

COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

From: Administration

Date: March 23, 2026

Subject: RTC – Short Term Rentals

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND:

In 2024, Council requested staff proceed with the process for developing short-term rental regulations in Mackenzie. The following report provides an update on the current Provincial regulations, key considerations, and next steps in development.

Short-Term Rental Regulations

Short-term rentals (STRs), such as those offered through Airbnb, VRBO, and similar platforms have become increasingly common across British Columbia. These rentals typically involve the use of a home, suite, or bedroom for stays of less than 30 days. While STRs can offer needed accommodation for visitors, contractors, and seasonal workers, they can also affect housing availability, neighbourhood character, and enforcement capacity within small communities.

In late 2023, the Province of British Columbia introduced the *Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act* to strengthen oversight of STR activity across the province. The legislation introduces new requirements for hosts, platforms, and local governments, including increased fines, platform data-sharing, and the development of a provincial registry intended to support enforcement. A key feature of the Act is the provincial shift toward limiting STRs to an operator's principal residence, with the intention of reducing the use of entire homes as full-time short-term rentals in communities facing significant housing pressures.

Considerations

Mackenzie has seen intermittent and seasonal increases in STR activity, particularly connected to tourism, major projects, industrial workforce needs, and community events. Some homeowners benefit from the supplemental income, while visitors and contractors rely on STRs during high-demand periods. However, as in other BC communities, there is increasing interest in

understanding how STRs may affect long-term housing availability, rental market stability, and neighbourhood expectations. To date, the District of Mackenzie (District) has not conducted dedicated public engagement specific to STRs.

Across British Columbia, many communities have reviewed short-term rentals and found the need to balance housing availability, tourism and local business support, neighbourhood impacts, and effective enforcement. As Mackenzie considers its approach, short-term rentals present both opportunities and challenges. They can support visitors, workers, and local businesses, and provide supplemental income for homeowners, while also potentially reducing long-term housing availability and affecting neighbourhood quality of life. Clear local rules and enforcement can help address these issues by promoting fairness, accountability, and consistent expectations across the community.

Further, Mackenzie is currently excluded from the provincial principal residence requirement because its population is under 10,000. This means that, unlike larger municipalities, entire-home short-term rentals may continue to operate legally under provincial legislation. *The Act* gives smaller municipalities the option to opt in to the principal residence requirement if they wish to apply the same restrictions as larger communities. Even with the exemption, other parts of the legislation will still apply, including enhanced enforcement tools, platform obligations, and the expectation that local governments be responsible for setting clear rules through zoning, business licensing, and local bylaws to define where short-term rentals may operate and under what conditions.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff are preparing to initiate a public engagement process to better understand how residents, property owners, and businesses feel about short-term rentals in Mackenzie. Public engagement will help staff bring forward options and recommendations that reflect local values, housing considerations, and the community's economic development goals. The survey will incorporate questions informed by engagement approaches used in other communities across British Columbia.

The following provides an overview of the upcoming phases of developing the regulation:

Timeline		Activities
Phase 1 – Plan	2025 - present	- Review of DoM bylaws, other community practices, and provincial regulations - Discussion with DoM departments to identify local considerations for regulations as well as consider how to sustainably operationalize the new regulation in each service area.
Phase 2 – Engage	April/May 2026	First Round of Public Engagement

Phase 3 – Create	May 2026	• Prepare and Present What We Heard Report #1 • Draft new regulations.
Phase 4 – Review	May/June 2026	• Present draft regulations to Council and departments for feedback. • Second Round of Public Engagement
Phase 5 – Draft	June/July 2026	• Prepare and Present What We Heard Report #2 • Prepare final draft regulations for Council consideration
Phase 6 – Adopt	July 2026	• Adopt regulations and share communications materials.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Economic Vitality

- The District is a leader on efforts aimed at diversifying the community's economy, supporting local businesses, and attracting new investment to the community. Diversification, a strong business sector and new investment are key to our economic vitality.

Strong Governance and Finances

- As the municipality's elected governing body, we serve all residents and businesses in the community. We engage residents and stakeholders on important issues and make our decisions through open and transparent processes. We are careful in our use of resources, mindful of the need to maintain programs and services, while also meeting the community's infrastructure needs.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Rachelle Richman, Economic Development Coordinator

Reviewed By: Corporate and Financial Services

Approved By: Chief Administrative Officer