

Staff Report

2024-244 - Fire and Emergency Services
Department



To: Chair Koetsier and Committee of the Whole
From: Corinna King, Supervisor of Municipal Law Enforcement
Joshua Bondar, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer
Date: December 10, 2024
Subject: Short Term Rental Year End Report

Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee of the Whole accept this report for information purposes; and

THAT Committee of the Whole recommend to Council to direct staff to bring forward an amendment to the Short Term Rental By-law in February 2025 to outline the changes as discussed.

Report Highlights

Overview of the first year of the short term rental by-law including:

- By-law staff application process
- Statistics
- Registered short term rental host survey information.
- Discussion items for Committee to consider
- Building Review for new applications
- Sustainability overview
- Next Steps - 2025

Background

The Short term rental By-law 2023-116 was passed in December 2023. In January of 2024, staff began preparing to implement the by-law and by February advertising the by-law began. Staff put signage up on message boards throughout the Township and flyers were created and put out at libraries and Township buildings. Posts were also made on the Township social media accounts and municipal road signs were changed to advertise the new by-law.

Before staff sent letters to property owners, the Township had received 14 applications from the various media forms mentioned above.

Come April, by-law staff drafted and sent 224 letters to the known short term rental owners in the Township. These letters introduced the property owners to the new by-law without a specified deadline to apply.

In June, by-law staff drafted and sent 132 letters to all active short term rental owners that had not made an application for their short-term rental. This letter gave a 30 day compliance date for owners to submit their application.

To date, by-law staff has sent 367 letters to property owners. This includes secondary letters to some property owners that listed their properties later or who had blocked dates in hopes of coming into compliance with the by-law.

In July, the first penalties were issued to non-compliant property owners. 2 months later in September, second offence penalties were issued to a small group of property owners who had still not made any contact to the Township or submitted an application for their short-term rental.

Analysis and Options

Statistics and data for the following topics are within the attached PowerPoint and will be presented to COW:

- Original STR numbers vs Current STR numbers
- STR administrative penalties breakdown
- Outline of application process
- Registration revenue
- Building and finance statistics
- Common application issues
- Complaints
- Results of Short-Term Rental Survey

Discussions items

Throughout the first year of the Township regulating and registering short term rentals, there has been two common issues that staff have received consistent feedback about.

Responsible person

The Township received many responsible person consent forms with owners living outside the 1 hour response requirement. With complaints being minimal during the first year of the by-law, by-law is asking COW to consider amending the by-law to allow for an increase to a 2 hour response requirement in case of an immediate by-law concern or emergency. Currently, we have people provide a secondary contact that can meet the criteria so we are setting the short term rental hosts up for success ensuring that they can meet the timeframe as set out in the by-law. While there were a few owners that lived in other provinces or more than two hours away, majority of the owners are within the GTA and a two hour time limit would allow the owners of the rental to respond to by-law concerns or complaints without relaying on other people or neighbours to assist in these situations. This 2 hour response time would allow people in major cities such as Mississauga, Toronto, Uxbridge, Parry Sound, and Huntsville to

be their own responsible person. Throughout this season, there was no calls required to the responsible person listed within our registered STRs.

Sleeping Cabins

A large majority of applications came through the application process including a secondary or accessory sleeping cabin included in their number of bedrooms and number of occupants. As seen in the statistics, provided the number of occupants within short term rentals have been significantly reduced. Staff have heard from the registered hosts, and as seen in the survey results, removing sleeping cabins from their listings reduces the number of people that are permitted within the rental and has effects on their business as STRs in competing communities are not limited to just the main dwelling. Staff are asking the Committee to consider whether accessory structures or sleeping cabins, if they are rented in connection with the main dwelling be permitted. During the review process, staff would ensure that the sleeping cabin itself is legal and the septic system is approved for this amount of bedrooms in each structure.

Building Review of New Applications

During the application process, one of the first applications received did not have final occupancy approval from the building department. To summarize short-term rental by-law section 7.1(g), staff have the authority to refuse to issue or renew registration, or to revoke or suspend a registration where the property to be used as a short-term rental does not conform with applicable federal and provincial regulations, or municipal by-laws.

Due to this, by-law staff found it beneficial for building staff to review all short-term rental applications to ensure that there was no outstanding applications or orders, and that the bedrooms specified on the application matched building permits to ensure proper use of the septic system.

As seen in the PowerPoint slides, building staff have found a considerable amount of issues which left additional work on the building inspectors. Due to this influx of work, Township staff believe it would be beneficial to charge a \$100 fee for building review. With this fee, it will cover some of the building department staff costs who do not see any of the revenue from short-term rentals. This fee would be for new applications, not renewals, and if council decides to permit sleeping cabin as these owners would need to submit brand new applications to the Township.

Sustainability

The Sustainability Pledge implemented as part of the Short-Term Rental Licensing Program has been a significant success. Over 51% of hosts opted to participate in the Sustainability Plan, and out of all that completed the STR survey, only 11% have yet to meet all their goals. A majority of respondents focused on enhancing guest engagement by including guest books and sharing the history and culture of the region within their rental units. Additionally, more than 70% of hosts established working

relationships with local businesses and suppliers, showcasing local artists, retailers, and food service providers. Impressively, over 80% committed to promoting local trails, parks, and community activities, while also taking an active interest in understanding and sharing information about local fishing, hunting, and environmental rules. With random audits planned from January to March 2025, the Sustainability Department anticipates positive feedback. The program has been successful in fostering community engagement and environmental stewardship.

Next Steps - 2025

Following this discussion in COW, by-law staff is hoping that a resolution is passed to allow for the necessary changes to be made to the by-law that are recommended in this report. If so, these changes will be coming to the next council meeting in February.

At this time, with over 70% of active short-term rentals are fully registered, by-law staff is working at creating a simplistic renewal form. This form will have the property owner checking that all information for their property is the same, and then submitting to the Township. If items are to change, they can indicate this and submit a much smaller application. The item that Township staff believe most people will need to update is for their septic inspection. While many people had to get their septic inspection this year, it will not be too large of an influx for the upcoming 2025 year.

Similarly to the 2024 year, by-law staff expect many people to come back online to try and avoid the registration process. With the help of Granicus, by-law staff continue to monitor all active short-term rentals in the Township and will work to increase the percentage of total active short-term rentals that are registered.

Moving forward in 2025, staff will be also completing the following:

1. Create a condensed document of all by-laws pertaining to short-term rentals which will be a fast reference guide for hosts and guests.
2. Staff will allow short-term rentals that originally pay for a light registration (21 days or less), to pay the difference and move to a regular registration (22 days or more), if they are booked more than anticipated within their registration period.
3. Staff is reviewing all current documentation that they have provided, with taking comments throughout the year from hosts, and updating them to streamline the application process.

Environmental Consideration

With Council committing to the short-term rental by-law, Township staff have been able to substantially decrease the risk of overloaded septic systems and found multiple properties with current septic issues that would not have been addressed otherwise.

The implementation of the sustainability plan is unique to the Township of Georgian Bay. As the 2025 season begins, we hope that sustainability staff will see the effects of this environmental stewardship program that has been implemented. As well, staff hope that many people will opt for a sustainability plan with renewal as they will have

had more time to research and decide what sustainability goals would be appropriate for them.

Financial Considerations

The revenue statistics are presented in the PowerPoint slides that form part of this report.

The only new item that staff recommend that would have financial consideration is the \$100 building review mentioned in the analysis.

Conclusion

After 1 year of the short-term rental by-law, staff believe the results are very beneficial to the Township. Through this process, by-law staff hope the items discussed can be brought forward to Council to make the application process smoother for property owners.

Report Supported By

This recommendation report is in alignment with the following strategic pillars:

- Environmental Protection
- Fiscal Responsibilities and Technology Efficiencies
- Streamline Planning Policies and Procedures
- Customer Experience and Community Engagement
- District and Township Relationship
- Engage with Indigenous Communities

Reviewed By/Collaborated With:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Chief Building Official
- Director of Corporate Services / Clerk
- Director of Finance / Treasurer
- Director of Fire and Emergency Services / Fire Chief
- Manager of Human Resources
- Director of Operations
- Director of Planning
- Director of Sustainability
- Other

Attachments

[December 2024 Council STR Presentation](#)

Reviewed By

Karen Way, Director of Corporate Services / Clerk
Greg Mariotti, Chief Administrative Officer

Status:

Approved - 27 Nov 2024
Approved - 26 Nov 2024

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

By-law Department Year 1 Report



Presentation Overview

- In December 2023, Council adopted by-law 2023-116 to regulate short-term rentals in the Township of Georgian Bay.
- From this date, by-law staff (in connection with other departments), have been working to register all active short-term rentals.
- This presentation will outline the following:
 - What steps have been taken
 - Original numbers vs. current statistics
 - Outlining the application process and issues encountered
 - Complaints overview
 - Short-Term Rental survey results



Steps taken since December 2023

Public Outreach
Created posters for all municipal buildings, social media posts, and updated Township road signs.

December - March

April 2024

Welcome Letters
Letters sent to all active short-term rentals indicating by-law implementation and application were being received.

Compliance Letters
Letters sent to all short-term rentals that did not have applications submitted to the Township with 30-day timeline.

June 2024

July 2024

First Penalties Issued
Penalty notices sent to property owners with active short-term rental listings that had not contacted Township.

Second Penalties Issued
Second penalty notices sent to property owners with active short-term rental listings that had not contacted Township.

September 2024

Total letters sent to property owners: **367**

January 2024 vs. December 2024

JANUARY 2024 (Before Registration)

≈250

≈1800

--Active STRs--

↓ 42%

--Total Guests--

↓ 51%

DECEMBER 2024 (Today)

145

880

Current Statistics

ACTIVE SHORT-TERM RENTALS

145

REGISTERED

103

(71%)

AWAITING PAYMENT

2

(1%)

RECIEVED

9

(6%)

WORKING ON

1

(1%)

STALLED

6

(5%)

NON-COMPLIANT

12

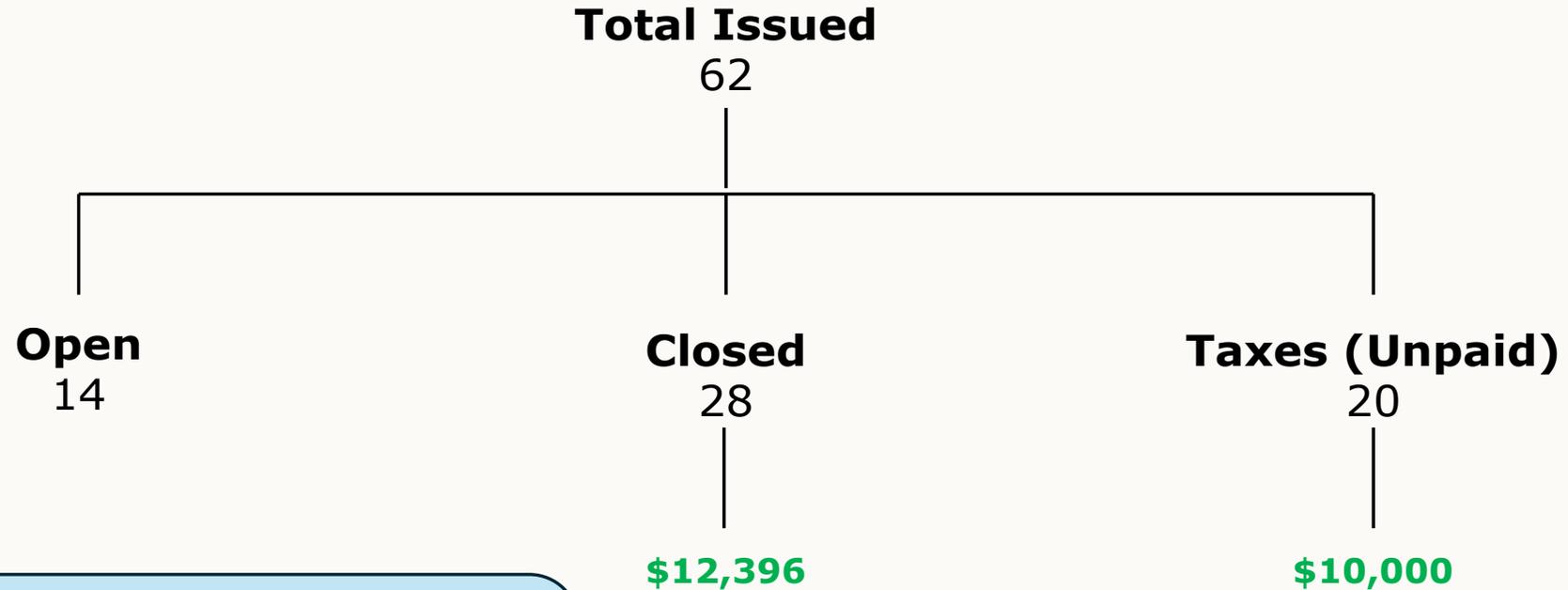
(8%)

UNKOWN LOCATION

12

(8%)

Administrative Monetary Penalty System

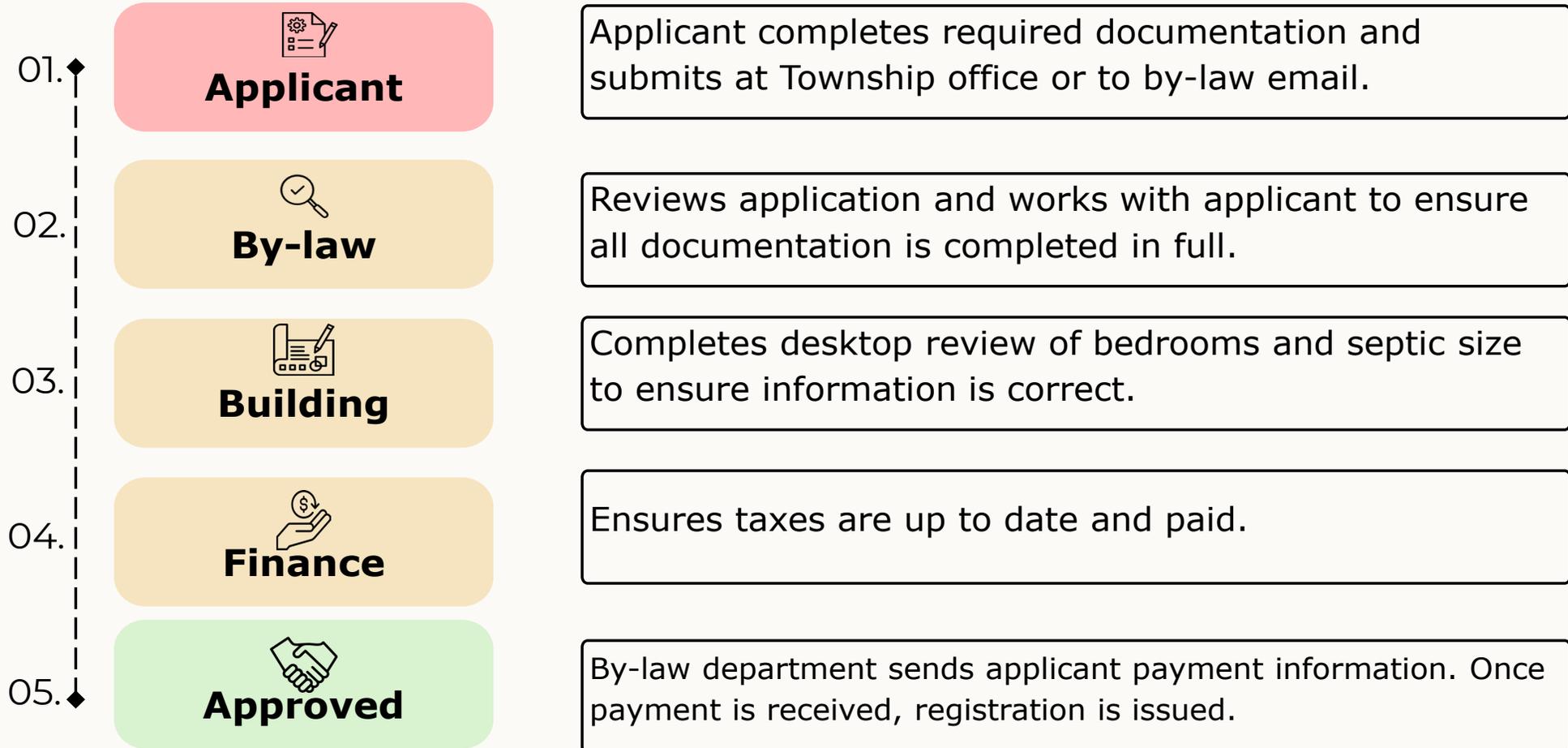


14/62 Requested a Screening Review

2/14 Requested a Hearing Review

Penalties issued to 46 different properties

Application Process



Registration Revenue

103
Properties
Registered

**Regular
Registration**
(22 or more days)
34 Issued

**Light
Registration**
(21 or less days)
16 Issued

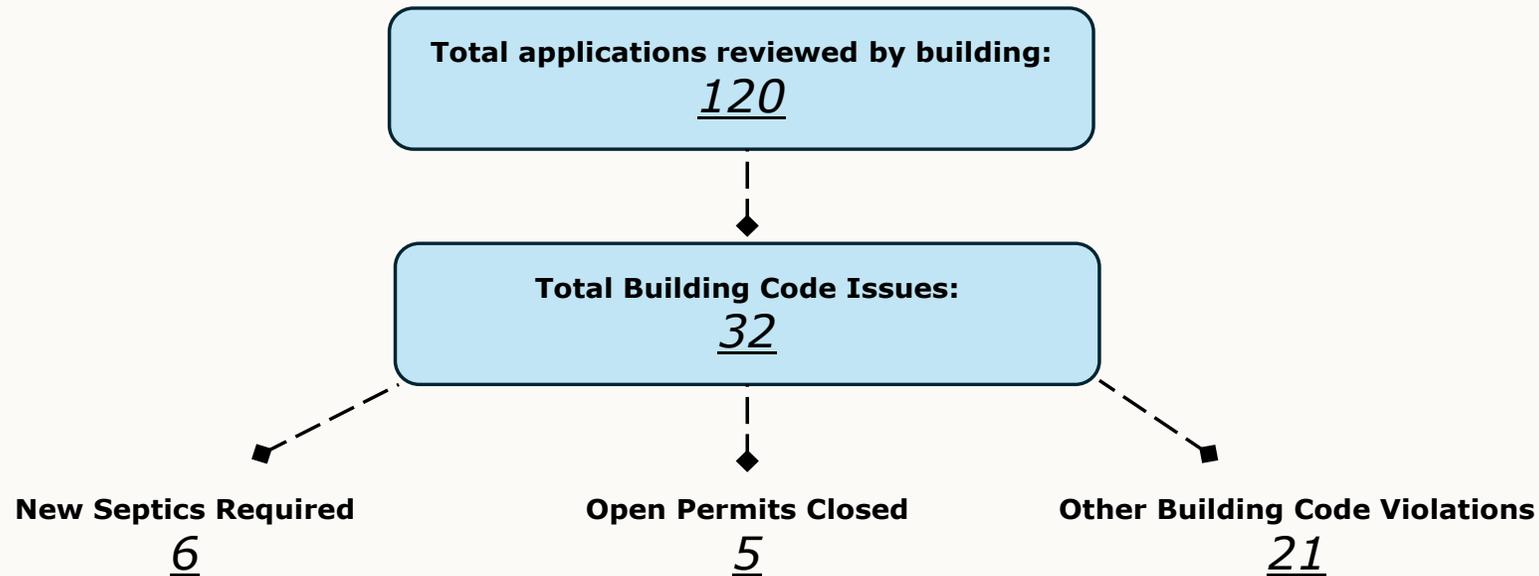
**Regular +
Sustainability
Registration**
(22 or more days)
37 Issued

**Light +
Sustainability
Registration**
(21 days or less)
16 Issued

Total Revenue
\$74,900

Building Stats

- During the application review completed by by-law staff, the property info is sent to the building department review.
- This would have a building inspector review the building records of the property to ensure no outstanding building permits or orders were open and that the bedrooms listed in the application were appropriate with the installed septic.
- This process found the following issues:



Financial Stats

- During the application review completed by by-law staff, the property info is also sent to the finance department.
- Upon review, the finance department looks to see if there are any outstanding taxes on the property. If taxes are outstanding, the registration cannot be issued until it is paid in full.

Properties with Outstanding Taxes	Total Amount Paid
6	\$38,326.81

Common Application Issues

Majority of owners had to get septic inspected causing extended time during application.

Septic Inspection

Property owners had to provide another contact because they did not live within 1 hour.

Responsible Person



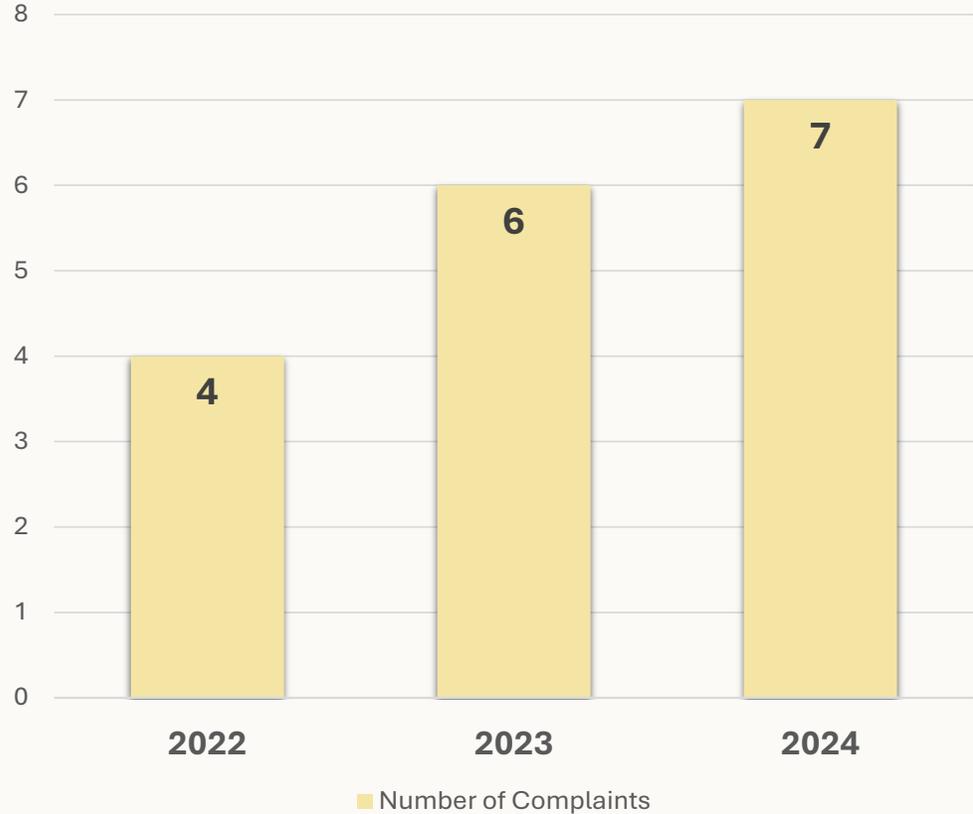
Bunkies

Owners wanted to rent out bunkies which is prohibited within by-law.

Guest Rooms

Applicants did not follow 2 guests per room and had to reduce number of renters.

Complaints



2024 STR Complaint Breakdown

- 3** = Neighbours complained/inquired if short-term rental next door was registered
- 3** = Renters were violating other Township by-laws
- 1** = Not valid (not an operating STR)

Short-Term Rental Survey

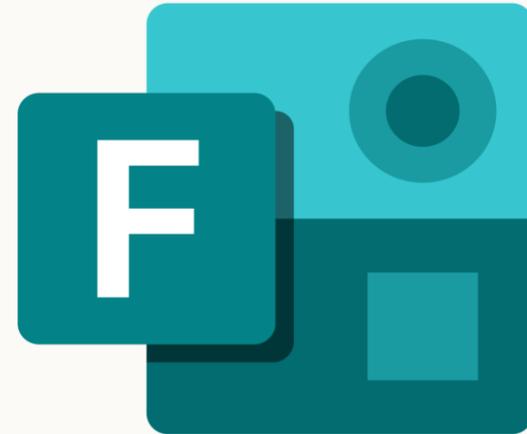
Township staff created a survey to that was circulated to all registered short-term rental owners.

The objective was to gather feedback from short-term rental owners regarding the short-term rental by-law and its associated procedures to bring to Council in December 2024.

Survey overview:

- Sent to all active short-term rentals
- Survey link sent via email and compiled through Microsoft Forms.
- **Start Date:** November 6th, 2024
- **End Date:** November 15th, 2024

- Total responses = 27 (26%)

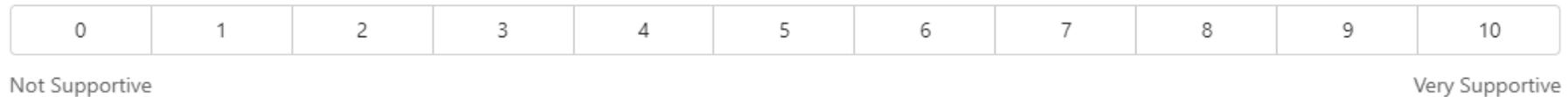


Survey Results

Question 1:

Are you supportive of the Township implementing a short-term rental by-law to register, regulate and govern all short-term rentals in the Township of Georgian Bay?

Applicable Answers:



RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

0 = 13 responses

1 = 2 responses

2 = 1 response

3 = 1 response

4 = 1 response

5 = 3 responses

6 = 2 responses

7 = 0 responses

8 = 2 responses

9 = 1 response

10 = 1 response

Average Response

2.07

Survey Results

Question 2:

Did you contact the Mayor or your local councillor regarding your opinion of the short-term rental by-law?

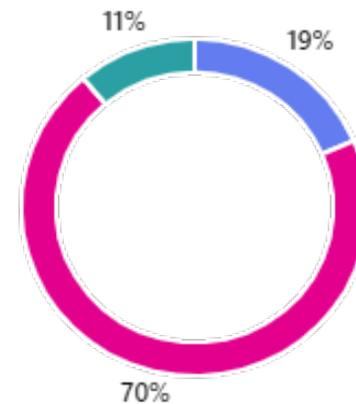
Applicable Answers:

 Yes No No, but I spoke in a public meeting

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes (19%)
- No (70%)
- No, but I spoke in a public meeting (11%)



Survey Results

Question 3:

Out of all documentation required as part of the registration process, please indicate how easy or difficult each item was to complete.

Applicable Answers:

1 - Very Easy

2 - Easy

3 - Neutral

4 - Difficult

5 - Very Difficult

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

Average Responses

Proof of Ownership = 2.2 (**Easy**)

Site Plan = 3.7 (**Neutral**)

Responsible Person Consent Form = 3.07 (**Neutral**)

Floor Plan = 3.6 (**Neutral**)

Proof of Insurance = 2.4 (**Easy**)

Waste Disposal Plan = 2.8 (**Easy**)

Septic Inspection = 3.8 (**Neutral**)

Sustainability Plan = 3.5 (**Neutral**)

Survey Results

Question 3:

Please specify what we the Township could have done throughout this process to have further assisted you? If any.

Applicable Answers:

Property owners provided their own answers. Below is the 3 most common themes found from the responses.

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

No comment to
be shared

Township was
helpful + Easy
Application

Township should
not regulate
STRs + Tax Grab

Short-Term Rental Survey

Question 5:

The Township received many applications with bunkies (sleeping cabins) included as part of the sleeping area. If the Township allowed for this to be classified as a "Guest Room" as long as the Primary Dwelling was being rented to the same party, would you be in favour?

Applicable Answers:

Yes

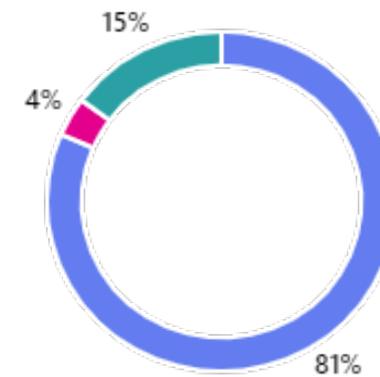
No

No, I do not have a bunkie on my property

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes (81%)
- No (4%)
- No, I do not have a bunkie on my property (15%)



Survey Results

Question 6:

The Short-Term Rental by-law requires owners to have their guests complete a renters code of conduct. With the new by-law and renters code of conduct, did you find more cooperation among guests during their stay?

Applicable Answers:

Yes, more cooperation

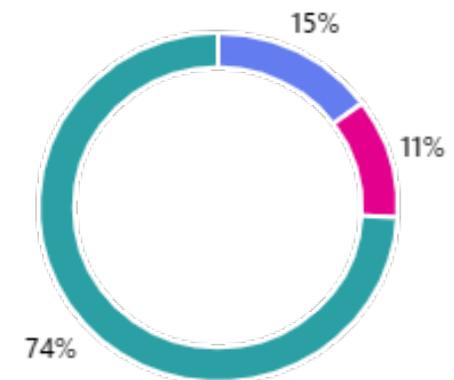
No, matters got worse

No, there was no change

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes, more cooperation (15%)
- No, matters got worse (11%)
- No, there was no change (74%)



Survey Results

Question 7:

Throughout the year, did you hit your sustainability pledge goals?

Applicable Answers:

Yes

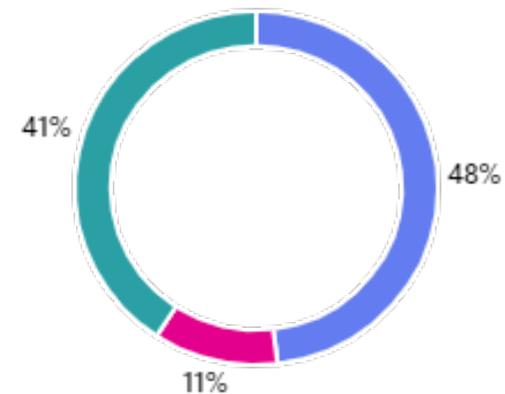
No

No, I did not complete a sustainability pledge

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes (48%)
- No (11%)
- No, I did not complete a sustainability pledge (41%)



Survey Results

Question 8:

Would you like to see a graduated rental category where you could commit to another week of rentals for an additional fee?

Applicable Answers:

Yes

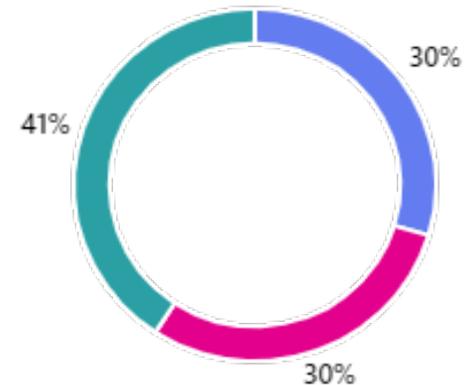
No

No, I already rent my cottage for more than 22+ days a year

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes (30%)
- No (30%)
- No, I already rent my cottage for more than 22+ days a year (41%)



Survey Results

Question 9:

With this by-law in effect, and the decrease in rentals across the province, will you continue renting your Georgian Bay property in the coming years?

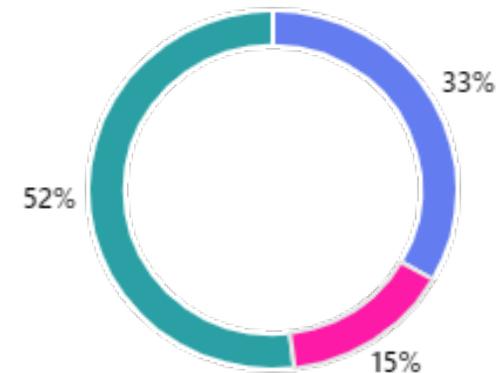
Applicable Answers:

 Yes No Maybe

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

- Yes (33%)
- No (15%)
- Maybe (52%)



Survey Results

Question 10:

As a registered short-term rental owner, what is something about the short-term rental program that you would like to see changed?

Applicable Answers:

Property owners provided their own answers. Below is the 3 most common themes found from the responses.

RESULTS

27 RESPONSES

Repeal By-law +
Do not agree
with
requirements

Fees to high

Condensed by-
laws for renters
to review

QUESTIONS?

