



Page County looks to balance tourist lodging with need for workforce housing

Published: Aug. 31, 2023 at 6:33 PM EDT



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By **Sponsored Partnership** | August 16, 2023 at 11:15 am

Page County's Tax Reassessment Issue Directly Links to Short Term Rentals

As all Page County residents are painfully aware, our newest tax reassessment letters have been delivered. The dramatic increases in assessed values of property seem to utterly defy logic. Many of our neighbors are reporting a 45% or higher increase, while others report absurd spikes as high as 300%.

With public pressure mounting, county officials released a series of statements on official social media accounts – most of which point to COVID-19's impacts on real estate sales. In other words, the assessments are being based off of markets that were radically inflated by wealthy outside buyers and corporations.

The critical factor conveniently missing in the county's reasoning is the explosive growth of the Short-Term Rental (STR) market in Page County. A large number of these STRs are not owned or operated by locals - or even individual people. Wealthy buyers and outside commercial operations often purchase multiple units in our back yard and directly compete with our local STR entrepreneurs.

These transient rental units have already devastated the long-term rental market, sucking up available housing and driving the cost of rent through the roof. Now, homeowners are feeling the pinch of housing availability too – in the form of 50%+ real-estate tax assessments. There are currently no meaningful regulations to manage this vicious cycle. A cycle in which locals are literally forced to pay for the consequences of our county's seemingly endless hunger for more tourism.

It's time to hold our county officials and policy makers accountable. Their duty is to protect and promote the interests of Page County residents– not corporations and wealthy people owning rental homes, who don't even live here. We deserve to be put first, and our county can easily do that by adopting regulations that put guardrails on the STR industry. Allowing this to continue unchecked will only deepen the burden on our local families, all of whom are simply trying to survive and maybe even prosper. Regulation of STRs would show our community that the county is serious about our concerns.

If our glaringly evident affordable housing crisis is of any true concern to our leaders, the Board of Supervisors, Tourism Authority, Planning Commission, and all relevant groups will come together immediately to address the root causes. They'll engage the public and listen to their realities, and act according to the interest of the people who elected them.

Call Your County Official TODAY and Make Your Voice Heard

WHO TO CONTACT

1. Short Term Rental Task Force

These individuals are currently assigned to a Task Force to review Page County's short term rental market and determine best practices for management, regulation, etc.

- a. PHONE: Nina Fox (540-743-4142), County Office (540-743-4142)
- b. Nina Long-Fox - nfox@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- c. Ryan Cubbage - rcubbage@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- d. Cathy Grech - catigrech9@gmail.com
- e. Cara Sotto - carasotto@gmail.com
- f. Tracy Clatterbuck - tclatterbuck@pagecounty.virginia.gov

2. Board of Supervisors

The governing body of our county, the Board of Supervisors are responsible for supporting and furthering the needs of their local constituents. This body reviews and approves legislative regulation for our community.

- a. PHONE: County Office (540-743-4142)
- b. Bucky Thomas, Chair - bthomas@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- c. Jeremy Baldwin, District 1 - jbaldwin@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- d. Allen Louderback, District 2 - alouderback@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- e. Ryan Cubbage, District 3 - rcubbage@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- f. Susan Kyle, District 4 - skile@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- g. Jeff Vaughan, District 5 - jvaughan@pagecounty.virginia.gov

3. County Administrators

These staff members oversee and execute county policies, such as those around Short Term Rentals. This staff is charged with operationalizing the directives of the county government.

- a. PHONE: County Office (540-743-4142)
- b. Amity Moler, County Administrator - amoler@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- c. Regina Harner, Asst. County Admin. - rmiller@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- d. Tessy Mowry - Comm. Services Aid - tmarston@pagecounty.virginia.gov
- e. Kimberly Donahue - Executive Asst. - kdonohoe@pagecounty.virginia.gov

Talking Points for Phone Calls

- The recently delivered county property value reassessments are unreasonably high – Many of our neighbors are reporting a 45% or higher increase, while others report absurd spikes as high as 300%.
- The county has already pointed to COVID buying as the cause of these absurd spikes – yet refuse to recognize that STRs are choking locals by using up vast amounts of available housing.
- Less housing available paired with high demand increases property value too – all while the monthly cost of renting for locals skyrockets. Once again, our community is paying the bill of wealthy outside investment.
- Wealthy Northern Virginia investors purchase multiple homes to rent as STRs, often while not even residing in our county. This is stiff and direct competition for our local STR owners and directly contributes to these inflated property values.
- There are currently no meaningful regulations to manage this vicious cycle. A cycle in which locals are literally forced to pay for the consequences of our county's seemingly endless hunger for more tourism.
- It's time to hold our county officials and policy makers accountable. Their duty is to protect and promote the interests of Page County locals – not wealthy people owning rental homes, who don't even live here.
- Allowing this to continue unchecked will only deepen the burden on our local families, all of whom are simply trying to survive and maybe even prosper. Regulation of STRs would show our community that the county is serious about our concerns.
- Regulation of STRs would show our community that the county is serious about our concerns. If our glaringly evident affordable housing crisis is of any true concern to our leaders, the Board of Supervisors, Tourism Authority, Planning Commission, and all relevant groups will come together immediately to address the root causes.

EMAIL TEMPLATE 1

SUBJ: Concern About Tax Reassessments and Short-Term Rental Impacts in Page County

Dear [Official's Name],

I am writing as a concerned Page County resident regarding the recent property tax reassessments and the broader housing pressures affecting our community. Many homeowners, including myself and my neighbors, are seeing dramatic increases that feel completely disconnected from the realities of long-term local residents.

It seems clear that the rapid expansion of short-term rentals is playing a role in driving up property values and limiting housing availability. I respectfully urge you to consider meaningful, balanced regulations that protect local homeowners and preserve housing access for people who live and work here.

Please prioritize this issue and ensure that the community voices which you represent are heard and meaningful decisions are thoughtfully made. Thank you for your time and for your service to Page County.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or District, if desired]

EMAIL TEMPLATE 2 -

SUBJ: Request for STR Regulation to Protect Local Housing and Tax Stability

Dear [Official's Name],

I'm reaching out to ask for your leadership in addressing the connection between rising tax assessments and the growth of short-term rentals in Page County. Many residents are facing steep increases that place real strain on families trying to remain in their homes.

While tourism is important, it should not come at the expense of housing stability for full-time residents. I strongly encourage you to support thoughtful regulation that creates reasonable guardrails on the short-term rental market and helps stabilize both property values and long-term housing availability.

I hope you will continue to engage with residents and prioritize policies that put the needs of the local community first.

Respectfully,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or District, if desired]

EMAIL TEMPLATE 3 - SHORT & DIRECT, EASY COPY/PASTE

SUBJ: Page County Resident Requesting Action on Housing and STR Policy

Dear [Official's Name],

As a resident of Page County, I am deeply concerned about the sharp increase in property reassessments and the long-term effects of an expanding short-term rental market. Many locals feel they are being priced out of their own community.

I'm asking that you work with the Task Force and Board to pursue practical regulations that protect housing access, ensure fairness in property valuation, and maintain a healthy balance between tourism and livability.

Please continue listening to community members and take action that reflects the needs of the people who call Page County home.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address or District, if desired]