



Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association

Email: hornbysshortterm@gmail.com

Dear Alex, Grant and Tim,

At the Community Information Meeting on January 23, it felt as though the Local Trust Committee and the community had made meaningful progress toward a shared understanding and support of the proposed Vacation Rental bylaw changes. Many of us left that meeting believing we were close to a balanced approach that worked for everyone.

So, the decisions made at the March 3 special meeting came as a shock and have left many in the community distressed and confused about how things changed so dramatically.

The potential impact of these decisions is devastating.

Vacation Rental hosts are long-time members of the Hornby community—most have been neighbours for over a decade, and some families have been connected to the island for two or three generations.

The amendments target residents who operate legally and responsibly, and who contribute to the social and economic fabric of Hornby. Requiring hosts to be permanent residents excludes almost all these families, despite their ties and contributions to our Island.

There are also significant economic implications for the island's year-round residents, local businesses, service providers, and artists who depend on the activity generated by Vacation Rentals to survive. The permanent residency requirement will significantly reduce their incomes, and even if you reverse that, removing 30-35 currently operating rentals would take away wages and jobs many full-time Hornby families rely on.

Each legal Vacation Rental, on average, supports roughly \$20,000ⁱ (*please see the end notes for sources and calculations*) in local spending annually—income that represents months of work for someone living on the island. The cumulative effect will be felt across the community.

While the amendment to include safe water and septic alternatives in the TUP requirements is welcomed, we respectfully urge the Trustees adopt changes to the Vacation Rental bylaws that respect all residents, protect the community's character and its economic stability:

1. Remove the permanent residence requirement.
2. Set the cap at 100, while allowing for all currently legal and qualifying Vacation Rentals to obtain a Temporary Use Permit (TUP), with any needed reduction occurring through attrition.
3. Define short-term rentals as stays of less than 30 days.

Our hope is that the bylaw can move forward in a way that honours the longstanding contributions of the many families who responsibly host visitors in our community, regardless of their residency status.

We believe there is still an opportunity for a solution that works for the entire Hornby community.

Sincerely,

The HISTRA Board

Jan Radford, Arifin Graham, Eulala Mills, Jenessa Tuele, Karen Young, Kim Luteijn, Michelle Easterly, Ray Therrien, Ticara Coertze, Patrick Lui

and the 95 Vacation Rental Hosts we represent



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Context and Facts

100 Vacation Rentals on Hornby:

- Are a reduction of 40% from the 162 counted in 2018 and of 25% from the 131 counted in the 2023 Community Profile – there has been **no growth**ⁱⁱ in legal Vacation Rentals for five years.
- Are primarily operated by people who spend significant timeⁱⁱⁱ on Hornby throughout the year, even if they do not meet the definition of a permanent resident.
- Contribute roughly \$2 million^{iv} annually to **local workers, businesses, and artists.**
 - Fees paid to owners are not included in that amount, nor are the taxes paid on fees. \$2M is a calculation of the **local spending** that comes to Hornby residents from the existing Vacation Rentals every year.
- Account for less than 10% of weekly summer visitors, while part-time homeowners, who don't offer legal vacation rentals, represent closer to 60%^v.
 - Homes no longer rented won't be empty, reducing Vacation Rentals will create little or no reduction in ferry traffic, E. coli contamination or water consumption.

Regarding Septic and Water

- Vacation Rental owners clearly support the new Water and Septic requirements and have been investing in needed upgrades to meet them.
- Close to half of Vacation Rentals have some kind of rainwater capture system^{vi}.
- The highest E. coli counts are found in winter – this is not caused by Vacation Rentals but by housing that does not have effective septic systems.
 - Everyone on Hornby should be supported to ensure dwellings on their properties have safe septic and water. This is an issue for the whole community, not one specific to Vacation Rentals.

Regarding comments made during the March 3rd meeting about illegal operators:

- In late 2025, the Islands Trust bylaw team identified and sent warnings to 10 Vacation Rentals potentially renting out of season.
- A scan of current viewable listings showed that 95% indicated they were not available for short-term rental out of season.
- The calendars on Hornby Accommodations do not automatically block the October–April period. Listings can appear available or rented when they are not.
- A small number of operators rent outside the permitted season, exceed bed limits or contravene other requirements, those activities place them outside compliance and therefore will make them ineligible for a TUP.

Regarding comparisons to Hornby:

- The jurisdictions noted in LTC meetings as having set a cap or reduced Vacation Rentals, including the San Juan Islands, Whistler, California, and Maui have done so by:
 - allowing existing and legal Vacation Rentals to continue by setting the cap at the current number;
 - allowing all existing and legal Vacation Rentals to continue and the cap be reached by attrition; or
 - giving a 5 or more year phase out period to allow for fair and reasonable adjustments.



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- Ocas Island invested in a three-year study to determine the size of a cap that protected their water, their economy and their community. **The Orcas model was local, data-driven, and island-specific. Their cap is reached though attrition; all legal operators were able to continue.**
- Since we don't have large hotels and resorts as these other jurisdictions do, Vacation Rentals generate the majority of Hornby's 'Service Income'. Removing almost all Vacation Rentals would devastate the small labour force^{vii} on island.

ⁱ Yearly Vacation Rental generated spending ON HORNBY: Upkeep and Maintenance: \$535,000, Cleaners, caretakers etc., \$820,000, Guest Spending \$775,000 -Total \$2,130,000. Average Direct Spending on Hornby per Vacation Rental, \$21,130. (Source 2022 HISTRA Owners and Guests Surveys and 2023 community profile, does not include rental fees paid to owners).

ⁱⁱ Individual houses shift in and out of offering Vacation Rentals, the net number operating has declined steadily since 2021. (Source, APC report 2022, Community Profile 2023, HISTRA count of unique provincial registration numbers 2025)

ⁱⁱⁱ Source, HISTRA Owners Survey 2022.

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^v 5,500 weekly Ferry passengers and two out of three of the 100 Vacation rentals hosting 6 guests, 430 part time homes with an average of 6 people each. $400/5500=9\%$, $2580/5500=59\%$. (Source: Ferry data 2023 community profile, guest and visitor information based on average capacity of Vacation Rentals in 2025 and 2022 HISTRA owners survey)

^{vi} 43% have some Rainwater Harvesting, (Source, HISTRA 2022 Owners Survey).

^{vii} Two in 3 of Hornby's full-time residents are not in the labour force. Hornby's labour force is 485, 250 of which are self employed, (Source 2023 Community Profile)