

CSRD Vacation Rental Guiding Principles Sheet

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Vacation Rental Guiding Principles Sheet is to aid CSRD staff and the Board in making land use and economic development recommendations and decisions as they pertain to the temporary/short term lodging of guests in residential dwelling units on a commercial basis. It is recognized by the Board that vacation rentals can contribute positively to the tourism economy of the region; however, it is also recognized that without appropriate consideration being given to the regulation of such commercial activity in residential areas, vacation rentals can negatively impact on the quality of life of existing nearby residents, while also creating an uneven playing field for existing and heavily regulated commercial property owners in the accommodation industry.

The intent therefore of these guiding principles are:

- To inform land use planning and economic development decisions of CSRD staff and the Board;
- To briefly describe the issues pertaining to vacation rentals and the purpose of the associated guiding principle;
- To provide consistency in decision-making when considering vacation rental issues;
- To provide information and direction to residents who may be considering establishing a vacation rental use on their property; and,
- To advise provincial ministries and agencies of the challenges facing local government in regard to vacation rentals.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Inappropriately sized, maintained, or installed sewer servicing of the dwelling(s) used for a vacation rental can lead to individual health issues and have significant environmental impacts on the neighborhood or downstream residents. Property owners are expected to meet all applicable Interior Health requirements for sewerage treatment and to have obtained a 'Letter of Certification' from Interior Health for the vacation rental use.
2. For the health and safety of renters, proof of the provision of potable water is required and landowners are expected to meet all appropriate provincial or Interior Health requirements in the provision of such water, e.g. wells, community water system.
3. Safety of guests staying in vacation rentals is of paramount concern to the CSRD. For this reason, confirmation from a Qualified Professional who is able to confirm that the dwelling unit proposed for vacation rental use meets with BC Building Code, and BC Fire Code, regulations is required.
4. A vacation rental should be restricted to a maximum occupancy of four (4) bedrooms per dwelling unit, and eight (8) guests, to minimize neighborhood impacts and to mitigate issues with the BC Building Code, e.g. fire separation for sleeping rooms, and BC Fire Code; there are difficulties in dealing with rescue and fire fighting operations in managing an incident at a residential structure where egress design has not been appropriately considered for large numbers of people compared to that of a commercial structure. At a minimum, a fire safety plan, portable fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors are required for each level of the vacation rental, and integrated smoke detectors located in each bedroom, as required for BC Building Code compliance per location and number.

5. In keeping with a residential neighborhood character, one off-street parking space must be provided for each room used for vacation rental purposes.
6. As most vacation rental units are located within homes in residential areas, the vacation rental users must not cause a nuisance to other residents through excessive noise, lighting or traffic so as to allow existing residents to have quiet enjoyment of their property. This includes a quiet time between 10pm and 7am.
7. Recreational vehicles, tents or park models are not permitted to be used for habitation purposes as part of the vacation rental.
8. Vacation rentals shall not operate as a bed and breakfast, hotel, motel, lodge or inn, nor include ancillary uses typical of such operations, e.g. meeting rooms, restaurants, concierge or retail sales.
9. From a risk management perspective, and since the CSRD is the approval authority for a TUP or rezoning for a vacation rental, the landowner must also provide a \$5 million Commercial General Liability insurance policy naming the CSRD as the additional insured prior to issuance of the TUP.
10. The CSRD supports vacation rental operators paying into the Municipal and Regional District Tax, where applicable, and also encourages the Ministry of Job, Tourism, and Skills Training and Destination BC to provide for legislation and policy in this regard.
11. The increase in use of residential dwellings for vacation rentals has caused a significant decrease in housing affordability and long term and season rental for workers in the tourism industry, and others. The CSRD supports provincial initiatives aimed at housing affordability and maintaining a sustainable rental market for long term tenants of all housing types, demographics and income levels.
12. As the use of the property changes from primarily residential to part-time or full-time vacation rental, the CSRD will forward a copy of any verified vacation rental, approved permit or bylaw amendment to BC Assessment so that they are aware of the change in use; at this time there is no legislative framework for BC Assessment to change the tax classification system for vacation rentals, however the CSRD supports such changes being made.
13. Since the property owner is most often not located on-site of a vacation rental, an easily accessible representative and emergency contact must be provided for all vacation rental guests.
14. Temporary Use Permit or rezoning is required for any property not currently zoned for vacation rental use. If zoned for vacation rental use the property owner must meet all other zoning regulations as applicable and as amended from time to time. In situations where a landowner expects that they may not be able to comply with specific zoning regulations, e.g. special event, a landowner may always apply to vary specific zoning regulations, or apply for a TUP.
15. It is expected that the vacation rental home and property will be in keeping with the residential character of the neighborhood.
16. For the health and safety of residents and visitors, the CSRD will continue to work with the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) in lobbying the Province of BC to enact appropriate regulation, taxation and oversight of the vacation rental industry. The CSRD will also continue to work towards the implementation of a building regulation service as a method of oversight for structures built specifically for vacation rental purposes.