

What's a Neighborhood Without Any Neighbors?

Perceptions of Community Resilience in the New Orleans Short-Term Rental Debate

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Abstract

Community resilience, or the collective ability of a neighborhood to deal with stressors and efficiently resume daily life following shocks, has become the de facto framework for communities, planners, and policymakers to prepare for climate change-induced extreme weather events. One possible stressor to community resilience is the short-term rental, whose community-level impacts are the subject of extensive literature and public grievance. Regulators across the world are attempting to curb the community-level harm of STRs while allowing locals to reap the benefits, and the disaster-prone and tourism-dependent city of New Orleans has been creating and modifying regulations on STRs since 2016. For policymakers to incorporate public preferences into regulations, residents must convey their experiences with short-term rentals to regulators, most often through public commentary periods. Thus, a discourse analysis of public commentary during policymaking proceedings is useful to understand how residents in New Orleans perceive a relationship between community resilience and STRs and try to influence regulations.

In the New Orleans STR debate, speakers and interest groups coalesce around certain problem framings and push forward regulations to address their perceived impact to community resilience from STRs. However, the relationship between community resilience and STRs is not wholly positive or negative but rather complex and dependent on the way STR owners act and municipalities choose to regulate. Consequently, regulators and residents can position STRs to bolster community resilience rather than diminish it. Viewing policy issues from the perspective of potential impacts to community resilience may be useful for disaster-prone cities like New Orleans to tackle stressors together, streamline regulations, and shift power to neighborhoods.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ANP	Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity
CPC	City Planning Commission
CR	Community Resilience
CZO	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance
DA	Discourse Analysis
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GNOHA	Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance
GNOHLA	Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association
JPNSI	Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative
LaFHAC	Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center
NHIF	Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund
NOLA	New Orleans, Louisiana
PIANO	Professional Innkeepers Association of New Orleans
PRC	Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans
STR	Short-Term Rental
VCPOA	Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents, and Associates

Glossary

- **Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative (JPNSI)** is a housing development organization, a community land trust, and a housing rights organization. Their 2018 white paper about the STR industry in New Orleans in 2018 found that 60% of total STR listings in Orleans Parish were from hosts with multiple listings and that 85.5% of listings were for whole home rentals (4-10-44¹).
- **Housing NOLA** is a partner organization of the Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance committed to ending housing insecurity in New Orleans. Their Housing for All Plan outlines the need to house 40,000 households earning 35k a year, with only about half that number of affordable units available (11-6-8).
- The **Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center (LaFHAC)** is a nonprofit civil rights organization working to eradicate housing discrimination in the state (18-6-5).
- **Unity of Greater New Orleans** is a collaborative of 60 homeless services agencies who work to prevent, reduce, and end homelessness, citing that in 2019 for the first time in many years New Orleans saw a rise in new entries into homelessness, with the primary driver a lack of affordable rental property (11-6-9).
- The **Advocacy Center of Louisiana** is the state’s nonprofit organization that protects, empowers, and advocates for human and legal rights of people with disabilities and seniors (12-8-3).
- The **Music and Culture Coalition of New Orleans** advocates for workers in the cultural economy, or culture bearers, like musicians and artists who are often long-term renters (18-6-57).
- The **Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance (GNOHA)** is a collaborative of housing advocacy groups which JPNSI and Housing NOLA are a part of (21-1-85).
- The **Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association (GNOHLA)** represents over 100 hotels who employ over 80,000 workers in New Orleans and generate millions of dollars in tax revenue (23-13-56).
- **Unite Here Local Chapter 23** is a hospitality union with over 2,000 workers in New Orleans that advocates for higher wages, protection against discrimination, health insurance, and job security (17-11-7).
- The **Professional Innkeepers Association of New Orleans (PIANO)** is a trade association of 50 small businesses in the tourism industry in New Orleans (26-1-15).
- The **New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau** (renamed New Orleans and Company) describe themselves as “brand stewards of New Orleans” and represent about 100 hotels in the New Orleans area (21-1-117, 26-1-44).
- The **Hospitality Coalition** is a group representing hotels and hospitality workers in New Orleans (23-13-28).
- **Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association** is the neighborhood group representing the Marigny neighborhood which is adjacent to the French Quarter immediately downriver (26-1-50).
- **Neighbors First for Bywater** is a neighborhood group representing the Bywater neighborhood which is immediately downriver from the Marigny (21-1-151).
- **Algiers Point Association** is a neighborhood group representing the Algiers area, a historic neighborhood of New Orleans across the river from the French Quarter (17-11-72).
- The **Louisiana Landmark Society** advocates for the protection of all neighborhoods from the negative impacts of STR proliferation, supporting regulation to “strengthen our neighborhoods and encourage people to live here full-time, contributing to the well-being of our community and our culture” (23-13-76).
- **Short-Term Resources NOLA** is an organization started by an STR owner in Algiers with over 60 STR owners that meet monthly to discuss ways to stay responsible, local, and small operating. The group started in response to social media backlash about STRs in New Orleans to show pride in their STR investments, discuss how to be responsible STR owners, and learn how to help the community (15-1-11).
- The **Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity (ANP)** is a trade organization of STR property owners created to discuss the legalization, regulation, and taxation of the STR industry in New Orleans (26-1-21).
- **French Quarter Citizens** and **Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents, & Associates (VCPORA)** are both neighborhood groups for the French Quarter area that advocate for a complete ban of STRs (18-6-54).
- The **Garden District Association** works to protect and preserve the historic fabric, character, and architectural aesthetics in the neighborhood (18-6-48).
- The **Short-Term Rental Committee** advocates for neighbors and neighborhoods across the city united in the effort to discipline and limit the number of short-term rentals (13-9-4).
- **Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans** is a nonprofit that promotes the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of New Orleans historic architecture and neighborhoods (23-13-67).

¹ Public comments are cited according to a scheme developed by the author, including Meeting Number-Docket Number-Commenter. Please contact the author for direct quotes at laurel.mire@tufts.edu.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Topic Overview

In their 2021 Sixth Assessment Report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change links an increase in the frequency and intensity of weather and climate extremes, including extreme precipitation and hurricanes, to human-induced greenhouse gas emissions (Seneviratne et al., 2021). Traditionally, emergency management and disaster preparedness measures are focused on physical infrastructure and acting reactively once extreme events occur (Cutter et al., 2014). However, discontent with this approach has spurred a shift in disaster preparedness efforts (Kruse et al., 2017). Since the early 2000s, the concept of resilience, not reaction, has become the de facto framework for planners, policymakers, researchers, and communities in the United States to prepare for extreme events and climate change (Cutter et al., 2014; Zaman & Raihan, 2023).

This shift in how disaster preparedness is approached hinges on the understanding that the informal ties between community members are crucial in the wake of an extreme event. For example, after a storm residents can check on their elderly neighbors before formal first responders could gain access to areas blocked by downed trees or flooded streets (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015, pp. 255-256). Thus, strong social connectedness between neighbors and community members can help people fare better in extreme events (Walker et al., 2022). Planners, policymakers, and residents must define what contributes to and what may threaten their community's connectedness and resilience. For coastal cities and towns that are both tourism-dependent and disaster-prone, a unique stressor to community resilience is emerging: the short-term rental.

The community-level consequences of poorly regulated short-term rentals (STRs) are the subject of extensive literature and public grievance. Communities describe a loss of local culture and decline in neighborhood cohesion as more STRs lead to ghost streets and a

revolving door of travelers rather than neighbors (Gallagher, 2017). Residents voice concerns about displacement and safety due to loss of long-term rental (LTR) units, increase in the price of remaining units, and fewer familiar faces in the neighborhood (Gold, 2019).

Regulators in cities across the world are attempting to curb the community-level harm of STRs while reaping the possible economic benefits for STR platform users and the city's tourism industry.

New Orleans, Louisiana is one such city creating regulations for its explosion of STRs. In 2019, it was home to some 4,700 legally operating Airbnbs, the STR industry leader (Berlin, 2019). The city has been regulating STRs since 2016, with major changes in 2019 and 2023 spurred by public anger, City Planning Commission (CPC) recommendations, and even court-ruled revisions (*Short Term Rental Administration*, n.d.). A 2022 study found that the benefits and harms of STRs in New Orleans are unequally spread across the city, with profits flowing primarily to wealthy white investors and historically black residential areas bearing the brunt of community-level consequences like unaffordability and neighborhood change (Robertson et al., 2022). Such sentiments are common in news stories too, with one resident noting Airbnbs contribute to feelings that New Orleans is a playground for tourists, looking “less like the city [they] grew up in every passing year” (Associated Press, 2023).

Research Question

Connections between these community-level impacts of STRs and what makes communities resilient are the basis of this thesis. The project aims to illuminate the public perception of the relationship between community resilience (CR) and STRs through an analysis of the STR policymaking debate in New Orleans to answer the research question: Considering the importance of community resilience to respond to and prepare for climate change-induced extreme weather events, how are perceptions of the relationship between

short-term rentals and community resilience communicated through public comment on short-term rental regulations in New Orleans?

Topic Justification and Importance to Policy & Planning

Disaster planners are increasingly concerned with building CR at the local level as the first defense against hazards (Kruse et al., 2017). Consequently, planners and communities alike ought to be attuned to what may decrease a community's resilience. The community-level consequences of STRs are well-defined in the literature but an explicit connection between STRs and CR is not present. However, there is significant overlap in the detrimental impacts of STRs on communities and the building blocks of CR. Connecting these two phenomena is crucial to understanding what may diminish CR and the disaster preparedness that relies on it.

This connection is especially important for communities, planners, and policymakers working and living in tourism-dependent and disaster-prone New Orleans. One of the most vulnerable US cities to climate change due to its low elevation, land subsidence, and exposure to more frequent and intense storm events, the New Orleans community is consistently tested on its ability to recover from disasters (National Resources Defense Council, 2011). Moreover, the city's Resilient New Orleans Plan and Master Plan both underscore the importance of community-scale resilience—the former working to promote cohesive communities and the latter calling for a Neighborhood Resilience program (American Planning Association, n.d.; New Orleans City Planning Commission, n.d.). With the next hurricane season looming and a municipal focus on resilience, the city of New Orleans should consider the relationship between CR and STRs in its resilience plans and STR regulations to better prepare for disasters.

Personal Goals

New Orleans is my home. As such, I have always been motivated academically and personally to understand its challenges and promote its opportunities to not only survive into the latter half of the 21st century—a hope many would scoff at considering its geography and infamous disaster history—but create a more equitable, resilient, and thriving city while it does so. New Orleans is brimming with residents who love their city and their neighbors like none other, and the explosion of short-term rentals is threatening communities and pitting neighbors with different opinions against each other. I hope this thesis can help residents, planners, and policymakers see the impacts of STRs through this lens of CR and disaster preparedness and consider this relationship in both STR regulations and resilience planning.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 serves to introduce the topic and justify its relevance to the fields of policy and planning. Chapter 2 provides an overview of relevant literature to ground the thesis in existing scholarship and show how this work fits into a unique space not yet formally explored. The literature review covers the topics of community resilience as a method of disaster preparedness, the community-level impacts of short-term rentals, and the role of public commentary in policymaking. Chapter 3 explains the discourse analysis methodology used to explore how residents of New Orleans giving public comment perceive a relationship between community resilience and short-term rentals. Chapter 4 explains the conceptual framework devised to identify the relationship between CR and STRs in public comments. Chapter 5 reports the narratives present in the discourse and how they use CR language to convey their opinion on STRs, Chapter 6 discusses these findings, and Chapter 7 concludes with recommendations for policymakers and planners to better address community resilience in their regulation of STRs.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To frame this analysis of public commenter's perceptions of community resilience relevant to short-term rentals, I review literature on climate threats, the turn to community resilience to prepare for climate-induced disasters, short-term rentals as a stressor to community resilience, and the role of public commentary in policy and planning.

Climate Threats and Disaster Preparedness

There is consensus among scientists that the burning of fossil fuels, which releases greenhouse gas emissions, has led to an increase in the frequency and severity of weather and climate extremes like flooding and hurricanes (Seneviratne et al., 2021). Moreover, sea level rise has contributed to an increase in coastal flooding in many low-lying coastal areas (Ranasinghe et al., 2021).

Traditional disaster preparedness measures are reliant on federal agencies who give support and funding in the wake of disasters, an approach critics say is top-down and reactive rather than community-driven and proactive (Cutter et al., 2014). After a storm, federal agencies like FEMA can be slow to get established in a city, and some residents may not qualify for financial help if their property's damage does not meet a certain threshold (Walker et al., 2022). With climate change increasing the severity and frequency of extreme storms, the need for robust and effective hazard planning and disaster preparedness is crucial for cities and towns to protect citizens, infrastructure, and the environment.

Discontented with this traditional approach, planners, policymakers, and communities are increasingly turning to a more proactive method of preparing for disasters, and community disaster resilience has become the de facto framework to prepare for extreme events (Cutter et al., 2014, p. 65; Kruse, et al, 2017). Instead of focusing on physical infrastructure and "bouncing back" from individual events, a focus on building CR approaches disaster preparedness more holistically and systemically, concentrating on forming strong social networks, incorporating equity and justice, and valuing local

knowledge (Cutter et al., 2014). Disasters disrupt the fabric of community life and stress social systems, and no technical solution or amount of investment in physical infrastructure can reduce all risk (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). Instead, strengthening social infrastructure prior to disasters can help in the recovery process. In a disaster situation, informal ties and community networks provide physical and emotional resources like wellbeing checks, information, childcare, and psychological support (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015). While it may take FEMA a few days to set up their response, neighbors are there immediately following the event to lend a hand.

Community Resilience

Despite its prevalence in municipal, climate, and disaster planning, the concept of community resilience is still vaguely defined, making it difficult to establish metrics to measure and enhance community resilience (Kruse et al., 2017). Rather than deciding on one scholarly definition, MacGillivray (2018) argues that resilience can instead serve as an umbrella term for community capacities related to the ability to prepare for, absorb, adapt to, and recover from hazard events (p. 118). Researchers Aldrich and Meyer (2015) craft a more place-based operational definition of CR, calling it the collective ability of a neighborhood to deal with stressors and efficiently resume the rhythms of daily life through cooperation following shocks (p. 255). According to Ranganathan and Bratman (2019), shocks are acute tests of a community's resilience, and, in the context of disaster planning, are events like hurricanes, fire, and floods. Stressors, on the other hand, are longer-term threats that may undermine the ability of a community to build up resilience to shocks, like gentrification, food insecurity, and lack of affordable housing (Ranganathan & Bratman, 2019, p. 119). Taken at face value, any phenomenon that undermines the ability of a community to develop and maintain its community resilience may be a stressor.

Measuring Community Resilience

To see if New Orleanians are perceiving an impact to community resilience by STRs, it is important to further outline how community resilience is discussed, operationalized, and measured by scholars. In other words, what are the building blocks that make up a community's resilience that New Orleanians may perceive are being impacted? As there are a multitude of definitions of CR, there are also a multitude of ways to measure and identify the concept. Geographer Susan L. Cutter is the head of the Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute at the University of South Carolina, an interdisciplinary research center developing tools and methods to advance equity and adaptive capacity in communities responding to disaster and climate hazards (*Hazards Vulnerability & Resilience Institute*, n.d.). With her colleagues, Cutter has worked extensively to develop and organize the landscape of community resilience scholarship, producing prolific publications that are widely cited in the field. This thesis heavily draws from Cutter's scholarship.

In one such extensive review of 27 different resilience assessment tools, Cutter found that scholars most often assess resilience by looking at two different measurement categories: a community's attributes & assets and a community's capacities (2016). Attributes and assets are baseline characteristics or conditions of a community and include measurement of indicators related to economic, social, environmental, and infrastructural features. Proxies to measure these attributes could include income, educational attainment, impervious surfaces, and mitigation spending. Capacities are more dynamic processes within a community that evolve, such as emergency management, social capital, and community functions. These are measured through variables like number of civic and religious organizations, community services, and feeling of belonging to the community. There is also overlap between these two categories, and different indices and scorecards may use a combination of capabilities and attributes in their measurement of CR. For example, the concepts of connectivity,

communication/information, and planning are both community attributes and community capacities (Cutter, 2016).

There is no consensus on which existing methods of measuring community resilience are “the best,” and community resilience itself is a place-based, small-scale approach to building disaster resilience that may manifest differently in various settings (Cutter 2016; as cited in Ludin et al., 2019). Thus, scholars also call for more research efforts to develop new ways to measure the social dynamics and interactions that build community resilience (Cutter 2016).

Because this thesis explores the perceived impacts to community resilience presented by New Orleanians in STR public meetings, no single conceptual definition or method of measuring community resilience was chosen. Table 1 below summarizes commonly used concepts and variables, or CR proxies, present in community resilience research. They range from more abstract concepts of social cohesion to specific variables to measure a community’s economic conditions. For this thesis, Table 1 serves as a collection of the many proxies which may be impacted by STRs and thus may be talked about by speakers in the New Orleans STR debate to signal a perceived relationship between STRs and CR. Collectively, I term this group of proxies “CR Talk.”

Table 1: Community Resilience Talk (CR Talk)

Concept/Definition & Source	Method of Measurement/ Proxy
Income (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual income ● Per capita income ● Wealthy retirees ● Per capita household income ● Median household income
Social infrastructure/social capital (Cutter, 2016) Social infrastructure at the community level focuses on social capital, “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (as cited in Aldrich & Meyer, 2015, p. 256)	Social Capital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civic organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Civic # civic organizations/10,000 ○ Civic & political organizations ○ Registered nonprofit organizations ● Religious ties/affiliations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ # religious adherents ○ # religious organizations ○ Faith-based networks
Health Access (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doctors/10,000 ● Physicians
Migration Plans (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Population covered by FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan ● FEMA Community Rating System Scores ● 10 year average of mitigation spending/capita
Community attributes, aspirations, & goals (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community services ● People help each other ● Hope for the future ● People work together for solutions ● Community has priorities and goals
Mitigation activities (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crop insurance policies/mile² ● Coastal setback, shoreline restoration ● Flood property acquisition, flood proofing, flood warning system ● Officials support vulnerability reduction ● Building codes
Infrastructure and buildings (Cutter, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emergency management buildings ● Commercial establishments and businesses ● Government/institutional buildings ● Infrastructure ● Recreation and arts centers

Table 1: Community Resilience Talk (CR Talk), Continued

Concept/Definition & Source	Method of Measurement/ Proxy
<p>Social connectedness (Walker et al., 2022) Social connectedness is defined as “the depth of social bonds within a community” (p. 7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement in social activities ● Informal and formal networks ● Interpersonal and intergroup connections
<p>Emergency management assets and functions (Cutter, 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First-hand experience with recover in last 10 years ● Preparedness ● Learn from the past ● Loss-causing weather event frequency ● # presidential disaster declarations/#loss causing events
<p>Perceived community resilience Index of Perceived Community Resiliency (Kulig et al., 2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong community leadership ● Positive neighborhood change ● The ability of community members to positively deal with a problem ● Sense of pride in the community ● Shared values and ideas in a community ● Participation in community events ● Feelings of isolation
<p>Social/neighborhood cohesion “The extent to which a community works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalization, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers its members the opportunity for upward mobility” (as cited in Ludin et al., 2019, p. 622) *Neighborhood Cohesion Scale (Buckner, 2988) ^Ludin et al., 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community fights exclusion and marginalization^ ● Attraction to neighborhood* ● Sense of belonging*^ ● Relationships with neighbors* ● Community trust^ ● Upward mobility^ ● Desire to stay in the neighborhood* ● Shared values* ● Perception that neighbors would help in an emergency* ● Sense of community* ● Shared identity*
<p>Other Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (Cutter et al., 2014)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Racial/ethnic income equality ● Non-dependence on primary/tourism sector employment ● Disaster aid experience ● Attachment to place ● Social capital ● Citizen disaster preparedness and response skills ● Population stability

Short-Term Rentals as a Stressor to Community Resilience

The community-level consequences of poorly regulated STRs are the subject of extensive literature and public grievances. Communities describe a loss of local culture and neighborhood cohesion as increased STRs lead to ghost streets and a revolving door of travelers rather than neighbors (Gallagher, 2017). Loss of long-term rental (LTR) units and price increases of remaining rentals drive displacement, and fewer friendly and familiar eyes pose safety concerns (Gold, 2019). Regulations attempt to reap the economic benefits of STRs for hosts, renters, and the tourism industry while curbing the community-level harm.

Overview of STRs

Since its founding in 2008, Airbnb, one of the most well-known and ubiquitous STR platforms, has grown into a worldwide platform with over two million listings across 220 countries (Gurran and Phibbs, 2017; *Airbnb*, n.d.). Airbnb operates within the sharing economy, which has dramatically changed the way consumers engage in market activities, particularly by utilizing digital platforms (Gold, 2019). Airbnb allows peer-to-peer STRs between residents looking for extra income and tourists seeking out a more authentic experience at their vacation destination. While there are many digital vacation rental platforms that operate within the sharing economy, this thesis focuses on Airbnb because it is the industry leader, the dominant platform used in New Orleans, and sole focus of much research and data (Robertson et al., 2022; Wegmann & Jiao, 2017).

Benefits of STRs

The benefits of Airbnb are largely economic, with hosts making extra money, travelers saving on accommodations, and the local tourism industry growing. STR platforms have opened new revenue streams for people with a spare couch, room, or even entire home (Gold, 2019). Over time, the property value itself rises along with total home equity, making STRs a short-term cash cow and a long-term investment (Gold, 2019). For tourists, booking a STR is often cheaper than a night's stay at a hotel, providing a financial incentive that

compliments their desire to travel like a local (Gold, 2019). Lastly, STRs may boost the local tourism economy by bringing more travelers into the city. In New Orleans, an industry-funded study touts that STRs brought \$900 million and 10,200 jobs to the city in one year, but this finding was immediately called into question by numerous economists and the City Planning Commissioner due to its undisclosed methodology and data sources (Stein, 2018). While the numbers may not be so large, it is reasonable to conclude that STRs do bolster tourism industries to a certain extent.

Negative Consequences of STRs through a Community Resilience Lens

A growing body of research investigates the multitude of negative externalities of STRs, primarily felt at a community scale (Angel & Doganer, 2020; Gold, 2019; Gurran & Phibbs, 2017; Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative, 2018; Robertson et al., 2022; Wegman & Jiao, 2017). The loss of long-term residents due to STR proliferation has impacts throughout a community, as researchers cite reduction of the community safety net, erosion of neighborhood social capital, and a loss of neighborhood identity and autonomy (Gold, 2019; Fussell, 2021). Replacing residents with tourists reduces the amount of people who are invested in the neighborhood and causes conflicts between locals and travelers who have different needs and expectations of the neighborhood surrounding them (Angel & Doganer, 2020; Jane Street Neighborhood Initiative, 2018). This makes everyday life difficult for residents who have seen their neighborhood negatively change (Angel & Doganer, 2020).

While these impacts are felt across communities, researchers have also found a mismatch between the burden of negative STR impacts and the economic benefits that incentivize STR use. Racial discrimination by hosts and renters leads to White hosts making more money than their Black counterparts in the same neighborhood. Meanwhile, growth in STR listings correlates with gentrification in historically minority-occupied neighborhoods (Gold, 2019). This contributes to the feeling that STRs turn neighborhoods into a playground for wealthy, mostly white investors, while systematically excluding non-White populations

from the benefits of STRs (Associated Press, 2023). These community-level impacts of STRs correspond to many of the building blocks of community resilience described in Table 1 above. Chapter 5 outlines this relationship more thoroughly.

The Role of Public Comments in the Policymaking Process

For community-level stressors like STRs to be addressed in regulations, citizens must communicate their experience of STR impacts to policymakers. The basis of a representative democracy is the incorporation of the interests, values, and preferences of citizens in public policy decisions through citizen participation (Farkas, 2013; McCubbins, 1987). When policymaking occurs at the local level, certain procedures attempt to ensure that the public opinion is at least considered and ideally centered in the development of regulations, primarily through public commentary processes (McCubbins, 1987). Ordinary individuals and organized interest groups use the public comment process to communicate their views and, in doing so, alert policymakers of the interests and underlying values of their constituents (Eidelman et al., n.d.; Mendelson, 2011). However, public participation is not a silver bullet to ensure policymaking processes give all citizens an equal opportunity to make their interests, values, and preferences heard.

While some scholars argue that participation in local government proceedings provides the greatest access for citizens to influence the policymaking process, research reveals that power dynamics tend to restrict participation (Farkas, 2013). Van Dijk defines power as “the control exercised by one group or organization over the action and/or minds of another group, thus limiting the freedom of actions of others” (as cited in Farkas, 2013, p. 401). Power may be exercised by numerous actors within the public comment process. Government officials may limit the time, agenda, and setting of the meeting wherein public commentary occurs (Farkas, 2013). Interest groups and other established networks may use involvement in political proceedings to push a particular narrative and pursue certain

objectives (Jacobs, 2006). Thus, an analysis of public commentary can illuminate how citizens and groups communicate their values, push forward their preferences, and struggle for power over the policymaking process.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter presents the methods used to answer the research question and justifies why discourse analysis is a fitting analytical tool to understand the role that the concept of community resilience plays in advocacy for and against short-term rentals in New Orleans. After an explanation of discourse analysis as a qualitative research method, I explain how the analysis was carried out before concluding with a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach both inherently and in its application here.

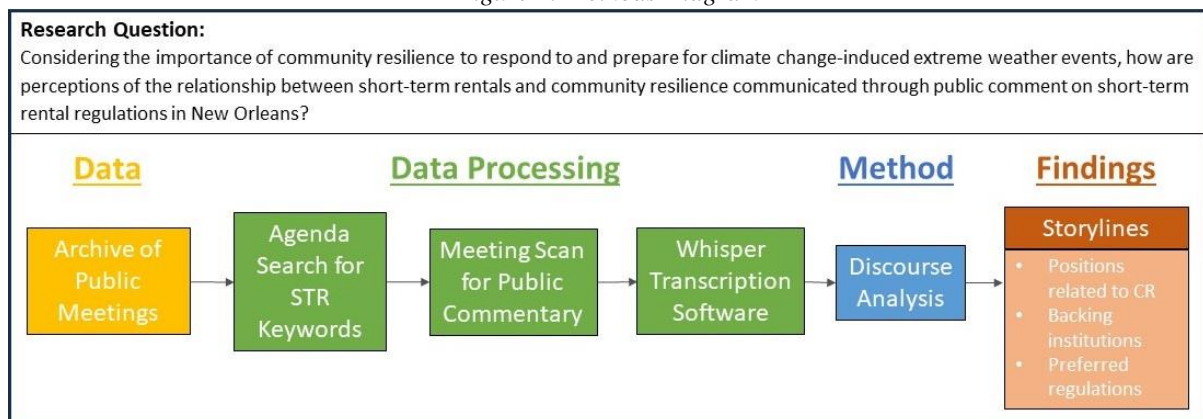
Justification of Approach

In Chapter 2, I detailed many indices, frameworks, and metrics that attempt to measure a community's resilience. However, resilience scholar Cutter asserts that the current set of proxies commonly used to quantitatively measure CR struggle to truly capture the nuance of resilience. In practice, community leaders and residents intuitively understand and feel resilience as “the dynamics within a community and the social capital that is important in fostering connectivity and action” (Cutter, 2016, p. 754). Consequently, a strict quantitative analysis that approaches STR prevalence as the independent variable and CR as the dependent variable is unlikely to capture what community members see on their streets—loud partygoers on the weekends, ghost towns during the week, and the feeling that their neighborhood has changed for the worse. Speaking about the overabundance of vacation rentals in their hurricane-prone town, one Galveston, Texas resident spoke clearly of his perception of the relationship between STR proliferation and community resilience, saying “I feel like there's less community here than there used to be because of all the short-term rentals” (Cody Wright, cited in Holley, 2021). Another resident echoes the sentiment, saying STRs “take away from that community spirit and that sense of ownership a neighborhood needs to have a real identity” (Rob Lewis, cited in Holley, 2021). These perspectives and the investigation of STRs as a possible stressor to CR, rather than a *measurement* of CR, are best

captured through a qualitative approach that explores how residents discuss the relationship between CR and STRs.

To understand how the people involved in the New Orleans STR debate describe the link between STRs and CR, I apply a discourse analysis (DA) approach. The population of interest for this study is New Orleanians who participate in the STR policymaking process via public commentary during CPC meetings. This subset of New Orleanians displays – in two-minute statements – many perspectives involved in the debate around STR regulation. Figure 1 provides an overview of the methodology described in this chapter.

Figure 1: Methods Diagram



Discourse Analysis

Discourse can be defined as a system of “ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices through which meaning is given to physical and social realities” (Hajer, 1995, p. 44). Discourse analysis (DA) is then an examination of how and why things appear the way they do, and how certain actions become possible (Dunn & Neumann, 1996). Certain socially-produced meanings of ideas, concepts, and categorizations are favored over time and institutionalized, becoming “truths” that define common sense and what constitutes legitimate knowledge (Dunn & Neumann, 1996; Dryzek, 1998). One power of discourse lies in its ability to push certain meanings and courses of action over others. Institutions, or formal and informal regular patterns of behavior, help produce these different meanings and their preferred courses of action (Dunn

& Neumann, 1996). These theoretical elements can serve as the basis for analyzing a discursive space.

Discourse analysis is useful in policy and planning as policymaking may be understood as a discursive struggle over defining problems (Fischer & Forester, 1993). Problems may be given different meanings and thus different courses of action are suitable solutions. Moreover, discourses are often reduced to succinct storylines, which condense complex narratives into simplistic statements that can become commonly used in certain contexts (Hajer, 1995), such as public meetings held during the municipal policymaking process wherein members of the public and institutions push forward different meanings and preferred courses of action.

For this thesis, I focus on the following theoretical elements of discourse:

- “positions” as specific meanings attributed to ideas and concepts which speakers use to frame a problem,
- “preferred regulations” as the courses of actions pushed forward by those speakers to solve the described problems, and
- “backing institutions” as the groups that individuals join to help consolidate positions and preferred regulations and push them forward in the policymaking process.

These three elements are categorized into overarching storylines, which present a consolidated framing of problems and solutions. I chose to use storylines as my primary discursive element because, in a discourse, speakers and backing institutions tend to consolidate their positions and preferred regulations around these central narratives.

I focus on how community resilience language is used to frame positions and prescribe preferred regulations within each storyline. Speakers and backing institutions coalesce around certain problem framings and suggested solutions and, in doing so, perceive and present a similar relationship between CR and STRs as others in their storyline. With such a diversity of ways to define, operationalize, and measure CR, there are also many ways

speakers can see a relationship between STR impacts and CR. Using a conceptual framework explained in the following chapter, I present how storylines and the backing institutions and speakers within them use CR Talk to push forward their preferred regulations.

Selecting Texts for Discourse Analysis

The first step in a discourse analysis is determining which texts make up a particular discourse (Dunn & Neumann, 1996). In this case, texts are public comments about the STR debate in New Orleans that speak to the connection between STRs and CR. Statements made on the record during public meetings attempt to influence the regulatory process and carry more authority than passing comments shared by disgruntled neighbors on the street.

Comments can thus be analyzed discursively within the democratic participatory process, as residents are asked to state their explicit stance on a given STR regulation, placing them in a certain position pushing a certain preferred regulation forward to influence policymaking. I received a “Not human subjects” classification from the Tufts IRB for this research (see Appendix I).

City Planning Commission Meeting Format

Texts were selected from an archive of public meetings conducted by the New Orleans City Planning Commission (CPC) from 2010 to the present (*City Planning Commission Live and Archived Content*, n.d.). This archive contains meeting agendas, video recordings, and MP4 files. CPC meetings and their corresponding agendas are organized according to the docket items for the commission’s review. Each docket item has a description, such as a request for a conditional use permit, a subdivision of existing property, or text amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO). Docket items may be brought by citizen applicants or the City Council who request the CPC and their staff conduct studies and make recommendations.

There are three groups of key players present at CPC meetings. First, the City Planning Commission itself is a nine-member board appointed by the mayor and approved by

the City Council (*About City Planning*, n.d.). The CPC hears docket items and makes recommendations to the City Council based on their own discussion and informed by city planning staff reports. The city planning staff is the second group of key players, responsible for reviewing, analyzing, and recommending approval or denial of docket items to the CPC based on Master Plan adherence, the existing CZO, and the staff's own research. The City Council makes motions to the CPC directing studies of certain aspects of STRs, such as their impact on affordable housing or the local economy. The CPC staff then undertakes the study and makes recommendations to the CPC who then make recommendations to the City Council. Thus, the CPC is not a lawmaking body. However, while city councilors may also solicit public input, the primary method of procedural public comment periods is within CPC meetings. Moreover, the city's archive does not contain recordings of City Council meetings, so they could not be included as texts in the discourse analysis. The final group of key players are the public, who are either the applicant bringing an item before the CPC or general members of the public who may be proponents or opponents of a docket item.

Procedure for Selecting Meetings

The following procedure was used to select relevant meetings from the archive for this analysis and is summarized in Figure 2. There were 584 meetings in the city's archive for the study period from March 9, 2010 to January 23, 2024. First, meeting agendas for boards and commissions of the City of New Orleans were searched for keywords related to short-term rentals. Keywords include "rental," "short-term rental," "short term rental," "vacation rental," "VRBO," and "Airbnb." This search was catalogued in a spreadsheet with meeting date, the board or commission holding the meeting, and existence of STR keyword. 59 meeting agendas had STR keywords ("Selected Meeting Agendas"), all of which were CPC meetings since the CPC is responsible for studying and providing recommendations to regulate STRs to the City Council.

I then scanned meeting recordings to see if there was a public comment period for the docket item related to short-term rentals flagged by the agenda search. If the STR-related docket item had public testimony, I recorded the time stamps of the beginning and end of the public comment period. For these meetings with public commentary on the STR-related docket item (“Selected Meetings”), I then scanned all other docket items in the meeting for public commentary and recorded time stamps for their beginning and end. Docket items and their corresponding time stamps for public commentary, if any, were recorded in the sequence of the meeting itself. This order may or may not be aligned with the order conveyed in the meeting’s agenda as the CPC may choose to reorder docket items to support the flow of the meeting. For example, some docket items were reviewed together if they were both related to STRs, with only one public commentary period. Moreover, if the Board anticipated a lot of public comments for a certain item, they often reordered the docket items to move quickly through other matters to not keep single applicants waiting through an extensive public commentary period. The order of docket items was noted to comment on how people may or may not be influenced by the commentary before their own. If comments that use CR Talk seem to clump together in time, speakers may be using CR language just because the speakers around them are too.

Of the 59 Selected Meeting Agendas, 29 had public commentary for the STR docket item. The other 30 meetings did not have STR public comment (14), had a recording issue (nine), was erroneously listed in the meeting archives (one), or the STR item was deferred (six). To analyze both the discourse around STRs and also assess the general prevalence of CR Talk, I further selected two sub-groups of docket items from these Selected Meetings. The first subgroup “Selected Docket Items” is comprised of all STR-related docket items and forms the majority of the text for analysis. The second subgroup “Control Docket Items” are from the same meetings but do not have STR keywords listed on the agenda. I analyzed a

small sample of these to assess how CR Talk appears outside of STR topics. To get this sample, I used two criteria: the docket is not a conditional use permit from a civilian applicant and speakers do not mention STRs in their public commentary. Among the 29 Selected Meetings, there are 34 Selected Docket Items as four meetings had more than one docket item related to STRs and 22 Control Docket Items.

Transcription of Selected Meetings by Docket Item

These Selected Meetings and the docket items therein were then transcribed. I employed the help of Tufts-supported transcription resources aided by Digital Humanities and Natural Language Processing Specialist Peter Nadel. I provided Peter with a spreadsheet of all Selected Meetings and their docket items, with the STR-related docket item highlighted, along with time stamps for the beginning and end of public commentary periods. I gave all the docket items a unique name with the scheme “Meeting Number - Docket Item Number” and supplied the corresponding meeting link from the city’s meeting archive. See Appendix II Figure 8 for an excerpt from this spreadsheet.

Peter used the OpenAI tool Whisper to transcribe the selected comments. Whisper is a free and open-source automatic speech recognition (ASR) and speech translation model lauded for its accuracy and robustness, showing improvement over many existing ASR systems (*Openai/Whisper-Large-V3*, n.d.; Radford et al., 2023). Peter ran Whisper locally, so input audio and output transcription files were not sent to an outside server or used for further machine learning. I created a shared Box folder for Peter to upload the individual text files for each docket item according to the naming schema described above (“Meeting Number - Docket Item Number”).

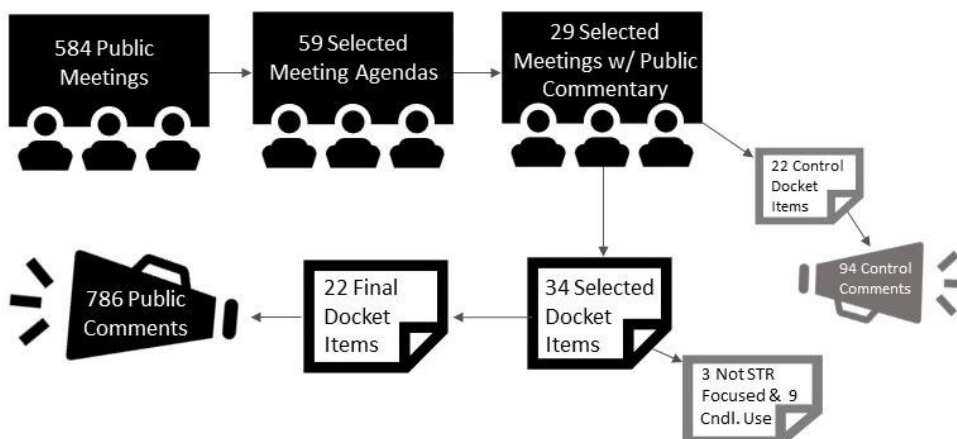
Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Process

I consolidated text transcription files for Selected Docket Items into one master document of all excerpts pertaining to STRs in the Selected Meetings. I then listened to all meetings again and corrected the transcripts manually to match audio recordings. See

Appendix II for the QA/QC process steps and examples of transcript corrections (Figures 9 & 10). While listening to meetings to verify transcriptions, I “tagged” each speaker with at least two preliminary tags: pro-STR or anti-STR and CR Talk or no CR Talk. I also assigned each speaker’s commentary a unique name according to the meeting, docket item, and order of speakers that matches the naming schema above. For example, the third speaker of Meeting 9 giving a comment for docket number 7 would be named “Commenter 9-7-3.” This naming system is used throughout this thesis to quote or cite speakers.

Eleven Selected Docket Items contain public comment periods for STR studies conducted by CPC staff between 2012 and 2023. An additional 11 are City Council motions for text amendments to the CZO to define language related to STRs to enable regulation. The remaining 12 Selected Docket Items were not included. STRs are not the primary topic of three of these docket items, so only a few speakers, if any, refer to STRs in their comments. The other 9 Selected Docket Items are conditional use permits from civilians to run STRs. These items do not have public comments other than the applicant and their representation and speak directly about the particulars of the application, usually parking and design requirements. These docket items do not contribute sufficiently to the discourse and were removed. This left 22 Final Docket Items with 786 public comments therein as the final body of text for discourse analysis. Figure 2 summarizes the process I used to determine the texts for discourse analysis.

Figure 2: Determining Texts for Discourse Analysis



Deductive Coding & Data Collection

With a complete selected body of discourse transcribed, I returned to each comment's edited transcript for a more comprehensive round of coding. This was composed of a three-part process including: take general meeting notes (Figure 3); conduct in-text deductive coding for pro-STR arguments, anti-STR arguments, CR language, mention of Hurricane Katrina and other disasters, speaker affiliation with backing institutions, and regulations (Figure 4); and collect data in a comprehensive spreadsheet (Appendix III Figure 12) organized by meeting, docket item, and commenter.

Figure 3: General meeting notes with deductive coding scheme

PRO ANTI KATRINA CR YES CR NO HOUSING AFFILIATION GENERAL REGS					
STR Study Meetings					
MTG	PRO	ANTI	CR	KATRINA	GENERAL
12-8	Wages as problem not STRs Hurricane refugees in STRs Grandfathering in "A few bad apples"/"bad actors" ruining it for everyone Race: tourist dollars into new areas of the city Elderly using to stay in home Neigh neighborhood should be privileged or exempt	"Culture bearers" Race: being asked where to buy drugs Healthcare worker for Medicaid...most people in favor of exemptions say "what will I do with my five homes"...the need to uplift the voices that are not here Commercial corridor where we would incentivize have best access to transit Call for people to disclose the money to be made and how many properties they own People with disabilities need more than lip service	Empty on weekends Loss of long-term residents AND long term residents using STRs to stay themselves "Where are my neighbors when my husband and I are cleaning out the storm drains before hurricane season"	"Where are my neighbors when my husband and I are cleaning out the storm drains before hurricane season" Price of everything increased post-Katrina No one at STR during freeze	CPC recommendati on of allowing 25% of buildings as absentee speculator-own ed STRs CSTR vs RSTRs General topic: homestead exemption, FQ and GD bans

This data collection spreadsheet contains columns for speaker address, backing institution, and regulations suggested. I used binary scales to collect information about STR opinion, use of CR Talk, mention of Katrina/previous storms, and repeat speakers. 0 indicates anti-STR positions, 1 indicates pro-STR positions, and 0.5 indicates the speaker is somewhere in the middle. For CR Talk, 0 indicates no CR Talk present and 1 indicates the speaker uses some form of CR Talk. If present, I copied quotes of the speaker's CR language and categorized it according to the conceptual framework described in the following chapter, in the format **CR Theme** (*CR proxies*). For Katrina, other storms, and repeat speakers, 0

indicates no mention/not a repeat speaker and 1 indicates they did mention Katrina or some other storm and spoke during another Final Docket Item.

Throughout this process, I devised different storylines as I recognized common narratives, regulations, and CR-related positions. I added a “Storyline” column to the spreadsheet and returned to previously coded comments as necessary to assign a storyline. Comments that do not fit within the dominant storylines found within this discourse were marked “Other.” See Appendix III Figure 13 for examples of STR position and CR quotes, along with the CR Themes and storylines given to the speaker.

Figure 4: Example of in-text deductive coding according to color codes above

Commenter 12-8-19

Tags: pro-STR, CR

Conrad Shelby. 3308 Upper Line Street in Broadmoor. Thank you. I rent my home in Broadmoor, and I own one piece of property, which I've been renting off and on as a short-term rental since 2000. And primarily I use it as kind of an executive furnished home for people being transferred. I've rented to people who have been displaced by fire in the Garden District, people doing renovations, hurricane refugees, all kinds of different situations, a lot of film industry people, people who need a whole house, not a hotel room. Anyway, the only way to really sustain that is to also do short-term rental in the meantime, you know, less than the 30-day requirement. Anyway, I pretty much second what Eric and Mary stated. And, you know, I think we're all a little frustrated. We've just been working on this for so long and following the rules. And, you know, I've got my license, and I just want to keep it. You know, I just think that at the very minimum we should be grandfathered in with the people who have followed the rules and played along. You know, we want regulations. We want to be taxed. We know this is not a black-and-white issue. We want to just be part of the discussion, and I feel like we've earned that. And we deserve that. Anyway, thanks.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Approach

Researchers have found that one’s positive feelings towards their community go together with their actual community connectedness (Walker et al., 2022). Although this sounds quite intuitive, it gives power to what people say, legitimizing their perception of reality and their chosen language to convey that perception. Thus, a study on how New Orleanians participating in CPC meetings perceive an impact to CR is likely quite reflective of the actual impacts of STRs on CR experienced by those commenters. Moreover, public comments are a specifically valuable source of data to understand how policymakers interact

with citizens and use public opinion in their regulatory process (Eidelman et al., n.d.). However, participation is controlled by power dynamics and all meanings are filtered through discourse (Dunn & Neumann, 1996; Farkas, 2013). The controlled and filtered language used during a public meeting is thus restricted to what is “sayable” during such proceedings. A professional and procedural decorum is at play, limiting what is seen as appropriate. This is a limitation of applying discourse analysis to public commentary offered during municipal policymaking proceedings, as power-holding institutions and people may influence what positions and regulations appear to be dominant in the discursive space.

While fitting for this thesis, there are inherent limitations to this methodology. While the public comment process is the primary means for citizens to engage in and influence policymaking, some citizens may be unable to attend public meetings for a variety of reasons, such as lack of time, mobility constraints, or language barriers. Consequently, this thesis does not attempt to generalize to all New Orleanians but instead seeks to illuminate how citizens who do participate in the public comment process convey their perceived relationship between STRs and CR to influence policymaking.

Moreover, DA is quite subjective and heavily dependent on the individual researcher. Rather than uncovering one underlying “truth,” DA is an attempt to understand how certain meanings are pushed forward by certain actors, limiting the potential options for action. To combat these shortcomings and the inherent bias of DA, Dunn and Neumann recommend extensive reflexivity from the researcher, paying special attention to the research choices made and striving for transparency in conveying these choices and the results drawn from them to the audience (Dunn & Neumann, 1996, pp. 129-130). To remain reflexive during my data collection, analysis, and interpretation of findings, I used a research journal to document the research choices made during each work session, using the following prompt derived

from Markham (2017): what led me to that decision and how does this decision contribute to or limit my potential conclusions?

This analysis does not seek to establish a causal relationship between STRs and CR impacts. Countless indicators, metrics, and frameworks may be used to measure CR, and the impact of STRs, if any, is likely one small part of a much larger puzzle. Moreover, although resilience is increasingly the focus of efforts to increase disaster preparedness at a community scale, it is not a silver bullet to equitable and sustainable recovery following extreme events. Many scholars critique resilience thinking for its theoretical foundation in ecology and consequent shortcomings when applied to social systems (Meerow & Newell, 2019). Despite these limitations, this topic and methodology can still shed light on a stressor to community resilience that ought to be considered in the policymaking and planning processes of cities and towns preparing for extreme events and climate change.

Chapter 4: Conceptual Framework

Due to the lack of an established relationship between CR and STRs in the literature, it was necessary to develop an analytical lens through which to view the public comments. This framework analyzes the many proxies used across literature to describe and quantify community resilience thematically. Rather than looking for dozens of indicators, variables, and concepts individually, categorizing similar CR proxies into themes created a more cohesive understanding of how CR and STRs are connected in existing literature and how this relationship may manifest in public commentary. For example, one speaker may discuss how the relationships with their neighbors have changed and the next may describe how neighborhood-serving businesses have closed. Both experiences are examples of CR Talk but convey quite different impacts, the former about intangible community connections and the latter about physical changes to the neighborhood. The framework grounded my coding of CR Talk in existing research and practice while furthering my ability to see the dynamic relationships between CR and STRs spoken about in public comments. CR Themes correspond with community-level impacts of STRs from the literature reviewed as discussed below and summarized in Table 2. *CR proxies* (italicized) are grouped into **CR Themes** (bolded) and collectively make up CR Talk.

- The CR Theme **Community Cohesion** contains proxies for the connections between residents that develop over time and form a neighborhood fabric. This corresponds to the loss of neighbors and the connection, safety net, and neighborhood identity formed between them as described by STR researchers.
- The CR Theme **Sociodemographic/Community Attributes** contains CR proxies about a community and its people, including physical resources like *community services* and *commercial businesses* as well as how people act towards each other, like if they *fight exclusion and marginalization* and *support families and kids*. The ability to improve upon one's situation (*upward mobility*) and stay in the community (*population stability*) are also included. This theme corresponds to changes to the community, including the people

living and staying there, the types of services and businesses available, and who benefits from or is excluded or challenged by these characteristics.

- The CR Theme **Disaster Experience/Preparedness** captures more conventional proxies related to a community's and its residents' ability to respond to a shock, including *prior experience with disasters and recovery* and the *perception that neighbors would help in an emergency*. This theme is grounded in the collective knowledge that long-term residents carry with them about their community that is uprooted by the loss of residents from STR proliferation.
- The CR Theme **Positive Feelings Toward Neighborhood** contains proxies that are inherently more subjective and based on one's personal needs, experiences, and feelings towards their community, such as *sense of belonging*, *feelings that changes to the neighborhood are positive*, and *attachment to place*. This corresponds to the overall negative impacts of STRs that make life more difficult for residents.
- The CR Theme **Shared Values** describes the relative agreement and cohesion among members of a community about their identity, goals, and values. This aligns with STR impacts related to the issues between residents and tourists who use STRs and the loss of a strong neighborhood identity.

It is important to note that the relationship between CR proxy *population stability* and the loss of long-term residents due to STRs is at the core of many other matches between CR proxies and STR impacts as the effects of displacement ripple through a community.

Moreover, the distinctions between CR themes and STR impacts are not concrete and may overlap and interact. This framework was used as a starting point to establish the relationship between CR proxies and STR impacts from the literature that is not explicitly called out and to approach the complexities of public commentary and discourse analysis with a more thoughtful approach.

Table 2: Conceptual Framework to Understand the Relationship between STRs & CR

CR Theme	STR Impacts
<p>Community Cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walker et al., 2022: <i>Interpersonal/intergroup connections, informal or formal networks, depth of social bonds</i> ● Cutter, 2016 and Cutter et al., 2014: <i>Community connectivity, social capital, capacity building</i> ● Ludin et al., 2019: <i>Social cohesion, community trust</i> ● Buckner, 1988: <i>Neighborhood cohesion, relationship with neighbors, sense of community</i> ● Aldrich & Meyer, 2015: <i>Social infrastructure</i> ● Kulig et al., 2013: <i>Strong community leadership</i> 	<p>Loss of Neighbors & Neighborhood Networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gold, 2019: Fewer familiar eyes, reduction of people who are invested in the neighborhood, erosion of neighborhood social capital ● Fussell, 2021: Loss of community safety net ● Angel & Doganer, 2020: Loss of neighborhood identity and autonomy, loss of long-term residents
<p>Sociodemographic/Community Attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ludin et al., 2019: <i>Fight exclusion & marginalization, upward mobility</i> ● Cutter et al., 2014 and Cutter, 2016: <i>Community services, have resources to care for problems, racial/ethnic income equality, population stability, non-dependence on tourism sector employment, health access, commercial establishments and businesses, support families and kids, people help each other, wealthy retirees</i> 	<p>Community Change and Mismatch of STR Burden & Benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gold, 2019: Racial discrimination by hosts and renters leading to unequal economic benefits ● Associated Press, 2023: Playground for wealthy, white investors ● Angel & Doganer, 2020: Loss of long-term residents
<p>Disaster Experience/Preparedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cutter et al., 2014 and Cutter, 2016: <i>Prior experience with disasters & recovery, citizen disaster preparedness and response skills, flood insurance coverage, learn from the past</i> (Cutter et al., 2014; Cutter, 2016) ● Buckner, 1988: <i>Perception that neighbors would help in an emergency</i> 	<p>Outmigration & Loss of Collective Knowledge/Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Angel & Doganer, 2020: Loss of long-term residents ● Fussell, 2021: Loss of community safety net ● Gold, 2019: Fewer familiar eyes
<p>Positive Feelings Toward Neighborhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kulig et al., 2013: <i>Positive neighborhood change, sense of pride in the community</i> ● Buckner, 1988: <i>attraction to neighborhood, desire to stay in the neighborhood, sense of belonging</i> ● Cutter et al., 2014 and Cutter, 2016: <i>attachment to place, sense of belonging, hope for the future</i> ● Ludin et al., 2019: <i>Sense of belonging</i> 	<p>Negative Feelings Toward Neighborhood Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Angel & Doganer, 2020: Everyday life difficult for residents due to neighborhood changes, theme park on weekends, ghost town during the week ● Gold, 2019: Reduction of people who are invested in the neighborhood
<p>Shared Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kulig et al., 2013: <i>Shared values & ideas, ability of community members to positively deal with a problem</i> ● Buckner, 1988: <i>Shared identity</i> ● Cutter, 2016: <i>People work together for solutions, community has priorities & goals</i> 	<p>Conflict between Long-term Residents & STR Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Angel & Doganer, 2020: Loss of neighborhood identity and autonomy ● Jane Street Neighborhood Initiative, 2018: <i>Conflicting needs between tourists and long-term residents</i>

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter describes the relationships between CR and STRs presented in the final body of texts as conveyed by backing institutions, preferred regulations, and positions within the storylines. It concludes with the results of the control group.

Discourse Analysis

Organization of Findings

For each storyline, I present three theoretical elements of discourse, including positions, preferred regulations, and the backing institutions that push them forward. I discuss positions through the lens of CR Talk using the conceptual framework in Chapter 4, noting which CR Themes and proxies are characteristic of each storyline. I discuss backing institutions that play a major role in pushing forward certain positions and preferred regulations when presenting those elements. Some commenters negate the positions and preferred regulations presented within a storyline, even questioning the motives and funding of specific backing institutions. I briefly outline these counterarguments for each storyline. Throughout the DA, I collected quotes from speakers that were succinct and representative of the distinguishing theoretical elements of storylines. I use these quotes throughout this section to illustrate the position, CR Theme, counterargument, or other finding being discussed. Quotes are cited by Meeting-Docket-Commenter.

The positions and preferred regulations pushed forward by backing institutions were heavily used to distinguish between storylines, and thus each backing institution falls within one storyline. However, individual speakers may use multiple storylines within their comments. For example, the argument that one STR owner is a unique landlord in that they keep rent for their long-term unit affordable by renting short-term uses two storylines, recognizing the need for affordable rental prices while distancing their actions from the negative impacts associated with STRs from other landlords (12-8-37).

12-8-37: *I'm a unique landlord. I stay true and committed to low-income housing, but however, on last year, I was threatened with losing my house. In despair, short-term rental came to my idea. I am still committed to low-income housing because I have a tenant that I am truly committed to, and the short-term rental has also afforded me the opportunity to, as long as my low-income renter is there, afford her the rent of \$600 as long as she would like to reside there.*

Based on this analysis, five major storylines emerged. To address the research question, I focus on the specific roles that CR plays in STR arguments and the three storylines that heavily use CR language to form their positions and preferred regulations, including Homes for People Not Profit, We Want Neighbors, and STRs for Community Good. Two other storylines, Not Part of the Problem and Neighborhood Change, are very popular in the discursive space but their speakers use CR language in less concrete ways based on feelings and whether speakers consider changes to their neighborhood due to STRs to be positive or negative. These two storylines demonstrate how CR Talk can be prevalent, but not instrumental, in arguments. Given the focus on understanding the perceived role of CR with respect to STR regulation, I review the instrumental uses in discourse first, with less emphasis on the storylines with more surface uses of CR. The use of storylines is not intended to disregard differences between speakers and backing institutions or the complexity of the STR debate in New Orleans. Instead, it enables the organization of the many players, opinions, and comments into a more cohesive form to understand and succinctly answer the research question.

Overview of Major Backing Institutions

Backing institutions are made up by the different stakeholders who play an active role in the STR debate in New Orleans. Groups fall into five categories but not all groups within each category align with the same storyline. While there are more backing institutions present in the STR debate in New Orleans, only key players are discussed as they have more members speaking on their behalf and hold more influence in the discourse. For further descriptions about backing institutions, see the Glossary.

Affordable housing and advocacy groups all fit into the Homes for People Not Profit storyline as they advocate for populations in need of affordable rentals. The biggest players in this space are the Jane Plane Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative (JPNSI) and the Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center (LaFHAC) as both have representatives at every meeting analyzed. They also conduct research and create reports that many anti-STR speakers use to back up their arguments. Other institutions include Housing NOLA, whose speakers also advocate for affordable housing but are not present at every meeting; the Advocacy Center of Louisiana that specifically works for the disabled and elderly populations who are often in need of affordable housing; and Unity of Greater New Orleans that advocates for the homeless.

Preservation and culture-focused nonprofits are the most diverse group of backing institutions in terms of the storylines they fit into. The Louisiana Landmark Society is primarily concerned with how STRs impact neighborhoods and the community culture of New Orleans, falling into the We Want Neighbors storyline. The Music & Culture Coalition of New Orleans fits into the Homes for People Not Profit storyline, focusing on how STRs inhibit affordable housing for New Orleanians who contribute to the cultural and creative economies. Finally, the Preservation Resource Center is primarily focused on preserving and restoring the historic residential character of New Orleans, and in doing so fits best into the Neighborhood Change storyline.

The hospitality/tourism industry is well-represented in the STR debate, with backing institutions including hotel associations (Greater New Orleans Hotel & Lodging Association and the Hospitality Coalition), tourism associations (New Orleans & Company), bed and breakfast associations (Professional Innkeepers Association of New Orleans), and hospitality worker unions (Unite Here Local Chapter 23). These groups are all in the Homes for People

Not Profit storyline and unite in opposing STRs due to their negative impact on the traditional hospitality industry in New Orleans and its workers.

STR-specific interest groups have developed in response to the industry and its regulation and debate. The only STR interest group against STRs is the Short-Term Rental Committee which was created to discipline and limit the amount of STRs in the city and falls into the Neighborhood Change storyline. The most well-represented and perhaps the most powerful backing institution in support of STRs is the interest group the Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity (ANP). The ANP has dozens of speakers representing it and states that the group supports the legalization, regulation, and taxation of the STR industry, falling into the Not Part of the Problem storyline. Also in support of STRs is the group Short-Term Resources NOLA, an STR interest group formed to help STR owners to be responsible, local, and small operating that pushes forward the positions and regulations characteristic of the STRs for Community Good storyline.

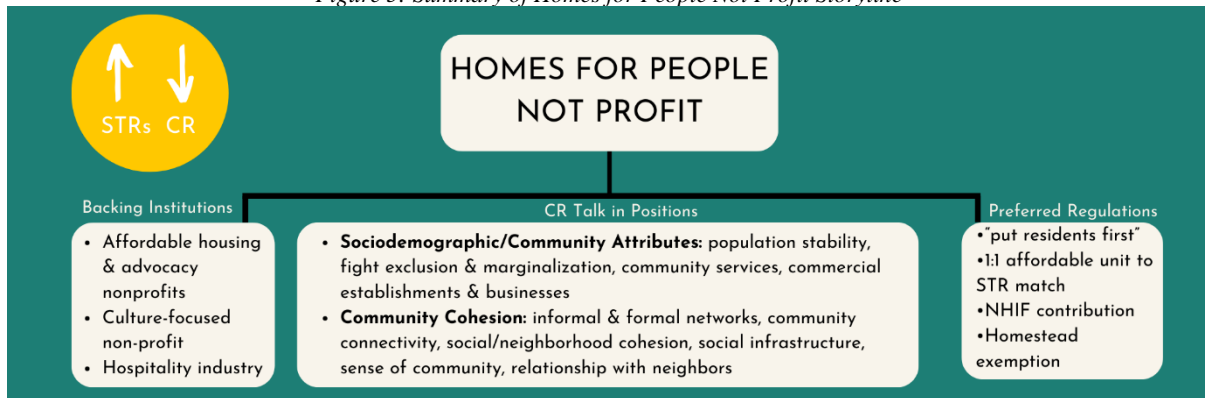
Last, neighborhood groups represent the interests of specific areas and communities in the city. Such groups representing the neighborhoods in the city's more traditional tourism zones, including the French Quarter and the Garden District, are very well represented and staunchly against STRs, falling into the Neighborhood Change storyline. This includes the Garden District Association, French Quarter Citizens, and Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents, & Associates (VCPOA). In other areas of the city that have become more popular tourist areas recently but still maintain an "off-the-beaten-path" feel, neighborhood groups tend to coalesce around the We Want Neighbors storyline, including the Faubourg Marigny Neighborhood Improvement Association, Neighbors First for Bywater, and the Algiers Point Association.

Homes for People Not Profit Storyline

The Homes for People Not Profit storyline centers the relationship between STRs and

the city’s affordable housing stock, focusing on the exclusionary impacts of STRs on vulnerable populations and how such exclusion affects communities, both neighborhoods and New Orleans as a whole. A summary of the backing institutions, CR-related positions and their corresponding Theme and proxies, and suggested regulations discussed in this storyline are included in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Summary of Homes for People Not Profit Storyline



Speakers say the proliferation of STRs impacts rental housing in two ways. First, STRs reduce the quantity of affordable rental housing by incentivizing conversion of cheaper units to STRs. Second, STRs drive up housing prices overall by introducing commercial speculation into the residential housing market as “property value starts to reflect the inflated value of what can be made through investing in it as a STR” (18-6-7). Speakers and backing institutions in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline are clear that they understand that STRs are not solely responsible for the affordable housing crisis in New Orleans. However, they underscore that the STR industry plays a large role in perpetuating and exacerbating the existing crisis.

A perhaps unlikely alliance arises between the backing institutions in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline—affordable housing and other advocacy nonprofits and the hospitality/tourism industry—along with one culture-focused nonprofit. These institutions come together to oppose proliferation of STRs due to their impacts on housing options for the vulnerable populations they advocate for and the trickle-down effects of the displacement of

such groups which are crucial to their own communities and the larger community culture of New Orleans. Backing institutions in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline are:

- affordable housing and advocacy nonprofits Jane Place Neighborhood Sustainability Initiative (JPNSI), Housing NOLA, the Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center (LaFHAC), Unity of Greater New Orleans, & the Advocacy Center of Louisiana;
- preservation and culture-focused nonprofit the Music and Culture Coalition of New Orleans; and
- hospitality/tourism industry groups Unite Here Local Chapter 23, the Professional Innkeepers Association of New Orleans (PIANO), the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association (GNOHLA), and the Hospitality Coalition.

Use of CR in Positions

The Homes for People Not Profit storyline pushes forward positions which frame the problem of STRs in New Orleans as exacerbating the affordable housing crisis by driving evictions and displacement, discriminating against vulnerable populations, inhibiting access to resources, and uprooting the communities and culture those populations support.

Vulnerable populations advocated for within this storyline are working-class and middle-class individuals and families, residents of historically black neighborhoods, workers in the cultural economy, hospitality industry workers, people with disabilities, and the elderly (16-8-44). Backing institutions and speakers argue that the benefits of the STR industry, which they say are primarily financial, occur at the expense of these vulnerable populations. These positions correlate most fundamentally to the CR Theme **Sociodemographic/Community Attributes** and secondarily to **Community Cohesion**.

16-8-44: *And it's very disingenuous, I feel, to tout how much this industry has benefited New Orleans without recognizing how it's impacted its labor force, renters, people who work, the working poor, the working middle class. If you don't acknowledge that, then really, what are you offering the city except more profit at the expense of workers?*

Sociodemographic/Community Attributes

CR proxies *population stability, fight exclusion and marginalization, upward mobility, community services, and commercial establishments and businesses go hand in hand*

in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline, as speakers cite how rising rents and conversion of LTRs to STRs leads to displacement of working-class, middle-class, and often non-White populations. JPNSI describes how “teachers, bus drivers, servers, healthcare workers, musicians, and all the other folks who make this city run” are pushed to city outskirts where there is a lack of services and opportunities (17-11-3). The Hospitality Coalition describes how hundreds of workers have lost their homes, particularly those close to the core of New Orleans where jobs are located (21-1-84). This position underscores the importance of living near transit corridors to reach jobs, commercial establishments, schools, and day to day community services.

Another form of exclusion and marginalization described by the Homes for People Not Profit storyline is racial discrimination and racially bifurcated outcomes in the use and regulation of STRs to New Orleans. The LaFHAC outlines the racial dynamics present in the STR industry, its regulations, and its impacts, saying STRs are “supercharging the affordable housing crisis and are part of what is driving up prices, pushing people of color out of our city, and intensifying segregation” (16-8-7). They cite evidence of racial discrimination by STR platform users renting in New Orleans who leave racially coded language in rental reviews to disparage listings in historically Black neighborhoods, ensuring more traditional tourism stops like Bourbon Street are just an Uber ride away (13-9-12). This direct racial discrimination by platform users alludes to the more indirect racially segregated outcomes of STR regulations, such as the practice of encouraging STRs in certain “economic development zones” while limiting their use in other areas. Speakers from Unity of Greater New Orleans say that without careful consideration, these zones are likely to mimic existing racial lines in the city and fuel speculation and eviction rather than investment in historically Black neighborhoods while protecting other neighborhoods from negative impacts (11-6-9). LaFHAC says historically disinvested neighborhoods, which are often also non-White due to

a national legacy of redlining and white flight and the city's inequitable recovery after Katrina, deserve actual government investment and not just market-based solutions.

The Homes for People Not Profit storyline also pushes forward the position that STRs exclude people with disabilities and the elderly by not complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and inflating rents beyond what New Orleanians on fixed incomes can pay. This first argument aligns with the hospitality industry's argument that STRs operate on an unequal playing field, stating that the lack of accessibility in STRs for the disabled and elderly creates an unfair burden for other lodging options that must comply with ADA regulations, creating a cheaper option for tourists at the expense of the disabled (21-1-106). Additionally, speakers from the Advocacy Center join housing nonprofits in raising the concern about affordable housing, which they say is heavily felt by seniors and those with disabilities. Due to the lack of affordability, they state these populations are finding it "increasingly difficult to call New Orleans home" (18-6-13).

Speakers who have experienced eviction due to conversion of their rental unit to a STR who are now homeless are a prime example of the position that STRs exacerbate the affordable housing crisis, leading to *population instability* and *exclusion and marginalization* of certain people in a community. One speaker alludes to the dehumanization of low-income renters and the homeless present in the STR debate, saying those in favor of STRs "come up here and say that the city should accommodate their right to profiteer off of the housing stock and to talk about homeless people as something to be cleaned up" (18-6-60).

Community Cohesion

Speakers in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline also share accounts of how STRs impact the **Community Cohesion** CR Theme as people are removed from the homes and neighborhoods where they and people like them have historically lived, such as culture bearers and hospitality workers living near the French Quarter or Black families living in the Tremé neighborhood. This not only uproots individuals but also neighborhood fabrics and

cultures. This impact is related to widespread displacement which threatens *population stability* but shows an understanding that STRs cause a loss beyond housing, affecting the people and the connections between the neighbors living in those homes and CR proxies *community connectivity, relationships with neighbors, informal networks, social infrastructure, and social/neighborhood cohesion.*

Backing institutions play a large role in connecting this impact on communities to the very culture of New Orleans that makes it a desirable tourism destination. First, displacing service industry workers threatens the city's ability to continue to serve tourists. Unite Here describes how hospitality workers are the "engine that make [the] tourist economy work" but are being pushed out of homes by STR conversions and artificially inflated rental prices (17-11-6). Second, STRs displace culture bearers and families from their historic neighborhoods which threatens the community-centric culture that attracts the very tourists STRs aim to house. The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau says that STRs change locally owned homes into investment properties, replacing the authentic experience of visiting New Orleans neighborhoods with an artificial one which will ultimately not draw the same amount of tourists. GNOHLA uses CR Talk to describe the effect of STRs on residential neighborhoods, saying they have "torn a hole in the fabric of our neighborhoods" (11-6-11). They critique previous STR regulations, saying "we've learned the hard way how an ineffective STR regulatory framework can disrupt and damage our community" (11-6-11). They join other backing institutions in underscoring that neighborhoods and the culture they produce are what visitors come to see, and that STRs threaten those neighborhoods and thus the sustainability of the tourism industry. The Music and Culture Coalition of New Orleans describes how STRs are a cannibalistic practice, "devouring the very thing that it is selling" by "shredding of neighborhood fabrics which have been incubators of New Orleans culture for decades" (18-6-57). They posit that proliferation of STRs is causing an amount of

displacement that threatens the “critical mass of people” needed for “culture to happen and for the culture to be passed on to new generations” (17-11-78). Another speaker asks, “what will be left of the culture if the people who are born and raised in the city can no longer afford to live here?” (16-8-54).

One unique use of CR Talk only used by one speaker in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline is the position that other forms of transient lodging, namely small bed and breakfasts, contribute to CR by investing in the city and helping it weather disasters, which displays the CR Theme of **Disaster Experience/Preparedness**. A speaker from the backing institution PIANO states that their membership has been helping the city for many years, providing jobs and “helping to weather events like 9-11, the oil spill, and Katrina” (26-1-20). This points to an understanding that commercial establishments that are invested in the local community are important to a city when there is a challenging event. However, hospitality workers are quick to say that while they have helped the city weather such events, they are not immune to the threats of STRs which have impacted their businesses more so than such disasters, indicating a negative impact on CR due to STRs (26-1-4).

Preferred Regulations

Given their problem framing, this storyline pushes forward preferred regulations that “put residents first” (16-8-7) and provide support for vulnerable populations needing affordable housing, including a one-for-one match of STRs to affordable units, increasing contributions to the city’s Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund (NHIF), and requiring a homestead exemption to hold a STR permit. Speakers and backing institutions in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline also oppose grandfathering existing STR permit holders, saying that this practice chooses to protect financial interests of speculators over the interests of vulnerable residents. Housing NOLA frames the implementation of these preferred regulations as the duty of the CPC to take extra care to limit the burden of negative impacts of STRs on vulnerable people and neighborhoods in New Orleans (11-6-8).

Counterarguments

Positions pushed forward by the Homes for People Not Profit storyline are subject to many counterarguments as the public questions the duty of private homeowners to supply affordable housing and the hotel industry's interest in affordable housing. Speakers from the Not Part of the Problem and STRs for Community Good storylines refute the notion that STRs play a role in causing an affordable housing crisis. First, some say there is no affordable housing crisis per se, but a larger affordability crisis as all costs are on the rise and wages have stagnated, necessitating the use of STRs to make ends meet. Like other pro-STR positions, this applies an individualistic solution for the systemic issues presented by STRs, framing STRs as making one's own housing affordable—using earnings to pay for mortgage, insurance, and home repairs—rather than framing STR use within the larger housing market. Other commenters offering counterarguments to the Homes for People Not Profit storyline, mostly in the STRs for Community Good storyline, say there is an affordable housing crisis but that it is not the responsibility of or even in the power of the private sector to address housing unaffordability or ensure housing security. Instead, it is the job of the public sector to ensure housing for all, noting that many STRs would not be affordable rentals if converted back to long-term housing and saying that idea is a “sad hoax that the big operators, the hotel industries, are perpetuating” (15-1-29).

This leads to the second major counterargument to the Homes for People Not Profit storyline as speakers question the motives of the hotel industry in their opposition to STRs. Speakers from the Not Part of the Problem storyline say STRs are a way for residents to capture tourism revenue, “keep[ing] a tiny amount of money generated by lodging tourists in the local economy instead of being sent to corporate headquarters of large hotel chains” (17-11-32). They question why the hotel industry does not help alleviate affordability issues for their own workers by offering better wages and frame the hotel industry's opposition to STRs as a “classic David versus Goliath issue” pitting mom & pops against Fortune 500 hotel

chains (26-1-24).

We Want Neighbors Storyline

The We Want Neighbors storyline focuses on speakers' concern for their own neighborhood, neighbors, and personal experiences with STRs and places impacts to the CR Theme **Community Cohesion** at the forefront. A summary of the backing institutions, CR-related positions and their corresponding Theme and proxies, and suggested regulations discussed in this storyline are included in Figure 6. Speakers talk of losing their own neighbors and the change they have seen in their own blocks. In addition, backing institutions are place-based, mostly including neighborhood groups that present preferred regulations they think will be best for their particular area. There are also more speakers that are not affiliated with any backing institution, presenting their own experiences rather than representing a group. Backing institutions in the We Want Neighbors storyline are:

- neighborhood groups Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association, Neighbors First for Bywater, and the Algiers Point Association and
- preservation and culture nonprofit Louisiana Landmark Society.

Figure 6: Summary of We Want Neighbors Storyline



These characteristics distinguish the We Want Neighbors storyline from the previous Homes for People Not Profit storyline, as speakers serve as their own advocates rather than advocating for vulnerable populations, backing institutions are geographically rather than

issue-driven, and positions related to the CR Theme **Community Cohesion** are foundational for speakers rather than being secondary (17-11-6).

17-11-6: *Two years ago, I lived in an apartment on the 1200 block of Kellrick Street in the seventh ward. At the end of my lease, my landlord asked us to leave and converted my home on Kellrick between Henriette DeLille and Moray into an Airbnb. A few months prior to that, she'd done the same with my neighbors on the other side of our double shotgun. According to the rental registry, there are currently 12 active STRs on the block. In the past few years, the street went from being my favorite place in the city, full of families, artists, and working people, everyone knew each other, to a block full of out-of-towners.*

Use of CR in Positions

Impact to CR is at the forefront of this storyline centering concerns about the loss of neighbors if something were to happen, the loss of neighborhood connectivity and diversity, and the loss of neighborhood-serving commercial establishments. All speakers describe how population instability leads to impacts far beyond the loss of residential feel or any one individual. Speakers talk about their own neighborhoods and the perceived relationship between CR and STRs they have experienced themselves. The following positions are organized by pairing *population stability* (or the lack thereof from population loss) with another CR Theme/proxy.

Population Stability + Losses to Relationships, Sense of Community, & Diversity

For speakers in the We Want Neighbors storyline, a loss of neighbors is intrinsically tied to alteration and loss of *relationships with neighbors*, loss of an overall *sense of community*, and loss of diversity in neighborhoods. There are two types of impacts to relationships between neighbors described by this storyline. The first is quite straightforward, as people describe how they lose the relationship they had with their neighbors as residents are replaced with transient tourists. Second is the perception of a change to the type of relationships people have with their neighbors as interactions are dominated by the topic of STRs or the displacement driven by STR proliferation. One speaker describes how he wishes his relationships with his neighbors could go back to what they used to be rather than helping them move out of the city to surrounding areas when they are displaced by STRs, saying “I’m

tired of my interactions with my neighbors being me helping them to pack up and move to Chalmette or New Orleans East instead of, you know, hanging out and eating crawfish like I'd like to, and like I used to" (12-8-10). This perceived relationship between STRs and CR proxy *relationship with neighbors* shows a change in both the quality and quantity of relationships between neighbors. While the literature does not make a distinction between the number versus the type of relationships between neighbors, other CR proxies *depth of social ties* and *informal networks* speak to the quality and quantity of community relationships.

Examples of changes to *Relationships with Neighbors, Depth of Social Ties, and Informal Networks*

15-1-30: *I've seen my street just go under in the last five years. We've had many neighbors, if you needed a half a green pepper you could call somebody and get it. that's gone.*

17-11-5: *I used to live in a neighborhood where I knew my neighbors, where I had service people who worked in the French Quarter. But now it's changed, and I pretty much lost my neighbors. And now I live in an Airbnb neighborhood.*

17-11-60: *She forced the renters out and moved out herself and turned the entire property into an Airbnb. These renters, our neighbors, were a couple who had lived on their side of the double for 30 years. Their names were Tony and Wolf. And they had a little dog who would roll over so you could pat her tummy when you stopped by to talk. Tony knew everybody in the neighborhood. And she would always happily watch your child for a few minutes while you ran to the market. And Wolf would tell you, you just missed Mr. Okra, but you could probably find him over on Burgundy.*

Extending beyond individual relationships with neighbors is a larger scale impact on the *sense of community* in a place as STRs cause a loss of the “concentration of residents that...created the vibrancy of this district and contributed to a sense of place” (7-2-5). While residents feel this impact on their own lives, they are quick to underscore that this will not only impact their own neighborhoods. Instead, speakers use an allusion to the Golden Goose fairytale, saying that if New Orleans is the goose, then its neighborhoods are the golden eggs that foster the *sense of community* which is synonymous with the culture of New Orleans that is attractive to both residents and tourists alike.

Examples referencing New Orleans as the Golden Goose

12-8-6: *We moved to the French Quarter, we had real neighbors, wonderful neighbors who were in the service industry, who support our cash cow, our golden goose, the tourist business. And guess what happened? When this nightmare called short-term rentals started, my beloved neighbors, the renters, were the first to go.*

17-11-57: *What's a neighborhood without any neighbors? We love New Orleans and the world loves New Orleans. I repeat, that's because of the wonderful people who live in New Orleans. Let's not kill the goose that laid the golden egg.*

Last is a perceived relationship between STRs and a dynamic combination of the CR proxies *population stability, sense of community, fight exclusion & marginalization, and racial/ethnic income equality* in CR Themes **Community Cohesion** and **Sociodemographic/Community Attributes**. Extending from the previous position that the loss of people causes a loss of community feel and culture is the position that STRs are causing a loss of specific residents who make neighborhoods diverse places to live in racially, economically, and demographically. Service industry and cultural economy workers who are traditionally renters are being pushed out of neighborhoods due to rising rents and lack of housing stock, and STR proliferation has exploded in historically Black neighborhoods in New Orleans, displacing non-White residents unequally (18-6-1).

18-6-1: *I just want to describe a little bit about what's happened to our neighborhood the past couple of years. It used to be that it was a very diverse neighborhood, a lot of elderly people, a lot of racial, a huge number of different, it was very mixed. Old people, poor people, young people, disabled people, people were sitting out on their stoops in the evening. People would say hello and people would say good evening. Now what's happened, now here's what my neighborhood is like. It's pretty empty, the blocks. Half the houses on my exact block are not occupied except for on the weekends by, looks to me to be a bunch of bridesmaids frequently. And the street is kind of deserted.*

While I parse between these relationships between STR impacts and CR proxies, speakers thread through many of these relationships in one comment. For example, the speaker below weaves together the perceived relationship between STRs and loss of neighbors, sense of community and culture, and diversity as described above (17-11-57).

17-11-57: *People come from all over the world to visit this city and why is that? It's because of the people who live here. The amazing cross section of folks who make this city unique. I'm afraid we have now seen the unintended consequences of the proliferation of short-term rentals run amok. My own block has been emptied out. Where I used to have neighbors, and by that, I mean live people who live on my block, I now have short-term rentals. I used to have a very diverse block. Young and old, rich and poor, every race and creed. All that has changed in the past couple of years. Now my block is empty all week. And every weekend it fills up with visitors who leave every Monday. We have a census coming up. Those people won't be counted as living in the Marigny. They don't vote in the Marigny either. What's a neighborhood without any neighbors? We love New Orleans and the world loves New Orleans. I repeat, that's because of the wonderful people who live in New Orleans. Let's not kill the goose that laid the golden egg.*

Population Stability + Disaster Experience/Preparedness

Speakers in the We Want Neighbors storyline perceive a relationship between disaster preparedness and the population loss caused by STRs. This can be seen as an extension of the relationship between STRs and population stability beyond the day-to-day to times of crisis or need. Speakers connect population instability to a concern about a lack of neighbors if something happens. While some may be motivated by safety concerns, saying that your neighbors are “who look after your house when you go away, the people who pick up your mail if you’re not there, the people who spread the word if something has happened in the neighborhood” (15-1-27), others specifically bring up extreme weather events, with one speaker saying she could not contact the owner of a whole house rental during a freeze when pipes needed to be covered (12-8-25). Speaking specifically of hurricane preparedness, one speaker makes the point that even responsible short-term rental owners do not engage in activities that a good neighbor would, saying “you’re not there cleaning out the storm basins” (17-11-25). These sentiments show a perceived connection between STRs and the CR proxies of *perception that neighbors would help in an emergency* and *citizen disaster preparedness and response skills*. As the literature states, neighbors often serve as the first safety net in an extreme event. These speakers see a perceived relationship between the loss of neighbors caused by STRs and the ability of that neighborhood to be prepared for and respond during a crisis—whether that be an extreme event like a freeze or hurricane, crime, or STR disturbances

themselves. A neighborhood of transient vacationers would not be there to prepare for the event or provide help during and immediately following it.

The recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina are often brought up by speakers in the We Want Neighbors storyline as something to protect from the negative impacts of STRs on population stability and community connectedness. As one speaker conveys succinctly: “everything we fought for after Katrina to bring back, I don’t want to lose that now. And that’s the people” (18-6-1). Another speaker later in the same meeting echoes this connection between the continued recovery effort from Hurricane Katrina in the city being undercut by STR proliferation, saying STRs are “making it more difficult for families to return and remain in our neighborhoods” (18-6-55). While the perceived relationship between STRs and disaster preparedness described above speaks primarily of pre-disaster preparedness (i.e. what if something happens), mentions of Katrina in this storyline speak to the ability to maintain previous post-disaster recovery efforts in the face of other stressors.

Population Stability + Commercial Establishments & Businesses and Community Services

We Want Neighbors storyline commenters and backing institutions also contest the position that STRs bolster the local economy, offering their own position that STRs cause the conversion of neighborhood-serving commercial establishments to businesses catering to tourists. This position relates to the CR Theme **Sociodemographic/Community Attributes** and proxies *community services* and *commercial establishments and businesses*. Instead of patronizing local businesses, STRs negatively impact businesses that serve residents because the new “people on the block didn’t want to buy what residents want to buy. They wanted to buy T-shirts and daiquiris” (15-1-15). An owner of a local market shares how pressures to accommodate tourist-focused business have impacted his grocery store, saying he “can’t make a living selling cigarettes” instead (26-1-13). Associated with this loss of neighborhood-serving businesses is the loss of neighbors who support the local workforce to provide basic community services needed by residents. The following speaker from the

Neighbors First for Bywater backing institution underscores the position that losses of affordable rental units go far beyond the impact to housing stock itself (18-6-55).

18-6-55: We're talking about all of the economic effects of the loss of people using repairmen, seamstresses, grocers, designers, doctors, lawyers, dentists, carpenters, plumbers. It's not just the loss of a house or a rental. It's the loss of many people's livelihoods.

Preferred Regulations

For speakers in the We Want Neighbors storyline, STRs have already had a negative impact in neighborhoods, communities, and the city. As one speaker explains, “the fabric of our neighborhoods has already been ripped apart by the short-term rental industry. It's already happened. So, the question is whether you, with these recommendations, or what you decide to recommend, will repair the fabric of our neighborhoods” (16-8-43). A representative from the Algiers Point Association says that without regulation conditions will get worse and “our residents, our neighborhoods will be pulled apart” (17-11-73).

The primary preferred regulations are homestead exemptions and anti-clustering/density limitations. In tandem, these regulations work to let New Orleans residents benefit from the STR industry without letting corporations or out-of-town investors buy up multiple houses and convert LTR housing into STRs. The Louisiana Landmark Society describes their support for regulations that “strengthen our neighborhoods and encourage people to live here full-time, contributing to the well-being of our community and our culture” (23-13-76). Hoping to have STR benefits accrue to people who are invested in and care about the city, speakers use the tagline “one host, one home” to show their support of requiring New Orleans residency to qualify for one STR permit per homestead exemption. However, a speaker from the Faubourg Marigny Improvement Association warns that even with the homestead exemption allowing STRs by-right without a density cap per block could still have negative impacts on community connectivity, saying “with the 45 [existing STRs on the block], we don't know our neighbors...we've just run out of the neighborhood” (26-1-17).

To track permits, speakers and backing institutions also recommend platform data sharing, saying this requirement of companies like Airbnb is the only way the city can enforce the regulations it creates. For We Want Neighbors speakers, these regulations “mean more neighbors, fewer empty blocks midweek, and stronger communities” to prevent the “continued erosion of neighborhoods” (18-6-20), hoping to lessen the negative impact on CR from STR proliferation.

Counterarguments

The Not Part of the Problem storyline provides counter arguments to the We Want Neighbors storyline, disagreeing specifically with the opinions pushed forward by neighborhood groups. Members of the Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity (ANP) backing institution say they are part of the neighborhoods whose associations present positions and preferred regulations against STRs that do not necessarily represent everyone within the geographical confines of that neighborhood (26-1-21). Moreover, the Not Part of the Problem storyline position that New Orleanians participating in the STR industry are good for their neighborhoods as they clean up homes and distribute revenue is a counterargument to the We Want Neighbors position that STRs do not help local economies.

26-1-21: While neighborhood associations have a right to speak and make their views known, we do not believe that their views represent the interests of a majority of the members of their neighborhoods—the property owners, the residents, and the businesses in those neighborhoods. They certainly don't represent the members of ANP who are members of those neighborhoods.

In addition, the STRs for Community Good storyline frames STRs as a tool for capacity-building and resource-sharing. This is a different position from We Want Neighbors, who does not attribute the negative effects of STRs to good-intentioned New Orleanians renting responsibly, but still do not see STRs as a resource. Rather, STRs are something to limit and be wary of, rather than something to be embraced and strategically used.

STRs for Community Good Storyline

Speakers in the STRs for Community Good storyline see the STR industry as a huge opportunity for the city and residents to create and invest in community resources. A

summary of the backing institutions, CR-related positions and their corresponding Theme and proxies, and suggested regulations discussed in this storyline are included in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Summary of STRs for Community Good Storyline



Speakers share how STRs, when properly regulated and restricted to New Orleanian owners, are “a way forward through a myriad of physical, economic, and social problems that confront our city today” (17-11-11). This storyline is uncommon in the STR debate in New Orleans, with most pro-STR speakers using positions from the Not Part of the Problem storyline. However, it is included here due to its unique and unexpected connection with CR, STRs, and disaster preparedness. Most of the comments in the STRs for Community Good storyline are from individual commenters, with only the Short-Term Resources NOLA backing institution driving these positions.

Use of CR in Positions

In pushing forward the position that STRs are a community resource, speakers in the STRs for Community Good storyline share how they have used their rental to house hurricane victims and others impacted by disasters like freezes and fires free of charge. This relationship between STRs and community resilience was not found in the literature and was thus unexpected. This shows a positive relationship between STRs and the CR Themes **Disaster Experience/Preparedness** and **Community Cohesion**.

Short-Term Resources NOLA and individual speakers in this storyline describe how STRs themselves can be used to *build capacity* within communities to provide post-disaster recovery support, create *community services*, and forge *formal and informal networks* among residents. Thus, there is a perceived positive relationship between STRs and CR, meaning STRs potentially increase CR when used as described in this storyline. In addition, New Orleanians have used their unbooked STRs to hold community meetings, providing physical infrastructure to support the more intangible community resilience building described, too.

Examples of using STRs as a community resource

12-8-19: *I've rented to people who have been displaced by fire in the Garden District, people doing renovations, hurricane refugees, all kinds of different situations.*

18-6-4: *It also allowed us to have guests from Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma stay with us at no cost to them, and their animals were able to stay with us. That's something a hotel wouldn't be able to accommodate, I don't think.*

26-1-24: *During times when my property is not rented, it has been used for neighborhood meetings, a free place to stay for nonprofits and missionaries when they are here to help out the community. In fact, I'm leading a pilot Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity program, which will allow private home rental owners to donate at least seven days of their time each year to similar nonprofit causes.*

The second CR-related position pushed forward by the STRs for Community Good storyline describes how STR revenue, like taxes, fees, and fines, can be reinvested in the city for *community services*. Speakers call for community-level reinvestment and infrastructural improvements in services like schools, parks, and hospitals. This shows an understanding of the need for such infrastructure in the community and, more interestingly, the opinion that New Orleans is lacking in such services due to poor recovery after Hurricane Katrina.

Examples of using STR revenue for city services

26-1-33: *You guys are about to experience a radical democratization of a huge revenue stream in your city. don't miss it. It's a really good thing. Okay you guys can collect taxes from these folks. These folks want to pay taxes. Who wants to live in a city where they can't pay their firefighters? why not invest that in making parks nicer? Why not invest that in infrastructure? Maybe, like, I don't know. Schooling for that neighborhood, right? There's a lot of ways we can take the tax dollars coming in and invest that into these neighborhoods.*

4-10-53: *This city has all these hospitals and all these schools that have been closed since Katrina. And they're really close to the Bywater, really close to the Marigny. Why aren't we doing something, making hospitality villages or making senior citizen homes there? Why is it just sitting there? Let's reinvest in our communities, not take it away.*

Preferred Regulations

The STRs for Community Good storyline pushes forward regulations they say will benefit New Orleanians rather than outside investors and bolster the potential community-

level benefits of STRs rather than limit them, saying STRs are an “untapped revenue stream for the city” that needs “policy, not suppression” (26-1-27). Short-Term Resources NOLA shares the position that the CPC should put residents first in order to keep the industry and its benefits local. They agree that there are too many STRs and that it is an industry that should be kept at the local level. Thus, they advocate for the requirement of a homestead exemption to obtain an STR permit. However, they want the CPC to allow more than one permit per homesteaded individual, saying that the CPC should not “limit residents from helping themselves and their communities by only allowing them one” (15-1-11).

Speakers from the STRs for Community Good storyline recognize that there is an affordable housing crisis in New Orleans but that STRs are not the crisis’ driver. Rather, the tearing down of affordable housing units after Katrina is “the real issue here. But as tax-paying, caring, and real estate savvy business owners we are happy to do our part to help find a solution and finally remove this burden for the affordable housing crisis that’s been scapegoated across our shoulders” (17-11-9). Thus, they support an increase in the NHIF contribution from STRs to support affordable housing development in the city.

Counterarguments

There are no commenters or backing institutions that speak against the Short-Term Resources NOLA backing institutions, indicating that their position that STRs can be leveraged as a community resource may be viewed favorably across the STR debate in New Orleans. Alternatively, the relatively small number of speakers and backing institutions making up this storyline, and consequently the lack of prominence in the debate, may lead to a lack of attention given to refute this storyline.

Other Storylines

The two following storylines are separated from the previous three because CR is not foundational to their positions and, when CR Talk is used, it is more individualistic, subjective, and aesthetic-based. For the Neighborhood Change storyline, speakers and

backing institutions are driven by a desire to preserve residential character. For the Not Part of the Problem storyline, the individual economic benefit of STRs drives positions and regulations. Perceived impacts to CR are secondary to these aesthetic and individualistic concerns. It is important to note that the Not Part of the Problem storyline also heavily uses the *population stability* CR proxy. However, their use is distinct from use in the other storylines as it focuses on one’s own ability to make their home affordable using STR revenue rather than a community-level impact of population stability.

Not Part of the Problem Storyline

The Not Part of the Problem storyline is named so because speakers and backing institutions are not blind to some negative impacts caused by the unregulated proliferation of STRs but rather separate their own participation in the STR industry from other “bad actors.” They join other storylines in saying that there are problems with large corporations owning multiple STRs and thus push forward the position that STR-owning New Orleanians want to be legalized, regulated, and pay taxes. They suggest regulations for “keeping it local” and paying their “fair share.” This storyline is primarily pushed forward by the Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity (ANP) who frames the sides of the debate as STR-owning residents (“real people”) versus the hotel lobby. Moreover, they say these sides are reliant on fact-based evidence versus anecdotes and feelings, respectively.

Example of New Orleans residents being “not the problem”

15-1-16: *The truth is, residents of NOLA, who own and operate STRs, are not the problem. It's the absentee non-resident owners with no skin in the game and the large corporations who've been granted hundreds of licenses.*

18-6-23: *I've been hearing people talk about the guests that they have at their short-term rentals, and we have the nicest people. We have retirement people coming there. We have really nice families that come to celebrate. We have corporations that come. We are really a higher end short-term rental houses. So we have to keep our houses beautiful. The outsides have to be meticulous. The trash always has to be picked up.*

Positions

Speakers in the Not Part of the Problem storyline use positions rooted in the economic benefit of STRs for individuals and, through successful and “common sense” regulation, for the city. Through their economic lens, the ANP provides counter arguments to the Homes for

People Not Profit and We Want Neighbors storylines. They argue that hotels are using the affordable housing crisis to maintain their dominance in the tourism industry and that there is not an affordable housing crisis but an affordability crisis for all New Orleanians. Thus, they say supplying affordable housing is the job of the government and not private homeowners who are themselves trying to make ends meet with STRs among rising rents, cost of home maintenance, and insurance premiums. Ultimately, they coalesce around the position that problems from STRs have to do with outside investors and poor regulation. In contrast, true New Orleanians participating in the STR industry are good-intentioned people who are not only a part of their neighborhood but are actively bettering their neighborhood with STR revenue (15-1-12).

15-1-12: *Let's turn our city of yes into a city of yesTR, with over 10,000 local livelihoods resting on your decisions. It's your opportunity to represent them and not the paid spokespersons hiding behind the veil of developer funding.*

CR Themes and proxies present in these positions are **Positive Feelings Toward Neighborhood** (*positive neighborhood change, attraction to neighborhood, sense of pride in the neighborhood*) and **Sociodemographic/Community Attributes** (*wealthy retirees, income, and commercial establishments & businesses*). STR owners in the Not Part of the Problem storyline see their participation in the STR industry as a necessity to pay their own bills and a gift to the city by beautifying homes, paying maintenance workers and maids, and supporting local businesses by bringing tourism dollars into neighborhoods.

Preferred Regulations

Rather than perceiving a negative impact to CR associated with STRs themselves, the Not Part of the Problem storyline perceives negative effects to the community through overly restrictive STR regulations, such as limiting STR permits to one per block. Speakers say this regulation will pit neighbors against neighbors as STR owners on the same block must compete for the permit. Overall, the Not Part of the Problem storyline presents regulations that they say are “common sense” by keeping benefits of STRs local, being based on facts,

and avoiding neighbor conflict. They also want to “pay our fair share” and “work together” with affordable housing advocates by increasing the contribution to the city’s NHIF allocated from each rental and increasing overall fees. They separate their basis for their preferred regulations from other storylines by saying, “good policy is not built on anecdotal evidence, emotions, and fear mongering” (26-1-11).

Counterarguments

As a strong voice in favor of STRs that speaks largely of economics, the Not Part of the Problem storyline is subject to much disagreement. The motives of the ANP are called into question, as commenters say the industry has gone far beyond helping residents pay bills. One speaker shares his experience going to an ANP meeting, saying, “on my way in, someone said to me ‘Hey man, how many you got?’ Right, so how many short-term rentals do you have? And I thought, I mean that’s pretty telling right. If you’re going to a meeting and someone’s saying how many do you have, that’s not necessarily about making ends meet. That’s about how much money are you making” (16-8-29). Another speaker also underscores the individualistic and economic focus of the ANP, asking the question “Prosperity for whom?” and citing her own experience as a small business employee in the heavily STR saturated neighborhood St. Claude who has lost a residential customer base to tourists (17-11-75). Lastly, one LTR owner questions members of the ANP describing themselves as New Orleans-loving residents who need to make ends meet and want to better their neighborhood while doing it, saying “maybe I have it wrong. You know, maybe I should convert it to a short-term rental, you know, kick the long-term tenants out, and I’ll be able to drop everything and come stack a meeting to keep the money coming in my pocket” (15-1-18).

In addition to speaking against the ANP itself, commenters also refute their positions that STRs are necessary because they support the local economy and provide tax revenue for the city. Instead, tourists have replaced the residents who would support local establishments. This counterargument aligns with the We Want Neighbors position that STRs hurt local

neighborhood-serving businesses. Speakers also question the position that STRs should be allowed because they can provide a large tax revenue for the city to use for community services, saying this is a “politically very palatable” way to increase tax revenue without a tax increase but, as STRs displace residents, ask “what good is more revenue for services for people who can no longer afford to live here?” (15-1-15).

Neighborhood Change Storyline

The Neighborhood Change storyline presents the position that STRs threaten the residential character of and quality of life within historic core neighborhoods and call for protection of such neighborhoods from the incompatibilities presented by STRs, oftentimes conveying Not-in-My-Backyard (“NIMBYism”) sentiments. This is a widely critiqued method of opposition to “change” within residential areas pervasive in public participatory processes often used to limit density in housing development. Such commenters speak of the conversion of long-term residential units to STRs in terms of the loss of residential character. They focus on quality-of-life issues and more ambiguous neighborhood change, such as concern with trash, noise, traffic, and general nuisance.

Backing institutions in the Neighborhood Change storyline are focused on the preservation of and quality of life within the “historic core,” saying STRs are inherently incompatible with residential areas and go against the city’s Master Plan by injecting commercial uses into neighborhoods (21-1-99). Five backing institutions present positions and preferred regulations that characterize the Neighborhood Change storyline, including

- neighborhood groups the Garden District Association, French Quarter Citizens, Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents, and Associates (VCPORA);
- STR interest group the Short-Term Rental Committee; and
- nonprofit Preservation Resources Center of New Orleans.²

² It is important to note that the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRC) shifts its position throughout the Selected Meetings, speaking only about preserving residential character in earlier meetings and later starting to state that there are potential benefits to STRs if used carefully (12-8-8). It is in this position, along with their mention of affordable housing and recognition that STRs lead to the “erosion of residential base

Positions

The Neighborhood Change storyline is distinguished by speakers and backing institutions who primarily speak about how STRs impact residential neighborhood character. This impact corresponds to the CR Theme **Positive Feelings Towards Neighborhood** and the proxy *positive neighborhood change*. For example, the Short-Term Rental Committee states that STRs are “inherently harmful to the residential fabric of neighborhoods” and cause “neighborhood degradation” through increases in noise, trash, traffic, and other nuisances deemed to be “quality of life” issues (11-6-2). It is the speakers’ concern for aesthetic residential character and lack of specificity about the actual residents who contribute to such residential character that distinguishes this storyline from others that focus on people.

Preferred Regulations

The preferred regulations pushed forward by the Neighborhood Change storyline aim to reduce the impact of STRs on quality of life in residential neighborhoods and prevent historic core areas from becoming 24-hour tourist attractions (12-8-15). Backing institutions and speakers primarily from the French Quarter and Garden District neighborhoods describe how these traditional tourist areas are overstressed and have been “impacted beyond what [they] can withstand” (17-11-44). They push for a ban on STRs in these neighborhoods based on existing bans on new hotels (18-6-54). Speakers from the Garden District Association, French Quarter Citizens, and VCPOA also argue that the option to ban STRs should be allowed in other “historic core” neighborhoods. However, representatives from those neighborhoods do not necessarily advocate for bans themselves, and other neighborhood groups outside of the “historic core” question the fairness in privileging certain areas over

needed for community, neighborhoods, and culture” (18-6-20) that makes categorizing PRC strictly in the Neighborhood Change storyline difficult. It is unclear if PRC changed their language to “talk the talk” of CR or from a true concern, but this shift nonetheless presents an example of the dynamic nature of the discourse surrounding the STR debate in New Orleans.

others, specifically the wealthier, Whiter, and more politically powerful French Quarter and Garden District neighborhoods (5-4-3).

The Neighborhood Change storyline also pushes the CPC to hold platforms accountable for enforcing regulations. They often posit that enforcement will not be possible without data sharing from STR platforms, which is a baseline requirement for all other industries (26-1-33). VCPORA argues that STR platforms have written the rules in a way that places the responsibility and burden of enforcement on residents, neighbors, and city staff, shirking any accountability themselves (16-8-42). Thus, they propose platform licensing and data sharing as a solution.

Counterarguments

The Neighborhood Change storyline is subject to much dissent from pro-STR speakers, backing institutions, and even anti-STR speakers who see quality of life complaints as subjective and the regulatory approach of only banning STRs in the “historic core” as unfair. The President of the Historic Faubourg Tremé Improvement Association states that “the ban in the French Quarter has exacerbated what was already a bad problem in [his] neighborhood” (13-9-11), passing the negative impacts of STRs to other neighborhoods to spare the French Quarter.

Speakers from the backing institution Greater New Orleans Housing Alliance (GNOHA) frame the opposition to STRs in the Neighborhood Change storyline as NIMBYism and bigotry working to prevent housing development, stating their frustration with the effects of poor STR regulations being grouped with initiatives to promote natural infill and increases in housing stock the city needs to house its residents, particularly vulnerable renter populations (2-8-1). GNOHA underscores the difference between restrictions and regulations, saying the council should look to innovative ways to capture revenue from STR taxation for the city’s economy rather than restricting New Orleanians with homestead exemptions utilizing STRs. Thus, GNOHA pushes the council to think

creatively to use revenue from STR taxation to help guarantee affordable housing development in all land use, zoning, and STR regulations, zooming out to the larger affordability crisis in which the STR debate occurs.

Control Docket Items

To assess the general prevalence of CR Talk in statements unrelated to STR, I assessed a total of 94 Control Docket comments. 32% of control comments (unrelated to STR) used CR Talk while 54% of the 786 STR-related comments did. CR Talk was primarily used during Control Docket Items related to housing and was not often present in public comment covering topics like street renaming, parking lot standards for crime mitigation, a firearm safety study, and the city's capital improvement plan.

Within one docket item, neighborhood groups use CR proxies *neighborhood cohesion* and *sense of community* akin to the We Want Neighbors storyline to oppose the conversion of traditional shotgun houses to dorm-style university housing. Housing advocates underscore the need to house New Orleanians, not affluent students, like the Homes for People Not Profit storyline. For a docket item about multi-family housing, supporters use the same CR proxies of *fight exclusion and marginalization* and *population stability* as the Homes for People Not Profit storyline, and one neighborhood group opposed the project citing negative impacts to the block like the Neighborhood Change storyline. With the context of this control group, it seems there is a broader relationship between housing and CR in New Orleans.

Across these control items, there were fewer public commenters for docket items than for STR-related docket items. This may be a product of the intense debate surrounding STRs unfolding over several years, while these other topics do not bring as much community input. One councilman describes the uniqueness of the STR policymaking process, saying how in all of his years as a Counselor he had never seen such community involvement and passion.

More discourse analyses of public meetings would be useful to probe the use of CR in public participatory processes and the relationship between CR and STRs.

Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter discusses the prevalence of Community Resilience (CR) Talk in the debate as a whole and the foundational differences between speakers' understanding of CR concepts that leads to different perceived relationships between CR and STRs.

Community Resilience in the New Orleans STR Debate

There are many positions, preferred regulations, and backing institutions present in the discursive space analyzed in this thesis that show complexity in how the relationship between CR and STRs may be perceived within the STR debate in New Orleans. Speakers and backing institutions coalesce around a few cohesive and distinct narratives, or storylines, and present the same positions and preferred regulations based on similar perceived relationships between CR and STRs. The Homes for People Not Profit, STRs for Community Good, and We Want Neighbors storylines push forward positions that heavily use CR Themes, although the way they use CR Talk to define their preferred STR regulations are distinct. Anti-STR speakers in the Homes for People Not Profit focus on positions that represent community resilience values of sociodemographic and community attributes, while impacts to a community's cohesion is most fundamental in the We Want Neighbors storyline. Pro-STR speakers in the STRs for Community Good storyline reframe many of the perceived negative impacts on CR described by anti-STR speakers and say that STRs can be used to actually increase community resilience based on sociodemographic and community attributes and community cohesion. Two other storylines were discerned through this analysis, and both use CR Themes but not in instrumental ways: Not Part of the Problem and Neighborhood Change.

All storylines use at least one position that connects to a CR Theme. Thus, there does appear to be a perceived relationship between CR and STR impacts within the discourse surrounding the STR debate analyzed here. However, this relationship is more complex than

a simple finding that STRs negatively impact CR. Instead, the ways STRs are run by owners and regulated by policymakers can have a positive or a negative relationship with different aspects of a community that contribute to its resilience. This underscores the importance of regulating STRs in a manner that bolsters CR rather than hurts it. There does not appear to be a pattern between the order of speakers and the likelihood that CR Talk is used. In other words, if the speaker before someone uses CR, this does not set off a string of CR Talk in the following comments. Instead, the use of CR Talk is much more dependent on the speaker's storyline and backing institution, often using the same CR-related phrases as other speakers in the storyline. Compared with the control group, CR Talk was used more often in the STR-related docket items, but CR and similar storylines could be seen in this control public commentary, especially related to housing. While I still argue there is a significant and complex relationship between CR and STRs that is not simply a byproduct of widespread use of CR language throughout public meetings in New Orleans, this control group shows that CR Talk is present within different policymaking topics. Thus, viewing issues across policymaking through a CR lens may provide a unique framework to connect impacts, streamline regulations, and efficiently allocate resources.

It is important to note that the many ways CR may be defined and operationalized academically and discussed in everyday conversation make finding CR Talk within comments more common than I expected. I predicted that I would find one "Community Resilience" storyline wherein commenters perceived negative impacts to CR from STRs that would be distinct from other problem framings and impacts, drawing a line between those using CR language and everyone else interested in affordable housing, the economic benefits of STRs, and so on. However, I found that CR Talk is woven into many speakers' comments. This does not render the finding that New Orleanians perceive a relationship between CR and STRs useless. Instead, this reinforces the arguments of practitioners and researchers that

community resilience is useful as an umbrella term that may manifest itself in many different ways depending on place and scale (Cutter, 2016; MacGillivray, 2018). For planners and policymakers, defining resilience for one's specific community is crucial to creating policies and plans that address the specific shocks, stressors, and opportunities to build resilience that are place-based and actionable.

Opposing Positions for the Same CR Concepts

Different storylines often use the same CR concepts to support opposing opinions of STRs. When there is disagreement on a specific CR concept between pro-STR and anti-STR commenters, there is often a basic difference in the foundation on which commenters speak, either a question of scale, of which community is being discussed, or if the speaker refers to STRs themselves or the mismanagement of STR regulations. Differences between these foundations often arise as counterarguments to other storylines, refuting or reframing a position to fit a different context, scale, or community. The following sections outline these foundational differences leading to disagreement about CR proxies in the STR debate.

Inherent CR Harm or Regulatory Harm?

Anti-STR commenters describe how STRs themselves negatively impact their community and how poor regulations will allow the inherently harmful aspects of STRs to proliferate. This is illustrated clearly in the We Want Neighbors storyline which describes how STRs shred neighborhood fabrics, are a detriment to relationships with neighbors, and threaten culture. While most anti-STR speakers acknowledge that most harm comes from out-of-town corporate STR owners, they argue that even singular “good” operators contribute to harmful community-level impacts. Conversely, pro-STR commenters most often describe how STR regulations, rather than STRs, will negatively impact their community. Most notably is the argument that certain regulations will “pit neighbors against neighbors,” a line used repeatedly by pro-STR commenters in the Not Part of the Problem storyline, often under the Alliance for Neighborhood Prosperity backing institution. This deployment of CR

language is used as a tool to oppose the limits of STR density and lottery system assignment of STR licenses proposed by the CPC. While pushing forward this position, pro-STR speakers often agree to a certain extent with anti-STR speakers, saying they do not want the negative impacts of completely unregulated STRs either but that proposed regulations would also cause harm.

Examples of STR regulations causing harm

4-10-16: *If I have to go up against my neighbor to get my short-term rental license, that's just going to create bad blood and ruin the neighborhoods even more.*

17-11-25: *This isn't a simple argument. It's not an all for or all against. There is some good with short-term rentals. There's also some bad. I think the big problem is that regulation has failed. And it's not one person causing an overwhelming problem or a few people with overwhelming crushing force. It's death by a thousand paper cuts.*

7-11-80: *STRs are a commercial use. Money changes hands. Duh. And must be treated as such. The problem is not just bad actors. Even good actors degrade a neighborhood's residential character. Bad actors simply do it more quickly. (counterargument)*

Individual or Community Scale?

As shown in the literature, many benefits of STRs accrue on the individual scale while costs are born on a systemwide or community scale. This dichotomy is displayed clearly in the STR debate in New Orleans, explicitly articulated in comments below.

Examples of perceiving STR impacts at an individual versus a community scale

17-11-14: *It's critical that we understand how short-term rentals affect not just individuals, but the city as a whole. I support the IZD because we need to get a handle on what's happening with the systemic city-wide affordability and quality of life issues that STRs and their current framework have both created and contribute to.*

4-10-59: *I'm assured from today's presentations that there are a large number of STR operators who do a very good job and do it very well. But there are far broader issues than the number of people who are here who present their personal circumstances.*

The most obvious manifestation of this difference between pro-STR individual benefits and anti-STR system wide issues surrounds housing affordability and CR proxy *population stability*. Put in terms of CR Talk, one's individual ability to stay in their own home by supplementing the cost of mortgages, insurance, and maintenance with STR revenue, a position pushed forward by the Not Part of the Problem storyline, versus the rental housing unaffordability and inaccessibility driving displacement and overall population instability, pushed forward by the Homes for People Not Profit storyline. These two arguments counter

each other, pro-STR people saying STRs make their own homes affordable while anti-STR people zoom out to see the larger issues of STRs on the housing market.

Which Community?

While anti-STR commenters tend to speak about their community based on a geographical neighborhood scale, pro-STR commenters often use the same CR indicators to speak about the STR community itself—New Orleans residents who rent out property on STR platforms and the travelers who use STR platforms for lodging. For example, the CR proxy *supports kids and* may be used quite differently by different speakers and within different storylines. The anti-STR position seen in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline argues that STRs are displacing families from neighborhoods where they have lived for a long time and where they have access to transit, can easily get to school, groceries, and other services (18-6-5).

18-6-5: *On my block itself, about half of the dwellings are used for short-term rentals. Many of these were inhabited by families before they became STRs, families with children. My roommate knows them well and knows that they did not want to leave. On weekdays, these dwellings sit empty while many children have to bus and drive from across town to go to school. On the weekends, they fill up with visitors who are sold on the opportunity to stay a block away from two of our city's most famous restaurants. City planning that prioritizes visitors' ability to stay right next to these deservedly esteemed restaurants over children's ability to get to school, along with their ability to enjoy the fruits of their city's culture and cuisine, can only be seen as contemptuous to those children and their families.*

Conversely, the pro-STR speakers in the Not Part of the Problem storyline allude to the same community resilience proxy to say how STRs supply a different type of lodging for families that are too big for a hotel room, cannot afford a hotel rate, do not want to stay in touristy areas, or are not in New Orleans for vacation. They use this to refute the claim that STRs cater to partygoers and large groups of disruptive youths. However, this position does not speak to *supporting kids and families* within the New Orleans community but rather kids and families who are traveling to the city. This may be an example of deploying CR language to “talk the talk” of CR.

CR Proxies Inherent to the New Orleans STR Debate

The STR industry in New Orleans itself and the surrounding multi-year debate, which drew extensive public input, relate to certain CR proxies in their own right. In this section, I zoom out from perceived impacts to CR from STRs described by speakers and look at the debate and STR industry in New Orleans as a whole.

Formal Networks & Shared Values

Strong presence of backing institutions in the STR debate in New Orleans indicates high *formal networks*, a proxy for community resilience (Walker et al., 2022). Moreover, many backing institutions work to form alliances with other institutions and neighborhoods, which can be understood as *informal networks*, which support CR, too (Walker et al., 2022). Moreover, the work backing institutions do to develop positions, push forward certain regulations, and refute other arguments aligns with the CR proxy of *shared values & ideas* (Kulig et al., 2013) as they work together to develop and articulate priorities and form a strong aligned voice across numerous speakers.

Non-Dependence on Tourism Sector Employment

A primary pro-STR argument is that STRs are a necessity to stay in one's own home and neighborhood which speaks to two CR proxies. First, the CR proxy from Cutter et al. (2014) *population stability*, which shows that STRs would have a positive impact on CR by allowing residents to stay in their existing neighborhood. However, this goes against another CR proxy from Cutter et al. (2014) of *non-dependence on the tourism sector for employment*. Pro-STR speakers cite the local economy that has built up around STRs as a strong reason to support STRs, as STR owners would have to lay off maids, lawn care servicemen, and other workers who support the STR industry if they lost their ability to STR. High dependence on STRs indicates high dependence on the tourism sector economy for New Orleanians to get by, which may be inherently detrimental to CR, or at least does not positively contribute to CR. As noted by anti-STR speakers in response to this point, "complete reliance on a very

temperamental industry” (1-8-11) may not be sustainable if conditions change. Moreover, while certain jobs have been created by the STR industry, other livelihoods have been uprooted as people are displaced and neighborhood businesses are pressured to adapt to their new customer base of tourists. One speaker notes that, “we're not just talking about the loss of home rentals. We're talking about all of the economic effects of the loss of people using repairmen, seamstresses, grocers, designers, doctors, lawyers, dentists, carpenters, plumbers. It's not just the loss of a house or a rental. It's the loss of many people's livelihoods" (18-6-55). Thus local jobs serving the neighborhood base, which are not dependent on tourists, have been replaced with STR jobs that are dependent on tourism. During a disaster and the recovery process after, this customer base will likely be absent.

Katrina

Hurricane Katrina’s impact and recovery process is palpable in New Orleans and among New Orleanians. Katrina thus appears numerous times in this discourse, used mundanely as a shared memorable event to mark time (before Katrina, during Katrina, after Katrina) and more pointedly to talk about issues of affordable housing, displacement, blight, rebuilding and recovery, cost of living, and insurance. Storylines within the discourse do not discuss Katrina in the same way. For We Want Neighbors, Katrina is a previous stressor to CR from which the city has tried very hard to recover. As one speaker states, “everything we fought for after Katrina to bring back, I don’t want to lose that now. And that’s the people” (18-6-1). The progress made to bring back residents and restore neighborhood connectivity is something to protect from the population instability and threats to community connectivity from STRs proliferation. For the STRs for Community Good storyline, Katrina is the reason for the scourge of blighted property across the city which STR owners wish to rehabilitate and the cause of a present-day lack of resources and infrastructure. One speaker shares this framing of Katrina and ideas for using STR revenue for community good, saying that “the

city has all these hospitals and all these schools that have been closed since Katrina...why aren't we doing something, making hospitality villages or senior citizen homes? Let's reinvest in our communities" (4-10-53). For speakers in the Homes for People Not Profit storyline, Katrina spurred the loss of much of the city's affordable housing units that contributed to the present housing crisis which STRs exacerbate. For speakers in the Not Part of the Problem storyline, staying after Katrina and helping the city recover is a badge of honor that proves their commitment to the city and supports their right to have a STR now, as one STR owner exemplifies, saying "I made it through Katrina, stayed, helped to rebuild. I feel I'm an asset to this city, not a detriment (15-1-10).

Given the prevalence of Katrina in the collective consciousness of New Orleans and the world as a notorious example of a climate change-driven extreme storm event causing widespread devastation, infrastructure failings, and governmental mishandling of recovery efforts on the local, state, and federal level, one can expect Katrina to be a pervasive topic in any New Orleans or disaster-based discourse. Its prevalence in the STR debate illustrates the connection between STRs, community resilience, and disasters, the lasting impacts that a poorly prepared for and recovered from events have on a community, and the need to consider community resilience in all of New Orleans policymaking.

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusion

The final chapter offers recommendations to policymakers and planners to consider residents' perception of the impacts of STRs on CR in their regulatory process. These recommendations shift power to the public, as they are grounded in the regulations pushed forward by speakers, and position STRs to bolster community resilience in New Orleans rather than diminish it. The conclusion ties this work back to the larger CR, STR, and public participatory landscapes and calls for further research.

Recommendations

Initially it may seem that the debate over STRs in New Orleans shows lots of disagreement, conflict between residents, and lack of **Shared Values**, indicating low CR. However, use of CR Talk by many speakers on both sides of the issue suggests there is agreement at least as to the importance of CR in a place, especially one that is so disaster-prone. Beyond the disagreement and contention is an inherent **Shared Value**: love of and pride in New Orleans, especially in light of the enormous recovery effort after Hurricane Katrina, and a desire to showcase its unique culture to the world through tourism. Like many disaster-prone places, there is a strong *sense of pride* in New Orleans surrounding its resilience and ability to rebuild. There is a pervasive sentiment in New Orleans that, when faced with a challenge, residents will not respond passively. Rather, there is a fierce protection of the city stemming from the love and pride felt by its residents.

These shared values are a strong common ground that can be used by planners and policymakers to shift from traditional disaster preparedness to community resilience building, creating *shared priorities* and a vision for the future. The following recommendations are grounded in the shared values presented across storylines and speakers in the STR debate and work to increase the positive relationships and minimize the negative between CR and STRs perceived by commenters. One recommendation addresses the shortcomings of conventional

public participatory processes, like commentary periods during public meetings, as the primary method of public involvement in policymaking.

1. Keep it local

Foundation

Actual New Orleans residents renting out a spare bedroom or even one STR are not seen as the issue by most speakers in the New Orleans STR discourse. Thus, regulations should be created to allow residents to reap the benefits of STRs, rather than out of town investors and corporations. Speakers say that residents are invested in the city, and will, for example, “sit through a four-hour public meeting to discuss municipal policy” while corporations, out of town speculators, and tourists will not (21-1-82). Thus, regulations should benefit those who have a stake in the resilience of the city, like residents and “mom and pop” owners, rather than those trying to make a quick profit off the city’s culture.

Recommendation

Across both sides of the debate, requirement of a homestead exemption to obtain an STR permit is seen as a way to keep outside speculation and corporate profits out of the New Orleans rental industry while allowing residents to reap the benefits of STRs. Moreover, density limitations on the number of STRs allowed per block are suggested by both sides of the debate to prevent the hollowing out of neighborhoods. This recommendation will limit the negative perceived relationship between STRs and *population stability* and the CR Theme

Community Cohesion.

2. Hold platforms accountable

Foundation

Speakers say that STR platforms have “written the rules in a way that places the responsibility and burden of enforcement on residents, neighbors, and city staff, shirking an accountability themselves” (16-8-42). Platforms do not have to share data about STR listings with the city in which the rental occurs, leaving city staff to guess where rentals are and residents to undergo burdensome reporting mechanisms to complain to an overworked

municipal worker. By leaving residents to report on their neighbors for bad STR behavior, the STR platforms have created a “very hostile environment” and “pitted neighbors against neighbors” (16-8-8). A remedy to this is to hold platforms accountable and require data sharing to help cities regulate the permits they issue (18-6-6).

18-6-6: We believe that Airbnb, VRBO, the other platforms, platforms, excuse me, should be required to give that information over. We don't let any other business come into our city and tell us what they're going to do. We shouldn't let Airbnb and VRBO overrule us again. We learn from our mistakes.

Recommendation

Speakers on both sides of the debate, most vocally the Not Part of the Problem and Neighborhood Change storylines, call for the city to enter into platform-specific licensing agreements with corporations like Airbnb and VRBO. In such licenses, they urge the city to mandate data-sharing, including actual location of listings, number of days rented, number of bedrooms, and other data that the platforms have but do not disclose to the public. Speakers say this information is crucial for the city to be able to enforce the regulations they put in place, such as restricting permits to New Orleans residents with a homestead exemption and enforcing density limitations. In addition, speakers say the license should mandate that platforms delete illegal listings, meaning listings that do not have a permit from the city or whose permit has expired. This recommendation bolsters the city’s capacity to implement regulations.

3. Shift power to neighborhoods

Foundation

Many speakers call for the specifics of regulations to be made by neighborhoods themselves, allowing residents to set density limitations or bans as they see fit to complement the mixed-use and neighborhood-focused layout of New Orleans. Moreover, power dynamics in the conventional public participatory space exclude certain populations and often create rules for all based on the loudest voices in the room. Across both sides of the debate, speakers note all the people who are not present and thus unable to participate in the CPC decision-

making process. Finding a way to engage with people who cannot participate in the conventional setting of public meetings is crucial to creating equitable policies.

Example of the call for STR regulations to uplift underrepresented populations

15-1-14: *I'm here to help represent women, short-term rental operators who are mothers. Rarely do we have the opportunity to attend the afternoon scheduled city planning commission or city council meetings because our children's schedules, short-term rental, and work schedules demand our attention. Our voices are rarely heard yet we make up the majority of short-term rental operators.*

12-8-1: *And most of the people speaking in favor of exemptions to what you are putting forward, you know, they're saying, I don't know what I can do with my five houses. That's actually not a luxury that the vast majority of New Orleanians have. And I really, really want to emphasize that those voices, I want to uplift those voices in the room right now because they're actually not in the room.*

Recommendation

The CPC staff should hold neighborhood-scale community engagement meetings, rather than the citywide CPC meetings with strict public comment periods and distribute surveys to engage those who cannot attend in person meetings. Moreover, means of participation for non-English speakers, including Spanish and Vietnamese speakers, should be developed. This recommendation addresses some of the shortcomings of this public participatory process and supports *capacity building* and development of *shared priorities and goals* in communities, covering the CR Themes of **Community Cohesion** and **Shared Values**.

4. Encourage STRs as a community resource over individualistic endeavor

Foundation

Some STR owners, such as the head of Short-Term Resources NOLA, use STRs to bolster community capacity, services, and connectivity. By meeting to discuss how to be “good” STR owners, such as opening unbooked rentals for disaster victims or donating extra supplies to local charities, these groups not only foster *informal and formal networks* but support *capacity building* and create *community services*.

Recommendation

The CPC, CPC staff, and Short-Term Rental Administration should popularize and support grassroots groups that use STRs as a community resource, rather than just an individual investment opportunity, to foster a positive relationship between CR and STRs. The New Orleans Short-Term Rental Administration develops publications with resources for STR owners to navigate permitting and regulations. Content on how to use one's STR for community good could be included in those existing resources, including an option for owners to add their contact information to a publicly available list of rentals open to being used as a community gathering spaces or short-term housing following disasters. This recommendation supports the positive relationship between STRs in the STRs for Community Good storyline and bolsters the CR proxies *capacity building, social infrastructure, formal and informal networks, strong community leadership, community services, and citizen disaster preparedness*.

5. Collaboratively address issues with policymaking

Foundation

Housing NOLA offers a critique of the CPC planning process regarding the bifurcation of related issues when it comes to recommendations and initiatives. The CPC conducts numerous studies that are related and can tackle problems together, rather than siloing issues and regulations. Their speakers argue that STR regulations should not be considered without regard to other CPC actions and related issues in New Orleans. Although they speak specifically about the need to coordinate resources and planning efforts related to housing stock and affordability with STRs regulations, this sentiment can be extended to other issues related to STRs like community resilience and disaster planning. This problem framing and suggested solution offers the overall takeaway that planning ought to take a collaborative and synergistic approach. This way, resources can be allocated efficiently, and related problems are not debated time and again in planning processes.

Recommendation

The CPC and Planning Staff should explore connections between issues facing New Orleans and put forth policy and planning initiatives that, when possible, address multiple issues. I recommend policymakers and planners in New Orleans explore the connection between CR, disaster planning, and STR regulations outlined in this thesis, namely the possible negative impact on CR from population instability and a loss of neighborhood cohesion and the possible positive impact on CR from using STRs to promote disaster preparedness, recovery, and capacity building, like housing hurricane victims and using unbooked STRs as community meeting space.

Conclusion

Key Takeaways

Community resilience has become the de facto framework for disaster planning as municipalities attempt to bounce forward from shocks and alleviate everyday stressors. However, CR is a complex and locally specific phenomenon, with researchers offering various definitions, methods of measurement, and observable characteristics that may contribute to resilience. This complexity is evident when analyzing the STR debate in New Orleans through a community resilience lens. Speakers describe the impacts of STRs they have experienced and many of these impacts correspond to one or more aspects of CR. However, the nature of this relationship differs, and speakers coalesce around certain aspects of CR to form cohesive narratives and push forward their understanding of the relationship, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, between CR and STRs.

Based on the dynamic interaction between CR proxies and STR impacts described by the storylines in the New Orleans STR debate, STRs can be a stressor to community resilience or bolster community resilience. As they have existed historically in New Orleans, STRs have predominantly been a community-scale stressor to CR. However, through proper

study and regulation STRs have the potential to support community resilience, especially through their use as a community meeting space during times of normalcy and an emergency shelter during extreme events.

Conventional methods of public participation in the planning and policymaking processes are not conducive to truly engaging with and shifting decision making power to the public. As seen in the STR debate in New Orleans, public commentary periods restrict who may influence policymaking and how they may participate. People who cannot attend the meeting, present their opinion within the confines of a two-minute speech into a standing microphone, and come back again and again meeting after meeting are left out of the policymaking process. Moreover, people must be on the proponent or opponent side, reinforcing the assumption that issues are black and white and imposing “sides” to discussion that should focus on collaboration. As described in the recommendations section, an attempt to engage with the public outside of CPC meetings about STR regulations is crucial to forming policies that are comprehensive and equitable.

Future Research

More research should be conducted to further explore how community resilience concepts are discussed colloquially by the public rather than just measured academically. It is important to note that this analysis focused on community resilience discourse in a specific location, New Orleans, facing its own potential shocks and stressors. However, I did not set out to distinguish between the relative importance of different community resilience proxies in contributing to these location-specific community resilience needs. In New Orleans as well as in other cities and towns, individual CR topics may carry different relative weights based on the specifics of a place and the shocks and stressors it faces. Future research should focus on specific, locally relevant community resilience themes in public discourse to better understand the relationships between STRs and CRs in that location. While there are many

CR proxies defined and analyzed in scholarly literature, this would allow focus on the most important building blocks of CR in that place.

Further research should continue to analyze the dataset created for this thesis. More work should be done to analyze the STR discourse geographically, as there may be correlation between storylines and area of the city a speaker resides in. This may be particularly useful to understand whether and how the storylines are influenced by local density of STRs, localized community resilience concerns, and location-specific stressors and likely shocks. This discourse analysis would be enhanced by interviewing residents, policymakers, planners, and nonprofit groups in New Orleans to specifically ask about the relationship they perceive between STRs and CR. Given how discourse forms the problems that policies address, further understanding this relationship can inform better-fitting policies.

Finally, in New Orleans, planning staff, the City Planning Commission, and the City Council should conduct a STR study exploring STRs as a stressor to community resilience, similar to the studies already conducted that look into affordable housing and economic impacts. Given the role of public comment in informing, but not setting, STR regulations, more research using discourse analysis to investigate public commentary should be done to better understand the relative success or failure of particular framings of issues in influencing municipal policymaking.

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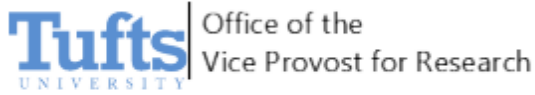
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Appendix I – IRB Determination



NOT HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

February 7, 2024

Laurel A. Mire
Tufts University
Laurel.Mire@tufts.edu

Dear Laurel A. Mire:

On 2/7/2024, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Community Disaster Resilience and Short-Term Rentals in New Orleans, LA
Investigator:	Laurel A. Mire
IRB ID:	STUDY00004641
Funding:	Tufts University

The IRB determined that the proposed activity is not research involving human subjects as defined by DHHS and FDA regulations.

IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities are research involving human in which the organization is engaged, please submit a modification request to the IRB for a determination. You can create a modification by clicking **Create Modification / CR** within the study.

Sincerely,

A O'Brien

Amanda O'Brien
IRB Analyst

Appendix II – Selecting Texts for Discourse Analysis

QA/QC Process Steps

I edited transcripts for typos, incorrect transcriptions, and repeated text. See Figures 9 & 10 for an example of the raw transcript produced by Whisper AI and the edits made. First, I deleted obviously incorrect transcriptions, such as repeated text and common misspellings for place names and acronyms. For example, the historic neighborhoods of the “Marigny” and the “Vieux Carré” were commonly transcribed as “Maroney” and “Vucaray,” respectively. Moreover, Whisper periodically lost the transcription and began making erroneous transcriptions. It is not clear what made the technology trip up. Sometimes it is when people are speaking over each other but other times it seems completely random. There also does not seem to be a difference in accuracy between long time periods of transcription and shorter ones. In other words, length of transcription does not seem to correlate with accuracy. Once Whisper AI loses its accuracy and place, it often repeats the last phrase of correct words or transcribes completely erroneous text for several lines before picking back up. In this instance, I deleted the repeated incorrect text and left a blank space to return to.

While making these edits, I also organized transcribed text by the different speakers within each docket item. Changes from one speaker to the next were relatively easy to find, as it is customary in CPC meetings for speakers to begin with their name and address. I also assigned each speaker’s commentary a unique name according to the meeting and docket item and the chronology of speakers. For example, the third speaker of Meeting 9 giving a comment for docket number 7 would be named “Commenter 9-7-3.” This unique name was then used to keep track of speakers instead of names. With this general outline of speakers, cleaned transcriptions, and blank spaces where text would need to be filled in, I then listened and watched the recordings for each Selected Docket Item within each Selected Meeting, editing and adding to the transcribed text as necessary.

Figure 11: List of all Final Docket Items & Corresponding Meeting Used in DA

Meeting	Docket	Description	Public Comments	Year
1	8	STR Study	11	2023
2	8	Overlay district to prohibit STRs	2	2023
3	8	Text amendment to CZO	7	2023
3	14	STR Study	4	2023
4	10, 11	Text amendment to CZO	70	2023
5	4	Text amendment to CZO	3	2023
6	4	Text amendment to CZO	3	2022
7	2	Text amendment to CZO	4	2022
9	3	Interim zoning district to prohibit STRs	1	2022
11	6	STR Study	11	2019
12	8, 9	STR Study	46	2019
13	9	STR Study	27	2019
15	1	Special CPC Meeting on 2018 STR Study	48	2018
16	8	STR Study	54	2018
17	11, 12, 13	Text amendment to CZO, STR Study	93	2018
18	6	STR Study	69	2018
19	5	Text amendment to CZO	1	2018
21	1	Text amendment to CZO	141	2016
23	13	Text amendment to CZO	92	2016
24	9	STR Study	19	2016
26	1	Planning and Special Projects Committee Special Meeting on STRs	66	2015
28	7	Text amendment to CZO	14	2014

Note: Docket items are listed together, there was one collective public commentary period for those related docket items. If two docket items are listed separately for the same meeting, there were two separate public comment periods for the individual docket items.

Appendix III – Deductive Coding

Figure 12: Data collection spreadsheet, containing STR opinion, use of CR Talk (quote & corresponding CR Theme and proxies), mention of previous storms/Katrina, regulations suggested, storyline, & repeat commenter.

Date	Docket No & Topic	Mtg- Dkt	Comment Address	Affiliation	STR	CR	CR Phrase	CR Talk: Theme (proxies)	Katrina Storm	Repeat	Suggested Regulations	Storyline
3/12/2019		12-8	12-8-16	Garden District Association	0	0			0	0		Neighborhood Change
3/12/2019		12-8	12-8-17		1	1	I think that by revitalizing certain corridors of the commercial area can help, especially the blighted areas of St. Claude, or even the Laritte Greenway has been seeing revitalization from this.	sociodemographic/community attributes (commercial establishments)	0	0	grandfathering; pro life safety; CSTRs same as hotels; no homestead exemption	Not part of the problem
3/12/2019		12-8	12-8-18		1	0		disaster experience/preparedness (disaster aid experiences, prior experience with recovery); community cohesion (strong community leadership, capacity building)	0	0		Other
3/12/2019		12-8	12-8-19	3308 Upperline Street	1	1	I've rented to people who have been displaced by fire in the Garden District, people doing renovations, hurricane refugees, all kinds of different situations.	disaster experience/preparedness (disaster aid experiences, prior experience with recovery); community cohesion (strong community leadership, capacity building)	0	1	1 grandfathering	STRs for Community Good

Figure 13: Examples of Deductive Coding Distinctions

<p>STR = 1 (pro-STR)</p>	<p>17-11-11: I would like to conclude that I want to take this opportunity to express my strongest support for the short-term rental business world and applaud them as a way forward through a myriad of physical, economic, and social problems that confront our city today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: STRs for Community Good • CR Talk: Sociodemographic/Community Attributes (<i>community services</i>) <p>16-8-47: I have one short-term rental, and it is the only one on the block. It doesn't have a massive impact. I realize that there have been neighborhoods that have been seriously affected by a proliferation, especially Tremé and the Marigny. And it's a shame that the study just suggests totally doing away with whole-term rentals. It's like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. There are ways to address some of the issues because, like from that map, it's true. There are too many.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: Not Part of the Problem
<p>STR = 0 (anti-STR)</p>	<p>12-8-28: Sherry Cannon, 1026 Burgundy, here in New Orleans. I am a proud resident of the French Quarter, and I'm very disappointed that, once again, you're recommending to the city council that the ban on the French Quarter be lifted. It would be interesting to me to note how many of you are sitting on this council live in a neighborhood that's been negatively impacted by short-term rentals or have had the misfortune to live next door to a whole house short-term rental. I've had that experience. It's not fun.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: Neighborhood Change • CR Talk: Positive Feelings Toward Neighborhood (<i>positive neighborhood change</i>) <p>4-10-14: Our mission is to preserve our city's architecture, its neighborhoods, and its cultural identity. Well, we need neighbors in those neighborhoods and that cultural identity revolves around people, right? It requires people. So I think density limits are appropriate and I do have concerns that one per block face could be too permissive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: We Want Neighbors • CR Talk: Community Cohesion (<i>relationship with neighbors, social infrastructure, social capital</i>)
<p>CR = 1 (CR)</p>	<p>12-8-10: I'm tired of my interactions with my neighbors being me helping them to pack up and move to Chalmette or New Orleans East instead of, you know, hanging out and eating crawfish like I'd like to, and like I used to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: We Want Neighbors • CR Talk: Sociodemographic/Community Attributes (<i>population stability</i>); Community Cohesion (<i>relationship with neighbors</i>); Positive Feelings Toward Neighborhood (<i>positive neighborhood change</i>) <p>15-1-27: We need to protect our residents, not just, yes, the quality of neighborhoods, the people who look after your house when you go away, the people who pick up your mail if you're not there, the people who spread the word if something has happened in the neighborhood. When all of your neighbors are temporary, that doesn't happen anymore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: We Want Neighbors • CR Talk: Disaster Experience/Preparedness (<i>perception that neighbors would help in an emergency</i>); Community Cohesion (<i>informal networks, community connectivity</i>)
<p>CR = 0 (not CR)</p>	<p>4-10-54: I just think that this city has wonderful history and culture. And I think it should be left like that. We should preserve this city. It's a beautiful place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: Neighborhood Change <p>12-8-27: We caution that an overabundance of short-term rentals in the French Quarter would adversely affect the historic nature and preservation of the French Quarter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: Neighborhood Change
<p>STR = .5</p>	<p>4-10-23: I'm neither opposed nor against nor for nor in love with any of this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storyline: Other