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Municipal Affairs and Housing

Strata change to help availability of long-term rentals

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A change to the Strata Property Regulation will support strata corporations in enforcing short-term rental bylaws, helping strata corporations address issues that can arise from short-term rentals, while keeping long-term rentals in the market.

“We’ve all heard the stories of renters losing their homes when units are pulled out of the rental market to be used as short-term rentals. With this change, we can ensure there is long-term rental stock for people and families who need them,” said Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “As part of our 30-point plan to improve housing affordability in B.C., we are supporting strata corporations to both deal with the noise and security issues that can sometimes come with short-term rentals, and also preserve rentals for the long term.”

Currently, strata corporations can pass bylaws that restrict or ban short-term rentals, and fine owners or residents who are not complying. Maximum fines of \$200 per week will be raised to up to \$1,000 a day, to discourage unwanted short-term rental activity.

Short-term rentals have put significant pressure on vacancy rates, rents and home prices for people around British Columbia. Short-term rentals can also sometimes mean unacceptable levels of noise, damage to common property, and security issues in strata communities.

“The new regulations will help define short-term commercial use as a different function than rentals, and provides some very real consequences for the violators,” said Tony Gioventu, executive director, Condominium Home Owners Association of B.C. “For those strata corporations who prohibit short-term use, this is a valuable amendment. It will require strata corporations to amend their bylaws at a general meeting to permit the higher penalties, which in

turn will provide the strata with a great opportunity to make sure the strata's bylaw complies with provincial legislation.”

The regulation was developed in consultation with representatives from the two major strata stakeholder associations, the Condominium Home Owners Association of B.C. and the Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association (VISOA).

“Short-term rentals are a huge concern to strata corporations,” said Sandy Wagner, president of the board of directors, VISOA. “The wear and tear on the common property, as well as the security concerns caused by a steady stream of unknown occupants are just a few of the reasons why VISOA, on behalf of our members, are pleased to support the proposed amendments to the Strata Property Regulation, which will permit strata corporations to assess fines at a real deterrent level.”

The change will take effect on Nov. 30, 2018, in order to allow short-term rental hosts time to adjust bookings and comply with a strata's short-term rental bylaws.

Quick Facts:

- Strata living is a popular choice in B.C., as more than 1.5 million people live in stratas throughout the province.
- Strata housing not only includes apartment-style condominiums, but can also include duplexes, townhouses, fractional vacation properties, or single-family homes in bare-land strata corporations (“strata subdivisions”).
- Budget 2018 launched the most significant investment in housing affordability in B.C. history — more than \$7 billion over 10 years.

Learn More:

Strata short-term rental bylaws: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/strata-housing/operating-a-strata/bylaws-and-rules/short-term-rental-bylaws>

Changes to strata legislation: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/strata-housing/legislation-and-changes/changes-to-legislation>

Read Homes for B.C., government's 30-point plan to address housing affordability for British Columbians: https://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_Homes_For_BC.pdf

To find out what the Province is doing to improve housing affordability, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/bc-government-addressing-housing-affordability-challenges>

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