

## Report

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Renée Mask, CAO  
Date: March 21, 2024  
Subject: Short-Term Accommodations Review

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### Recommendation

That Council approve licensing short-term accommodations, and;

That Council direct Staff to circulate the attached revised by-law, which includes adjustments to meet the Township's objective and community input, to the community through a survey, and;

That Council direct Staff to present a final by-law, licensing fee, and implementation strategy at a future Council meeting.

### Background

In September 2023, Council received a Draft By-law to License, Regulate, Govern Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STA) for information purposes and directed Staff as follows:

*"That Council direct Staff to engage the community and residents with a Short-Term Accommodation Survey to be posted on the Township's Website to receive community feedback on STAs; and*

*That Council direct Staff to schedule a Public Meeting to receive comments from members of the public and those currently operating Short Term Accommodations on the proposed regulations and the Draft By-law; and*

*That Council directs Staff to report back to Council with a process and licensing system to regulate Short-Term Accommodations (STA) in the Township, to be brought to Council for consideration."*

### Discussion

The purpose of this report is to inform Council for decision-making and seek Council direction for the implementation of a by-law to regulate short-term accommodations. The Report of Findings, attached herein, provides Council with information from the data analysis and community engagement regarding the regulation of short-term accommodations.

The proposed licensing framework for regulating Short-Term Accommodations (STAs) aims to achieve the following objectives:

March 21, 2024  
Regular Council

- Safeguard the community's character, amenities, and quality;
- Ensure occupants enjoy safe accommodations compliant with fire and building safety standards;
- Ensure STA premises are operated and maintained at acceptable levels as per Property Standards;
- Ensure STA Operators understand and adhere to the Township by-laws and regulations;
- Develop a system that is funded on a cost-recovery basis and does not increase the tax rate.

This framework is designed to strike a balance, allowing residents to enjoy the benefits of STAs while acknowledging their potential impact on neighbours and the broader community. Many acknowledged benefits of STAs include the stimulation of tourism, attraction of investment, increased community visitation, and revenue generation for local businesses.

The proposed licensing framework addresses common concerns associated with STAs, including noise disturbances, land-use compatibility, septic system capacity, safety standards, and parking issues. In return, the Township will maintain a registry of STAs to facilitate housing market analysis, by-law enforcement, and growth management efforts.

In the absence of any provincial legislation or regulation governing STAs, there is no standard way to regulate STAs in Ontario, and each municipality must determine an approach based on their community needs. A licensing by-law strengthens the Township to hold property owners responsible for controlling their property and the renters within it, by establishing regulations related to several pressing issues, including mandatory contact information and property owner's response times in the event of a complaint.

Existing by-laws are being reviewed, and new bylaws are being considered to ensure that by-law enforcement officers have the tools required to investigate, act on, and resolve community well-being concerns promptly and effectively.

A short-term accommodations licensing by-law, complemented by existing supporting by-laws, can effectively address concerns associated with STAs. Considering public feedback, industry trends, and fiscal responsibility, a licensing by-law is recommended. A revised version of the draft by-law following a lighter approach is attached to this report for consideration.

### **Third-Party Monitoring and Compliance**

Third-party operators such as Granicus play a pivotal role in facilitating the implementation of an STA licensing program. These firms will:

- Communicate with registered STA operators, notifying them of compliance requirements and timeframes for enrollment in the licensing program.
- Manage complaints through a 24-hour hotline, contacting listers to resolve issues promptly.
- Monitor compliance with Township by-laws.

March 21, 2024  
Regular Council

- Offer mobile permitting and registration services to streamline the process.

Opportunities exist to offset licensing and enforcement costs based on licensing fees and revenue generated. For illustration purposes, the table below demonstrates a cost-recovery fee of \$300 annually per license based on 243 STA licenses, a quote for a third-party operator, and staff time to review the application.

Number of STAs as of February 2024	243
Licensing Revenue	
Licensing Fee (\$300 annually)	\$ 72,900
Expense	
Staff Cost (\$225 per license)	\$ 54,675
Third-Party Operator	\$18,225
Net Profit/(Loss)	\$ 0

### Next Steps

Should this report's recommendation be approved, the revised draft By-law will be circulated to the community through a survey, as indicated in the Public Meetings.

Staff will finalize the By-law for Council review. When this by-law is brought forward for final review and approval, a recommendation on how to successfully implement it will also be brought to Council. A successful implementation plan will include time for STA owners to provide information to meet the licensing requirements and a comprehensive education campaign. Staff is recommending a minimum of six months from the passing of the by-law to allow for internal review of the application and for STA operators to meet the requirements to be compliant.

### Strategic Plan Alignment

The licensing of STAs is aligned with the strategic plan priorities of Growth Management - *We will plan for positive change and sustainable growth while maintaining the unique nature of the Township, balancing economic and infrastructure needs to support our growing community.* Regulating Short-Term Accommodations is an objective of the Strategic Plan, which includes the direction to review and recommend options for the regulation of short-term accommodations. The licensing of STAs contributes to sustainable growth while balancing the economic needs to support our growing community.

### People Consulted

Township Solicitor  
Municipal Law Enforcement Services (MLES)  
County of Renfrew Municipalities  
Planning and Development Department

March 21, 2024  
Regular Council

**Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications in this report.

The costs to implement the by-law to create and administer the short-term accommodations licensing will result in an increase in revenue, however, as the licensing fee is calculated on a cost-recovery basis, any revenue realized will offset the costs of administration, enforcement, and compliance.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Renée Mask, CAO

March 21, 2024  
Regular Council