

Short-Term Rental Licensing

APPLICATION GUIDE
for new and existing
operators



Introduction



On December 4, 2023, City Council passed By-law No. 2023-115 respecting short-term rental licensing. In accordance with the Short-Term Rental Licensing By-law, all short-term rentals must be licensed with the City of Owen Sound.

This guide provides information to assist short-term rental licence applicants with the application process.

In this guide, short-term rentals are also referred to as STRs.

Contact

If you have questions after reading this guide, please contact the City's STR Licensing Coordinator at:

Email: str@owensound.ca

Phone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1257

Summary

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSING PROGRAM

This section provides a summary of the short-term rental licensing program. It is not intended to replace the Short-Term Rental Licensing By-law. It is the applicant's responsibility to read and understand the by-law. The by-law can be found at [OwenSound.ca/STR](https://www.owensound.ca/STR).

Application, Licence, and Licensing Fees

- There is an annual licensing application and application fee as part of the program.
- The application can be accessed online at [OwenSound.ca/STR](https://www.owensound.ca/STR) or a paper copy can be picked up at City Hall. The application can be submitted at any time of year and, once approved, the licence is valid for one (1) year.
- The fee payment is non-refundable and is due when the application is submitted to the City. The application fee is \$500.00.
- When final approval is provided, a licence will be issued. The licence must be displayed in a prominent place at the short-term rental.

Operators

- Operators of short-term rentals must be at least 18 years of age and must be individuals. Operators cannot be corporations, partnerships or any other legal entity.

Principal Residence

- Short-term rentals in Owen Sound must be located at the principal residence of the operator.
- Principal residence means the dwelling unit owned or rented by the operator, either alone or jointly with others, where the operator is ordinarily resident, and which is shown as the principal residence on the operator's income tax filing or other government records.



Operating days

- A short-term rental may operate for a maximum of 180 days per year. This requirement does not apply to bed & breakfasts.



Permissions

- Where applicable, applicants must demonstrate that they have permission to operate a short-term rental from their condominium corporation and/or landlord.



Insurance

- Applicants must provide a certificate of insurance that includes:
 - a liability limit of no less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) per occurrence for property damage and bodily injury; and
 - a statement that a short-term rental is being operated on the premises.
- Certificates of insurance for Bed & Breakfasts must also include:
 - the City of Owen Sound as an additional insured with respect to the operation of a short-term rental; and
 - an endorsement that the City will be provided at least 30 days' notice in writing of any cancellation or material variation to the policy.



Occupancy Limits

- Short-term rentals must comply with set occupancy limits, which are based on two (2) persons per legal bedroom, plus two (2) additional persons (e.g. in common areas) up to a maximum of eight (8) people.
- For example:
 - a short-term rental with two (2) legal bedrooms has a maximum occupancy of six (6) people:
 $2 \text{ bedrooms} \times 2 \text{ people per bedroom} = 4 \text{ people} + 2 \text{ people in the common areas} = \text{maximum of } 6 \text{ people}$
 - a short-term rental with four (4) legal bedrooms has a maximum occupancy of eight (8) people:
 $4 \text{ bedrooms} \times 2 \text{ people per bedroom} = \text{maximum of } 8 \text{ people}$

- Note: Bed & Breakfasts do not have the 8 occupant restriction.

↙ Multiple Groups

- Multiple groups are not allowed to be booked simultaneously in a short-term rental.
- This requirement does not apply to Bed & Breakfasts.

↙ Parking

- Parking for short-term rentals can be on-site at the location of the short-term rental and off-site in City parking lots or on-street parking stalls.
- The number of parking spaces available on-site at the short-term rental will be determined during the application process. Parking spaces must be hard-surfaced and measure at least 2.65 m by 6 m. Vehicles that cannot be accommodated at the short-term rental will need to legally park elsewhere.
- Street parking is available during the day and overnight from April 1 – November 30 in certain areas. If your visitors' parking needs cannot be accommodated on-site or on the street, parking passes can be purchased.
- Between December 1 and March 31, vehicles may not park on the street between 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. or they may be fined and possibly towed.
- Parking passes and overnight parking passes can be purchased at City Hall or the Bus Terminal during regular business hours. It is recommended that if your visitors require a parking pass, you ensure they are aware of the time and locations for purchase or provide a pass for their use.

↙ Fire Safety

- Short-term rental operators must provide a fire safety plan as part of the licence application. This plan includes a layout of the interior of the short-term rental with locations of all smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire extinguishers, and exits. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure that alarms are in good working order and that any deficiencies are corrected immediately if observed while the STR is rented.
- The fire safety plan must be displayed in a prominent location within the short-term rental, such as at a primary entrance/exit.

↘ Garbage and Recycling

- All short-term rentals must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition with adequate measures for the storage and disposal of waste. These can include a self-enclosed building, structure, or container that is located outside the short-term rental and that is of sufficient size to store the waste generated at the short-term rental. Garbage and recycling bins are to be placed at the curb by 7:00 a.m. on collection day. All garbage must have a City bag tag. [OwenSound.ca/Waste](https://www.owensound.ca/Waste).
- Operators who request that visitors put garbage and/or recycling out at the curb are still responsible to ensure the required tags are applied and any uncollected items are removed promptly.

↘ Electrical Safety

- Your application must include a Letter of Acceptance from a qualified, insured, and licensed electrician that the short-term rental conforms to the Electrical Safety Code.

↘ Water Quality

- If the short-term rental is on a well, the applicant must provide proof of well water testing within the previous year that confirms the absence of bacterial contamination. This can be obtained from Grey Bruce Public Health by picking up a water sample collection kit at Grey Bruce Public Health 101 17th St East, Owen Sound between 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday, obtaining a sample from your well and dropping it off within 48 hours of collection.
- [PublicHealthGreyBruce.on.ca/Your-Environment/Safe-Water/Private-Drinking-Water](https://www.PublicHealthGreyBruce.on.ca/Your-Environment/Safe-Water/Private-Drinking-Water).

↘ Septic Maintenance

- If the short-term rental is on a septic system, the applicant must include proof of septic maintenance, inspections, and pump-out servicing within the last three years.
- An invoice from a licensed septic servicing company that shows the date pump out and an inspection was performed is required.
- If an invoice is not available, a letter on the letterhead of your licensed septic servicing company stating what work was done and when can be provided.

Enforcement

- Enforcement typically begins with education on the first visit by an officer to a short-term rental, followed by penalties on subsequent visits. An officer includes any person authorized by the City to enforce by-laws, including by-law enforcement officers and police officers.
- A short-term rental licence will be revoked where the short-term rental has three or more violations in a six-month period or four or more violations in a calendar year. A violation means that an officer has attended the property, determined that there has been a contravention of a law or by-law, and issued a ticket, order or other penalty.
- Tickets may be issued to both occupants and operators of short-term rentals for violations.

Visitor's Code of Conduct

- Every group of short-term renters, called visitors, must be provided with a Visitor's Code of Conduct.
- The Visitor's Code of Conduct is created by the City and sets out the roles and responsibilities of visitors in short-term rentals. The visitor responsible for booking the short-term rental must confirm receipt of a copy of the code and this confirmation must be kept by the operator for one (1) year.

Visitor's Information Package

- Visitors must also be provided an information package.
- The information package is created by the City and contains instructions on how to access certain services within the City (9-1-1 information, name and address of nearest hospital, non-emergency contacts, etc.).

Registry

- The City maintains an online registry of the licensed STRs in the City. Once an application is approved and a licence is issued, the address of the licensed property is added to the registry.

Conditional Approval - MAT Registration

- If an application has received conditional approval, the City is prepared to issue a licence after receipt of proof that the applicant has registered for the Municipal Accommodation Tax.
- See page 10 for more information.

Application Process

Steps are outlined in detail on the following pages.



**Step 1: Complete the
Short-Term Rental
Licensing
Application Form**



**Step 2: Payment of
Application Fee**



Step 3: Review



**Step 4: Conditional
Approval**



**Step 5: Final
Approval**



**Step 6: Short-Term
Rental Startup and
Operation**





Step 1: Complete the Short-Term Rental Licensing Application Form

The application form can be found online at OwenSound.ca/STR. In order for an application to be complete, an applicant will need to provide several additional documents. These documents will vary from applicant to applicant and are outlined in the Application Checklist included in the Sample Application Package.

Any drawings required for the application (i.e. site plan, fire safety plan, parking management plan) can be done by the applicant using a computer or drawn by hand, as long as they are legible and all required information is included.



Step 2: Payment of Application Fee

The \$500.00 application fee must be paid at the time of application and is non-refundable. It can be paid with cash, cheque or debit in person at City Hall or by mailing a cheque with your application to the STR Coordinator at City Hall 808 2nd Ave East, Owen Sound, ON, N4K 2H4. Cheques should be made payable to the City of Owen Sound.



Step 3: Review

Once your application is complete (including all required documents), your application package will be reviewed by staff. Staff will not review incomplete applications. Staff may reach out with additional questions, document requests, or inspection requests.

Important: If notice that an application is incomplete has been issued, the outstanding items are due to the STR Coordinator within thirty (30) days or the application file will be closed. In this circumstance, the applicant will need to apply again, including payment of the application fee. Fees previously paid will not be refunded.



Step 4: Conditional Approval

Once an application has been approved by staff, the applicant will be given notice of conditional approval. The approval is conditional on proof of registration for the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT).



Step 4: Conditional Approval (continued)

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel Motel Association (ORHMA) is the City's MAT collection partner. The STR Coordinator will notify ORHMA when an STR licence application has been conditionally approved and ORHMA will contact the applicant and the City with a notice of MAT registration.

NOTE: Conditional Approval does not allow the applicant to advertise and/or rent the short-term rental until Final Approval has been granted and a licence issued.

For information about MAT visit OwenSound.ca/MAT.



Step 5: Final Approval

Once all the above steps are complete, an approved applicant will receive a licensing package, which includes a licence and a unique licence number. This licence permits the applicant to advertise and operate the short-term rental at the address noted for a period of one year and will require renewal on or before the anniversary of the date the licence was issued.

The licence must be displayed in a prominent location at the short-term rental such as at a primary entrance/exit.

The applicant will also be provided with a package of documents including an Operator's Guide, a Visitor's Information Package, and a Visitor's Code of Conduct.



Step 6: Short-Term Rental Startup and Operation

After an applicant has received final approval, they may advertise and rent their registered location as a short-term rental.

As you receive bookings you will need to:

- Provide visitors copies or a link to the Visitor's Code of Conduct and the Visitor's Information Package for your STR;
- Retain a copy of the signed Visitor's Code of Conduct form for one (1) year from the rental date; and
- Record your guest's information in the Visitor's Logbook.

Sample Application Package



The following pages contain sample documents that are required as part of the short-term rental licensing application package. Application submissions, including supporting documents, will vary from applicant to applicant. Therefore, the following sample application package is to be used for reference only.

If you have questions while completing your application, please contact the City's STR Licensing Coordinator at:

Email: STR@owensound.ca

Phone: 519-376-4440 ext. 1257

This package contains:

- Application Checklist
- Sample Tax Bill
- Sample Site Plan
- Sample Picture of Front of STR
- Sample Government Issued ID
- Sample Proof of Primary Residence
- Sample Parking Management Plan
- Sample Fire Safety Plan

Application Checklist - Part 1



All applicants must submit the following supporting documents with a Short-Term Rental Licence Application Form. Please use the check boxes below to confirm that you have included everything with your application form:

	<p>Ownership – provide one of the following two documents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Proof of Ownership of the property on which the Short-Term Rental is located (if owned by the Applicant) <i>Accepted documents may include copy of Property Tax Bill or Transfer/Deed.</i>2. Owner’s Authorization Form (if Applicant is not the Owner)
	<p>Proof of Primary Residence of the Applicant. <i>Accepted documents may include copy of Driver’s Licence, Income Tax forms or returns.</i></p>
	<p>Verification of 18+ Age <i>Accepted documents may include copy of Driver’s Licence or other valid Government issued ID.</i></p>
	<p>Proof of Insurance that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. has a liability limit of no less than 2 million dollars with coverage for, but not limited to, bodily injury and property damage per incident; and2. identifies that a short-term rental is being operated on the property. <p>For Bed and Breakfasts, proof of insurance that also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. names the City as an additional insured with respects to the operation of the Short-Term Rental; and2. endorses that the City will be given 30 days written notice of any cancellation or material variation of the policy.
	<p>Photo of Front of Dwelling (and Front Entry if shared entry)</p>
	<p>Site Plan showing house and accessory structures, setbacks, dimensions and garbage location (<i>see sample</i>).</p>
	<p>Parking Management Plan showing spaces onsite and permitted on-street parking (<i>see sample</i>).</p>
	<p>Fire Safety Plan showing exits, fire extinguisher(s), smoke and CO alarms (<i>see sample</i>).</p>
	<p>Electrical Safety Authority Letter of Acceptance (findacontractor@esasafe.com)</p>
	<p>\$500 Licensing Fee (to be paid upon submittal of application)</p>

Application Checklist - Part 2



Certain applicants must submit the following supporting documents with this Short-Term Rental Licence Application Form. Please use the check boxes below to confirm that you have included them with your application form:

	<p>Well Water Test Report from Public Health Unit (only if on private water supply. Available through Grey Bruce Public Health)</p>
	<p>Record of Septic Service within 3 years (only if on private sewage system showing inspection and pump-out service)</p>
	<p>Condominium Authorization Letter (if part of a Condo/Life Lease/Cooperative)</p>
	<p>Operator's Log Book (if renewing a licence)</p>

Please note that all personal information submitted for inclusion in this application is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and will be used to complete the licensing process. The information provided will be distributed to City Departments and other applicable authorities for comment to determine if a licence will be granted. Certain information will form part of the Council Agenda which is a public record. Questions about this collection should be directed to the City Clerk, Briana M. Bloomfield, at 808 2nd Avenue East, Owen Sound, ON, N4K 2H4, bbloomfield@owensound.ca, or 519-376-4440 ext. 1247.

Sample Tax Bill



**CITY OF OWEN SOUND
TAX DEPARTMENT**
808 2ND AVE EAST
OWEN SOUND ON N4K 2H4
519-376-4440 ext. 1249



Tax Roll No:	4259-020-011-07400-0000
Account No:	02001107400

Bill No. 263405 2023 Final Tax Bill

Name and Address DOE, JOHN 321 EXAMPLE LANE OWEN SOUND, ON N4K 5B2	Municipal Address 321 EXAMPLE LANE Legal Description PLAN 172 N PT LOT 6 STANDISH AVE N
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Assessment Tax Class	Value	Municipal			County		Education	
		Municipal Levies	Tax Rate(%)	Amount	Tax Rate(%)	Amount	Tax Rate(%)	Amount
RTEP	169,000	Res/Farm Tx:Full - EPubSup	0.01254208	\$2,119.61	0.00328373	\$554.95	0.00153000	\$258.57
Sub Totals >>>		Municipal Levy	\$2,119.61	County Levy	\$554.95	Education Levy	\$258.57	
Special Charges		Instalments			Summary			
		September 30, 2020		Tax Levy (Municipal, County & Education)		\$2,933.13		
		\$745.32		Special Charges		\$0.00		
		December 15, 2020		2020 Tax Cap Adjustment		\$0.00		
		\$745.00		Final 2020 Levies		\$2,933.13		
				Less Interim Billing		\$1,442.81		
				Past Due/Credit		\$0.00		
Total		\$0.00		Total Amount Due		\$1,490.32		

Schedule 2				Schedule 3			
Final 2019 Levies	Total Year over Year Change	Final 2020 Levies	CVA Taxes	Commercial	Industrial	Final Taxes Multi-Res.	
\$2,885.62	\$47.51	\$2,933.13	2020 CVA Taxes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Final 2019 Levies		\$2,885.62	2019 Annualized Taxes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
2019 Annualized Taxes		\$2,885.62	2020 Tax Cap Amount	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
2020 Local Municipal Levy Change		\$40.80	2020 Provincial Education Levy Change	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
2020 County Levy Change		\$4.44	2020 Municipal Levy Change	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
2020 Provincial Education Levy Change			Final 2020 Taxes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
2020 Tax Change Due to Reassessment		\$2.27					
Final 2020 Levies		\$2,933.13					

Comments:

Levy Date: June 23, 2020

- PLEASE NOTE:** PENALTY CHARGES REFLECTED ON FINAL TAX BILLS HAVE BEEN CALCULATED TO MAY 31ST, 2020 ONLY!
If you have a past due amount appearing on your Final Tax Bill you must contact our office to determine the penalty amount you incurred on June 1st, as you must pay your June 1st penalty charge in addition to the dollar amount reflected on your September 30, Instalment Stub.
- Receipts:** Please retain your cancelled cheque as a receipt. If a receipt is required please mail in both payments and the complete tax bill, along with a self addressed stamped envelope.
- Penalty/Interest:** Payment must be received at City Hall by the Due Date to avoid Penalty/ Interest Charges. Penalty/Interest Charges will be calculated at a rate of 1.25% /Month or 15% /Annum and charged the 1st day of default as well as the first day of the month thereafter.

PLEASE RETAIN TOP PORTION FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES

020011074000000

020011074000000

RECEIVED FROM:	
4259-020-011-07400-0000 DOE, JOHN 321 EXAMPLE LANE OWEN SOUND, ON N4K 5B2	
DUE DATE:	AMOUNT
September 30, 2020	\$745.32

Total of Both Instalments
\$1,490.32

149032

RECEIVED FROM:	
4259-020-011-07400-0000 DOE, JOHN 321 EXAMPLE LANE OWEN SOUND, ON N4K 5B2	
DUE DATE:	AMOUNT
December 15, 2020	\$745.00

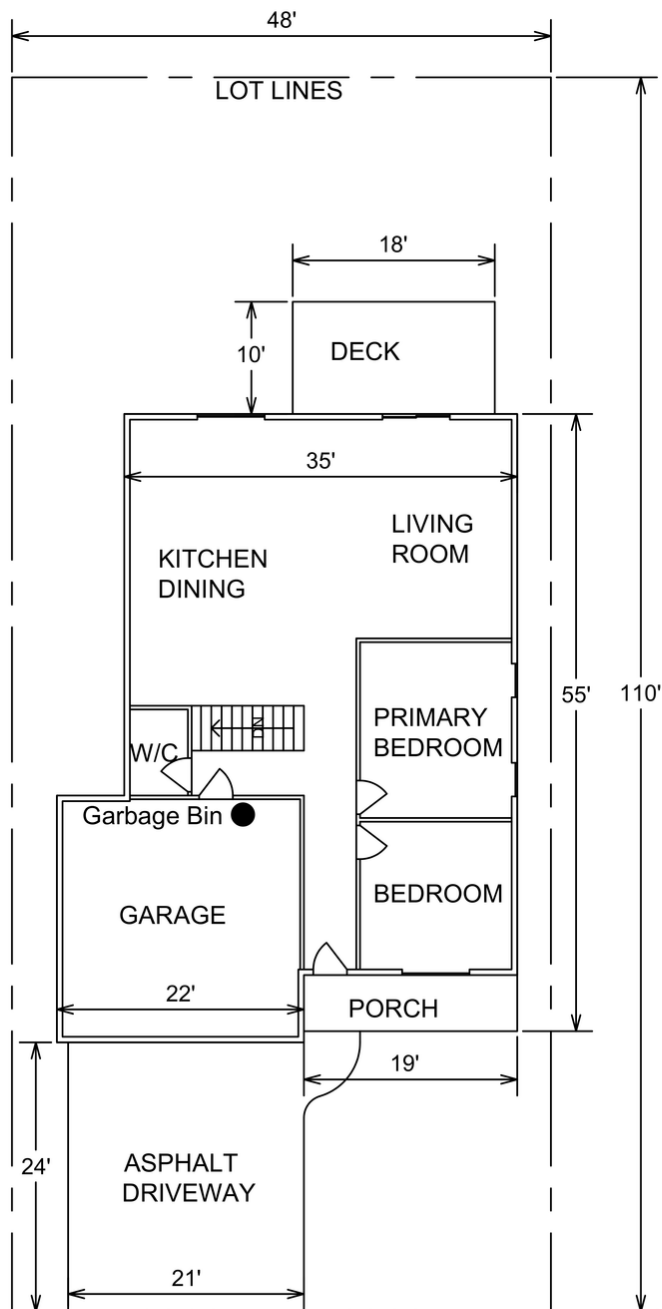
74532

74500

Sample Site Plan



123 Example Lane



SITE PLAN

Sample Photo of Front of STR



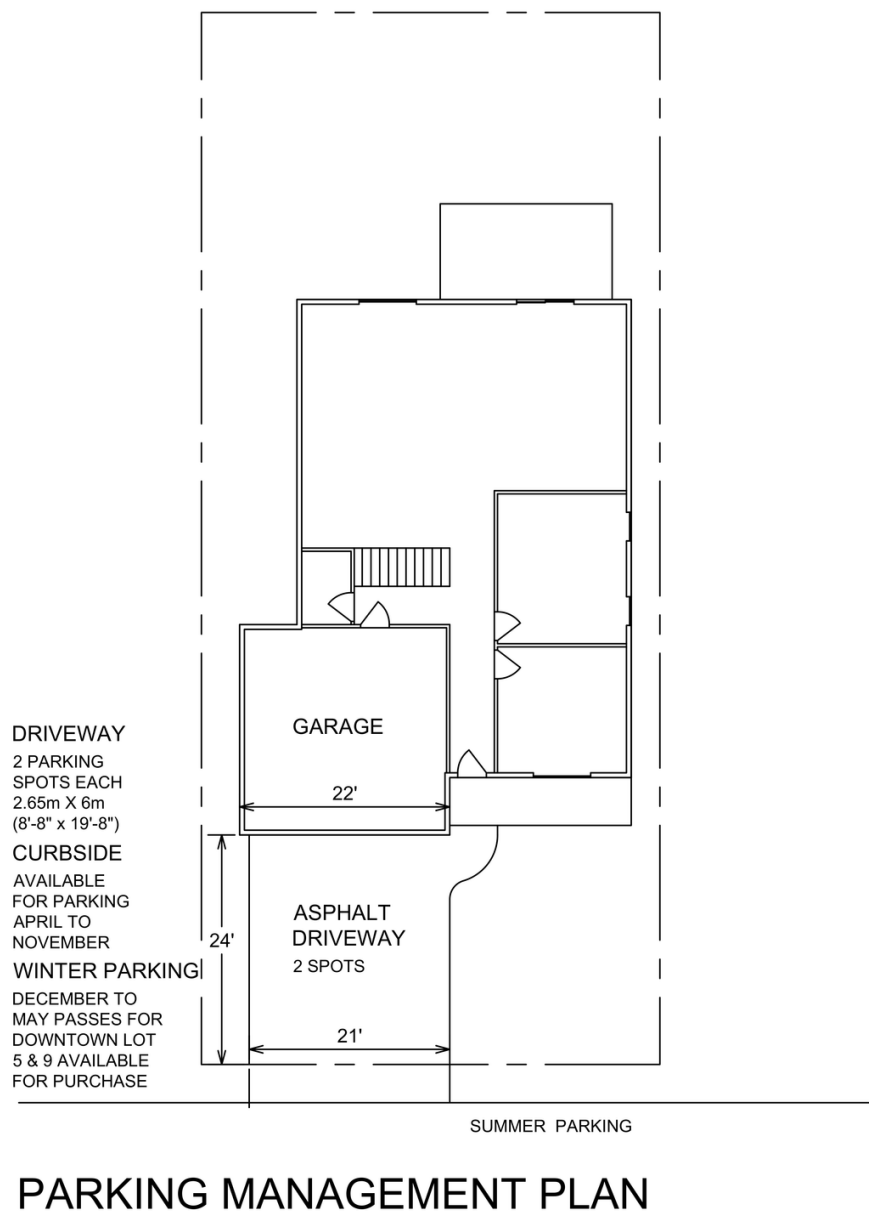
Sample Government-Issued ID *and* Sample Proof of Primary Residence



Sample Parking Management Plan



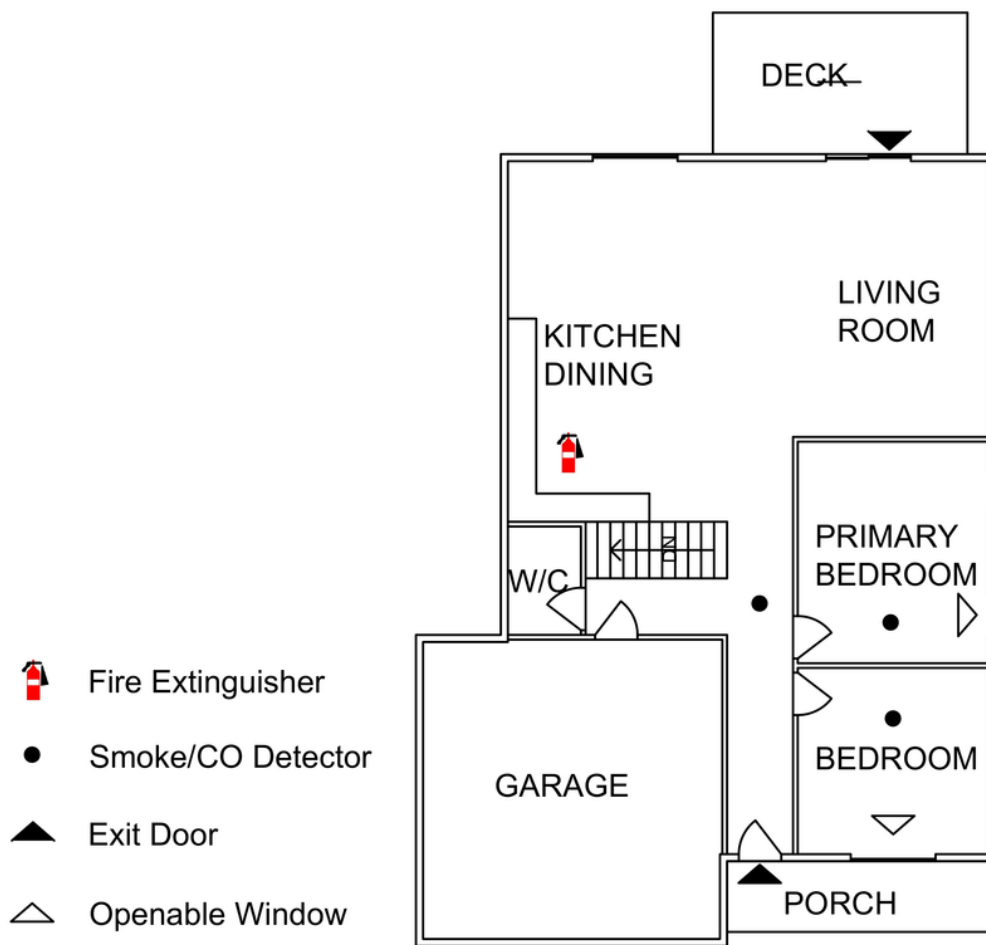
123 Example Lane



Sample Fire Safety Plan



123 Example Lane



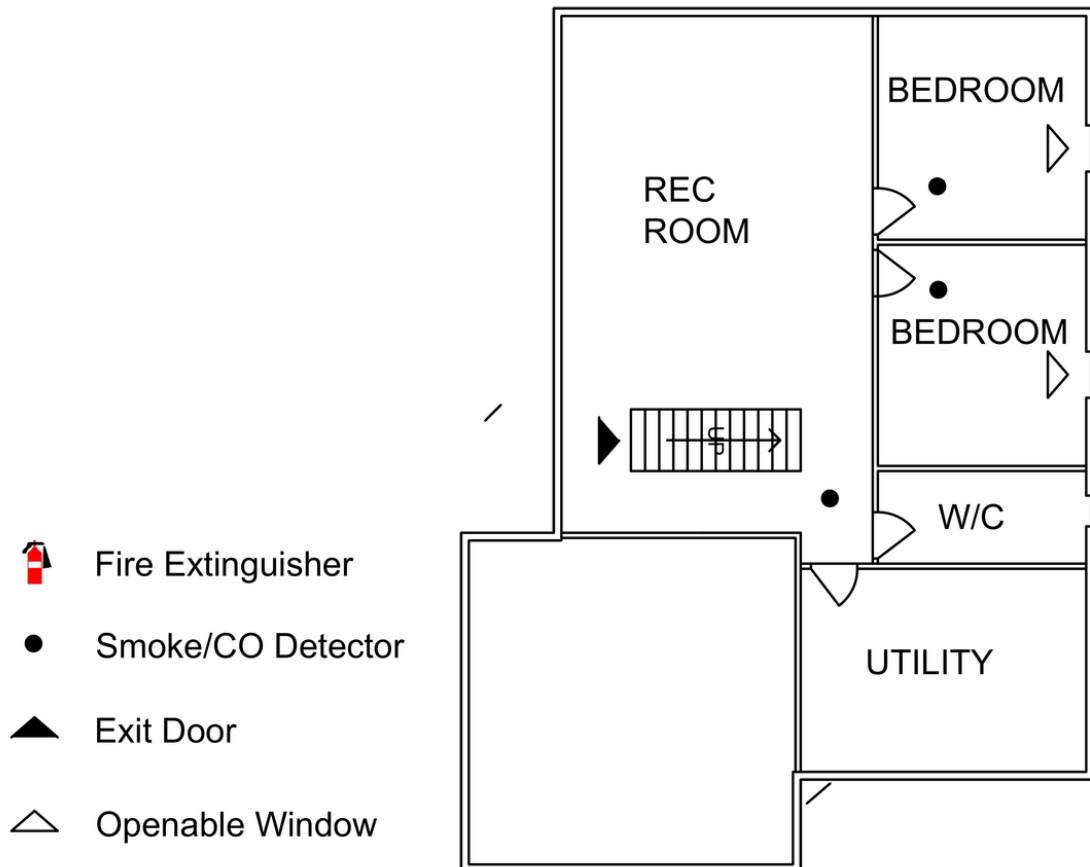
FIRE SAFETY PLAN: MAIN FLOOR

Sample Fire Safety Plan

(continued)



123 Example Lane



FIRE SAFETY PLAN: BASEMENT



Contact Information



City Hall:
808 2nd Avenue East, Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H4

Website:
OwenSound.ca/STR

Email:
str@owensound.ca

Phone:
519-376-4440 ext. 1257



**owen
sound**
where you want to live