



Infrastructure Services

Prepared for: Council-in-Committee

Report: IS-11-2025

Meeting Date: May 12, 2025

1. Title

Short-Term Rentals – Parking in Crystal Beach (Pilot Project)

2. Recommendations

That: Council approve that Short-Term Rental (STR) applicants that do not have on-site parking in the Crystal Beach area, are permitted to apply to rent parking spaces in Municipally managed parking lots in Crystal Beach for an annual fee of \$500 per space, as a Pilot program for 2025, and further

That: Council direct staff to update By-law 39-2025 to allow Short-Term Rental parking in the parking lot located on the South side of Erie Road between Oxford Avenue and Oakwood Avenue (April 1 – October 31) and the Erie Road Parking Lot (November 1 – March 31), and further

That: Council approve that only up to ten (10) parking spots will be dedicated to Short-Term Rentals in these parking lots, and further

That: Council approve Delegated Authority to the Director of Infrastructure Services to approve/deny parking in Municipally managed parking lots, and further

That: Council direct staff to update By-law 132-2024 to Establish Fees and Charges for the Town of Fort Erie, as necessary.

3. Relation to Council's Corporate Strategic Plan

Priority: Quality of life and community well-being

4. List of Stakeholders

Mayor and Council of the Town of Fort Erie

Town of Fort Erie Ratepayers

Short Term Rental Applicants

Crystal Beach BIA

5. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's direction and approval to update the Parking Lot By-law 39-2025 to allow a pilot project in 2025 for Short-Term Rentals in Crystal Beach. This pilot project provides options for Short-Term Rental applicants that have a property that does not have on-site parking to apply for a minor variance to allow for off-site parking at municipally managed parking lots in Crystal Beach.

6. Analysis

Background

On January 29, 2024, Council approved By-law 01-2024, being a by-law to amend Comprehensive Zoning By-law 129-90, as amended, with respect to the Short-Term Rental Land Use Study for the Town of Fort Erie, and By-law 02-2024, being a by-law to enact an amendment to the Official Plan related to Short-Term Rentals.

As a result of the land use controls, there are new parking requirements that must be met for short-term rentals. Specifically, section 3 of By-law 01-2024 states that:

Short-Term Rental - One (1) parking space for three (3) or more bedrooms in addition to the required parking for the dwelling unit. Tandem parking is permitted.

Staff have received short-term rental applications in Crystal Beach, where applicants are seeking off-site parking options to meet these new requirements. Due to the configuration and size of some lots in Crystal Beach, there are parking limitations that exist with no options to expand or add parking.

Staff are proposing a pilot program that would allocate up to 10 parking spaces in the parking lot located on the South side of Erie Road between Oxford Avenue and Oakwood Avenue for use by short-term rental operators that meet the licencing and zoning requirements. As the parking lot is not maintained during the winter months, parking would shift to the municipal lot on Erie Road from November through March.

In order to meet zoning requirements, short-term rental applicants that do not have sufficient on-site parking will be required to submit a Planning Act application to permit off-site parking.

Staff recommend that the most appropriate application process for this is through a Minor Variance application, which includes:

- A fee of \$1,437
- Approval by the Committee of Adjustment
- An application processing time of approximately 45 days to the Committee decision
- A 60-meter public notice radius

It is important to note that previously Infrastructure Services (IS) was not a reviewer of short-term rental applications; however, both IS and Planning Services will review all new applications to ensure conformity with parking requirements.

7. Financial, Staffing and Accessibility (AODA) Implications

AODA considerations will be reviewed during the initial application and minor variance processes.

When a STR is approved with a minor variance to allow off-site parking, along with the license fee, applicants will also be charged a proposed annual fee of \$500 per parking space for this pilot. Parking pass(es) will be issued to the property owner(s) to place in the visitors' vehicles in order to identify those that will be using the dedicated spaces.

There will be minor costs to the Town to add dedicated parking space signs at both locations and can be managed within the current Operational Budget.

8. Policies Affecting Proposal

By-law 136-2023 adopted Councils 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan for the Town of Fort Erie. The recommendations provided conform to the priorities, goals and initiatives as described herein.

By-law 1-2024 being a by-law to amend Comprehensive Zoning By-law 129-90, as amended, with respect to the Short-Term Rental Land Use Study for the Town of Fort Erie.

By-law 2-2024, being a by-law to enact an amendment to the Official Plan related to Short-Term Rentals.

By-law 39-2025 - Municipal Parking Lot Use and Maintenance Policy.

By-law 132-2024 to Establish Fees and Charges for the Town of Fort Erie.

9. Comments from Departments, Community and Corporate Partners

Comments and considerations from relevant departments have been incorporated into this report.

10. Alternatives

Council can choose not to approve these changes to the Municipal Parking Lots and not allow dedicated parking spaces for STRs in municipally managed lots.

11. Communicating Results

Staff will update the signage in the parking lots.

12. Conclusion

Staff will monitor this pilot project over the 2025 season for usage and gather feedback from the short-term rentals, businesses and residents at the end of the year. Based on feedback, staff can provide Council with an update report and make any necessary recommendations for 2026 and beyond.

13. Report Approval

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14. Attachments

N/A