

A Road Map to Regulating Short Term Rentals

A focus on localize Crime Prevention with respect to
the Unregulated Short Term Cottage Rental Industry

Short-Term Rental Meaning

- Short-Term Rentals (STR) are dwelling units of various sizes that are rented for a term of less than 28 days. Platforms such as Airbnb, VRBO, Ontario Cottage Rentals (OCR) and Facebook are often used to showcase and process rentals, such as bed & breakfasts, cottages, hotels, and motels.

Short Term Rentals

- Short-term rentals come in all shapes and sizes, ranging from small-scale bed and breakfast to home-shares,
- **Type 1:** where the host occupies the premises and merely rents out a room,
- **Type 2:** to rentals of entire homes or condominium units that are not simultaneously occupied by the owner.

Vacationers Do Their Research

Top Wants

1. Pool or Beach,
2. Fully functional kitchen,
3. free parking,
4. Pet Friendliness,
5. AC,
6. WIFI,
7. Amenities,
8. Hot tub/spa,
9. TV, Heat

The Problem

- Lack of Adequate Parking
- Noise
- Vandalism
- Garbage
- Drug and Alcohol Associated problems
- Uncontrolled Bonfires
- Damage to neighbouring properties
- Trespassing

Possible Offenses Associated with Unregulated Short Term Rentals

- Sexual Assault
- Assault
- Robbery
- Arson
- Break & Enter
- Theft Over & Under
- Fraud
- Mischief
- Drug Crime
- Possession
- Driving Under Influence
- Personal Injury
- Property Damage

The Question

- A major, recurring question was how to hold hosts accountable for the actions of their guests. It heard from several concerned citizens with respect to noise complaints, garbage and littering, vandalism, public intoxication and partying, all of which directly increase the burden on County provided services.
- non-owner occupied properties had a much greater impact, and in some cases, have been devastating to the surrounding neighborhood during the summer months

The Cost to Municipalities

- Bylaw Enforcement
- Police Enforcement
- Emergency Response
- Damage to Municipal Structures

The Solution

1. Design a Bylaw that would make owners of these short term accommodations accountable for their guests actions.
2. Create Licensing Bylaw for dwelling units of various sizes that are rented for a term of less than 28 days for non owner occupied units.
3. Increase Police Presence along Lakeshore Road, Lighthouse Drive, Edgewater Drive
4. Update Haldimand County Website to include a “Notice to Visitors and Short Term Renters”

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Social Media is an excellent tool to remind Guests of their responsibilities and that they can be held accountable for their actions

Haldimand County Responsibility

- Municipal Zoning By-laws typically function by prohibiting all uses of land in a defined area, except those that are expressly authorized.
- The argument has been made that providing short term accommodation in exchange for money, does not fit within the typical definition of residential use, or residential occupancy which is permitted in residential zones, and therefore municipalities are entitled to prohibit this type of use in residential zones without even changing their by-laws.

The Proposal and The Solution

- **1. Develop** a zoning bylaw stipulates that short-term rentals would only be permitted in designated areas of the Town and waterfront zone.
- **2.**A licensing bylaw would require short-term rental operators to apply for a license, and pay a licensing fee, on a yearly basis. The license could not be transferred. If the rental property is sold, the new owner would have to apply for their own license.

The Proposal and The Solution

- 3. A renter's code of conduct is included, which establishes an acceptable standard of behaviors for renters and their guests. It incorporates a number of existing bylaws, including the clean yards bylaw and the noise bylaw, to minimize impact on neighbors.
- 4. Two guests per bedroom will be permitted in short-term rental accommodations, up to a maximum of eight people. Pullout couches and Murphy beds are considered bedrooms and will count toward the total.
- 5. The bylaw will be enforced with a three-strike system. If the municipality receives three complaints or has to issue three notices to comply within a six-month period, the licensing officer may revoke a license. This rule would be enforced on a case-by-base

Licensing Requirements

- To apply for a short-term accommodation license, they will need to provide:
- Proof you're at least 18 years old, such as a birth certificate, valid driver's license or valid passport
- A criminal record check issued in the last 60 days from police services in the area you reside. Third party searches are not acceptable.
- Proof of general liability insurance for the operation of the short-term rental accommodation, with a minimum \$2 million coverage per rental. This could be a letter from your insurance company or a copy of your insurance policy. It's the sole responsibility of the operator to ensure they understand the implications of operating a short-term rental.
- Contact information for the primary person responsible for the short-term accommodation
- Permission from the homeowner (if you're a tenant)