
To: Mayor and Council

From: Sasha Helmkey-Playter, Clerk/Director of Legislative Services; Amy Cann, Director of Planning & Building; Amanda Murray, Manager Parks & Recreation; Briar Kelly, Community Economic Development Officer

Meeting Date: April 14, 2025

Subject: Report # LS-008-2025 – Short Term Rental Accommodation Licensing – Next Steps

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Clearview hereby receive report LS-008-2025 (Short Term Rental Accommodation Licensing – Next Steps) dated April 14, 2025, for information.

Background

At the February 24, 2025, meeting, Council supported developing a short-term accommodation program for the Township of Clearview, including a licensing by-law; and directed staff to begin the process of investigating a program. This investigation would include public and stakeholder engagement, policy considerations, regulations and legislation, and existing programs established by neighbouring municipalities.

Since this meeting staff have been working collaboratively to draft and outline next steps in this process. Below is a summary of these steps.

Comments and Analysis

The development of a Short-Term Rental Accommodation program is one that needs to be taken in strategic steps, gathering key information that will assist in making informed decisions to move to the next step. Each part of the process will relate to one of the key areas identified in the first report to Council in February:

- Public & Stakeholder Engagement
- Policy Considerations
- Legislation & Regulations
- Existing municipal STRA licensing programs

Relating back to these key areas will assist in keeping the process on track, understanding timelines and promote meaningful engagement.

Next Steps

Below is a high-level overview of the proposed next steps. These items form part of staff's Project Work Plan to ensure that the project is moving forward efficiently and effectively.

- [Zoning By-law Update \(Policy Considerations\)](#)

The Clearview Planning Team, together with the Township's Planning consultants at MHBC, continue to work on the comprehensive Zoning By-law review (ZBLR) process, which was initiated at the end of 2024. At this time, background information is being gathered and analysed for the purposes of drafting a new by-law and initiating the public consultation phase of the process. This phase is slated to occur in the summer months. Where possible, the ZBLR review and engagement process will be used to supplement or create efficiencies with the STRA review process.

- [Launch Survey \(Public & Stakeholder Engagement\)](#)

To better assess the community's receptiveness towards a STRA licencing program and Municipal Accommodation Tax, staff have developed a survey that will be made available to the general public in April 2025. The survey in its form is attached as Appendix A to this report. This survey is intended to be a high-level strategy to capture initial thoughts and concerns from the community prior to staff developing the by-law.

Over the course of three weeks, staff will conduct a Communications Plan (Appendix B) to reach the intended audience to participate in the survey. This Communications Plan is designed to reach a wide demographic of residents, stakeholders and visitors to Clearview. All efforts will be made to ensure accessibility to the survey in either online or in-person opportunities.

This survey will provide a guiding pathway ensuring that all factors are considered during the development of the by-law. After the by-law draft is created, staff will engage the public in a secondary consultation period that is outlined further in this report. This secondary consultation period will include an open house, stakeholder rounds tables and invitational feedback sessions. All anticipated costs to execute the survey, Communications Plan and secondary public engagement activities will be supported collaboratively through the Economic Development and Clerks budgets.

- [Draft Licensing By-law for comment \(Legislation, Regulations & Existing Municipal STRA licencing programs\)](#)

Clearview has some advantages in being one of the last municipalities to institute a STRA licencing program. It provides the opportunity to understand the challenges and successes of neighbouring municipalities and highlight the hot topic items that the public have an interest in. With information from other short term rental licencing by-laws and

the survey results from the initial public engagement outlined above, staff will work on a draft by-law throughout the summer for proposed release by October 2025. With the release of the draft by-law, staff will conduct further Council and public/stakeholder engagement on key items of interest. In reviewing other municipal licensing by-laws, staff have preliminarily identified the following as areas of interest:

- **License fees** – identify an appropriate annual licensing fee. Neighbouring municipalities range from \$1250 - \$3000.
- **Residence type** – i.e. whether short term accommodations may only be permitted at principal residences in settlement areas.
- **Licence cap** – i.e. maximum number of short term accommodations that can be licenced annually.
- **Regulate number of renters/guests per room** – i.e. maximum number per rental, per room, and maximum number of guests (1 per renter).
- **Demerit point system** – fines and demerit points for non-compliance with rules and regulations set out in the by-law.
- **Inspection requirements** – Fire Department, Building Department and By-law Enforcement to conduct inspections prior to issuance of licence. Require homeowners to complete certain requirements i.e. fire extinguishers made available, proof of updated HVAC inspections, etc.
- **Municipal Accommodation Tax** – identify the purpose of the tax, how it will be collected from property hosts and gain feedback on which tourism and related activities/projects that the municipality will utilize the revenues for.
- **Working Session with Council (Public & Stakeholder Engagement)**

Once a draft by-law is ready for input, the Clerks Department will schedule a working session with Council to discuss the key items identified above and any other hot topics that have been identified through the public survey. This session will be the kick off to the Township's engagement with the public on the draft by-law. It is intended to hear Council's opinions, concerns and opportunities. Council may attend the open house for public engagement.

- **Public Open House (Public & Stakeholder Engagement)**

During the development of the by-law, all feedback captured during the survey from the initial phase of public engagement will be considered and addressed as applicable. Once a draft of the by-law is complete and ready for consideration, staff will conduct a Public Open House to introduce the proposed by-law, outline what is considered the hot topic items and receive additional feedback from members of the community. Staff are

anticipating that this session will be held in early/mid-Fall or at a time that the licensing program by-law is at a stage where it is ready for public input.

- **Focus Groups and Invitational Consultation (Public & Stakeholder Engagement)**

As part of the secondary public consultation strategy for the STRA licensing program, staff will also conduct a series of focus groups and invitational consultations with stakeholders. These sessions are expected to be held in mid/late-Fall to ensure that individuals within the tourism sector are within capacity to participate.

Planning for these sessions is in the early stages and will be further refined as the by-law continues to be developed. Staff are expecting to coordinate two initial round table events; the first will be open to the general public with the second being an open invitation to operators and stakeholders from the tourism sector. A final roundtable session will be held on a closed invitational basis with the key targets being operators of internet-based STA platforms (AirBnB, VRBO, Jayne's Cottages etc.) and self-identified rental hosts that are currently or interested in operating.

There may be individuals or stakeholders who are unable to attend the focus groups/roundtables or those who wish for their feedback to remain confidential. With this in mind, staff are considering developing a secondary survey that will capture their key feedback of the proposed licensing program and draft by-law. Throughout this process, staff will also ensure that the public are able to submit additional commentary and feedback by email or phone directly to the Clerks Department who will be identified as the main point of contact for this program.

Finalization of By-law

In early 2026, once public engagement is complete on the draft by-law, it is staff's intention to provide a follow-up report to Council with the feedback received, and if needed, hold another working session to discuss the hot topics further. It is the plan to have a final by-law presented for approval by the end of Spring, with it coming into force and effect on January 1, 2027. The time before the by-law comes into effect will allow staff to begin the communication plan for licensing requirements, including inspection necessities with hosts being able to complete any works needed in anticipation of receiving their licence. It will also provide the opportunity to create a list of potential or known short term rentals, allowing staff to provide direct communication to these hosts. Although the licensing by-law is intended to come into effect January 1st, 2027, there will be a period of time provided from this date onwards for hosts to submit a completed licence application for the year (est. 1 month). By-law Enforcement staff will begin with education in the first half of the year, and address non-compliance in the second half with possible issuance of fines, where applicable.

Municipal Accommodation Tax By-law

The Communications Plan as outlined in this report will also engage the public and Council on the concept of a Municipal Accommodation Tax and how the funds can be utilized. The Municipal Act, 2001, provides the power for municipalities to impose a transient accommodation tax (MAT) under Part XII.1. It's important to note that the implementation of an accommodation tax is done through a separate by-law, it's not included in the licensing by-law. The Municipal Act requires that the by-law contain (at the very least) the following information:

1. It must state the subject of the tax to be imposed.
2. It must state the tax rate or the amount of tax payable.
3. It must state the manner in which the tax is to be collected, including the designation of any persons or entities who are authorized to collect the tax as agents for the municipality and any collection obligations of persons or entities who are required to collect the tax under subsection (4).

The Township can reach an agreement with a separate entity to collect the tax on the municipality's behalf, which Clearview would be looking to do if Council approves charging the tax. There is much to explore regarding a MAT with the Tourism Industry of Ontario (TIAO) providing clear information on different aspects of the Tax and common questions. More information can be found at <https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/municipalaccommodationtax>.

If a MAT is instituted, the Township under O.Reg. 435/17 must make a payment to one or more eligible tourism entities promoting tourism in the area, representing 50% of the net revenue of tax collected. The other 50% can be used for initiatives at the discretion of the Township i.e. offset wages of additional by-law enforcement staff, etc. More information about MAT and considerations for Council's input will be explored in upcoming staff reports.

Financial Implications

For the public engagement sessions there will be costs associated with advertising and promotion of the sessions. These advertising costs are planned to be covered under both the Economic Development and Clerks Department advertising budgets.

For the 2026 Budget, staff will be presenting a staffing business case for an additional By-law Enforcement Officer who will be managing the Township's licensing, mainly short term rentals, and zoning compliance. If Council approves the additional position, staff propose to have the individual start by mid-2026 to assist with the communication plan, development of application and inspection regime through CityView and record keeping, as well as development of a list of short term rentals currently operating in the municipality.

With any large project, there may be financial implications that are not anticipated. If there isn't an existing budget that can manage the financial impact, staff will report to Council seeking approval for any additional funding required.

Clearview's Strategic Plan

The above initiative supports the following strategic pillars:

- Communication

Report Appendices

Appendix A – STRA & MAT Survey

Appendix B – Public Engagement Communications Plan

Approvals

Submitted by:	Sasha Helmkey-Playter, B.A., Dipl. M.A., AOMC, Clerk/Director of Legislative Services
Reviewed by:	Terry Vachon, Director of Parks & Recreation; Joseph Paddock, Supervisor By-law Enforcement
Financial Implications Reviewed by:	Kelly McDonald, Treasurer
Approved by:	John Ferguson, CAO



Clearview Short-Term Rental Accommodations (STRA) Community Survey

Clearview Township needs your feedback!

As part of this exploration process, Clearview Township is requesting feedback from its residents to share their support or concerns for a STRA bylaw and licensing program. Please take a few moments to fill out this short survey and help shape the future of Clearview's tourism sector.

Across the region, municipalities are implementing Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STRA) licensing programs. Clearview Township is currently exploring a licensing program to establish and regulate various models of STRAs, including but not limited to Internet-based accommodation platforms.

1. Are you a resident of Clearview Township?

Yes

No

2. Do you support a Short-Term Rental Accommodation licensing program? This program would require all forms of STRAs be licensed and monitored by the municipality.

As a general concept, STRAs that are being considered in this licensing program would include internet-based platforms such as AirBnB, Vrbo and other similar booking systems. This would not include bed and breakfasts, inns or motels.

Yes

No

3. Please share any concerns or advantages that may occur if Clearview Township implements this type of licensing program.

4. Would you support a Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) that would be applicable to all licensed STRAs? The revenue generated from MAT would be directed to support community initiatives, such as enhancing public spaces, implementing destination marketing initiatives, improving facilities and other community-based projects.

Yes

No

STRA Public Survey – Communications Plan

Purpose: To gain critical insights and concerns from the general public, stakeholders and residents of the community for Clearview Township staff to consider during the licensing program and bylaw development.

Date	Call to Action
April 23	News Release – Launch Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quote from Mayor ○ Point of Contacts: Clerks
April 25	Creemore Echo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¼ page ad • QR code
April 26 to May 11	Launch social posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent messaging and posts 1-2 times per week on channels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clearview Township (LinkedIn) ○ Discover Clearview (Facebook and Instagram) • Sample Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Hey Clearview Residents! We want your input...” ○ Last call! Only 48 hours remaining to tell us what you think about licensing STRAs in Clearview Township
May 2	Creemore Echo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¼ page ad • QR code
May 3	Event Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct in-person promotional strategies at the <i>Stayner Duck Races</i> • Reach residents and visitors • A-Frame signs with QR code for easy scanning access
May 10	Event Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct in-person promotional strategies at the <i>Creemore Springs Turas Mor</i> on May 10 • Reach residents and visitors • A-Frame signs with QR code for easy scanning access

Other Promotional Activities:

- Mayor Doug Measures on “Talk of the Town” 95.1 The Peak FM morning radio show
- Discovering Clearview e-newsletter and Economic Development e-newsletters
- Newsletters such as Chamber of Commerce, Creemore BIA, and Tourism Industry Partners

Budget Considerations: All expenses and budgetary needs will be supported by both the Economic Development and Clerks budgets.