

**Staff Report P2024-23 Resource 4
Affordable Housing Task Force Letter**

August 1, 2023

To: Members of Council, Town of Collingwood
From: Collingwood Affordable Housing Task Force

Re: Staff Proposal on Short Term Accommodations

As members of the Collingwood Affordable Housing Task Force, we are responding to the staff report #C2023-15, Short-Term Accommodation Licensing Framework Draft #1.

The task force generally agrees that we do not favour any short-term accommodations within residential zones in Town. There is research that shows that the presence of short-term accommodations erodes the supply of rental properties and thus has a negative impact on affordability.

We, however, understand that STAs will continue to exist despite the Town prohibiting them. Thus, we agree that the best way forward is a licensing framework as proposed by Town Staff. We compliment Town Staff on their research and work on this file and the public engagement sought in this process.

As a task force we are offering the following suggestions to strengthen the regulatory framework as proposed:

1. Set licensing fees at a level that the program will be financially self-supporting. The proposal as presented shows a potential taxpayer subsidy to the program to cover shortfalls between licensing revenues and approval and enforcement costs. The existence of STAs should not come at taxpayer expense. We therefore recommend to significantly increase the fees, especially for the first year. For instance, if the median income of an STA in Collingwood is \$25,000 per year as stated in the report, a 5% licensing fee would be \$1,250. The proposed fees should be at least that.
2. We recommend that in the licensing framework, it is specified that the applicant pays the cost of any inspections such as fire and health inspections.
3. Requiring licence numbers to be included in all advertisements has led to abuse in other municipalities where unlicensed STAs copy the license number from licensed STA listings. We recommend that in addition to the above, the Town maintain a listing of all licensed STAs in Collingwood accessible to the public on their website. We realize that this requirement is included in the proposed by-law section 7.1 but wish to re-iterate the importance of this.
4. We recommend that Staff set parameters on where STAs are permitted in Town. This could take the form of restricting STAs to commercial or residential areas that encourage mixed use-built form. It would be logical for STAs to be in areas that are walkable, close to commercial entities, and in areas that are transit supportive.
5. The task force also has concerns about subsidized ADUs being used as STA's. We recommend that where an ADU is subsidized by the Town or the Region through available financial incentives, that these be prohibited to be used as STAs. We encourage more ADUs, however if they simply are used for STA's, they will not be adding to the affordable rental stock in our Town. We are aware that the Rapid ADU Deployment Grant Program has provisions in place to mitigate this risk and encourage future programs to have similar requirements where grants and/or subsidies are present.

We trust that these suggestions are helpful to support the good work staff have done on this file.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Vanderkooy,
Vice-Chair, Collingwood Affordable Housing Task Force.