

Late Submission
Public Hearing re Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2026-04

Date: March 14, 2026

To: Mayor and Council, City of Penticton

From: Sidney Sheppard

Address: 1769 Duncan Avenue East, Penticton, BC

Re: Feedback on Business License Bylaw No. 2026-01 and Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 2026-04

To Mayor Bloomfield and Council,

I'm writing to you today as both a Penticton resident and an active member of our local development community. I wanted to share some concerns regarding the proposed updates to the Short-Term Rental (STR) regulations, specifically the new occupancy limits and the restrictions on non-principal residences.

From a development standpoint, I'm worried about the long-term economic ripple effects. Penticton is an aging city that needs growth and revitalization to stay vibrant, and new developments are part of what fund the vital infrastructure we all rely on. By placing heavy restrictions on STRs, we run a very real risk of stalling new construction. In this market, we simply can't afford to discourage the investment that keeps our city moving forward.

We've already seen how this played out in Kelowna. They imposed heavy restrictions, even on properties they had specifically zoned for STRs, and it led to a shortage of accommodations that hit their tourism industry hard. Now, they're looking at rolling some of those back. To put it plainly: we aren't Kelowna. We don't have their scale or diversified business base. We rely on tourism to survive, and if we don't foster it now, the consequences down the road could be significant.

Beyond tourism, the City needs the DCCs that development brings in. With our aging infrastructure needing repairs and replacements soon, I'm concerned the City doesn't have the reserves or tax revenue to cover those costs alone. We already have local projects struggling to meet presale requirements and adding more restrictions right now effectively pushes away the investment buyers needed to get these projects off the ground.

Regarding the proposed occupancy limit of eight guests, I believe a flat cap on STR spaces is overly restrictive. In practice, this rule makes it difficult for multi-generational families or larger groups to stay under one roof, which is often the primary reason they choose a vacation rental over booking multiple hotel rooms. We should be making it easier for these families to choose Penticton, rather than creating arbitrary barriers that push them to stay in neighboring municipalities with more flexibility.

I believe these changes are coming at a difficult time and don't quite account for the diverse needs of our tourism sector or our need for residential growth. I urge Council to reconsider these limits to ensure Penticton stays the vibrant, welcoming, and economically viable city we all want it to be.

Sincerely,

Sidney Sheppard