

DISTRICT OF INVERMERE

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

DECEMBER 6, 2023



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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The District of Invermere (District) is located near the British Columbia/Alberta border, making it a popular travel destination for residents of both provinces. The area has a variety of recreational activities including hiking, biking, golfing, and boating on Lake Windermere that attract a range of visitors. In recent years, the District has seen an upsurge of **Short-Term Rental (STR)** properties within the area to accommodate tourism. The District defines an STR as use of a residential dwelling unit for the commercial accommodation of paying guests for a period of less than one month.

In 2021, the District completed a Housing Needs Assessment. In the Assessment, the District identified the conversion of dwellings to STRs as a challenge to both current and anticipated housing needs and demands in the community. For these reasons, the subject of STRs has been of great interest to the Invermere community and to the District's Council.

The District conducted a public survey in 2021 to help determine the level of public support for regulating the operation of short-term rental accommodation units in Invermere. The survey results reported in the fall of 2021 showed strong support for regulating the operation of STRs in Invermere. As a result of the survey, the District has completed background research and drafted potential options for regulating STRs in Invermere.

In October of 2023, the District held a set of public information meetings and circulated a public survey to collect information from the community regarding the proposed options for regulating STRs in Invermere.

The purpose of the following report is to summarize the engagement feedback and provide a high-level overview of the survey findings. Please note that because all engagement activities were voluntary, their responses do not reflect a random sample.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Public Information Sessions: The District of Invermere held three public information meetings on October 5, 2023, with presentations by District staff on the proposed STR accommodation regulations, and other updates to the District of Invermere's Business Licencing Bylaw. In total, there were **48 community members** who participated in the sessions.

Survey: The District of Invermere also conducted a public survey with 11 questions asking the public for feedback regarding the proposed options for regulating the operation of STRs in Invermere. The survey was open from Thursday, October 5 to Friday, October 27, 2023. In total, there were **471 survey responses**. All responses remained anonymous.

Written Submissions: The District invited the community to provide written feedback about the proposed STR regulations. During the engagement period, **two (2) written submissions** were received.

More details on the project can be found at: www.invermere.net

OVERALL SURVEY FINDINGS

Total Survey Responses

Most survey respondents live **North of 13th Street, Downtown**, and **Wilder**.

Overall, survey respondents **were divided on whether they supported STRs in residential and low-density neighbourhoods**. For those in support, many did so with the stipulation that STRs be **regulated** to maintain community livability.

Over half of survey respondents **support STRs in all Zones**, except for Industrial or Light Industrial.

Over half of survey respondents **did not support managing STRs with a two-tiered approach** that would use both the Business Licencing Bylaw and Temporary Use Permits.

Over half of survey respondents indicated that **managing STRs with Temporary Use Permits (TUP) would not be fair** for operators or surrounding neighbours.

Survey respondents noted that the most common exceptional amenities that would need to be considered in TUPs, if used to manage STRs, were **fire pits, hot tubs, pools, play structures or play areas**, and **outdoor decks or patios**.

Over half of survey respondents noted that the District should **place a limit of one STR licence per owner**.

Over half of survey respondents shared that the District should **implement a cap on the number of STRs** in Invermere.

Over half of survey respondents indicated that the District should **control the number and location of STRs**.

Most survey respondents indicated that the **number of guests at STRs should be limited** by the District.

Most survey respondents shared that the **District should establish parking requirements** for STRs and that **noise monitoring should be mandatory** for STRs in Invermere.

Most survey respondents indicated the District should implement a **set of escalating fines** to address poor management of STRs.

Most survey respondents indicated that STR operators should have between **one to three months** to apply for and obtain a business licence.

The top **additional concerns or considerations** that respondents shared included:

- economic impact of limiting STRs
- how STRs change the sense of community in Invermere
- suggestions to opt-in to the recently introduced provincial legislation for STRs
- impact of STRs on the availability of seasonal worker housing

Resident-Only Survey Responses

When the survey results were filtered to just **Invermere residents**, residents were more supportive of STR regulations (i.e., number and location of STRs, parking requirements, noise monitoring, fines, etc.) than the overall survey group.

Non-Resident Only Survey Responses

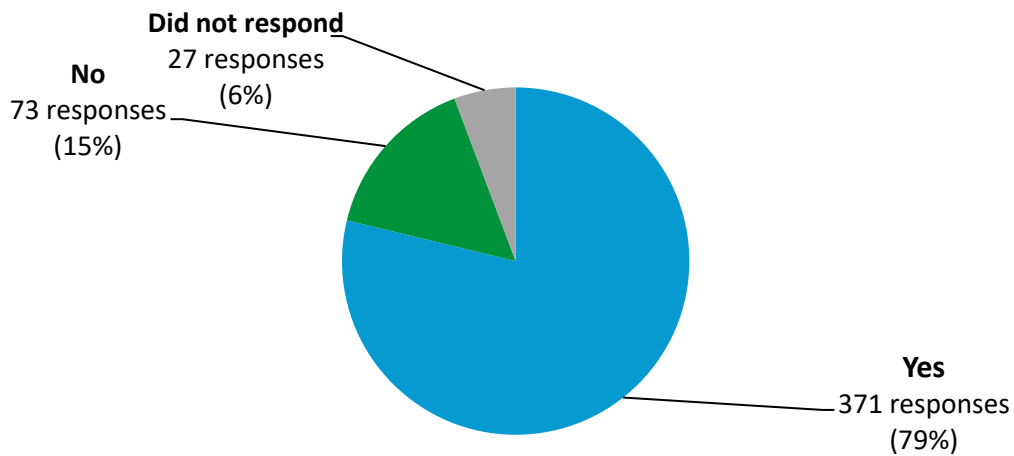
When the survey results were filtered to just **non-residents**, non-residents were more supportive of STRs in residential and low-density neighbourhoods than residents and the overall survey group.

Non-resident survey respondents were less supportive of STR regulations (number and location of STRs, parking requirements, noise monitoring, fines, etc.) than the overall survey group.

WHAT WE LEARNED: SURVEY RESULTS

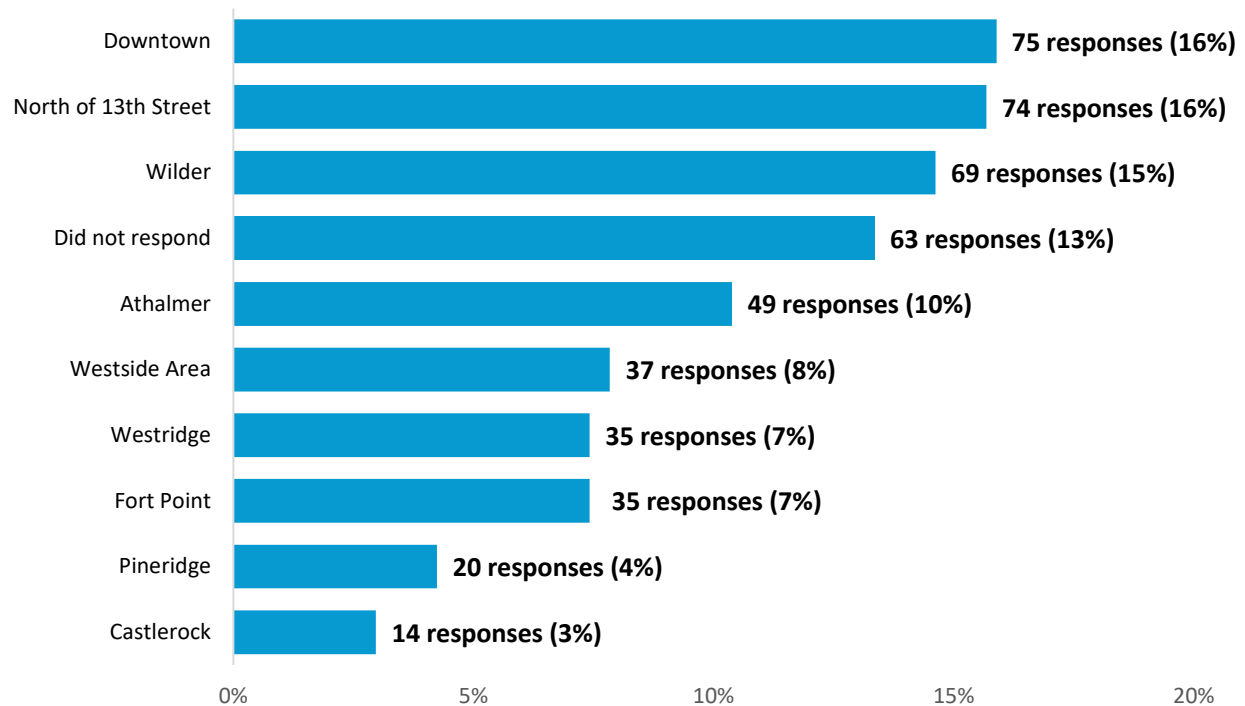
RESIDENCE LOCATION

Q: Are you a resident of Invermere? (n = 471)



Overall Findings: Most respondents (79 percent) indicate that they are residents of Invermere.

Q: What area of Invermere do you live in? (n = 471)



**This question was optional, and respondents could select multiple neighbourhoods.*

Note-percentages shown in tables and charts have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Overall Findings: Survey respondents represented most neighbourhoods of Invermere, with the North of 13th Street (16 percent), Downtown (16 percent), and Wilder (15 percent) having the most responses and Pineridge (4 percent) and Castlerock (3 percent) having the least.

Figure 1 below illustrates the neighbourhoods in the District of Invermere.

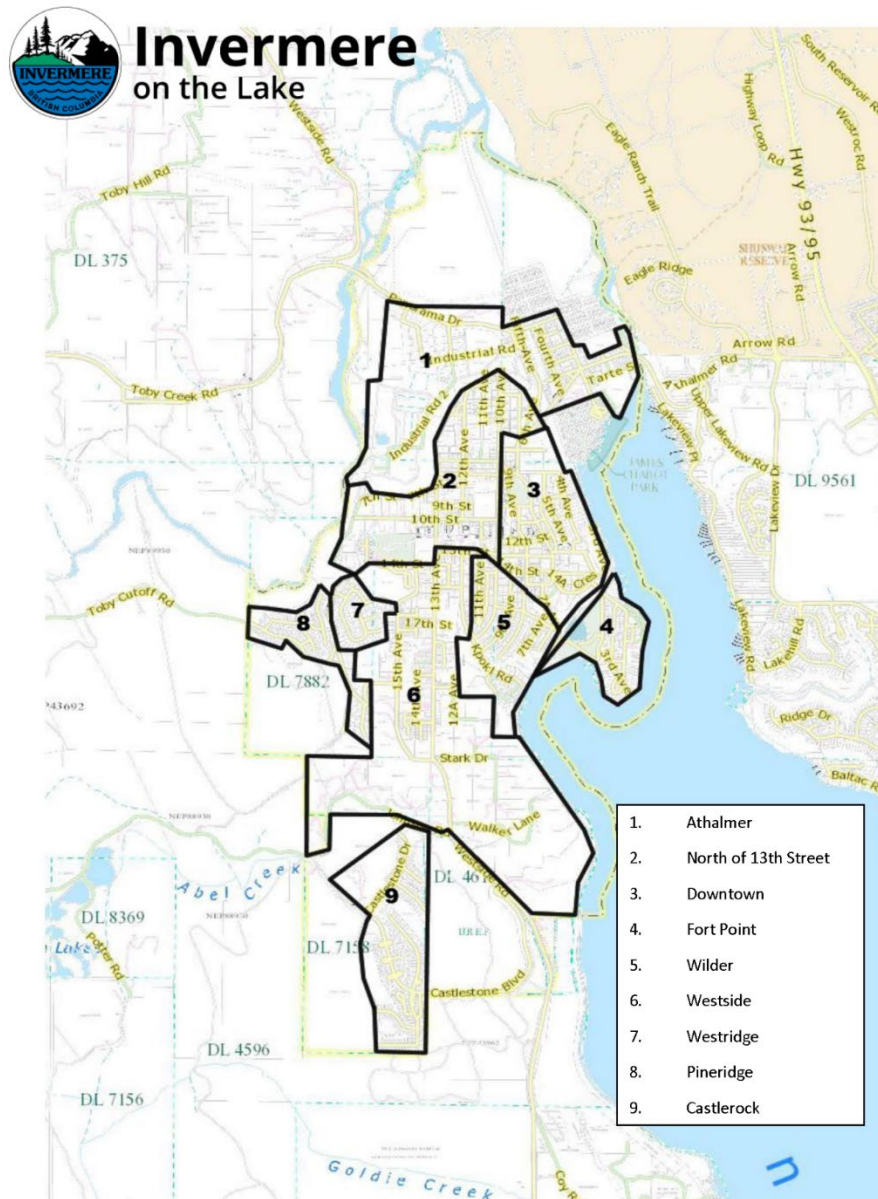


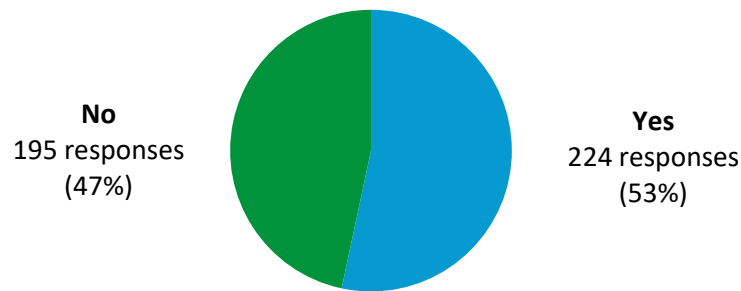
Figure 1. Neighbourhoods in the District of Invermere

REGULATING SHORT-TERM RENTALS

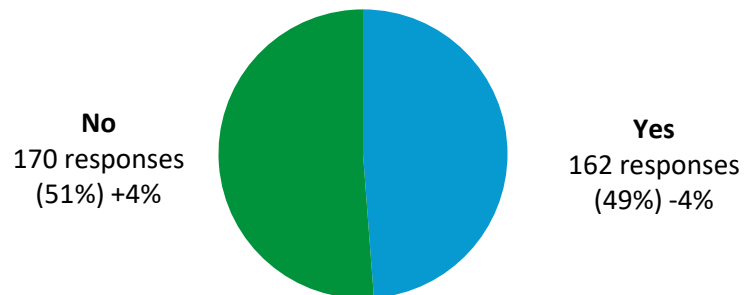
Exploring Regulation: Single Family and Low-density Residential Zones

#1a. Should Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STR) operations be permitted in single family and low-density residential zones?

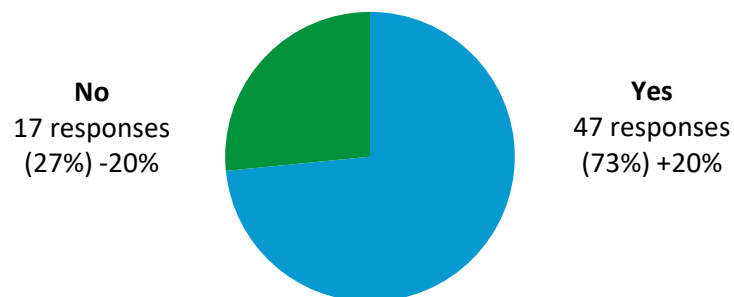
Overall Results (n=419)



Invermere Residents Only (n=332):



Non-Resident Responses (n=64):

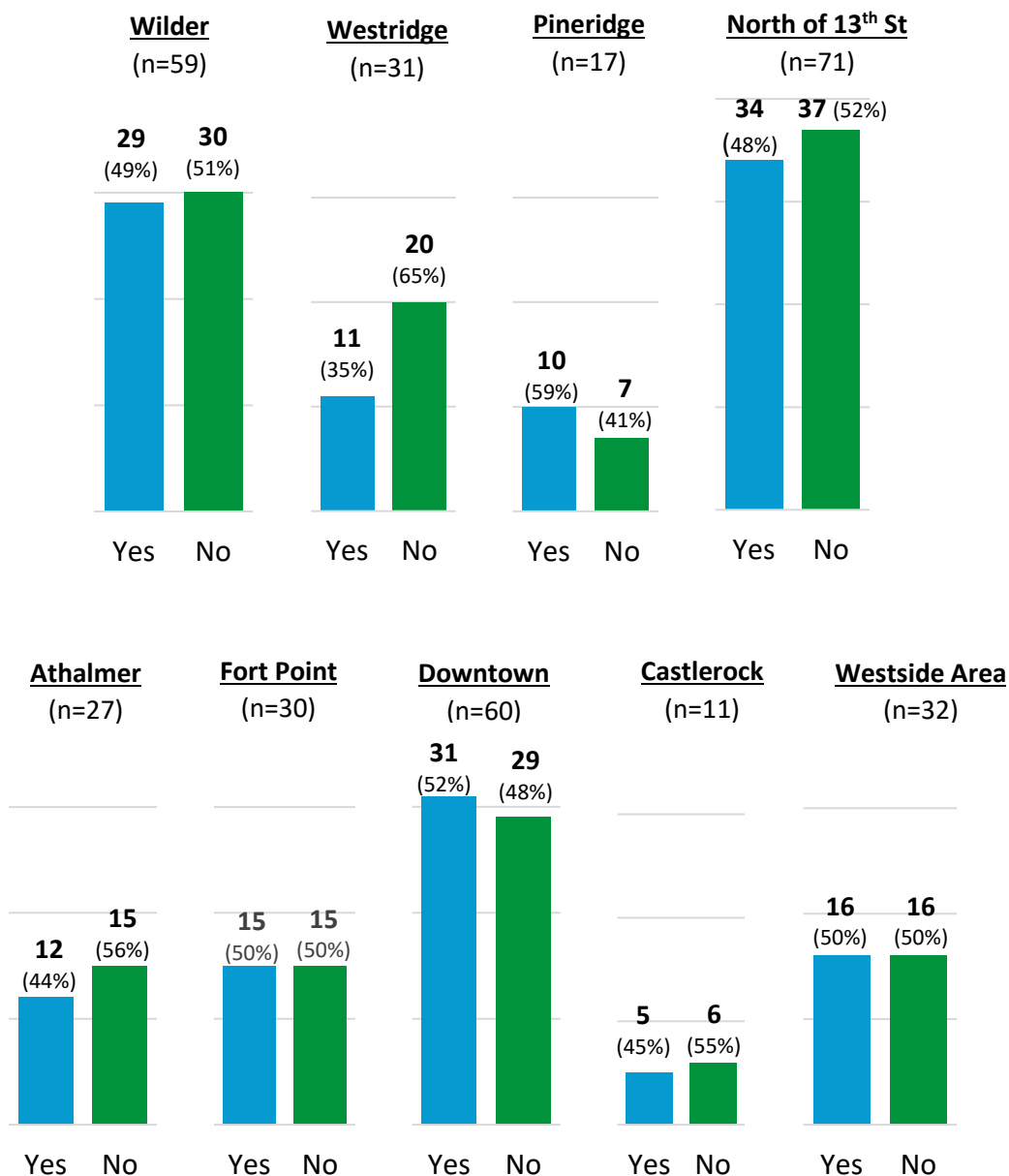


Overall Findings: The responses between those who support and those who do not support STRs in low-density neighbourhoods was relatively even. Of the 419 responses for this question, 53 percent of respondents indicated that they do support STRs in single family and low-density residential zones, while 47 percent indicated that they do not support STRs in single family and low-density residential zones.

It should be noted that of those who indicated their support, 70 respondents stated that their support was contingent on STRs operating in a regulated environment.

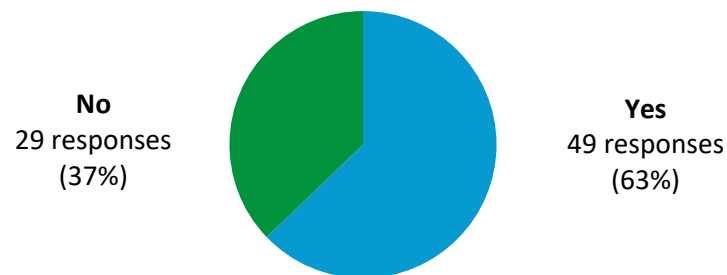
Breakdown of Results - by Neighbourhood:

“Should Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STR) operations be permitted in single family and low-density residential zones?”

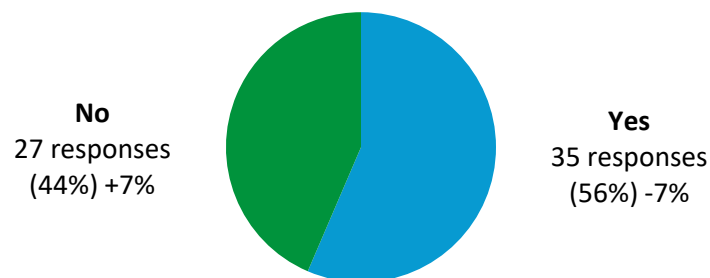


#1b. Should the District permit STR operations in all Zones, except for Industrial and Light Industrial Zones?

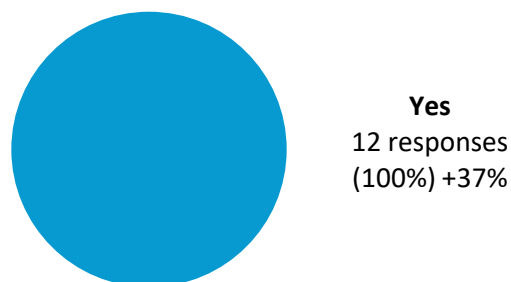
Overall Results (n=78):



Invermere Residents Only (n=62):



Non-Resident Responses (n=12):

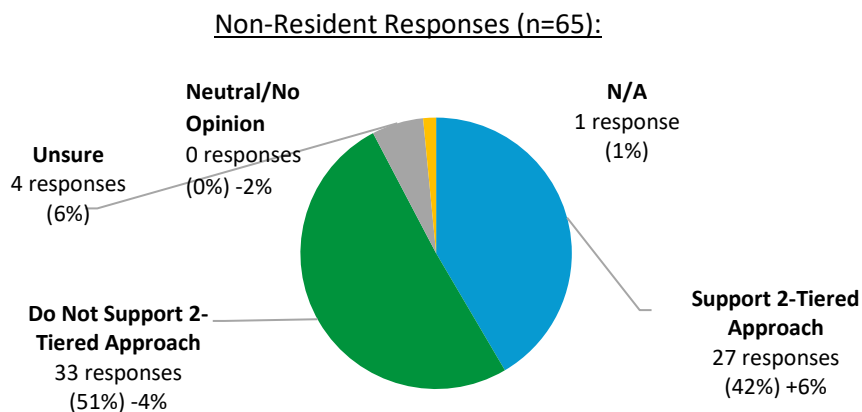
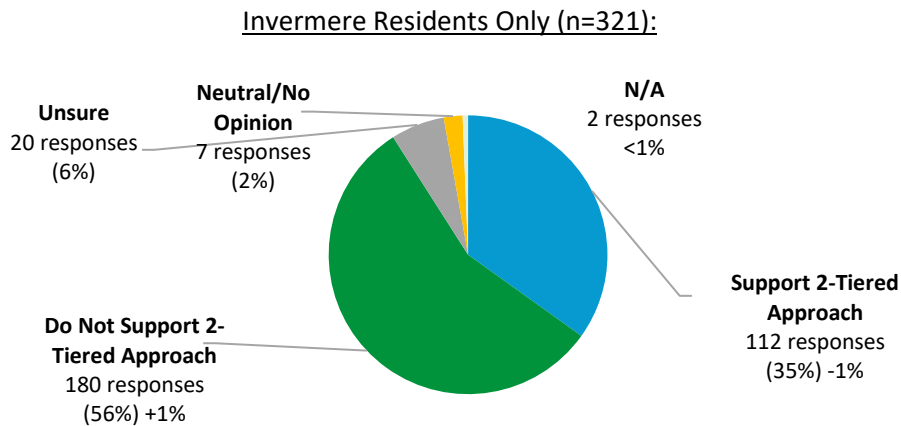
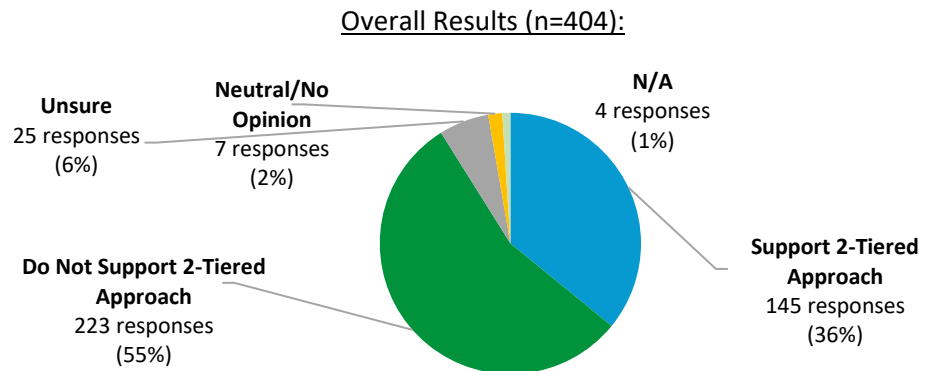


Overall Findings: Of the 78 responses, 63 percent indicated that the District should permit STRs in all Zones, except for Industrial and Light Industrial Zones.

Exploring Regulation: Business Licencing and Temporary Use Permits

#2. The District is considering regulating STR operations through its Business Licencing Bylaw and using Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) to address cases where proposed STR operations cannot comply with the District's Zoning Bylaw and/or Business Licencing Bylaw.

What do you think about this two-tiered approach?



Overall Findings: Overall, more than half of respondents (55 percent) indicated that they do not support this two-tiered approach; while 36 percent indicated that they do support this two-tiered approach (six percent were unsure and two percent were neutral or did not respond).

Of the respondents who did not support a two-tiered approach, additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Business Licencing Bylaw approach preferred: Respondents (50 responses) stated STRs should be administered only through the Business Licencing Bylaw, for simplicity and traceability.

STRs should always follow Zoning Bylaw regulations: Respondents (32 responses) shared that STRs should only be allowed in areas currently permitted by the District's Zoning Bylaw.

Difficult to administer: Respondents (15 responses) noted that a two-tiered would be hard for the District to administer and enforce. It would involve more work for the applicant, District Staff, Council, and residents.

Too permissive: Respondents (14 responses) shared that a TUP process is not strict enough and would ultimately allow more non-conforming uses throughout Invermere.

Unfair for owners: Respondents (14 responses) expressed that the approach was unfair for property owners who wish to benefit from renting their homes as STRs.

STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (8 responses) reiterated that they do not support STRs at all.

Impact on tourism: Respondents (6 responses) stated that additional regulation of STRs would negatively affect tourism and the local economy.

Of the respondents who did support a two-tiered approach (36 percent), additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Use proper enforcement: Respondents (11 responses) stated that proper staffing and enforcement needs to be in place for the approach to be effective.

TUPs for Single Family Areas: Respondents (7 responses) shared that a TUP should be required within Single Family Zones, and remaining areas should be regulated by the Business Licencing Bylaw or stratas, where applicable.

Use TUPs sparingly: Respondents (6 responses) indicated that TUPs should only be used in special cases, with business licencing being the primary way to regulate STRs.

Good for ensuring standards: Respondents (6 responses) commented that a two-tiered approach would allow the District to control STRs and help ensure that rules and standards are kept within the community.

Fees: Respondents (4 responses) shared that licences and permits should be accompanied by an application fee to cover administrative costs.

Adjacent neighbours notified: Respondents (3 responses) expressed that if an STR operator applies for a TUP, surrounding neighbours should be notified and allowed to share any concerns.

#3a. What exceptional amenities might need to be considered under a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) application? (n = 62)

Findings: Of the 62 respondents who provided specific exceptional amenities, the following were noted the most by survey participants:

Fire pits: Respondents (39 responses) shared that fire pits present a hazard if they are not maintained or managed correctly.

Hot tubs: Respondents (29 responses) shared noise and safety concerns related to outdoor hot tubs.

Pools: Large crowds, noise, and safety concerns were shared by respondents (26 responses).

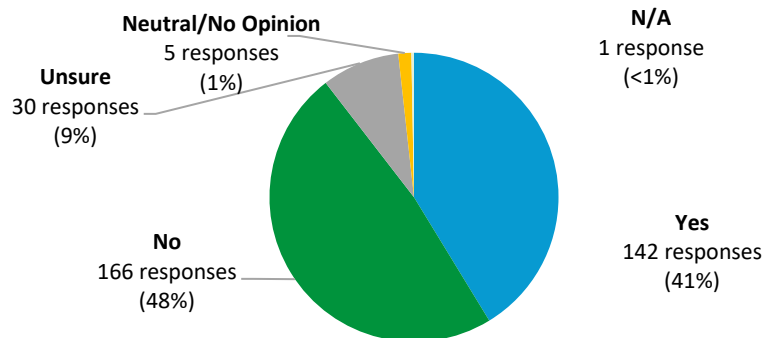
Play structures/play areas: Safety concerns were noted by respondents (16 responses).

Outdoor decks/patios: Noise concerns for surrounding neighbours were noted by respondents (9 responses).

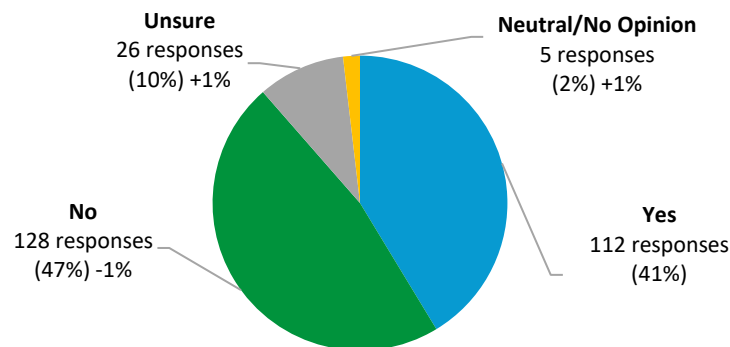
Additional amenities mentioned by respondents: Boat mooring, outdoor smokers, garbage/recycling facilities, saunas, tennis/pickleball courts, trampolines, and outdoor bars.

#3b. Does that seem like a fair process when you think about the interests of STR operators/owners and the surrounding neighbours?

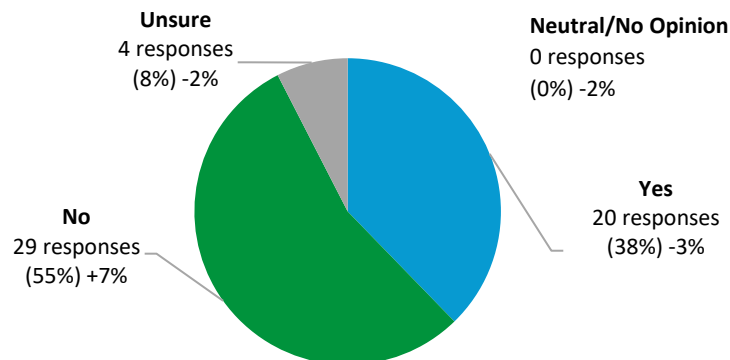
Overall Results (n=344):



Invermere Residents Only (n=272):



Non-Resident Responses (n=53):



Overall Findings: Of 344 responses, 48 percent of respondents indicated that the TUP process did not seem like a fair process between STR operators and the surrounding neighbours. Conversely, 41 percent of respondents indicated that the process was fair in balancing their interests, 9 percent were unsure, and the remaining respondents were neutral or did not express an opinion.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Unfair for surrounding neighbours:

Respondents (36 responses) stated that TUP applications would allow STR operators to circumvent the existing rules within residential neighbourhoods. Respondents shared that local community interests should be considered over those of a single STR operator.

Oppose TUP Approach: Respondents (28 responses) indicated that STRs are better regulated through existing bylaws (Zoning and Business Licencing) than through a TUP. Respondents noted that the approach adds time, cost, and uncertainty for both operators and the District.

Unfair for STR operators: Respondents (16 responses) stated that because property

owners do not require a TUP for the mentioned amenities, the process is over-regulated and cumbersome.

STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (8 responses) reiterated that they do not support STRs at all.

Let strata bylaws regulate applicable STRs:

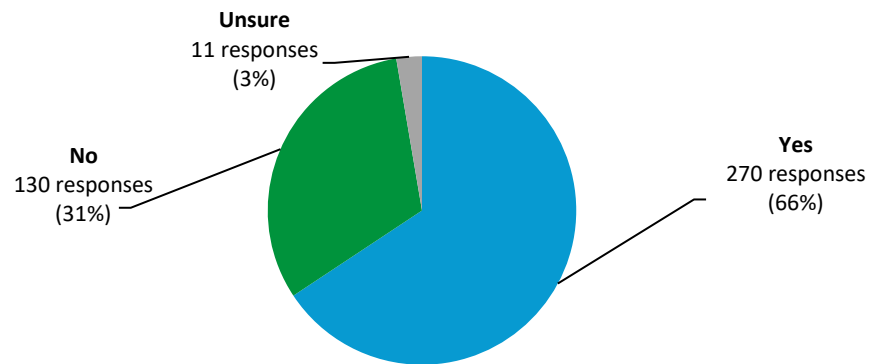
Respondents (5 responses) shared that if an STR is located within a strata property, the strata's bylaws already regulate the use of mentioned amenities.

Bad for tourism: Respondents (5 responses) stated that a TUP requirement would negatively affect business growth in Invermere.

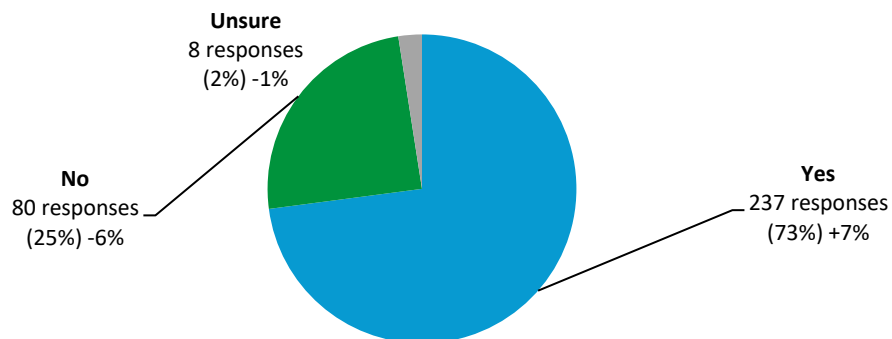
Exploring Regulation: Limiting the Number of STRs

#4. Should Invermere place a limit of one STR licence per owner?

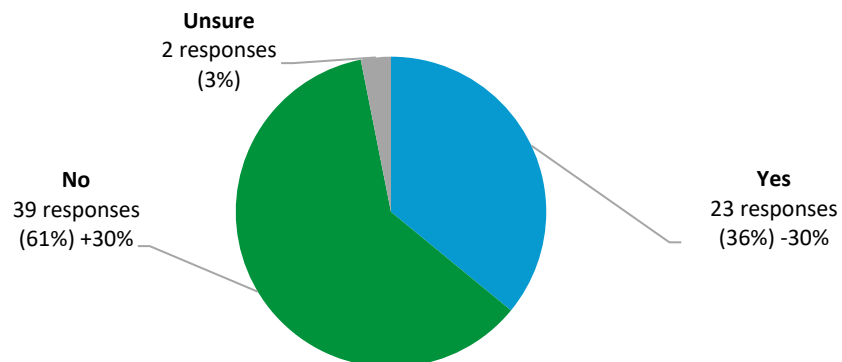
Overall Results (n=411):



Invermere Residents Only (n=325):



Non-Resident Responses (n=64):



Overall Findings: Of the 411 responses, 66 percent of respondents indicated support for a limit of one STR licence per owner in Invermere. Conversely, 31 percent of respondents indicated that there should not be a cap on STR licences per owner.

Of the respondents who answered “No,” additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Suggestions for higher limits: Respondents (21 responses) noted that a limit of one licence per owner could be too low and proposed District limits of:

- Two (5 responses)
- Three (8 responses)
- Four (1 responses)
- Five (1 responses)
- Unspecified – but more than one (6 responses)

Impact on tourism: Respondents (10 responses) shared that limiting the number of STR licenses in the community would have a negative impact on tourism and the local economy.

Only place a limit in Single Family Zones: Respondents (9 responses) shared that a limit

should only be placed in the Single-Family Zones in Invermere, and multiple licences should be allowed in commercial areas.

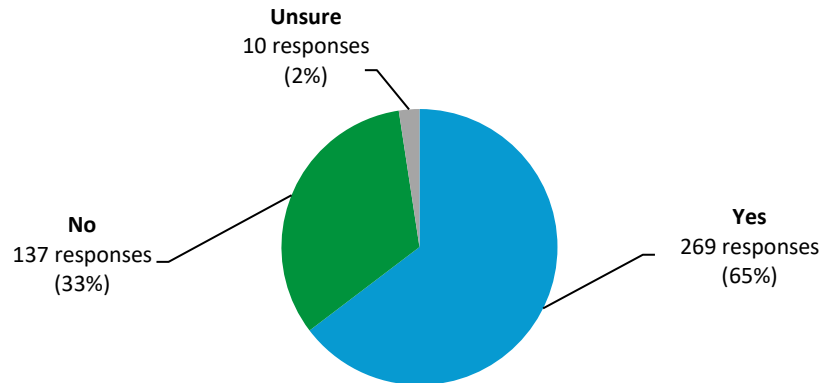
Unfair for property owners: Respondents (7 responses) noted that it is unfair for the District to regulate how owners choose to use their property. Respondents stated that they should not be regulated so long as they are following all existing bylaws and not causing a disturbance to surrounding neighbours.

Let the market decide: Respondents (5 responses) shared that the market should dictate STR operations and ownership.

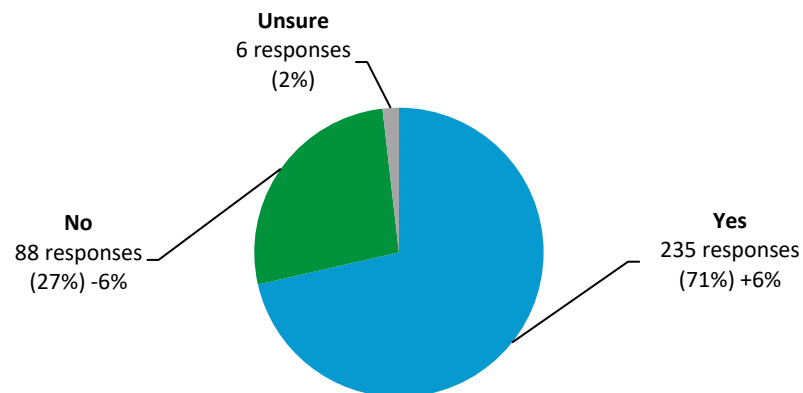
STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (5 responses) reiterated that they do not support STRs at all.

#5. Should the District consider implementing a cap on the number of STR operations in Invermere?

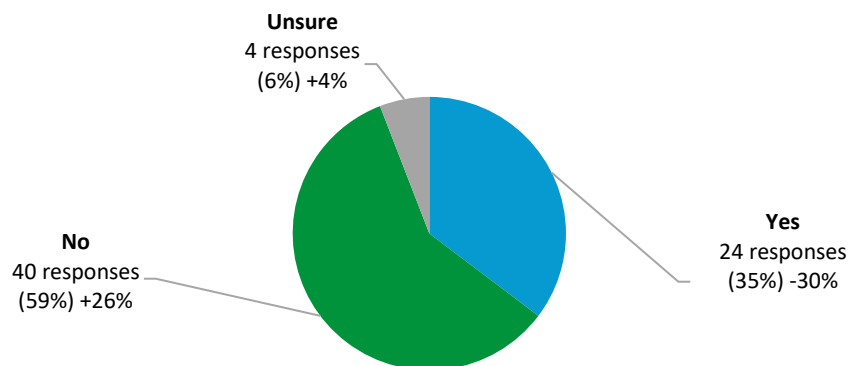
Overall Results (n=416):



Invermere Residents Only (n=329):



Non-Resident Responses (n=68):



Overall Findings: Of the 416 responses, 65 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see a cap on the number of STR operations in Invermere. Conversely, 33 percent of respondents indicated that there should not be a cap on the number of STRs in Invermere.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Impact on tourism: Respondents (18 responses) stated that limiting the number of STRs in the community through licensing would have a negative impact on tourism and the local economy.

Caps should be placed on the number of STR licences per owner: Respondents (11 responses) indicated that there should be a cap on the number of STR licences granted per owner/operator, rather than a cap on the overall number of STRs in the District.

Limits based on zoning: Respondents (9 responses) shared that limits should be placed in specific zones, rather than an overall cap on STRs in Invermere. For example, respondents stated that different limits should be placed in single family residential areas compared to commercial areas.

Impacts to seasonal worker housing: Respondents (6 responses) indicated that placing limits on the number of STRs (and the length of stay allowed in STRs) may also impact the availability of housing for seasonal workers.

Difficult to enforce: Respondents (4 responses) shared that this mechanism for regulating STRs may be difficult to enforce.

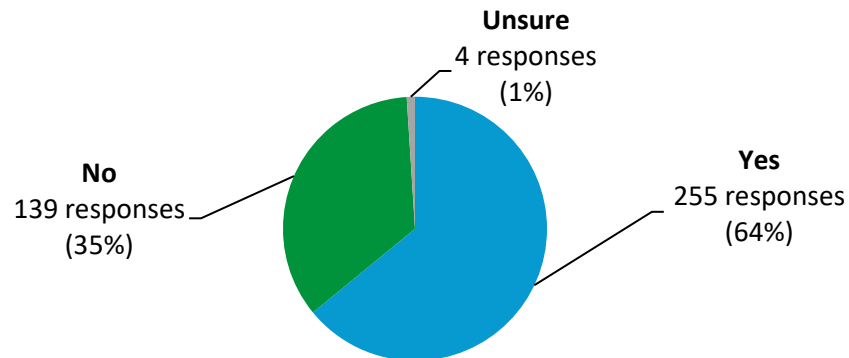
Restrictions for non-residents only: Respondents (3 responses) stated that restrictions should only be placed on property owners who do not primarily reside in Invermere.

Unfair for new property owners: Respondents (3 responses) noted that placing an overall cap on the number of STRs in Invermere would be unfair to new or future property owners who would not be able to benefit from renting their properties as a STR.

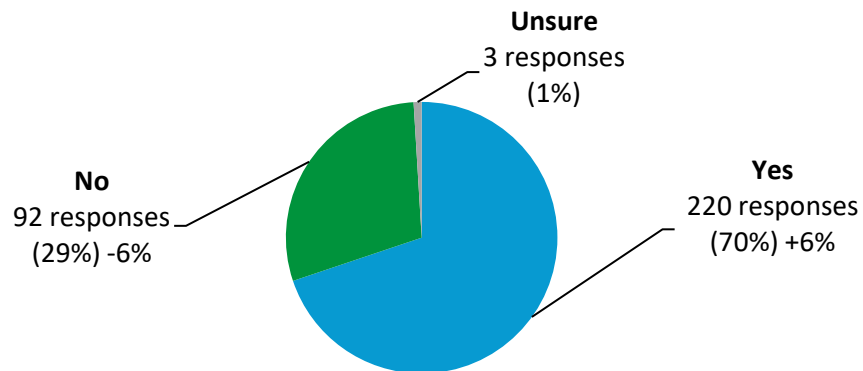
Limit length of stay rather than number of STRs: Respondents (2 responses) stated that limiting the length of stay in a STR, rather than placing a cap on the number of STRs, would be more effective in addressing the impacts of STRs in neighbourhoods.

#6 Should the District control the number and location of STRs permitted; for example, by imposing limiting distances between STR operations, and/or establishing a maximum number of STR operations allowable in a geographic area?

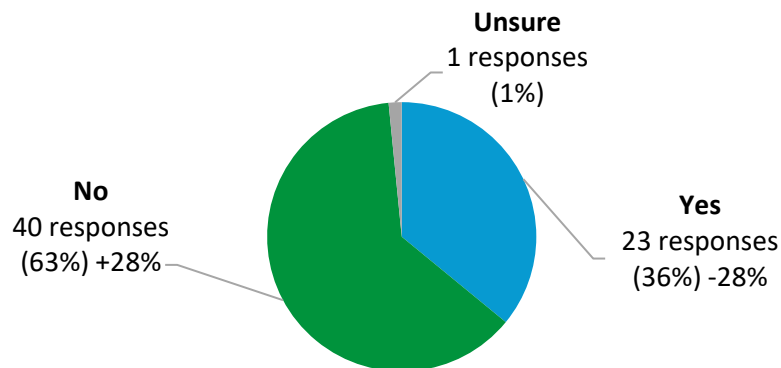
Overall Results (n=398)



Invermere Residents Only (n=329):



Non-Resident Responses (n=64):



Overall Findings: Of the 398 responses, 64 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see the District control the number and location of STRs permitted. Conversely, 35 percent of respondents indicated that there should not be a limit to the number and location of STRs permitted.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Policy redundancy: Respondents (10 responses) noted that Zoning Bylaws are a better way to enforce and regulate STRs and that additional measures may not be necessary.

Difficult to enforce: Respondents (6 responses) shared that this mechanism for regulating STRs may be difficult to enforce.

Unfair process: Respondents (5 responses) shared that this process may be unfair as it would prevent new and future property owners from renting their properties as a STR.

Limit numbers in stratas rather than geographic areas: Respondents (4 responses)

noted concerns about the impact of STRs in strata housing rather than geographic areas.

STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (2 responses) reiterated that they do not support STRs at all.

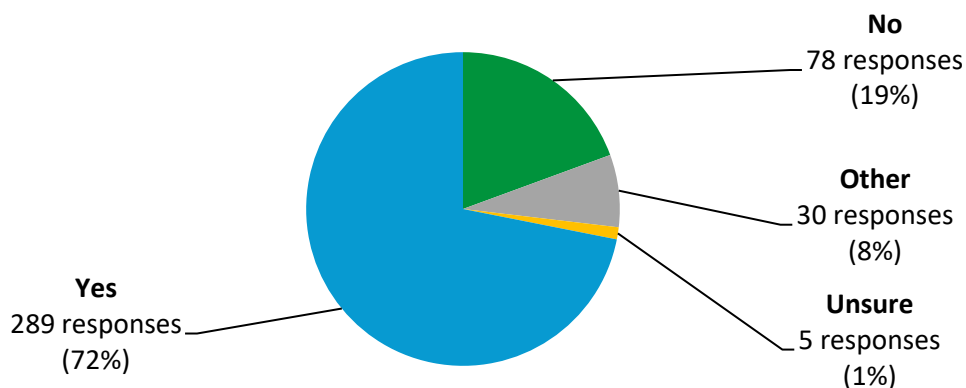
Follow provincial regulations rather than creating new policies: Respondents (2 responses) shared that the District should follow the proposed provincial legislation.

Limit number of STRs, instead: A respondent (1 responses) indicated that they were in favour of placing an overall cap on the number of STRs in Invermere rather than controlling STRs by location or distance between operations.

Exploring Regulations: Guest Limitations, Parking Requirements, Noise Monitoring

#7. Should the District limit the number of guests permitted in an STR operation?

Overall Results (n=402):



Overall Findings: Of the 402 responses, 72 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see the District limit the number of guests permitted in an STR. Nineteen percent indicated that there should be no limitations on guests, while 8 percent did not provide a yes or no answer but made other

comments on the topic, which are described in more detail below. One percent were unsure about limiting the number of guests in an STR.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Limit by capacity: Respondents (34 responses) stated that the number of guests permitted in an STR operation should be limited based on the capacity of the home. Many expressed that this number should be dictated by the number of available beds or bedrooms in the home. Additionally, some noted the limit should be based on the available parking.

Enforcement: Respondents (11) shared concerns regarding the ability to enforce the number of guests permitted in an STR operation, noting that this would be challenging for the District to regulate.

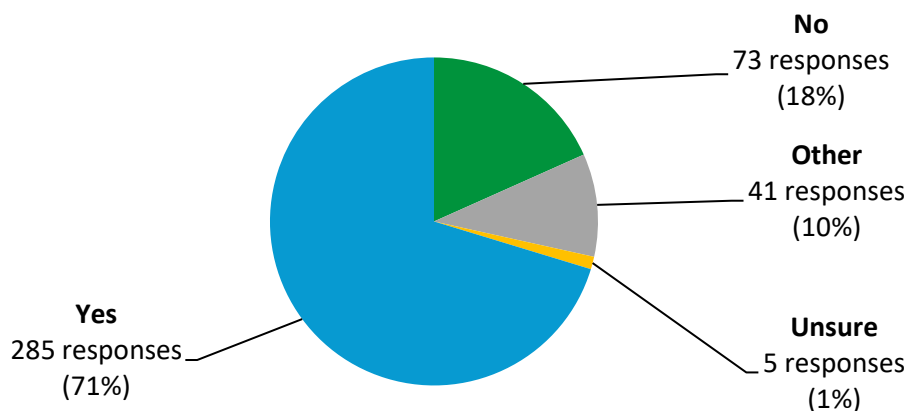
Limit to 6 guests: Respondents (8 responses) shared that they would like to see a maximum of 6 guests permitted per STR operation.

Limit by safety regulations: Respondents (3 responses) indicated that the occupancy limit for an STR operation should be determined by the safety measures as outlined in the building code.

Responsibility of the owner: Respondents (3 responses) noted that limiting the number of guests in an STR operation should be the responsibility of the property owner, not the District.

#8. Should the District establish minimum on-site parking requirements tied to STR operations (e.g., 2, 3, or 4 off-street parking spaces for 2-3, 4, or 5 Habitable Rooms respectively)?

Overall Results (n=404):



Overall Findings: Of the 404 responses, 71 percent of respondents indicated that the District should establish minimum on-site parking requirements for STRs. Eighteen percent indicated that there should be no parking limitations, while 10 percent shared other comments about parking requirements, described in more detail below. One percent were unsure about on-site parking requirements for STR operations.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

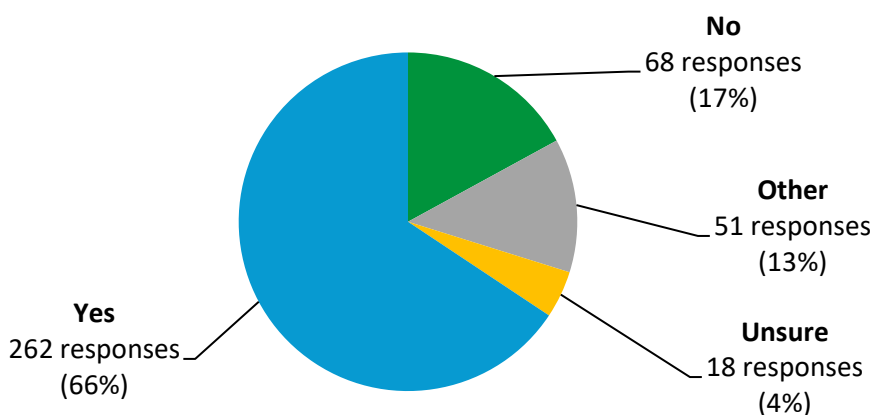
Parking stall to bedroom ratio: Some respondents (10 responses) noted that an appropriate parking stall ratio is one parking stall per two bedrooms. Other respondents (7 responses) shared that they would like to see one parking stall per bedroom.

Enforcement: Respondents (4 responses) expressed concerns regarding the District's ability to enforce on-site parking requirements.

On-site parking: Respondents (4 responses) noted that they do not support on-street parking and would like parking to be limited to on-site only. Additionally, some respondents (4 responses) noted that they would like to see a maximum number of parking spaces permitted on-site.

#9. Should the District make noise monitoring mandatory for STR operations?

Overall Results (n=399):



Overall Findings: Of the 399 responses, 66 percent of respondents indicated that the District should make noise monitoring mandatory for STRs. Seventeen percent indicated that there should be no noise monitoring, while 13 percent shared other comments related to noise monitoring, which are described in more detail below. Four percent were unsure whether noise monitoring should be mandatory for STR operations.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Enforcement: Respondents (30 responses) expressed that proper enforcement would need to be prioritized as part of this process. Many respondents questioned how the noise monitoring would be implemented, as enforcement is already challenging.

Outdoor noise: Respondents (12 responses) indicated that they would like to see noise monitoring implemented outdoors, as noise from the outside of homes tends to be an issue.

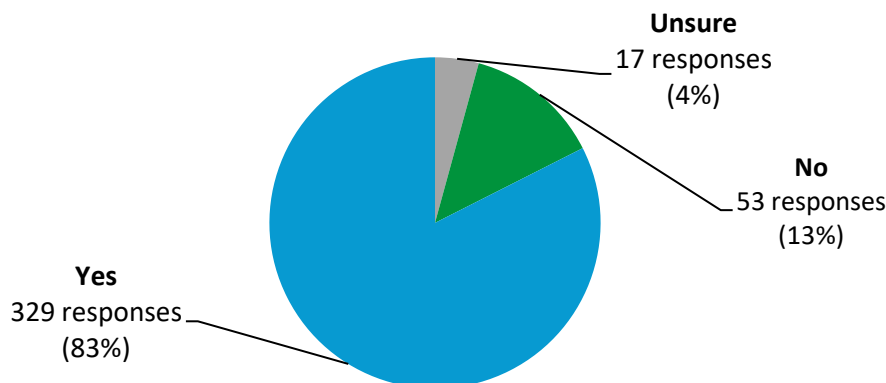
Strata regulation: For strata housing, respondents (8 responses) stated that noise monitoring is a strata concern and is already addressed by strata bylaws. Respondents (4 responses) noted that this type of noise monitoring should only be considered for single family homes.

Privacy: Respondents (5) noted that implementing noise monitoring would be a privacy concern.

Exploring Regulations: Implementation and Enforcement

#10. Should the District establish a set of escalating fines to help address poor management of Short-Term Rental Accommodation operations?

Overall Results (n=399):



Overall Findings: Of the 399 responses, 83 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see the District establish a set of escalating fines to help address poor management of STR operations. Conversely, 13 percent of respondents indicated that there should not be a set of escalating fines.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Steep fines to ensure compliance: Respondents (31 responses) shared that fines will not be effective unless they are large. Respondents stated that smaller fines would be considered a “cost of doing business” in Invermere, so steeper penalties would send a strong message that STRs should be well managed and compliant.

Different enforcement models: Respondents (22 responses) shared other solutions besides a set of escalating fines. These included a three-strike warning system, penalizing STR users directly, suspending STR licenses upon infraction, and levying a non-escalating, larger fine instead.

Revoke licence after multiple infractions: Respondents (14 responses) who supported fines also stated that the District should

terminate STR licences when an operator repeatedly breaks STR regulations.

Implementation is crucial: Respondents (13 responses) shared that a set of fines must come with enough enforcement to be effective. Respondents stated that they would like to see a system implemented for collecting fines, following up with properties, inspections, and next steps if a property does not pay a fine.

Allow a reset period if management improves: Respondents (9 responses) indicated that fine amounts should “reset” if a property becomes compliant and remains well managed.

Fines might not be effective: Respondents (8 responses) stated that fines would not be an effective solution for addressing poor management. Respondents noted that a complaints-based system might lead to

frivolous claims from neighbours; fines are difficult to enforce in court; and fines promote a culture of conformance as opposed to discussion.

Only issue fines for noise complaints:

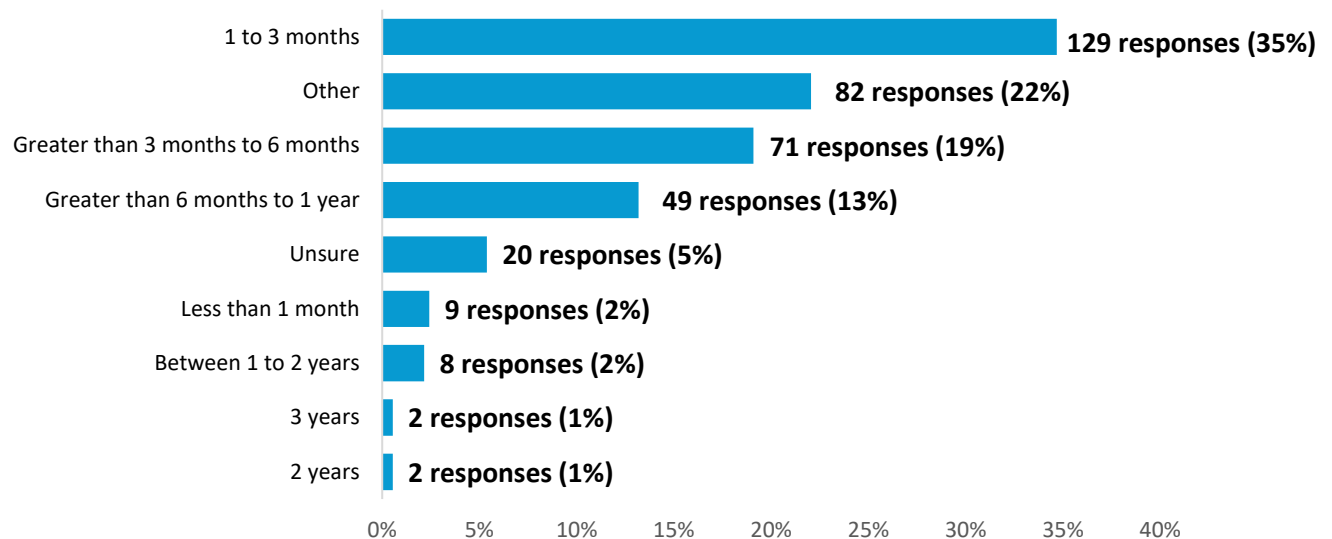
Respondents (3 responses) stated that fines should only be levied in cases where there are

noise complaints or other community disturbances, as opposed to other infractions such as guest limits or parking requirements.

STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (3 responses) reiterated that they do not support STRs at all.

#11. How many months should STR owners/operators be given to apply for and obtain a business licence (i.e., implementation and compliance period)?

Overall Results (n=372)



Overall Findings: Of the 372 respondents, 35 percent indicated that they would like one to three months given to STR owners/operators to apply for and obtain a business licence. Nineteen percent indicated a time period of greater than three months to six months, 13 percent indicated greater than six months to one year, and 4 percent indicated one year or greater. Twenty-two percent made other comments which are described below.

Additional comments were themed into the following categories:

Do not support licensing: Respondents (11 responses) noted that licensing should be required.

Short duration: Respondents (7 responses) noted that they would like to see operators be required to obtain a license as soon as possible.

Compliance required prior to operation:

Respondents (10 responses) expressed that the STR should be in full compliance before it is allowed to operate.

Additional Comments: (n = 195)

Respondents were asked to provide any additional comments about how the District of Invermere should regulate STRs, or considerations that could be incorporated into policies. Many respondents reiterated comments related to previous questions, and some highlighted the current challenges with STRs in the community.

The **most frequent** comments were themed into the following categories:

Economic impact: Respondents (25 responses) stated concerns about the impact of limiting STRs on tourism and Invermere's economy in general.

Sense of community: Respondents (21 responses) indicated that STRs had negatively affected the sense of community in Invermere.

Follow provincial regulations: Respondents (19 responses) noted that rather than developing policies for STRs specific to Invermere, the District should implement the regulations included in the recently introduced provincial legislation.

Worker housing: Respondents (17 responses) stated that limiting STR would make it difficult for seasonal workers to find housing in Invermere, impacting the ability of local businesses to attract staff.

Owner-occupied STRs: Respondents (17 responses) indicated that STRs should only be allowed in owner-occupied properties.

Enforcement: Respondents (15 responses) noted concerns about how current and

potential regulations would be enforced to prevent STR operators and renters from breaking the rules.

Long-term Rental issues: Respondents (14 responses) stated that issues with long term rentals were more important to focus on than STRs, including regulations in the *Residential Tenancy Act* that discourage property owners from renting long-term.

Engagement: Respondents (12 responses) provided feedback on the engagement process, including both positive feedback on the process and noted concerns that there should be more opportunities for all perspectives on the issue to be considered.

STRs should not be allowed: Respondents (12 responses) reiterated their opinion that STR should not be allowed in Invermere at all.

Too much regulation: Respondents (10 responses) expressed that new policies about STRs would lead to over-regulation, and the District should just enforce existing bylaws more strictly.

WHAT WE LEARNED: PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSIONS

Forty-eight (48) community members participated in one of three public information sessions on STRs. Sentiments shared at these meetings were largely reflected in the survey results. Some common feedback included:

STRs within Residential Neighbourhoods:

- STRs in residential neighborhoods can impact the sense of community and livability and can also reduce the value of the properties in the whole neighbourhood.
- Residents want to be notified when an STR is approved in their neighbourhood and know who to contact in case of issues on the property.
- STRs can contribute to noise and traffic flow.
- Participants showed some support for STRs in resort areas, commercial areas, and some residential areas, with restrictions.

Look to Other Communities and Legislation:

- Many communities in B.C. already have their own STR regulations, which the District can gain insights from.
- Radium, Kimberley, Golden, Revelstoke, Fernie, Kelowna were some example communities mentioned.
- In light of new provincial legislation related to STR, Invermere may not need its own policies to regulate STR.
- A key element of the provincial legislation is limiting the number of STRs that can be operated by an individual.

STRs and Housing Affordability:

- Concerned that STRs are affecting housing affordability and will feed into the housing crisis.
- STRs can limit housing availability and affordability for long-term residents, particularly seniors; greater demand drives housing prices.
- Work should be done to understand how STRs are *actually* affecting affordability; look to Canmore on the impact of STRs.
- Issues with housing affordability and availability are compounded by the *Rental Tenancy Act* regulations that discourage property owners from providing long-term rentals, which is why STRs are much more attractive to operate.

What to Regulate:

- Participants particularly noted the requirement for owners to be on the premises helps mitigate many of the challenges with STRs, or at the minimum a locally based and on-call property manager.
- Specific restrictions and requirements could be included in STR permits to prevent disturbances in the community, such as capping the number of nights a STR can be rented per year or reducing the STR occupancy limits.

- Enforcement is key to the success of an STR system within Invermere, and residents want clarity on who to reach out to and when to enforce bylaws.
- Support for regulations based on location.

Economic Impact:

- Desire to capitalize on tourism growth, which supports local businesses and the economy, by providing more accommodation than is available in hotels.
- There is potential for the District to generate revenue from STRs through permit fees and taxes, which would be needed to fund additional enforcement.

Concerns About STR Regulation:

- STR owners are concerned that the STR rental income is necessary to cover their mortgage, or is their primary retirement plan, and new restrictions will have major financial impacts for them.
- Many seasonal workers rely on STR for housing, so reducing the availability and limiting the length of stay may have staffing impacts on local businesses and the tourism industry.

WHAT WE LEARNED: WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

During the engagement period, the District received two (2) written submissions from residents about STR regulation in Invermere. Similar to what was expressed in the survey and open houses, the submissions urged the District to consider the needs of long-term residents when regulating STRs. Some general comments expressed here include the following:

- Along with the benefits of hosting STRs in Invermere, the District should plan to protect livability and long-term rental inventory within residential areas.
- Costs for any local infrastructure upgrades, which may be affected by STR users, are ultimately paid by residents through property taxes.
- Consider how large-scale STR operators might circumvent regulation in order to operate multiple STR properties in Invermere.
- Full-time renters provide a greater benefit to local stores and services than shorter-term visitors.
- Consider requiring STR operators to be a resident of Invermere or the Columbia Valley.
- Consider requiring STR operators to post contact information on the exterior of any dwelling.

MOVING FORWARD

The feedback from the engagement conducted in October 2023 has provided valuable insights into the community's perspective on the proposals for operating STRs in the District of Invermere.

Overall, maintaining a sense of community, housing affordability, and livability were the main concerns emphasized in response to the question of permitting STRs in residential and low-density neighborhoods. The community survey results revealed respondents were divided in their support for STRs in residential and low-density neighbourhoods. In contrast, community feedback from the public information sessions differed, indicating a lower level of support for STRs in such areas. For those in support, many did so with the stipulation that the District implement STR operating regulations to maintain community livability. The feasibility and difficulty of enforcing STR regulations were highlighted as a shared concern. Feedback from both the survey and public information sessions addressed the recently introduced provincial legislation governing STR operations, with respondents noting that these regulations should be considered.

Overall, these critical findings can be used to help inform the District of Invermere Council's approach to regulating the operation of STR accommodation in Invermere.