

ORDINANCE NO. ()

**AN UNCODIFIED INTERIM ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
ESTABLISHING A TEMPORARY CAP ON VACATION RENTAL PERMITS
COUNTYWIDE
(URGENCY ORDINANCE--4/5 VOTE REQUIRED)**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma ordains as follows:

Section 1. Findings and purpose.

- A. Sonoma County is experiencing a severe and ongoing housing crisis. This crisis already existed before the 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires, but was dramatically worsened by that wildfire event and by subsequent natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- B. Conversion of housing units to vacation rentals reduces housing stock and contributes to increased housing costs for both renters and buyers.
- C. The increasing number of short-term vacation rentals in some areas of the County adversely affects residential character, neighborhood stability, public safety, and quality of life.
- D. Under the existing vacation rentals ordinance, Sonoma County Code section 26-88-120, almost all vacation rental permits are ministerial permits, meaning that a permit must be issued if the application demonstrates that the property meets required standards, and those standards do not take allow for consideration of loss of housing stock and over-concentration of vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods.
- E. Based on the direction of the Board, the Permit and Resource Management Department is developing comprehensive amendments to the existing vacation rentals ordinance to address these effects, and additional planning, research, and analysis is necessary to prepare Zoning Code amendments for Board consideration.
- F. The issuance and approval of additional permits for vacation rentals during the period when permanent Code amendments are being developed and considered presents a current and immediate threat to the public safety, health and welfare in the unincorporated County due to the loss of housing stock and other negative effects caused by vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods.
- G. The purpose of this Ordinance is to temporarily limit vacation rental permits in unincorporated Sonoma County to those permits already issued, plus applications that were determined complete, as of June 23, 2020, which is the date of the public meeting in which the Board directed staff to prepare this interim ordinance.

- H. Government Code section 65858 allows the Board to immediately protect and preserve the public safety, health, and welfare by prohibiting uses that may be in conflict with a contemplated zoning proposal that the legislative body, planning commission, or planning department is considering or studying or intends to study within a reasonable time. Similarly, Government Code section 25123 authorizes the Board to adopt an ordinance for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety that shall be effective immediately when passed by a four-fifths vote of the Board.

Section 2. Interim cap on vacation rental permits.

- A. For the reasons set forth in the above findings, the Board finds and declares that this proposed interim Ordinance is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety, and welfare.
- B. In accordance with Government Code section 65858, from and after the date of this Ordinance, the number of vacation rental permits in unincorporated Sonoma County shall be limited to 1,907, equal to the number of duly approved and valid permits existing as of June 23, 2020, plus three (3), the number of vacation rental permit applications submitted to the County and accepted as complete on or before June 23, 2020. For purposes of this calculation, payment of all required fees was necessary to achieve a complete application.
- C. The Director of Permit Sonoma is authorized and directed to establish procedures for release of any permits under the cap that may become available during the term of this Ordinance. Priority shall be given to vacation rental applications in the order that each such application is determined complete. No vacation rental application shall be approved if such approval would result in exceedance of the cap.
- D. For the purposes of this Ordinance, “vacation rental” shall have the same definition as provided in Sonoma County Code section 26-02-140.
- E. Hosted rentals as defined in Sonoma County Code section 26-02-140 are not subject to this Ordinance.
- F. The Permit and Resource Management Department is directed to prepare the report required by Government Code section 65858(d) describing the measures taken to alleviate the conditions which led to the adoption of this Ordinance.

Section 3. Conflicting ordinance, policy, or resolution. During the period this Ordinance remains in effect, the provisions of this Ordinance shall govern. If there is any conflict between this Ordinance and any provision of the Sonoma County Code, or any County ordinance, resolution, or policy, the provisions of this Ordinance shall control.

Section 4. CEQA. This Ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.) Section 15060(b) and (c), because the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the

environment, and because it is not a project as defined in CEQA Guidelines section 15378, as it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly. Additionally or alternatively, the Ordinance is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this Ordinance or its implementation would have a significant effect on the environment.

Section 6. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this Ordinance and every section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases be declared unconstitutional or invalid.

Section 6. Effective date and term. This Ordinance is adopted as an urgency ordinance under Government Code sections 25123 and 25132 and as an interim zoning ordinance under Government Code section 65858. It shall be effective immediately upon its adoption by a vote of at least four-fifths of the Board of Supervisors. This Ordinance shall be in effect for a period of 45 days from the date of adoption, unless extended by the Board as provided in Government Code section 65858.

Section 7. Publication. This Ordinance shall be published once before the expiration of fifteen (15) days after said passage, with the names of the Supervisors voting for or against the same, in *The Press Democrat*, a newspaper of general circulation published in the County of Sonoma, State of California.

In regular session of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, adopted this 18th day of August, 2020, on regular roll call of the members of said Board by the following vote:

SUPERVISORS:

Rabbitt: Zane: Gore: Hopkins: Gorin:

Ayes: Noes: Absent: Abstain:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the above and foregoing Ordinance duly adopted and

SO ORDERED.

Chair, Board of Supervisors
County of Sonoma

ATTEST:

Sheryl Bratton,
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors