

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Association of Interior REALTORS® Wants More Flexibility in Short-Term Rentals Rules

KELOWNA, B.C. – June 2nd, 2025. The Association of Interior REALTORS® is excited to release their new report *Unlocking Flexibility: Rethinking Short-Term Rental (STR) Regulations in British Columbia's Interior*. The report conducts a qualitative study of provincial short-term rental rules focusing on the challenges these rules and regulations have created for communities across the interior of BC.

"Since the inception of the new regulations on short-term rentals we've been hearing of issues in every corner of our Association," says Kadin Rainville, Association of Interior REALTORS® President. "In the Okanagan it's having a serious effect on tourist accommodation. In our more rural communities, it's reducing temporary workforce housing for communities that rely on transient and locum workers."

The report makes 4 recommendations to policymakers to unlock more flexibility in the current short-term rental rules:

- 1) Return zoning autonomy to local governments and allow them to designate tourism zones that are exempt from the province's principal residence requirement
- 2) Enable flexibility near essential worksites and healthcare centers by creating exemption zones around these sites
- 3) Align regulations with seasonal tourism needs by allowing community opt-outs to take effect immediately upon approval
- 4) Allow strata hotel and fractional ownership properties to operate as intended by providing them a full exemption without additional requirements

"We understand that the impetus behind the legislation, we have critical housing issues in this province. That said, we need to make sure policy is balancing these housing issues with economic well-being of interior communities. Our recommendations are really asking for a little more flexibility in the rules to allow for that balance," adds Rainville

With this report the Association of Interior REALTORS® hopes to bring these issues to light ahead of the peak summer tourist season.

"As we head into a summer where geopolitical tensions are expected to drive up domestic tourism, we thought now is the right time to present this research, have a conversation, and try to make these short-term rental policies work better for everyone," concludes Rainville.

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The Association of Interior REALTORS® is a member-based professional organization serving approximately 2,600 REALTORS® who live and work in communities across the interior of British Columbia including the Okanagan Valley, Kootenay, Kamloops and District, as well as the South Peace River region.