

Bill Brown

From: Molly Harris
Sent: March-24-26 1:40 PM
To: Dan Horan; Terése Finegan; Bill Brown
Subject: FW: Short, Medium and Long Term Housing in Esquimalt...

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

- CAO
- Terese, Mgr of Economic Devt
- Bill, Director of Devt Services

Molly Harris

Corporate Services Assistant

Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services

Tel: 1-250-414-7163 | www.esquimalt.ca

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: March-23-26 5:07 PM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Short, Medium and Long Term Housing in Esquimalt...

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Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing to respectfully urge Council to permit the use of secondary suites and garden suites for short- and medium-term rentals without imposing a restrictive six-month maximum rental limit. Thoughtful flexibility in this policy will better reflect the real housing needs of Esquimalt while supporting residents, local businesses, and the broader community.

There is a clear and growing need for diverse accommodation options in Esquimalt. At present, the Township has extremely limited hotel capacity—effectively a single, often cost-prohibitive option. This leaves a significant gap for visitors, temporary workers, and families seeking alternatives. A healthy housing ecosystem includes a range of options: hotels, short-term rentals, medium-term furnished suites, and long-term housing. Each serves a distinct purpose and clientele.

Secondary suites and garden suites, in particular, offer a fundamentally different product than a hotel room. They provide privacy, a home-like environment, and amenities such as kitchens—features that are

especially valuable for stays in the 5–60 day range. These accommodations are frequently pet-friendly, family-oriented, and allow visitors to experience the community more like residents than tourists. This “local living” experience is increasingly in demand and cannot be replicated by traditional hotel offerings.

Importantly, the type of short-term rental that often raises concerns—rooms within an occupied home—has very limited demand. Many homeowners, particularly families, are not comfortable sharing their living space with strangers, and most guests prefer fully private accommodations. As such, entire secondary suites and garden suites represent the most viable and appropriate form of this housing segment.

Our own experience illustrates the importance of maintaining flexibility. We have a semi-detached in-law suite that is used by out-of-town family members from the Lower Mainland and Alberta for a portion of the year. For the past five years, when not in use by family, we have rented the suite on Airbnb in what is best described as the medium-term rental market. We follow a minimum 30-day stay policy, with most bookings ranging from 30 to 60 days.

This segment is often overlooked in policy discussions, yet it fills a critical gap between nightly tourist stays and year-long leases. Under current definitions, the Province classifies these rentals as short-term, while Esquimalt considers them long-term. We comply fully with all regulations, including paying the required \$450 provincial short-term rental licence, remitting GST and tourism taxes collected by Airbnb, and declaring all income appropriately.

Currently, we are hosting a traveling physician and his dog for a 60-night stay. This is a perfect example of the type of essential worker who relies on this form of housing. Without access to secondary suites, individuals like him would have few viable options in Esquimalt. Hotels are prohibitively expensive for extended stays and often do not accommodate pets. Similarly, visiting families, snowbirds, and contract professionals depend on these flexible, furnished rentals.

It is also important to recognize that secondary suites are not always suitable for long-term tenancy. In our case, the suite includes a Murphy bed, limited kitchen facilities, and no in-unit laundry—features that make it ideal for short- to medium-term stays but less practical for full-time living. Restricting its use would not necessarily convert it into long-term housing; instead, it would simply remove it from the available rental pool altogether.

From a policy and enforcement perspective, the most cost-effective and practical approach would be for Esquimalt to align with and adopt the Provincial short-term rental framework as it currently exists. The Province has already established regulations intended to balance housing needs with short-term accommodation supply, and has the resources and systems in place to enforce compliance. Aligning with these rules would reduce duplication, minimize municipal enforcement costs, and provide clarity and consistency for homeowners.

It is also important to recognize that Esquimalt has already demonstrated strong progress in meeting—and exceeding—housing expectations set by the Province. The Township’s Year 1 housing target was 81 units, yet 369 net new units were delivered—more than four times the requirement. Overall, Esquimalt is considered well-positioned to meet or exceed its five-year target of 754 units well ahead of schedule. Additionally, current planning confirms that sufficient land capacity already exists to meet long-term housing needs.

Given this strong performance, restricting secondary suites and garden suites will not meaningfully improve long-term housing supply, but it will reduce flexibility, harm tourism, and eliminate an important category of accommodation that serves real and immediate needs.

Finally, imposing a six-month cap on rental availability would unnecessarily limit supply and reduce economic benefits. In our situation, the suite is available for approximately ten months of the year. Reducing that to six months would mean fewer visitors, less local spending, and decreased tax revenue—both for the Province and the municipality. It would also remove an important source of supplemental income that helps homeowners manage the rising cost of living, including increasing property taxes.

Allowing year-round flexibility for secondary and garden suites, while aligning with Provincial regulations, strikes a more balanced and practical approach. It supports tourism, accommodates essential workers, reduces enforcement costs, and enables homeowners to contribute meaningfully to the housing ecosystem—without compromising neighborhood character.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this issue. We encourage Council to adopt a policy that reflects the diverse and evolving needs of Esquimalt. We would be interested in meeting to discuss this further if time permits.

Sincerely,

Andrew, Nancy, Jasper and Miki Paine

Bill Brown

From: Anne Dickinson
Sent: April-15-26 2:34 PM
To: Bill Brown; Terése Finegan; Dan Horan
Subject: FW: Short Term Rentals

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

Bill, Director of Development Services – For Action
Terése, Manager of Economic Development
CAO

Anne Dickinson
Reception Clerk
Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services
www.esquimalt.ca

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: April-14-26 12:55 PM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Short Term Rentals

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14 April 2026

Township of Esquimalt Short Term Rental Bylaw

Council Meeting 16 March 2026

Council was presented an independently compiled SHORT-TERM RENTAL POLICY ANALYSIS report to assist in development of Short-Term Rental Bylaw. Upon completion of presentation Staff was to receive guidance as requested in agenda to prepare a draft Bylaw for further examination and deliberation and further indicated a desire to move forward as quickly as possible, although the reasoning to move forward quickly was not indicated.

Council guidance to staff was to develop draft Bylaw guided by the adopted motion to allow for STR for a duration of 180-night limit encompassing only the principle resident dwelling renting rooms while present or whole home while away excluding garden or secondary/basement suites and other onsite

dwelling. Motivation for the adopted motion iterated a desire to seek a balance between rental and homeownership while favouring homeownership and long-term rental.

Esquimalt Real Estate

Full consideration of current real estate reality was not fully examined at 16 March meeting as it was stated further examination would take place once draft Bylaw created.

A snapshot of current Esquimalt rental accommodations and homes for sale on 24 March 2026 from data available at MLSlistings.com and Rentals.ca indicated that in Esquimalt there were 291 rental units of which 21 are homes available for rent and 83 homes for sale.

In addition, Esquimalt staff indicates that so far, in 2026:

- 166 housing units have been completed
 - 1 garden suite as part of a small-scale multi-unit housing
 - 66-unit condo apartment building
 - 99-unit condo apartment building

And,

Although completion dates are not exact, staff expects 780 total units of various types to be completed between 2026 to 2029 based on current permits:

- 512 Rental apartment units - complete between 2026 to 2029
- 30 Townhouse units – complete between 2026 - 2027
- 104 Seniors Residential - complete between 2027 to 2028
- 134 Condo apartment units - complete between 2027 to 2029

These statistics are brought forward to inform and to note that single family dwellings are not listed for construction. I contend that because Esquimalt is already a built-up community with no more land available, future construction will consist of the four types of dwellings listed in staff building permit data. Also, that construction permit is expected to continue to be requested as time goes on which can potentially result in more single-family homes being converted into either 4/6-unit townhouses in accordance with OCP. This will further increase available units for rent or purchase indicating that housing stock will continue to grow in future years well beyond the requirements of provincial directives that Esquimalt has already exceeded by satisfying 20-year requirement within next 4 years.

Province of BC STR Guidance

The Provincial STR guidance setting the “floor” for STRs in a municipality were developed through greater means of analysis than that available to Esquimalt alone. The regulations that came into effect on May 1, 2024, cover most communities of more than 10,000 people. They restrict short-term rentals to principal residences, secondary suites, or structures like laneway houses on the property (Eric Swanson, 2026).

In practice, this issue’s key trade-offs arise from the fact that certain forms of STR activity — particularly the conversion of entire residential dwelling units to short-term use — reduce the supply of long-term housing and make it less affordable, while also generating potential concerns related to parking, noise, and waste. At the same time, STRs provide flexible accommodation for visitors and temporary workers and offer property owners supplemental income and greater operational flexibility than long-term tenancy arrangements, which in some cases may not be feasible or desirable (Eric Swanson, 2026).

The reduction of supply of long-term housing is already addressed by increasing stock in next four years and additional stock that has not yet permitted but is expected to be requested that will add units. The potential concerns related to parking, waste and noise are red herrings as it is standard practice for short term rentals to utilize available on-site parking if a vehicle is used by a renter at all. With respect to waste, if the whole home is rented there is no appreciable difference in quantity of waste generated as owners are not utilizing property and if only rooms rented then any increased waste is incorporated into residents' available capacity. Noise issues are practically solved by informing clients of Bylaws and it is standard practice of reputable STR owners to provide clients with guidance of community norms and associated penalties for infractions.

STR Goals

Under the Province Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act without amendment, STRs in Esquimalt are limited to a person's principal residence and one other unit on the same property. The Province characterizes this as a regulatory "floor" intended to provide a baseline level of housing protection. Local governments may then adopt additional regulations that build upon — and may exceed — this provincial floor (Eric Swanson, 2026).

"What B.C. did is significant because it eliminated the patchwork problem. Developers and investors now have province-wide clarity. That certainty is actually good for the market - it channels capital toward proper long-term housing rather than speculative tourism plays," says Hosseinzadeh Sadeghi. She also cautions against overreach: "The goal isn't to eliminate short-term rentals - they serve legitimate purposes for travellers, families in transition, and the tourism economy. The goal is to ensure that housing units function as housing first, and that investor speculation doesn't displace the people who need a place to live.'" (Globe & Mail, March 13, 2026).

Discussion

The geographical reality of Esquimalt and small population with increasing dwelling availability sets up the Township in a positive position to respect property rights while meeting increased housing need. Increasing property tax pressure on homeowners, especially retired fixed income homeowners necessitate the need to generate income from the largest single investment most citizens make, their home, to address increased taxation. People rent there homes primarily because it is the only means of generating income as they are potentially not able to sell their time, effort, labour, and skills to the market as they once were. The province has knowingly infringed on private property rights, and the electorate overall has not objected. However, in doing so the province provided a balanced approach that addresses the need to place housing use first as housing and allowed municipalities to exceed the "floor" regulations as necessary to meet local need if required. In addition, and begrudgingly the "Floor" regulations recognize the economic benefit to the community and province.

Mayor and Council iterated a need for a balance between housing availability and homeowners' rights of property use. Yet the concerns were stated from the belief that housing is not available in the township and that the provincial STR act guidance does not adequately address the needs of Esquimalt. The Act recognizes the need to limit STRs but does not seek to eliminate their need and positive economic impact. The Act provides for amendment by council but does not require it from council. Based on current and known future housing stock is there a need to amend the Act to meet the need of Esquimalt? Given the geographical restrictions of Esquimalt there exists only two ways to increase housing stock, build up or replace single family homes. If the desire is to have all types of housing available in Esquimalt then at some future point Esquimalt will be at capacity. Is there a fear that without tight restrictions there will be a growth in the number of STRs that would have a negative

impact on housing availability? Also not fully explored is the ability to licence and tax STRs and the positive results that would benefit Esquimalt from such regulation.

As indicated from council discussions and responses from staff concerning questions of potential commercial lodging located in Esquimalt leading to either a hotel or apartment hotel (aparthotel) like Solo Suites in Langford be established in the township. Regardless of type of commercial lodgings, it is not difficult to surmise that a location on Esquimalt Road would be ideal both commercially and logistically, especially if of the Apartment Hotel type. There are also indications that STRs compete directly with commercial lodgings and/or impeded development of commercial lodgings. But STRs and commercial lodging serve distinctly different clientele and there is no evidence to substantially support the lack of commercial lodging development in Esquimalt based on STR's existing. Currently the demand for increased commercial lodgings in Esquimalt is unknown or anecdotally based. The assumption that Navy personnel on short term training and meeting requirements would utilize commercial lodgings is also unknown, but highly unlikely given that CFB Esquimalt is currently in developmental stages for construction of military accommodations that the government prefer DND personnel use vice commercial lodgings as a matter of federal government policy.

Recommendation

1. Council adopt the Provincial STR Act as enacted for implementation in Esquimalt as the base line of Esquimalt STR Bylaw amended as follows:
 - a. STRs need to be licenced and appropriately taxed as a business. This will generate needed revenue for Esquimalt.
 - b. Esquimalt should cap the number of available licences for STRs to prevent increasing their number to limit any type of potential impact on available housing. Capping the number of licences will allow Esquimalt to manage any proven impact on available housing by raising or lowering the number of licences as required or just establish a set number. The report delivered to council indicated there are approximately 64 known active STRs that appear to have no proven impact on housing availability. The report also indicated that there was or could be up to 100 existing STRs in Esquimalt. Further examination is required but maybe 75 STRs is the maximum number of licences available for this type of business. and
 - c. 180 nights limit for person's whole principal residence and one other unit on the same property e.g. Garden, Secondary/Basement Suite, and unlimited nights for rooms within principal residence.

Dwight Ince

█ Wychbury Ave

Esquimalt

█



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Bill Brown

From: Victoria McKean
Sent: April-13-26 11:49 AM
To: Victoria McKean
Cc: Sarah Holloway; Bill Brown; Dan Horan
Subject: FW: Short Term Rental Policy – Request for Secondary Suite Flexibility

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

- Victoria, for action (April 27 agenda)
- Bill Brown
- Sarah Holloway
- Dan Horan

Victoria McKean, (She/Her)

Committee Coordinator

Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services

Tel: 250 414-7119 | www.esquimalt.ca

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: April-11-26 2:10 PM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Short Term Rental Policy – Request for Secondary Suite Flexibility

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Barbara Desjardins and Members of Council,

I am writing to respectfully request your reconsideration of the current restrictions on short-term rentals in Esquimalt, particularly as they apply to secondary suites within principal residences.

My husband and I have, for many years, operated a one-bedroom suite within our home as a short-term rental when it is not being used by my elderly parents. My parents live with us for approximately four months each year, and the suite has been specifically designed to support their aging needs, including a full kitchen and a private, lockable entrance.

I understand that Council has recently moved to restrict the use of secondary suites for short-term rental purposes. This change has caused me significant concern, and I am asking that you consider a more flexible approach for situations like ours.

Suites such as ours provide meaningful benefits to the community, including:

- **Tax revenue:** Short-term rentals generate Provincial Sales Tax (PST), Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), and Goods and Services Tax (GST), which are collected from guests and remitted through booking platforms and tax filings.
- **Support for local businesses:** I actively encourage guests to visit Esquimalt's shops, restaurants, services, markets and events by providing a curated local guide.
- **Economic activity for trades and services:** Maintaining the suite supports local plumbers, electricians, cleaners, and other service providers.
- **Family support and intergenerational living:** This arrangement allows my parents to spend extended time with us in a safe, appropriate space, which has been invaluable for our family.
- **Financial sustainability:** The rental income helps offset some of the cost of maintaining our home in a challenging economic environment.
- **No impact on long-term housing supply:** This suite is not available for long-term rental, as it is regularly occupied by family. However, it does provide a valuable option for visitors to the neighbourhood, including friends and relatives of nearby residents.

While our suite complies with provincial short-term rental requirements, I understand that I will not be eligible for a provincial license if local regulations prohibit this use. This creates a situation where responsible, compliant operators like myself are effectively excluded.

Esquimalt has made significant progress toward housing targets, including exceeding its first-year provincial housing target by a substantial margin. In this context, allowing short-term rentals in owner-occupied homes would not undermine long-term housing supply.

I respectfully ask Council to permit short-term rentals in secondary suites within owner-occupied principal residences, particularly where the use does not remove housing from the long-term rental market.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further or provide additional information if helpful.

Sincerely,

Gillian Rowan

Bill Brown

From: Council Correspondence
Sent: March-18-26 1:03 PM
To: Dan Horan; Terése Finegan; Bill Brown
Subject: FW: STRs in Esquimalt

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

CAO

Terese, Mgr of Economic Devt

Bill, Director of Devt Services

Anne Dickinson

Reception Clerk

Lekwungen Territory

Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services

www.esquimalt.ca

Honoured & privileged to work on the ləkʷəŋən traditional territory and respectfully acknowledge the people of the Songhees Nation and Kosapsum Nation. Nətsəmat (We are all One) həyšxʷqə.



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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: March-17-26 5:19 PM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: STRs in Esquimalt

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Esquimalt Council and Mayor,

I would like to thank you, members of council and your Worship, for the opportunity to listen and participate in the discussion about Short Term Rentals in Esquimalt on the evening of March 16th. After the meeting I did feel positive that council agrees that short term rentals can be a benefit for residents and visitors to our region. This public meeting was a step in the right direction. I did feel like there was some confusion around how short term rentals work for not only the hosts, but the guests as well. My concern is that only allowing people to rent up to "two rooms" in their primary residence and not larger portions of their primary residence, will not only hinder the majority of people who are interested in hosting STRs, but will not attract the guests we are hoping to host in our municipality.

I would like to suggest that defining the up to two rooms in a primary residence should be thought of, and worded as, "any safe and reasonable space in the home that can be accessed by the principal resident from within the home." (as per the safety guidelines in the Short Term Rental report on pages 72 and 73). This wording would both help open up more possibility and variety for hosts and guests, while also causing less confusion as to what defines a "room". Many homes in Esquimalt were built with the popular design the "BC Box" or the "Vancouver Special". These types of homes have two stories and both levels are usable living spaces, but often the downstairs is not a suitable space for a long term rental as there is no kitchen or access to laundry facilities, and the homeowner cannot access the furnace room or laundry facilities, or garage if there is someone down there on a permanent basis. In these types of houses, the upstairs and downstairs are accessible from inside the home, with a back door. Many STR guests want a private space they can access on their own and come and go with out having to disturb their hosts. Imagine grandparents coming to visit their grandchildren. They can stay in a small suite in a home, come and go as they please and stay for longer, because of the value in an STR. People from up Island and the Gulf Islands who come to Victoria for medical appointments and procedures, will need a quiet and calm space to relax and recover. Imagine a young family wanting to come and visit family. They will need more than a bedroom for their family, renting a suite gives them more space and flexibility when visiting family or on vacation. People who want and need to travel with a pet can find not only a comfortable pet friendly place, but will also have a space outside for the pet to run and play.

You may also want to consider removing the cap on nights rented. For CFB employees who find themselves deployed for long stretches of time the cap could make renting more complicated for them. For other residence of Esquimalt who want to have a flexible space to use for themselves and family, may find the cap to be a challenge and too hard to monitor and keep track of. The more varied and accommodating the bylaw is, the easier it will be for residence to self regulate and less frustrating for Bylaw enforcement.

I hope that you will take time to consider and open up the definition to allow for spaces within the primary residence which can be accessed internally by the owner of the home, and to consider removing the cap on the number of nights a homeowner is able to STR space within their home. I do hope that a balance can be struck for both STR hosts, renters, potential hoteliers and the municipality.

Thank you for your time

Kind Regards

Colleen Kensit

█ Lugrin Place

Proud resident of Esquimalt since June of 2002

Bill Brown

From: Molly Harris
Sent: April-27-26 4:23 PM
To: Bill Brown; Terése Finegan; Dan Horan
Subject: FW: Reconsideration of Short-Term Rental Restrictions in Esquimalt

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

- Bill, Director of Development Services
- Terése, Manager of Economic Development
- CAO

Molly Harris

Corporate Services Assistant

Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services

Tel: 1-250-414-7163 | www.esquimalt.ca

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: April-27-26 11:49 AM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Reconsideration of Short-Term Rental Restrictions in Esquimalt

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of Council,

I am writing to respectfully urge the Township of Esquimalt to reconsider its current and proposed restrictions on short-term rentals.

A key concern often raised in discussions about short-term rentals is their impact on long-term housing availability. However, current data from the Greater Victoria area indicates that the rental vacancy rate has exceeded 3%, a level generally considered to reflect a more balanced and less constrained housing market. In such conditions, short-term rentals are less likely to meaningfully displace long-term tenants and instead can coexist as part of a diverse housing ecosystem. Policies should reflect these realities rather than assume conditions of extreme scarcity that may no longer apply.

The proposed approach of limiting short-term rentals strictly to a single room within a host's principal residence raises practical concerns for both homeowners and visitors. From a host's perspective, this restriction significantly reduces the flexibility and financial viability of participating in short-term rentals. Many homeowners rely on the ability to rent out entire units—such as secondary suites or laneway homes—to meaningfully offset rising costs of living.

From a guest's perspective, the appeal of short-term rentals often lies in privacy, independence, and the ability to use a full living space. Restricting accommodations to shared living situations diminishes these advantages and may discourage visitors from choosing Esquimalt altogether, potentially impacting local tourism and the small businesses that benefit from it.

Additionally, imposing limits on the number of days per year that a property may be rented short-term introduces unnecessary rigidity. Such caps can make it difficult for homeowners to plan and manage their properties effectively, while also reducing the availability of accommodations during peak travel periods when demand is highest. A more flexible approach would better support both property owners and the local economy without clear evidence that strict day limits are needed under current market conditions.

In light of these considerations, I encourage Council to adopt a more balanced and adaptable regulatory framework—one that recognizes the improved vacancy rate, supports homeowners, and maintains Esquimalt's appeal as a welcoming destination for visitors.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Rainer Plendl

Rainer Plendl

LIGHTWORK
P h o t o g r a p h y



Bill Brown

From: Anne Dickinson
Sent: April-28-26 2:08 PM
To: Dan Horan; Bill Brown; Terése Finegan
Subject: FW: Short Term Rental Policy – Request for Secondary Suite Flexibility

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:
CAO
Bill, Director of Development Services
Terese, Manager of Economic Development

Anne Dickinson
Reception Clerk
Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services
www.esquimalt.ca

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From: Vince Wruck [REDACTED]
Sent: April-27-26 12:06 PM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Short Term Rental Policy – Request for Secondary Suite Flexibility

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor Barbara Desjardins and Members of Council,

I am writing to support my wife, Gillian Rowan, in her request for reconsideration of the current restrictions on short-term rentals in Esquimalt, particularly as they apply to secondary suites within owner-occupied homes.

As a homeowner and long-time resident, I take seriously the responsibility of maintaining our property in a way that contributes positively to our neighbourhood. Our one-bedroom suite has been used thoughtfully over the years, serving primarily as a home for our family and rented on a short-term basis when it is not in use by Gillian's parents, who stay with us part of the year.

From my perspective, this type of use represents a balanced and responsible approach. It does not remove housing from the long-term rental market, and it allows us to make efficient use of space that is already part of our home. At the same time, it supports our ability to maintain our property and adapt it for evolving family needs.

I have also seen firsthand the positive local impact of our guests. They are typically family members of Esquimalt residents or travelers specifically seeking a quiet, community-oriented experience. We make a point of guiding them toward local businesses, and the feedback we receive consistently reflects appreciation for the neighbourhood.

Equally important to me is the role this arrangement plays in supporting intergenerational living. The suite exists first and foremost for family use, and the flexibility to offset costs when it is not occupied by family helps make that arrangement sustainable over the long term.

I respectfully ask Council to permit short-term rentals in secondary suites within owner-occupied principal residences, particularly where the use does not remove housing from the long-term rental market. This would allow homeowners like us to continue using our homes responsibly, while maintaining the broader objectives of housing policy.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be pleased to speak further or provide any additional information that may be helpful.

Sincerely,

Vince Wruck

Bill Brown

From: Council Correspondence
Sent: March-18-26 1:08 PM
To: Dan Horan; Terése Finegan; Bill Brown
Subject: FW: Please Follow the Provincial STR Framework and the Majority of Community Feedback

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Copy of correspondence forwarded to:

CAO
Terese, Mgr of Economic Devt
Bill, Director of Devt Services

Anne Dickinson
Reception Clerk
Lekwungen Territory
Township of Esquimalt | Corporate Services
www.esquimalt.ca

Honoured & privileged to work on the ləkʷəŋən traditional territory and respectfully acknowledge the people of the Songhees Nation and Kosapsum Nation. Nətsəmat (We are all One) həyšxʷqə.



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From: Will Nikl [REDACTED]
Sent: March-18-26 3:46 AM
To: Council <Council@esquimalt.ca>
Subject: Please Follow the Provincial STR Framework and the Majority of Community Feedback

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm writing to urge council to align our local short term rental regulations with the provincial framework and the direction clearly expressed by many residents in the recent consultation.

The Province of British Columbia has already created a balanced approach that allows short term rentals in a principal residence and one secondary suite or accessory unit. The goal was to protect

housing supply while still allowing homeowners reasonable use of their own property. Ignoring that framework locally creates unnecessary confusion and inconsistency.

Just as importantly, the consultation results showed that a significant portion of respondents support allowing short term rentals in principal residences. Council was elected to represent the community, and when a clear majority expresses a position, it deserves serious weight in the final decision.

For many homeowners, STRs are not about running large scale commercial operations. In my case, I travel out of town regularly and often have someone stay in a self contained guest room to keep an eye on my home. It is beneficial to have someone there in case anything goes wrong. Yet under the current direction being discussed, if that same person paid me instead of me paying them, it would suddenly be considered harmful to the community. That kind of distinction feels arbitrary and disconnected from the realities of how people actually use their homes.

I strongly encourage council to respect both the provincial direction and the voices of the residents who participated in the consultation. Following the provincial principal residence model would provide clarity, fairness, and a balanced approach that works for homeowners and the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Will Nikl

■ Constance Ave

**Subject: Submission for Council Consideration: Short-Term Rental Bylaws
– April 27 Meeting**

To: Mayor and Council, Township of Esquimalt

I'm writing as a resident homeowner to share serious concerns about the proposed Short-Term Rental (STR) bylaws, and to ask Council to align with the BC Provincial "Home-Lot" model, which permits STRs in a principal residence plus one secondary suite. I believe the current proposal, as written, will cause real harm to the very residents this Council is meant to serve.

1. The Voice of Engaged Residents

Many of us who participated in the recent survey did so because this issue directly affects our lives and financial stability. I'd ask Council to weigh that feedback seriously, rather than treating it as a fringe view simply because overall Township engagement was low. Low participation likely reflects that, for most residents, STRs aren't a pressing concern — which is itself meaningful. Those of us who showed up and spoke out deserve to be heard.

2. Keeping Residents in Esquimalt

For many homeowners, suite-based STR income is what makes it possible to stay in Esquimalt at all. Housing costs, strata fees, and now a proposed 13% property tax increase are squeezing residents out of the community they've built their lives in. STR income provides the financial breathing room that allows people to remain in their homes rather than being forced to sell and move away. A bylaw that eliminates this option doesn't just affect finances — it affects who gets to live here.

Beyond financial stability, STRs offer homeowners important flexibility for personal circumstances: hosting extended family, accommodating a caregiver, or managing a period between long-term tenants. Life doesn't always fit neatly into fixed rental categories, and good policy should reflect that reality.

3. Safety and the Importance of Physical Boundaries

The proposal to limit STRs to bedroom-only rentals within a shared home overlooks a fundamental safety distinction: a long-term roommate is a known, vetted presence, while a short-term guest is a stranger. A self-contained suite provides a real, locked boundary between a host and their guests — and most people would agree that's a reasonable thing to want in your own home. Requiring hosts to share their immediate living space with visitors they've just met places an unfair and unnecessary burden on residents, particularly those living alone.

4. Neighbourhood Character and the Pressure to Sell

I have serious concerns about the pace at which Esquimalt's neighbourhood character is being eroded. Township staff have confirmed that capacity for larger apartment developments hasn't been reached — meaning detached homes are already under steady pressure from developers. For many of us, suite-based STR income is what makes holding onto a detached home financially viable. Without it, selling to a developer becomes very difficult to resist. Permitting STRs in suites is one of the few practical tools residents have to stay rooted in their neighbourhoods and preserve the character of Esquimalt's streets.

5. Supporting Residents Today, Not Hypothetical Investors Tomorrow

I was genuinely troubled to hear concern raised at a recent Council meeting about how STR regulations might affect potential future hotel developers. Esquimalt homeowners are facing a proposed 13% property tax increase right now. It is difficult to accept that residents' financial flexibility should be curtailed to protect the speculative profits of a hotel that may never be built. Suite-based STRs provide real accommodation for visitors and military families today, and that income stays within the community — helping residents pay the very taxes that fund this Township.

6. Serving CFB Esquimalt and Military Families

Esquimalt is home to CFB Esquimalt, and with that comes a steady flow of military personnel and their families relocating on posting. These families often need flexible, short-term accommodation while they search for permanent housing — a need that hotels don't serve particularly well and that suite-based STRs are ideally suited to meet. This is a real, ongoing, and specific community need. Restricting STRs in suites would directly diminish Esquimalt's ability to welcome and support the military community that has long been part of this Township's identity.

7. STRs Support the Local Economy

Guests staying in suite-based STRs don't behave like hotel tourists. They shop at local grocery stores, eat at neighbourhood restaurants, and spend their money within Esquimalt rather than in centralized commercial areas. This is a meaningful economic benefit that often goes unacknowledged in these discussions. Restricting STRs doesn't just affect homeowners — it reduces the flow of visitor spending that supports local businesses and the broader community.

Suite-based STRs also create consistent, local demand for cleaning and maintenance services — providing steady employment opportunities for Esquimalt residents in those trades. This is yet another way STR income circulates within the community, supporting more of our neighbours in building a livelihood here.

8. STRs Are Already Accountable — By Design

Platforms like Airbnb and VRBO have built-in accountability mechanisms that are worth acknowledging. Hosts are reviewed publicly, required to carry insurance, and subject to platform oversight. A host who behaves badly loses their listing. This is not an unregulated grey market — it is a system with its own checks that complement municipal licensing. The assumption that STRs are inherently unruly ignores how these platforms actually function in practice.

9. Property Rights and Proportionality

Restricting what a homeowner can do with a legal, licensed, self-contained suite on their own property is a significant intervention. I'd ask Council to consider whether the harm being prevented actually justifies that level of restriction. To my knowledge, there has been no documented pattern of problems with suite-based STRs in Esquimalt specifically. If this bylaw is a preventative measure rather than a response to real, local complaints, that proportionality question deserves a direct answer.

10. Why Banning STRs Won't Create Long-Term Rentals

Many homeowners have turned to STRs after genuinely difficult experiences with the Residential Tenancy Act, which can make long-term landlording a significant financial and legal liability. Banning STRs in suites is unlikely to convert those spaces into long-term rentals — in many cases, the suite will simply sit empty. An empty suite contributes nothing to the housing supply, generates no tax revenue, and helps nobody. It is not a neutral outcome — it is a loss for the entire community. It's also worth noting that a licensed STR is registered, taxed, and subject to oversight, which is more than can be said for many informal arrangements that would take its place.

In Closing

The BC "Home-Lot" model represents a thoughtful, balanced approach to STR regulation — one that respects both housing availability and homeowner rights. I'd ask Council to trust that framework rather than imposing restrictions that go further than the Province has seen fit to require.

I also want to speak directly to the Third Space analysis. In my view, it gave insufficient weight to the local voices that actually participated in the process. The feedback from Esquimalt residents was gathered, but I don't believe it was reflected or weighted fairly — particularly when compared to the extensive survey of what neighbouring municipalities are doing. With respect, what neighbouring communities have decided for themselves should not be the primary lens through which Esquimalt sets its policy. You were elected to make decisions for the people who live here, and their voices should carry more weight than a comparison chart of neighbouring jurisdictions.

Mayor Desjardins has expressed concern that “once you let the genie out of the bottle, it’s going to be really hard to pull it back in.” With respect, the Province has already addressed this concern — the Home-Lot model is a defined, bounded framework, not an open door. Allowing STRs in a principal residence plus one suite is a clear, enforceable limit. The genie, in this case, comes with a well-designed bottle.

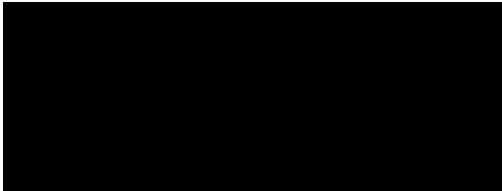
The Province examined this issue carefully and arrived at a framework designed to work across British Columbia. That framework already exists. I’d ask Council to use it, trust the residents who engaged with this process, and support the safety, stability, and financial survival of the people who actually call Esquimalt home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area. Above the box, there are faint handwritten marks, including a horizontal line and a small upward-pointing mark.

Bettina Plendl

A black rectangular redaction box covering contact information, likely a phone number or email address.