

Township of Bonfield Bylaw Information



The Township of Bonfield’s Proposed Short-Term Rental Bylaw 2025-17

This Bylaw outlines the rules for managing residential short-term accommodations to ensure the character of the neighbourhood and safety factors are considered when offering a home for short-term rentals.

Why is the Township proposing this Bylaw?

Renting your home or secondary home on a short-term basis has become a trend throughout Canada, and beyond. This practice is different from long-term rentals as each week or weekend there are new guests that arrive in the neighbourhood for a vacation. The Township is choosing to take a proactive approach based upon the experiences of other communities. We have heard from residents that the transient nature of guests is affecting the enjoyment of their own property. Council has also heard from residents that these short-term rentals contribute to the tourism economy and helps the owner cover costs of their property. The proposed Bylaw seeks to find a balance between these different points of view.

How might the new Short-Term Rental Bylaw affect me?

- Short-Term Rentals (STR) will be permitted with a valid Licence issued by the Township
- STRs may be where you live and rent a room(s), or a secondary dwelling (cottage).
- Corporations will only be permitted to own one (1) STR within the Township.
- STRs will allow individuals, families, and/or friends, to enjoy the community; however, there shall be no large gatherings, or the hosting of large assembly events.
- STR Licenses would only be issued to dwellings, and not accessory buildings or trailers.
- The STR must designate a Dedicated Responsible Person for the rental. That contact information is posted on the municipal website, and acts as the first point of contact for the guest and/or neighbours should it be necessary.
- Owners are responsible to ensure their guests follow the rules of the STR.
- The Township will initially offer 50 STR licences within the Township. As the trend grows, Council has committed to reviewing this number along with the housing demands.

Why are there inspections to obtain a licence?

The Bylaw includes the items for inspection. These are generally safety measures to limit the risk to property owners, the guests, and the Township. Items include, but are not limited to: handrails in place, and stairs not broken; only bedrooms being used for guests to sleep; any equipment on the premises being installed correctly, and working properly (i.e. stoves have ranges, lights have covers, etc.); and there are working smoke alarms and CO2 detectors.

The Inspector will work with the property owner to arrange a time for the inspection, and any repairs that may need to be completed.

What do I need to obtain a Licence?

- The property owner fills out the annual application.
- There is one STR licence issued per property with a fee of \$1,200 annually.
- The owner is required to have a \$2 million insurance policy for the STR
- Parking must be designated and contained within the STR property.
- Parking areas must be meant for parking. Vehicles will not be permitted on the grass of the front yard.
- There is a maximum occupancy of 2 persons per bedroom for the entire STR.
- A File Review letter from North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority indicating a valid and sufficient On-Site Sewage System is in place.
- A Dedicated Responsible Person must be appointed, and their contact information provided to the Township and posted on the municipal website.
- The Dedicated Responsible Person can be the owner, or another person, deemed fit to respond on site within 1 hour of a call.
- If the potential STR is in the Residential Limited Services (RLS) zone, and/or located on a private road, it must be communicated to guests that emergency services may be limited to set expectations, and ensure all guests are prepared.
- The owner is responsible to share relevant information with guests (i.e., the location of the landfill site, the property’s fire rating, the guests’ code of conduct, and other property-related information).



The Township of Bonfield’s Proposed Trailer Bylaw 2025-16

The Trailer Licence Bylaw for the Township of Bonfield sets out the rules for the management of trailers and recreational vehicles in the Township to promote community safety and improve property standards.

Why is the Township proposing this Bylaw?

The current zoning Bylaws do not permit trailers on any vacant land. There are trailers on vacant land, and enforcement of the rules has been inconsistent over time. Council was asked to better enforce these rules. Upon reviewing the rules, Council identified an opportunity for change, and that trailers should be permitted in certain areas of the Township. If they are permitted, Council also has a responsibility to protect the environment and consider the impacts on the neighbourhood. A license will ensure the owners share these responsibilities.



What if I need my trailer on-site while I build a house?

Using a trailer on your property while you clear your land, or start constructing your new house, is a great way to save time going back and forth.

If you have a current building permit and are actively working on your house construction, you do not need a trailer license. You are still responsible for managing the waste.

If you are clearing your land, you still need a trailer license. If it is in the same year as you are going to build and get a permit, once the building permit is issued, and you have started construction, you can apply for a refund of that years’ trailer license.

How might the new Trailer Bylaw affect me?

- Trailers include any manufactured trailer designed with sleeping and/or cooking and eating equipment. This includes RVs, Airstreams, livestock trailers with accommodations, tent trailers, camping trailers etc.
- If you have a house on your property, you can either store or use a trailer, for up to 120 days, without a license. If your trailer is in a camping establishment then no license is required.
- If you live in a rural zone, and have a vacant parcel, you can use a trailer from May 1 to December 15 of each year under a license. You can store the trailer on the property through the winter on the property as well.
- Trailers will not be permitted on vacant land within the hamlets or the waterfront (RLS Zone).
- Licenses will be annual with a fee of \$600.00. This will cover one site visit to approve the application. What is important to note here is that vacant land taxes are typically 1/3 of the taxes of a property with a dwelling. Part of the license fee will ensure that all residents contribute to municipal services fairly.
- A license will also provide the following opportunities:
 - Special Occasion license which allows for up to three trailers to join you on the property for 14 days in the season.
 - The construction of a deck under 108 sqft
 - One shed for the purpose of storage up to 108 sqft
 - 16 landfill bag tags for the season

What do I need to obtain a license?

The license application will be annual. Your property will need to have an approved entrance, and a 911 (civic) number so emergency services can get to the site. You will also need to supply the following to the Township:

- Details on how you are responsibly managing the septic and grey water systems on the property
- A site plan showing your property and the location of all relevant structures (proposed) on the property
- Pictures of the trailer

Need more information? Visit www.BonfieldTownship.com. Available resources:

- Bylaw Review
- Fact Sheet - Trailers
- Fact Sheet - Short Term Rentals

The Township of Bonfield’s Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments 2025-11

Hunt Camps

Did you know that hunt camps are currently not allowed anywhere in the Township of Bonfield?

The proposed Bylaw 2025-11 aims to change this by permitting hunt camps in Rural Zones, if the property is at least 10 hectares (25 acres), and has a valid Building Permit. Hunt camps will be considered seasonal structures not to exceed 800 Sq. ft. / 74.3 Sq. meters.

A Building Permit will be needed to ensure all hunt camps meet health, safety, and structural standards. If you plan to upgrade an existing hunt camp by adding heating, lighting, plumbing, or other features, you will need to get a Building Permit before making any changes.

Additional Dwelling Units

Did you know that Bonfield is "Open for Business" and is looking to allow more development on most properties across the Township?

When it comes to housing, the proposed changes would allow property owners in the Residential First and Second Density Zones (Bonfield and Rutherglen Hamlets) and the Rural Zones (in non-waterfront areas) to have up to three dwelling units per property - if all planning and building approvals can be met, including:

- The minimum unit size is 188 sq ft. / 17.5 Sq. m.
- Occupancy may be for a family member, or any individual.
- The Gross Floor Area (GFA) of an ADU cannot be more than 60% of the primary house, with some exceptions if it is a proposed conversion.
- An ADU shall be in the rear or side yard of the primary house within the hamlets. There are some exceptions to this in the rural area.
- The total lot coverage of all structures shall not be more than 15% of the entire property.
- Each additional dwelling must have its own parking space.
- Each additional dwelling shall have access to laundry facilities.

An ADU on a property could include:

- ✓ A Primary Residential Building
- ✓ One Attached Additional Dwelling Unit
- ✓ One Detached Additional Dwelling Unit

These new rules do not apply to the Residential Limited Services (RLS) Zone, where Secondary Dwelling Units will still be allowed; but future changes may occur based upon assessments of water quality, lake health, and development capacity considerations.



Unlike larger communities, Bonfield is not required to make these changes - but we plan to do it anyway! The main goal here is to address the rising demand for housing, create more rental opportunities, and provide more space for extended families in our community.

Accessory Structures with a House Permit

The proposed Bylaw also aims to clarify the design and construction rules for accessory structures in different zones when storage is required when building a house. This includes minimum setback requirements, property standards, and compliance with building codes to ensure safe and well-planned development.

- The building permit for the primary residential use shall be obtained at the same time as the accessory structure permit.
- The building construction must begin within one year of issuing the permit and be fully completed within three years.
- The property owner must enter into an agreement which outlines these requirements.

Shipping Containers

Did you know that shipping containers are not currently allowed for any use, including storage, anywhere in the Township of Bonfield?

Proposed Bylaw 2025-11 aims to change this by permitting shipping containers for storage under certain conditions. The main considerations are:

- Shipping containers shall not be stacked.
- They must be placed in the side or rear yard of a property
- On waterfront properties, they will not be permitted within shore road allowances.
- In rural areas a minimum 30m vegetated buffer, or appropriate screening, will be required from the road.
- Containers must be painted in a solid, neutral, or natural color, and any logos or advertisements must be removed to ensure the structure is visually appealing.
- Prior to changes made to the Ontario Building Code 2022, any proposed building or structure over 108 Sq. Ft. required a Building Permit.
- Now the Building Code has added a provision to permit sheds conditionally, to be constructed or placed, having a maximum floor area of up to 161.4 Sq. Ft. without having to obtain a building permit; provided the shed is used for personal storage purposes only; is accessory to a principal building on the property; is without plumbing; and must comply with all other zoning any applicable laws.
 - This means a container 8’x 20’ that is used for storage purposes qualifying as a “shed” does not require a building permit, (other uses or classification would require a building permit.)
 - A container larger than 8’ x 20’ still requires a building permit.



Did you know that you can find your property zone on the Township website?

You can search for existing land use planning and zoning matters associated with your property, by using the Township’s Online GIS Mapping System: <https://bonfieldtownship.com/en/municipal-services/building-planning/gis-mapping-system>

Mayor Narry Paquette
705-475-6207
npaquette@bonfieldtownship.com

Deputy Mayor Jason Corbett
705-840-0379
jcorbett@bonfieldtownship.com

Councillor Donna Clark
905-686-7056
dclark@bonfieldtownship.com

Councillor Steve Featherstone
905-531-5367
sfeatherstone@bonfieldtownship.com

Councillor Dan McInnis
705-358-2469
dmacinnis@bonfieldtownship.com

