight, those seeking the creation of a task force say a review of current policy is needed.



“If you're an owner of short-term rentals, then you don't want unfair competition, people who are operating without a permit, not paying the hotel occupancy taxes and can undercut others on price,” Bravo told me.

Airbnb is among the entities that supported the 2018 San Antonio ordinance. But Bravo believes a task force comprised of permitted rental operators and neighborhood residents can address permitting issues and a competitive disadvantage for those who play by the rules, as well as improve hotel occupancy tax collections.

“There's definitely some self-governance that the industry is trying to put in place but then also an overwhelming amount of activity they could probably never keep up with themselves,” he said.