

Environmental Task Force Agenda

9:00 a.m. - Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Council Chambers

[Zoom Meeting Registration](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement

We begin this gathering by acknowledging and celebrating these traditional lands as a gathering place of the first peoples and their ancestors who are entrusted to care for Mother Earth since time immemorial. We do so respecting both the land and the Indigenous People who continue to walk with us through this world. Today, the Township of North Frontenac is committed to working with Indigenous Peoples and all residents to pursue a united path of reconciliation.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

4. Environmental Task Force Notes

- a) Notes of the Environmental Task Force Meeting dated December 23, 2025 as approved via email and received for information at the January 16, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council. 2 - 5

[Environmental Task Force - 23 Dec 2025 - Minutes - Pdf](#)

5. Business Arising

- a) Work Plan Update 6 - 23
 - 1. Short-term Rentals - Bruce Moore, Kate Surra and John Inglis
 - 2. Septic Inspection Programs - Bruce Moore, Kate Surra, Roy Huetl and Fred Fowler
 - 3. Net Metering - John Inglis, Paul Asselin and Marlene Spruyt
 - 4. Invasive Species - Roy Huetl, Fred Fowler and Mike Ward
 - 5. Carrying Capacity of Lakes
 - 6. Community Engagement

[1. Short-Term Rentals By Law February 2026](#)

[Environmental Task Force - Mandatory Septic Inspection Proposal - Pdf](#)

6. New Business

- a) High Speed Train

7. Adjournment

- a) Meeting adjourned at _____ a.m. until March 31, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.



Environmental Task Force Minutes

9:00 AM - Tuesday, December 23, 2025
Council Chambers

Present: Deputy Mayor Roy Huetl; Councillor Fred Fowler (Chair); Paul Asselin; Mike Ward; and Katie Surra
Absent with Regret: Councillor John Inglis; Bruce Moore; and Marlene Spruyt
Also Present: Tara Mieske, Clerk/Planning Manager

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Traditional Land Acknowledgement

We begin this gathering by acknowledging and celebrating these traditional lands as a gathering place of the first peoples and their ancestors who are entrusted to care for Mother Earth since time immemorial. We do so respecting both the land and the Indigenous People who continue to walk with us through this world. Today, the Township of North Frontenac is committed to working with Indigenous Peoples and all residents to pursue a united path of reconciliation.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

None noted.

4. Environmental Task Force Notes

- a) ***Notes of the Environmental Task Force Meeting dated November 25, 2025 as approved via email and received for information at the December 12, 2025 Regular Meeting of Council.***

No comments.

5. Business Arising

- a) ***Work Plan Update***

1. **Net Metering** - John Inglis, Paul Asselin and Marlene Spruyt

Asselin advised he reached out to another company to discuss net metering and potential rebates available. To date the Task Force has discussed net metering which feeds unused power generated from the solar panels into the grid and would give the Township credit for the power provided to the grid. This system has very few rebates or grants

available.

Managing power being added to the grid by individual producers is difficult and costly for Hydro to manage because it is difficult to predict how much and when private power generators will be providing power to the grid. Therefore; in order to encourage load displacement systems Hydro is offering rebates. Load displacement systems are connected to the grid to allow power to be used from the grid when there is not enough power being generated. When the amount of power being generated exceeds the amount being used, the system automatically scales back generation to equal the amount required. The benefit of these systems to Hydro is they reduce the power needed from the grid but they don't have to manage the excess power. The rebate offered for this type of system is \$70,000 on a \$220,000 system which brings the cost of the project down to \$150,000. It was estimated the credits for transferring excess power to the grid would be approximately \$70,000 over a 25 year period. Therefore; this makes a stronger business case because the Township will see the savings at the beginning of the process.

An additional consideration would be to add a battery storage option to the system so excess power could be stored on site to be used when needed instead of using power from the grid. There may also be an opportunity for the additional power to be used to operate the EV chargers and help offset costs. This would have to be looked into in more detail to see if it possible and if so what the costs would be.

The Task Force discussed the technology and the implications of turning a system of this size off and on. There were concerns additional repairs may be required and what these repairs may cost. Asselin noted the inverters are warranted for 10-12 years and the replacement costs would be \$20,000 - \$30,000. He noted he added 1% per year into the business case for maintenance and repairs.

Asselin advised he did not request information or costing on the battery component of the system because he wanted to discuss this with the Task Force prior to proceeding. The Task Force decided to discuss next steps at the January meeting.

2. Invasive Species - Roy Huetl, Fred Fowler and Mike Ward

Deputy Mayor Huetl advised the Mazinaw Property Owners Association is applying for a grant to study the effects of the use of herbicides on Eurasian Milfoil. The research will look at the effects on other plants and animals. The study would take a couple of years. There are a few universities interested in this study. There are several studies on the effects of herbicides on invasive species but not specific to Eurasian Milfoil.

3. Septic Inspection Programs - Bruce Moore, Katie Surra, Roy Huetl and Fred Fowler
Nothing to report at this time.

4. Short-term Rentals - Bruce Moore, Katie Surra and John Inglis
A report will be provided to the Task Force at the January meeting.

5. Carrying Capacity of Lakes

Look at developing a sub-committee and role at a future meeting.

6. Community Engagement

Look at developing a sub-committee and role at a future meeting.

b) *Approved 2026 Work Plan - Council*

Provided for information.

c) *Voluntary Sector Member -Council*

Provided for information.

d) *Update - Proposed Provincial Changes to Conservation Authorities - Deputy Mayor Huetl*

Deputy Mayor Huetl provided an update on the proposal by the Province on Conservation Authority (CA) amalgamation. There has been a lot of opposition to the proposal by municipalities, conservation authorities, lake associations and other organizations. He noted there are concerns that the concerns of small municipalities will be lost in a large organization and the Province will download the costs to municipalities. The City of Ottawa has put forward a proposal to amalgamate Mississippi Valley, Rideau and South Nation Conservation Authorities into one. These three CAs all drain to the Ottawa River. This amalgamation would be easier to manage than the current proposal.

6. New Business

a) *High Speed Train - Deputy Mayor Huetl*

Deputy Mayor Huetl advised Council received a presentation from ALTO on the proposed high speed train from Toronto to Montreal. The location of the rail line is unknown at this time. However; it was released recently the location would be announced in January. Open houses will be held as follows:

- Perth – March 4, 2026 - 11 am to 3 pm & 5 pm to 9 pm, Perth Lions Club, 50 Arthur Street
- Madoc Township – March 5, 2026 - 11 am to 3 pm & 5 pm to 9 pm, Madoc Township Recreation Centre, 15651 ON-62
- Stirling – March 25, 2026 - 11 am to 3 pm & 5 pm to 9 pm, Stirling and District Lions Club, 435 W Front St

Huetl advised he is planning to attend the open house in Perth and will provide an update following the session.

7. Adjournment

a) **Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m. until January 27, 2026**

Deputy Mayor Roy Huetl, Chair

**Short Term Rentals - Recommended By-Law
Components**

for

Consideration by the Environmental Task Force

February 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

Under the direction of the Environmental Task Force and as subsequently endorsed by North Frontenac Council, this paper is to provide a recommendation for the parameters and key components of a Short-Term Rental By-Law to be applicable to all properties as appropriate in North Frontenac and the soft roll out of a licensing program. Note that this paper is not meant to include all components of the by-law. With Council's endorsement, it is meant to be referred to Municipal staff for review and further refinement of costing, enforcement and administrative considerations.

2. KEY SHORT TERM RENTAL DEFINITIONS

Short Term Rental Accommodation means the use of any residential dwelling unit+ (including but not limited to RVs, Yurts, Campsites, etc.) that offers a place of accommodation or temporary residence, or occupancy by way of concession, payment of a monetary fee, permit, lease, license rental agreement or similar arrangement for fewer than twenty-eight (28) consecutive calendar days, with an on or off-site management/owner throughout all or part of the year. Short-term Rental Accommodation uses shall not mean a motel, hotel, bed and breakfast establishment, country inn, tourist establishment, tourist cabin establishment, or similar commercial accommodation use.

Under this definition, it is recommended that the by-law make a distinction between Short Term Rentals based on the frequency of rentals:

Commercial Short Term Rental (CSTR) is the rental of accommodation/property for more than four (4) cumulative weeks per year. These renters would be treated as the commercial enterprises which they are.

Non-Commercial Short Term Rental (NCSTR): This designation refers to residential property owners who rent their accommodation for less than the total of 4 weeks per year. The intent of the STR bylaw would not be to act as a deterrent to those who want to rent their accommodation for a relatively brief period to family and friends. NCSTR's would be allowed to have rent accommodation on land zoned residential, would not be required to obtain a license or register with the Township. They would however be encouraged voluntarily to comply with the practices defined in the By-Law and continue to be required to comply with all by-laws.

3. WHY A BYLAW

North Frontenac's vision statement includes the necessity "*to preserve our unique and pristine natural environment and to promote a strong, resilient rural community.*" To do this requires a proper regulatory framework to ensure compatible land use within lake front communities, hamlets and with all North Frontenac properties.

Appendix A contains a **Case for Action** on the topic of STR which was prepared for the Environmental Task Force of Council. It describes reasons supporting the creation of such a by-law which include:

- Rapid growth in the number of rentals within the Township;

- Need for a cost neutral approach;
- Link between STRs and the overuse of septic systems;
- Other environmental impacts of the overcrowding of our lakes;
- Inequitable treatment of commercial tourist establishments within the Township;
- Public safety concerns;
- Developers targeting the Township for over commercialization due to lack of regulation when compared to neighbouring municipalities;
- Complaints from neighbours not being a proxy for measuring impact of STRs.
- Establish system for Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) implementation if deemed appropriate

4. BY-LAW OBJECTIVES

A key focus for the Bylaw should be the preserving our unique pristine natural environment. In addition, the following objectives should also be met:

- Is affordable - no incremental cost to the Township but rather a reliance on a STR licensing fee for the more frequent renters as a prime source of funding. This means that those that profit from rental income pay the greater cost.
- Does not place an undue administrative burden on the infrequent renter;
- Is fair, simple and easy to administer. A prime intent of registration/licensing should be to require renters to have a good management plan in place so that the need for enforcement is kept to a minimum
- Minimizes program oversight for municipal office employees e.g. electronic submission of complete information by operator with sample, infrequent site inspections
- Is explicit in compliance expectations and requirements so that renters, owners, neighbours and the community have a clear understanding of what is required for responsible operations
- Is supportive of existing municipal bylaws.
- Places the responsibility on the STR operator (or responsible representative) to be the first person required to deal with complaints in person; not neighbours or the Township;
- Is defensible from STR rental company litigation. Tiny Township, as well as other municipalities in Ontario, have successfully defended themselves in court. The Supreme Court in March 2025 confirmed that “local municipalities in Ontario have the legal right to implement a program to regulate and licence STR operations”. This ruling has set a significant precedent for all Ontario municipalities.
<https://www.tiny.ca/sites/default/files/2025-03/Township%20of%20Tiny%20-%20CV-23-445%20-%20Reasons%20for%20Decision%20->

[%20Leibovich%20J%20-%20Mar%202024.25.pdf](#) Note that most of the components of the STR Bylaw recommended for North Frontenac match the Tiny Township Bylaw.

- Is aligned with and supports any North Frontenac Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) implementation.

5. KEY BYLAW COMPONENTS

5.1 Two STR Categories

As part of the initial “soft rollout” of a North Frontenac STR Bylaw - recommendation that the by-law make a distinction between STRs based on the frequency of rentals. Over time and with experience, reassess categories/limits as appropriate.

Category 1 – NCSTR:

Those STR operators who rent for only short periods of time e.g. 4 weeks accumulatively per year, should be treated differently from those that rent for a greater period of time. These renters would not be required to register their rental, would not pay a fee, nor would they be subject to periodic inspection. They would, however, be requested to:

- Abide by Best Practices as posted on the municipality's website including but not limited to:
 - Voluntarily work to ensure that the operation of the rental does not create a public nuisance to noise, traffic, parking or health and safety at any time of the day.
 - When the property is being rented, provide the name and contact information for the person responsible for the property to neighbor(s)
 - Provide to their guest's key information regarding municipal by-laws – waste management, Noise by-law, Lighting by-law, etc
 - Encourage participation in the voluntary inspection program along with pumping out the system pump not less than once every four (4) years.
 - Respect STR By-law limits for number of occupants based on number of bedrooms and total square footage.

Recognize that tracking of the four-week limit is voluntary and would not be monitored by the Township. Neighbors/others could contact Municipal offices if they feel the rentals exceed 4 weeks. Periodic rental site advertising review would also identify commercial STRs. Note that, as the use of such NCSTRs grows, it is suggested that the degree of voluntary compliance be monitored to see if additional regulation is warranted.

Category 2 - CSTRs:

Those STR operators that wish to rent for more than 4 weeks per year or publicly advertise their rental through Air BNB, VRBO or similar, must obtain a License. To cover licensing/inspection costs, the property owner would be subject to an accommodation rental fee. Municipal staff are best placed to recommend a rate commensurate with the cost of operating the program and aligned with any MAT considerations for North Frontenac. One option is that this fee would escalate with the number of weeks per year that the facility is used for renting – to recognize the long term impact of STRs on the lake/community environment.

Such licensing would include (not limited to) for example conditions (standards) for:

- Limit: One rental unit per property
- Parking (where applicable);
- Sewage capacity, inspection and posting of capacity limits.
- Health and Safety.
- Assurance that all structures comply with current by laws regarding occupancy;
- Be subject to an inspection of their septic system initially and thereafter on a defined basis to ensure capacity/use compatibility and proper functioning of the system.
- Abide by Township limits for number of occupants based on number of bedrooms and total square footage (up to a maximum of 10).

Like Tiny Township, to prevent the rapid growth of STRs in the region and manage the licensing program size, limit the total number of licenses issued for the region/by lake as deemed appropriate. The intent of this limit would be to protect the integrity of communities currently zoned as residential and protect the local environment from the impact of unconstrained STR growth.

By controlling the number of licensed STRs, Tiny Township ensures more oversight and enforcement rather than open, unregulated growth. (Program overview and objectives provided in Appendix B)

It should be noted that currently NF requires that Short Term accommodations are allowed only where there is “permitted land use for your property” [Short Term Accommodations - Township of North Frontenac](#). The foregoing would allow STRs on land zoned Residential.

5.2 Escalating Fines for Infractions:

In instances where a license is required, there needs to be an escalating fine for operating without a license and for multiple infractions which could eventually lead to revocation of the license. The fine should be such that it dissuades CSTR owners from operating without a license. A demerit point system may be appropriate (multiple municipalities have implemented excellent simple demerit points systems.)

5.3 Owner and Renter Shared Responsibility:

Where feasible, the owner, as well as the renter, should be held to account for infractions dealing with such things as holding camp fires outside of permitted hours, ignoring of fire bans, use of fireworks outside permitted periods.

5.4 Recommendation to approve STR Creation:

It is recommended that Council approve the creation of a Short-Term Rental Bylaw in principle and refer this paper to staff for consideration of implementation issues including; registration, costing, enforcement and administrative issues. It is understood that many municipalities have now acquired considerable experience in this regard and should be quite helpful.

APPENDIX A

STR Bylaw - *The Case for Action*

1.0 Introduction

This Paper outlines the Case for Action for the Township of North Frontenac (NF) to provide clear policy and oversight of Short-Term Rentals (STR).

The North Frontenac Lake Association Alliance (NFLLA), in reflecting the overwhelming view of its member associations, remains very concerned with the risks posed by unregulated STR properties. The Land of Lakes has a sensitive ecosystem that requires careful stewardship. We recommend that a responsible STR Bylaw be developed that balances protection of the environment and the need to address broader STR community concerns with providing STR operators that are effectively commercial operations with a known regulatory framework within which to operate.

2.0 Growth of The Issue

According to a McGill University study, STRs in rural areas are growing twice as fast as in large cities. The Federation of Ontario Cottage Owners (FOCA) recognizes the rapid growth of concern about STRs. The Ontario Cottage Rental Managers Association now lists 59 municipalities in Ontario that have implemented STR bylaws. Additional jurisdictions are currently developing policy to address this issue.

A detailed survey of STRs by the NFLAA in NF indicates a continuing increase in the number properties being converted to STRs or are being built new specifically for the purpose of operating as a business on properties zoned Waterfront Residential. A review of online ads for STRs in NF also shows evidence of a substantial increase in the number of STRs over the past several years.

3.0 Base Case – Cost Neutral for North Frontenac

We recognize the concern of additional costs of STR regulation. The target would be to develop cost neutral STR regulation in which costs would be borne by those that profit from STR revenue.

4.0 STRs - Environmental Impacts and Commercial Considerations

4.1 Overuse of Septic Systems

A significant risk posed by unregulated growth in STRs is the heightened risk of the overuse and misuse of septic systems that were permitted based on residential (non-commercial use) and installed before current regulations were in place (and have never been re-inspected.) When septic systems are neglected, or overused, even on a seasonal basis, serious conditions can occur:

- Inadequate time for solids to settle limiting bacterial activity; solids clogging the drainage field, saturation of soils around the drainage field limiting absorption.
- Risk of contamination of adjacent wells with septic effluent with associated health risks
- Potential migration of contaminated water into nearby waterways and ground water.
- Renters may ignore or be ignorant of proper septic system use and large groups using STRs can result in significant septic overuse
- Issues caused by one renter do not show up immediately thus being cumulative and STR renters may not report issues fearing financial penalty.
- STR owners reluctant to limit #s of people using the STR motivated by short term profit.

4.2 Environmental Impacts of Overcrowding on Our Lakes

STR renters are coming to the lake *to be on the lake*. Increasing and inappropriate boating traffic can; lead to boat-wake-related shoreline erosion, impact wildlife nesting habitats, and be a source of contamination for invasive species. Many waterfront cottages in NF were built prior to current minimum setbacks (30 meter) on lots < 200' i.e. the lake density baseline is greater than what we now know is environmentally responsible. Added density through the proliferation of unregulated STRs is expected

to have broad long term negative impacts on our lake environments. Which is why so many other jurisdictions have taken action.

4.3 Inequitable Economic Contributions & Taxation – Commercial Establishment vs STRs

STR operators have an unfair advantage over local commercial tourism and lodging operations who must bear the costs of higher operating standards and pay higher taxes. The benefits of the STR business accrue to the owner and operators like Airbnb/VRBO therefore bypassing the local community.

4.4 Public Safety

Proper Bylaws help ensure rental properties meet safety requirements including fire bans and safety standards, maximum occupancy limits, parking regulations, noise control measures protecting both visitors and neighboring properties.

4.5 North Frontenac a Target Region with No Restrictions on STR Growth

There is now a marked trend toward STR properties being owned and managed by companies rather than by individual property owners. This is a province-wide development that NF is not immune to. There is currently a loophole in the NF Municipality's Bylaws that allows commercially oriented entities to operate under the guise of STRs to operate on lake shore properties on land zoned residential. Often this misuse can occur amid small cottage communities. Other municipalities have identified this trend and are restricting its harmful occurrence through STR Bylaws. With these tighter restrictions, elsewhere, we have seen Airbnb target regions with no/limited restrictions and encourage such operators to seek those municipalities where restrictions don't exist – like NF.

5.0 Complaints Are Not a Proxy for Issues/Impact Identification

There is a misconception that complaints to the NF "Report an Issue" process is a good proxy to assess the issues and impacts associated with STRs. The issues identified in this Paper do not typically drive individual complaints. They go well beyond noise/annoyance issues. Even if complaints were taken as a proxy, there are real limits to its use. These include: the complaints process unknown to many seasonal cottagers; cottagers often not comfortable making a formal complaint on a neighbor; concern with potential retribution; complaints may not necessarily be anonymous; the complaints system is cumbersome; time to complain is taken out of limited recreational time (e.g. weekends); time lag between incident and investigation makes follow-up irrelevant; police will not respond; limited consequences are taken even if transgressions found to be valid; almost impossible to prove case after the fact.

NORTH FRONTENAC CURRENT REQUIREMENTS

Zoning

Short Term Accommodations must be a permitted land use for your property. For more information please see the [Township's Planning Page](#).

APPENDIX B

Tiny Township – 300 STR Cap

Estimated Permanent Residences : ~ 13,000

Summer Population roughly doubles

Estimate number of Cottages: ~ 4000 – 4300

To protect the health of environment, safety, community character/neighborhood integrity number of STR licenses capped at 300. Policy Tool to balance tourism and rental income with housing stability, community character and safety concerns.

- 300 licences maximum: Once 300 licences are issued in a year, no new licences are accepted until the total falls below 300.
- Annual renewal: Licences must be renewed each year; this helps the Township monitor and adjust annually.
- Part of a broader suite of rules: The cap is one tool among others (minimum stay, occupancy limits, etc.) to manage short-term rentals responsibly.
- Cap to date has not been hit

RESOURCE MATERIAL

The following material is available on the Federation of Ontario Cottage Associated website:

August 19, 2025 – [Cottage owners pull rentals as new licensing rules affect Ontario](#) (CBC News)

July 23, 2025 – [Big Trouble in Cottage Country: Short-term renters have taken over, locals are mad as hell and town councils from Muskoka to Tiny Township are making everything worse](#) (Toronto Life)

July 1, 2025 – [These popular cottage destinations got new short-term rental rules. A year later, here's how listings and prices have changed](#) (Toronto Star)

March 26, 2025 – [Tiny Township mayor 'grateful' after Ontario court upholds STR bylaw](#) (Midland Today) – "The province's Superior Court has quashed an appeal of Tiny Township's short-term-rental (STR) accommodation licensing bylaw. ... the township said in a release that the court decision confirms that "local municipalities have the legal right to implement a program to regulate and licence STR operations which is good news for all municipalities in Ontario struggling with this same issue."

December 2024 – [Quebec tightens regulations around short-term rentals with a new public registry](#) (Cottage Life)

December 4, 2024 – [Cottage country municipalities are cracking down on short-term rentals. But are the bylaws working?](#) (Cottage Life)

October 24, 2024 – [Homeowners who regularly rent on Airbnb and other sites must pay 13% tax on property value when they sell, recent tax ruling finds](#) (The Star)

Nov. 13, 2024 – [More news coverage about Muskoka's new STRA bylaw that goes into effect next January 1](#) (CTV News, Barrie)

October 15, 2024 – the **Township of Minden Hills** has enacted a **Short-Term Rental By-Law** now in effect, and is processing applications for **Short-Term Rental Licenses** online only. Requirements include prominent posting of a Renter's Code of Conduct, noise and burning bylaws, and other conditions. [Read more on the Township website](#) (source of the image excerpt).



August 27, 2024 – [Wawa, Ont., the latest northern municipality to adopt accommodation tax of 4%](#) (Cottage Life)

July, 2024 – Muskoka Lakes Council approved a [Short Term Rental Accommodation Licensing By-Law](#) for the Township that comes into effect on January 1, 2025. It includes a "Renter's Code of Conduct" signed by the renter.

May 2024 – [Dysart et al adopts municipal accommodation tax, implements STR bylaws](#) (Cottage Life) – "The bylaw, expected to come into effect on October 1, enacts a municipal accommodation tax (MAT) that will impact properties that are rented for 28 days or less by one tenant."

May 2024 – the **Town of Gravenhurst** (which has had a STR bylaw since January 2023) has launched a new searchable map showing STR licensed properties and their permit numbers, "to ensure safe and efficient practices." [Access it here.](#)

April 2024 – the **City of Kawartha Lakes (CKL)** is reminding STR owners in their jurisdiction that the **Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU)** considers them to be owners and operators of "Small Drinking Water Systems" under [Ontario Regulation 319/08](#). As such, owners must conduct regular water sampling and testing, and maintain a log book of test results and maintenance activities. Learn more from [CKL](#) and [HKPRDHU](#) online postings.

- As part of the CKL's STR education program, they have also posted a handy local [STR Information Sheet for Renters and Owners](#) (PDF, 1 page) and a related [Complaints Sheet](#) (PDF, 1 page).

Mar. 19, 2024 – [Town of Huntsville introduces 24-hour STR hotline](#) (Cottage Life)

Feb.29, 2024 – the **Township of Georgian Bay** has launched a [communications campaign](#) to alert property owners to the by-law passed by Council in late December 2023 to register, regulate and govern STR in the township.

Feb. 13, 2024 – [As unruly guests disturb the peace, Muskoka Lakes considers licences for short-term rentals](#) (CBC News)

February 4, 2024 – [Federal government extends foreign buyer ban on Canadian homes to 2027](#) (Canadian Press)

November 21, 2023 – [Canada tax rule curbs Airbnb deductions to ease rental shortage](#) (Reuters.com) – the new rules will apply as of Jan. 1 in provinces and municipalities that bar STR and will affect deductions such as interest expenses. Starting in 2024, the government says they will spend \$50 million over 3 years to enable municipal enforcement of restrictions on STR.

Related Media Coverage of this Federal News:

- February 2024 – [Legislative proposal to crack down on non-compliant short-term rentals](#) (Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada)
- Dec.13, 2023 – [Shoreline Road Allowances Could Pose Problem for Haliburton County STR Operators](#) (updates from November 22nd Haliburton County council meeting, as reported by Cottage Life)
- Dec.5, 2023 – [Feds' New Short-Term Rental Rules Could Be Moot In Muskoka](#) (Storeys.com)
- November 29, 2023 – [Enforcement of federal government's tax laws on short-term rentals could be difficult](#) (Cottage Life) – FOCA's Executive Director is quoted in this article as questioning how the tax laws will affect short-term rental operators who don't claim their rental revenue as income
- November 24, 2023 – [Some Ontario cottage owners fear Ottawa's new short-term rental crackdown may force them to sell](#) (Toronto Star)

See other news and earlier developments including municipal responses to STR, as well as important tips about [your role](#) if you decide to rent, below.

November 23, 2023 – [City of Thunder Bay considers action on STR](#) (TBnewsWatch.com)

Nov. 22/23 – [Cottage country municipality \[Minden Hills\] holds short-term rental owner responsible for bonfire fine incurred by guests](#) (Cottage Life)

November 20, 2023 – [Owen Sound going with 180-day annual cap for STR](#) (OwenSoundSunTimes.com)

November 19, 2023 – [Trudeau government to crack down on people who profit from short-term rentals like Airbnb: source](#) – *“Property owners in areas that already restrict short-term rentals will no longer be able to claim their rental expenses against the income they make, a senior federal official told the Star, in a bid to take away the incentive to flout local restrictions and list properties on platforms like Airbnb anyway.”*

November 17, 2023 – [STR bylaw topic for Whitestone hybrid public meeting](#) (ParrySound.com) 2023 – staff report on status of updating their STR licencing bylaw (from 2014); new bylaw in a draft state and the plan is for public input in the new year

November 13, 2023 – [City of Greater Sudbury council to review staff report of STR at Nov.15 meeting](#) (Sudbury.com)

November 3, 2023 – [Minden rules property owners are on the hook for renter's fine](#) (MindenTimes.ca)

November 2, 2023 – [French River moves to regulate STR](#) (NorthernOntarioCTVnews.ca)

November 2, 2023 – [Tiny Township council approves increasing short-term rental licence fee to \\$1,750](#) (BarrieCTVnews.ca)

Oct.25, 2023 – [Cottage-country municipalities, rental owners respond to federal government's rumoured plans to limit STRs](#) (Cottage Life)

October 19, 2023 – [Meaford Council seeks public input on STR](#) (MeafordIndependent.ca)

October 19, 2023 – [East Ferris \(District of Nipissing\) sees reduction in illegal STR](#) (NorthBayNugget.ca)

October 18, 2023 – [Collingwood could allow short-term rentals by February](#) (CollingwoodToday.ca)

Oct.17, 2023 – [Limits on short-term rentals in cottage communities making waves](#) (London Free Press) – An online petition has been launched to amend a new bylaw that limits the number of short-term rental properties – any living space rented out for less than 30 days – in a rural municipality on the shores of Lake Huron.

Oct.17, 2023 – [B.C. slams door on operators of multiple vacation rentals](#) (Times Colonist) – As of May 1, [2024] short-term-rental units in communities with more than 10,000 people will be allowed only in the principal residence of the host, plus one secondary suite or laneway home

October 13, 2023 – [Enforcement approach continues for short-term rentals in the Township of Leeds & the Thousand Islands](#) (YahooNews.com)

Oct.10, 2023 – [Airbnb crackdown: Canada may tighten regulations on short-term rentals](#) (Daily Hive.com) – as reported by the Globe and Mail, the federal government is considering measures to encourage cities to limit the supply of Airbnbs as part of efforts to increase availability of long-term rentals across the country.

October 8, 2023 – [Sault Ste. Marie moves to crack down hard on unlicensed short-term rentals](#) (SooToday.com)

October 2, 2023 – [Bracebridge considers accommodation tax, rental restrictions](#) (South Muskoka Doppler)

September 20, 2023 – [Magnetawan looks to limit short-term rentals to minimum 7-day stays, 10 guests max](#) (NorthBayNipissing.com)

September 18, 2023 – the City of Kawartha Lakes has announced the launch of their new [Short Term Rental Accommodation Business License Application](#) process

Sept.14, 2023 – [STR bylaw progressing in Haliburton County](#) (The Highlander) – Council on Sept. 13 discussed moving toward the possible implementation of a regional STR bylaw with annual licenses and inspections and limits on numbers of guests, with a system of demerit points, fines and possible suspension of the license for non-compliance.

Sept.11, 2023 – [Airbnb and Vrbo must be put in their place](#) (National Observer)

August 25, 2023 – [Wasaga Beach maps out route to create STR bylaw](#) (Simcoe.com)

August 24, 2023 – [Oro-Medonte intensifies efforts against short-term rentals](#) (BarrieCTVnews.ca)

July 20, 2023 – [Tempers flare, OPP called as Alnwick/Haldimand council eyes short-term rental bylaw expansion](#) (GlobalNews)

July 14, 2023 – [Kenora discussing regulation of short-term rental properties](#) (WinnipegCTVnews.ca)

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Darwyn Sproule, Public Works Manager, P. Eng.
Tara Mieske, Clerk/Planning Manager, Dipl.M.A. Dipl.M.M.
Approved by: Corey Klatt, Chief Administrative Officer
Date of Meeting: 24 Feb 2026
Re: Environmental Task Force - Mandatory Septic Inspection Proposal

Recommendation:

Be It Resolved That Council receives for information the Public Works Manager's Administrative Report entitled "Environmental Task Force - Mandatory Septic Inspection Proposal";
And That Council _____.

Background:

Council approved the 2025 work plan for the Environmental Task Force on November 22, 2024 which included Environmental Stewardship, Protection and Regeneration - Septic Inspection Programs - potential policy and education.

A sub-committee was formed with the following members: Councillor Huetl, Councillor Fowler, Bruce Moore, and Katie Surra to research potential policies and education opportunities. Guests were invited to the sub-committees as required to assist with providing information to assist the sub-committee.

On April 25, 2025, Council passed the following Resolution #145-25:

Be It Resolved That Council receives for information Councillor Huetl's Administrative Report entitled "Environmental Task Force - Mandatory Septic Inspection Proposal " on behalf of the Environmental Task Force;

And That Council instructs the Clerk/Planning Manager and Public Works Manager to complete research on a potential mandatory septic inspection program on properties at the time of sale and report back to Council for future consideration;

And That the costs for Solicitor's advice is to be taken from the Operating Contingency Reserve.

Carried

The proposal includes mandatory septic inspections on all properties with a dwelling when there is a transfer of ownership. Exemptions were suggested for homes that have had systems installed or inspected within 10 years of the sale and transfers between family members. The definition of 'family members' remains to be determined. Options considered for the inspection / report includes use of a qualified third-party inspector retained by the purchaser or inspections completed by a contracted inspection service designated by the Township.

Researched By:

Environmental Task Force Sub-Committee

Darwyn Sproule, Public Works Manager
Tara Mieske, Clerk/Planning Manager
Don Reed, Chief Building Official
Kelly Watkins, Treasurer

Comments:

Authority to Require Inspections

Under the Municipal Act, municipalities have authority to pass by-laws necessary to protect the environmental well-being of the municipality and to protect the health, safety and well-being of residents in the municipality. In the Township Solicitor's opinion this section would authorize the Township to enact a septic system maintenance program. It is possible to use the transfer of title as the trigger for an inspection. However; it is recommended that the by-law include some exemptions for systems which have been recently inspected and transfers to an immediate family member.

Rationale and Basis for the Proposed Program

1. Public Health and Environmental Protection

Reduce the possibility of water contamination from leaking septic systems which would introduce bacteria and viruses into the environment.

Protect drinking water systems from contamination.

Protect aquatic ecosystems by reducing the spread of pollutants which can have a drastic effect on plant growth and oxygen levels in lakes.

2. Regulation and Property Value

Help property owners meet all standards required for their septic systems and prevent potential fines or penalties.

Improve property value- potential new home owners have confidence in the system functioning properly.

3. Proactive Maintenance

Regular inspections help the home owner identify small issues before they become major costly repairs or a replacement.

Educate the home owner on how a septic system should operate properly and offer information on what can and cannot be flushed into a septic system.

Increased awareness of the importance of water conservation.

Sales Data

The Township is provided sale information from MPAC. However; MPAC has advised the sales information cannot be used for operational purposes. In order to obtain sale information the Township would require an Agreement with Teranet. For a five-year term the cost to obtain the data bi-annually, quarterly and monthly would be \$6,334, \$6,703 and \$8,176 respectively.

Mandatory inspections after the transfer of title potentially leaves the new owner solely responsible for any subsequent repairs, remedial work or a costly replacement. This is the result of the Township not being able to obtain notice until after the transfer is completed. Potentially, once the requirement for mandatory inspections is well publicized, purchasers will be aware and have the option to address

responsibility for the inspection in offer to purchase agreement and / or insist on the seller having the inspection completed prior to the sale.

Program Implementation

Staff have reviewed several options to implement the program. There are several pros and cons to each of the options.

Administrative staff would need to review the Teranet reports and the status of each property to determine if an inspection is required. If so, prepare letters to new property owners advising of the mandatory septic inspection requirements, accept and record documentation, follow-up if documentation is not provided and maintain inspection records. It is estimated this would require approximately 4 hours at an estimated cost of \$150.00 per property.

If the property owner does not respond and additional correspondence is required there will be additional hours and costs required to follow-up. Also, if there are deficiencies identified there will be additional administration costs to follow-up on the remedial work.

Enforcement of non-compliance is the most costly consideration of implementing the program. For other By-law and Building Code infractions the enforcement can be as much as \$20,000 plus staff time.

We also researched who would complete the inspections. Consideration was given to septic designers, installers, pumpers, home inspectors, Township Building Department staff, etc. There are pros and cons to the different inspection options. External inspections completed on behalf of the property owner would not impact staff time other than noted above; however follow-up and enforcement would be the responsibility of the Township. If this is the option chosen it would need to be clearly set-out in the policy who could complete the inspections, what is required to be inspected, etc.

If the inspections are completed by Building Department staff, the amount of time required to complete the inspections, follow-up and enforcement is unknown, but likely onerous.

The biggest challenge with implementing a mandatory septic program is the unknown staff implications/costs. Existing Township staff (administrative and building department) do not have capacity to add the additional workload. Therefore; consideration would have to be given to adding additional staff or to contract some of the required services.

The Township currently has an agreement with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA) to complete voluntary inspections on behalf of the Township. There is an option to expand the current agreement to include the mandatory inspections. MVCA complete mandatory inspections for other municipalities, including: contact with the property owners, scheduling appointments, providing education, completing the inspections, issuing the report and providing follow-up and enforcement if necessary. A fixed cost can be established for the above contracted services, other than follow-up and enforcement. Contracted follow-up and enforcement services are typically provided on a per hour basis.

Options for educating the public on the mandatory inspection program

- Inquiries, zoning and tax certificate requests from potential purchasers
- Local real estate agents
- Social media/website
- Tax bill insert

- Communications with Lake Associations

Other Considerations

If Council decides to implement a mandatory septic inspection program they will need to consider if the voluntary program continues.

Mandatory Septic Inspection Program - Options for Consideration

Option #1

Not proceed with implementing the mandatory septic inspection program at the time of sale.

Option #2

Staff proceed with further research on implementing the mandatory septic inspection program at the time of sale using Township administrative staff and inspections being completed by the property owner (at their expense) using an identified person (qualifications to be determined) to complete the inspections.

Option #3

Staff proceed with further research on implementing the mandatory septic inspection program at the time of sale using Township administrative staff and inspections being completed by the Township's Building Department staff (with a fixed cost established for the mandated inspection), with follow-up and enforcement for noncompliance being provided using a contracted service agreement.

Option #4

Staff proceed with further research on implementing the mandatory septic inspection program at the time of sale using Township administrative staff, and through an Agreement with MVCA for contracted services. As noted above, MVCA completes mandatory inspections for other municipalities including the notice to property owners, scheduling appointments, providing education, completing the inspections / reports and follow-up / enforcement if necessary. The Building Department would be kept informed regarding noncompliance issues.

Financial Impact:

Teranet Agreement

Teranet Agreement (this will be required regardless of option chosen)

For a five-year term the cost to obtain the data bi-annually, quarterly and monthly would be \$6,334, \$6,703 and \$8,176 respectively.

Administrative Work Completed by Township Staff

The amount of administrative staff time required for the program depends on the number of property sales. According to our records there were 69 sales in 2023; 87 sales in 2024; and 71 sales in 2025 as of November. It is estimated if everyone complied with the requirements of the By-law the administrative staff costs would be approximately \$11,500 (\$28 plus 30% per hour for 4 hours and 75 properties). This will be required regardless of option chosen.

Cost

The property owner could be charged a fixed fee to cover Teranet, administration and inspection costs (unless the inspector is retained by the property owner). Other municipalities charge a fixed fee of \$0 to \$xxxx including administration costs and the inspection.

The current voluntary inspection program is provided free of charge to property owners.

Enforcement

It is difficult to estimate the costs of enforcement because it depends on the level of noncompliance by the property owner. Enforcement can be as simple as correspondence addressing what needs to be completed to ensure compliance and following up to confirm the required action has been taken. In this instance there would be minimal staff time and costs. If the property owner is not co-operative and legal or court services are required the costs can be as high as \$20,000 to achieve compliance.

Contracted Service with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority

For the current voluntary inspection program the Township pays \$ \$50 to \$65 per inspection plus an administrative / management fee. For the 2025 season the total cost was \$6,035 for 53 inspections. The cost of addressing an initial failure to comply would be minimal if the owner promptly addressed the remedial work. Further action including written and verbal communications with the property owner, posting orders to comply, issuing summons, and preparing documents for prosecutions would be provided on an hourly basis at a typical rate of \$100+ per hour. The Township would be responsible for legal fees and Building Department hours. Enforcement costs could be as high as \$20,000 depending on the specific circumstances.

Strategic Implications:

Environmental Stewardship - Establish an Environmental Task Force to develop and promote programs to protect the environment. The Environmental Task Force's work plan includes developing potential policies and education on septic inspection programs.