

2023 Candidates for Grapevine City Council- Their Views on Short-term Rentals

Note: Please feel free to forward to other friends and associates who live and vote in Grapevine.

While Grapevine prohibits new short-term rentals (STRs), an injunction related to a lawsuit brought in 2018 against Grapevine by several short-term rental owners prohibits the city from taking actions against those owners who are a party to the lawsuit. The city is enforcing its prohibition against any new STRs – contact the city manager’s office or code enforcement if you know of one near you. The lawsuit is on-going and, regardless of its outcome, the city will need to determine how to proceed to best protect our neighborhoods.

During the current Texas legislative session, several bills have been submitted to both the Texas House and Senate that would severely restrict, or even prohibit, the city’s ability to regulate a variety of types of STRs and local land use. [See the TX Neighborhood Coalition press release](#). As such, the city and its voters need to continue to work with the legislature to defeat these bills and ensure the city is not restricted in its ability to manage local affairs.

Because of this, it is important to understand the viewpoints of the different candidates for Grapevine City Council with respect to STRs. We want Council members who will strongly support our neighborhoods and not allow the city to become a haven for STRs. [Click here for a cautionary tale on Fredericksburg and what can happen to a tourist-friendly city, such as Grapevine, when STRs are unchecked](#).

To ascertain their views, a questionnaire was sent to each candidate asking them to agree/disagree to two statements related to STRs and to return a signed questionnaire. Below are the statements and responses from the candidates.

Statements:

1. I am opposed to single-family dwelling transient rentals (short-term rentals) within the City of Grapevine and its residential zones.
2. If elected to the Grapevine City Council, I will support [City Ordinance No. 2018-065](#) and will defend it from challenges that may arise via litigation or other means.

Responses to Statements:

Candidates for Place 5

- Chris Coy – agreed with both statements and returned a signed questionnaire.
- William Thorsell – stated over the phone he is opposed to short-term rentals but did not return a questionnaire.

Candidates for Place 6

- Duff O’Dell – agreed with both statements and returned a signed questionnaire.
- Theresa Strayer – did not return a signed questionnaire because she feels the statements were not sufficiently nuanced. She did send the following response via email:

I appreciate you reaching out to me for my stance on str’s. Your group has stated in the past election that anyone that says it’s not on the ballot or leave it to the courts does not

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know what it takes to be a Mayor or a Council person. I disagree. I know where you're coming from, but it isn't realistic. If it were that simple, it would not be in the court for years. I have followed this case and have an inch-wide notebook to prove it. To me the two questions on the questionnaire are not inclusive, this It's not a black or white issue. If it were, the whole state would not be dealing with all these lawsuits. Therefore, I will not be signing my name. However, if you're interested, I would be happy to meet with you and your group, in person. I will say this, the laws are set for reasons. I am very aware of rules and regulations under the federal law, especially, rules and policies for American Airlines for 46 years. If I am elected, I will follow the rules and ordinances of our city, as they are written. Yes, if I'm elected, I will agree with the city wanting to ban str's but not for the reasons your group has listed. There are other factors to be considered. The cost, to the city, both ways. Accepting str's or not. Code Employees are a big cost, either way in enforcing a decision. These will be factors in decisions that are being made. The city has a responsibility to enforce their ordinances. I am against party houses. I am against people that rent str's, not being respectful of the neighborhood. Strict rules, regulations and hefty fines would apply, with cancellation of their owning a str. I have a rent house that has never been an str. The Texas Constitution is a factor in these long court cases, all over the state. Yes, local cities ruling themselves would be great but realistically that's not the case at this time, that's why we have lawsuits, everywhere. Ft. Worth just ruled on str's, they have ruled to regulate them (*editor's note: our Ft Worth chapter coalition was successful in getting the city to reaffirm and approve an updated ordinance that does not allow STRs in residential areas, but allows them in mixed-use, commercial and industrial zoned districts – [click here for latest news](#)*) Dallas is having a vote on April 5th, to ban str's, we wait and see how that goes. (*editor's note: our Dallas chapter coalition has been promoting the KISS solution, i.e., defining STRs as lodging use, which would restrict STRs from operating in residential areas – [click here for latest news](#)*) A peaceful city and content residents is my desire. I have lived here for 42 years, and I appreciate Grapevine. The lack of Code enforcement is one of our problems. I think at this time, we only have one employee, in a city of 53,000, give or take. Maybe if your group focuses on getting the Texas Constitution amended you would have more success with what you are working so hard to achieve. (*editor's note: [click here for what our TX Neighborhood Coalition has been doing at the legislative level](#)*)

Campaign Contributions from Texas REALTORS

The Texas REALTORS association and its political action committee (TREPAC), both have taken very pro-STR positions and are actively lobbying at the state level to enact laws pre-empting cities and HOAs from regulating or restricting STRs ([click here and see pg. 13 and 25](#)).

Candidates were asked about their campaign contributions and no candidate indicated they had accepted any contributions from these organizations. Chris Coy stated he has been endorsed by MetroTex Association of REALTORS, but that he stressed to them they are not aligned on STRs since he is opposed to STRs. He also received an unsolicited campaign contribution from

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MetroTex, which he is returning. Below is Chris's statement regarding this unsolicited contribution:

With TREPAC's efforts to promote state pre-emption over Grapevine's local control regarding STRs, and my support for the Texas Neighborhood Coalitions' efforts to maintain Grapevine's right to eliminate STRs from our neighborhoods, I am returning the recently-received campaign contribution. MetroTex's endorsement was offered with full clarity on my STR position (aligned with Texas Neighborhood Coalition), but as one of many topics in an interview. However, with the STR issue looming large in our neighborhoods and legislature, I feel this issue outweighs any others on MetroTex's legislative agenda and feel compelled to return the funds to avoid any perception of inconsistency on the STR issue.