

Response to Licence Inspector Report – 1496 Dallas Road
Submitted to Legislative Services, City of Victoria
Asta Mail – June 5, 2025

I. General Statement

I am responding to the Licence Inspector's submission regarding the denial of my short-term rental license at 1496 Dallas Road. I intend to clarify misunderstandings, correct factual inaccuracies, and provide context that supports my case.

In 2024, I held an active and valid short-term rental license and operated in full compliance with the regulations at the time. In early 2025, I applied in good faith for renewal and awaited a decision while in a state of regulatory limbo. I continued to honour reservations made while my 2024 license was active, under the reasonable belief that doing so was permitted until I received a clear determination on my 2025 application.

It is important to note that I submitted my 2025 license application later than ideal—due to my misunderstanding of the City's renewal expectations. I believed that submitting the application by January 15th was sufficient, when in fact the license needed to be approved by that date. This misunderstanding was not malicious or careless—I had only held a license for six months at that time and was still new to the application process. Unfortunately, this timing contributed to the extended review process and placed me in a prolonged state of uncertainty.

During this period of uncertainty, I also sought clarity from the City regarding whether I needed to register for the new Provincial Short-Term Rental Registry while awaiting a local licensing decision. I received no clear guidance in response. This lack of direction directly contributed to my listing being removed from the Airbnb platform, compounding the economic impact of the licensing delay. The absence of timely, transparent communication from the City regarding provincial requirements has made it difficult for small operators like myself to stay in compliance through no fault of our own.

Nonetheless, I took specific and meaningful steps to comply with feedback I received, including physical alterations to the rental space and updates to my listing. I respectfully ask that Council consider this broader context as it reviews my response to the Licence Inspector's report.

I also wish to note that I have been in communication with both my local MLA and the Office of the Minister of Housing to express concern over the lack of procedural clarity and the impact these licensing practices have on small-scale operators like myself.

Additionally, I wish to share that my decision to offer a short-term rental rather than maintain a long-term tenant is based on the unique needs of my household. As a parent of young children and someone who lives in the home full-time, I value the flexibility to occasionally use the lower level for family or personal needs when it is not booked. A long-term tenancy would make this impossible and introduce additional strain on shared spaces.

Short-term hosting has allowed me to remain financially afloat while preserving the integrity and adaptability of my home environment. I believe there should be room in municipal policy to support small, live-in operators who contribute to tourism and local culture without removing full residential units from the long-term housing supply. I also hope to provide additional value to Victoria's tourism economy by offering guided tours of local regional parks through Airbnb Experiences, further showcasing our region and contributing to the city's cultural and economic vitality. This is not simply a personal matter, but part of a broader discussion around how municipalities interpret and enforce provincial legislation. I bring this forward not as a threat, but as a reflection of my commitment to ensuring that licensing processes remain accessible, consistent, and fair for all residents navigating these evolving regulations.

We made a conscious decision to renovate our basement space in order to create a legal, home-based Airbnb business that would allow me to generate income while remaining present with my children. This renovation was undertaken with care, intent, and a belief that small-scale, live-in short-term rentals could exist harmoniously within the City's framework—particularly when conducted transparently and responsibly by the homeowner.

II. Point-by-Point Response

1. Allegation: Continued operation in a self-contained unit during 2025

Inspector Reference: Summary, Paragraphs 10, 17, 19, 33, 34

My Response:

I honoured reservations made while I held a valid business license in 2024. After applying for my 2025 license, I did not receive a formal denial until March 1st, 2025, and I ceased short-term rental operations upon receiving that decision. Any listings, descriptions, or booking activity prior to that date were made while waiting for a

licensing decision and should not be interpreted as intentional non-compliance. I believed I was permitted to continue honouring existing bookings made in good faith during my valid 2024 license period. During this time, I hosted one guest for a 32-day stay, which falls outside the definition of a short-term rental and is fully compliant with provincial and municipal rules for long-term tenancy. This demonstrates my willingness to operate within the evolving framework and my understanding of how to responsibly adapt while awaiting license decisions.

2. Allegation: Operating a self-contained dwelling unit (kitchen, private entrance, etc.)
Inspector Reference: Summary and Facts Sections, Paragraphs 9, 13, 18, 19, 33

My Response:

In direct response to the 2025 inspection findings, I removed the microwave, unlocked the interior door, and made other changes to ensure the space was no longer a self-contained unit. This demonstrates my willingness to comply with bylaw requirements.

Additionally, a staff member later claimed I had been instructed in 2024 to remove the microwave as a condition of that license. I thoroughly reviewed our written correspondence from that time and found no record of such an instruction. When I asked staff to provide evidence of this claim, they were unable to produce any written documentation confirming that I was informed. I find it deeply concerning that this undocumented claim is now being used against me retroactively.

3. Allegation: Misleading listing language ("suite," "private," etc.)
Inspector Reference: Paragraphs 13, 17, 19, 33

My Response:

I promptly updated my listing to reflect changes to the rental space, including the absence of a microwave and the shared nature of the space. However, I did not realize that the use of the word "suite" alone would disqualify my application. I was awaiting clarification and had already taken steps to revise the listing further. Penalizing me for a single word—despite my compliance with the functional requirements—feels disproportionate and unjust.

4. Allegation: Inconsistencies in statements or business plan
Inspector Reference: Paragraphs 10, 13, 32

My Response:

Throughout this process, I have acted in good faith and attempted to provide clear, honest information. Any inconsistencies noted in the application process were the result of evolving understanding of the City's requirements, which themselves were changing (e.g., the introduction of a kitchen definition in August 2024). I never attempted to mislead staff and took all guidance I received seriously. If there were uncertainties, I always erred on the side of seeking clarification and making the necessary adjustments.

5. Allegation: Operating while unlicensed or misrepresenting intentions
Inspector Reference: Paragraphs 34–36

My Response:

As noted above, I operated under a valid license in 2024 and applied for renewal early in 2025. I was not informed that my license was denied until March 1st, and I believed I was operating within acceptable boundaries while awaiting that decision. I did not “misrepresent” my intentions; I made changes, updated my listing, removed the microwave, unlocked the door, and adjusted my operations—all to demonstrate that I was attempting to comply.

The characterization of my conduct as “insincere” is inappropriate and unprofessional, especially given the City's own delays in responding to my application. I waited nearly two full months for a licensing decision, which is excessive and unacceptable for any business process that impacts a resident's income and livelihood.

III. Final Request

I respectfully ask Council to recognize the good faith I've shown in navigating an evolving regulatory environment, my concrete actions to comply, and the administrative shortcomings on the part of staff. I request that Council either:





- Reconsider the denial based on the corrective actions I've already taken and allow me to bring my listing fully into compliance, or
- Provide a clear and objective path for how to operate lawfully in the future.

I appreciate your willingness to consider my case, and to see Air BnB as a valued form of contribution to the Canadian tourism sector.

Respectfully,
Asta Mail

too many issues with the long term rental
sys 10:56    

Thanks very much.     

 str@victoria.ca Mar 6
to me   

Hello Asta,

There may have been some miscommunication when speaking to Ms. Crockett and hopefully I can provide some clarity.

Short-term rental licenses are applied for and reviewed annually. The onus is on the applicant to ensure eligibility and compliance with the regulations. Short-term rentals have been prohibited in self-contained dwelling units since the enactment of the Short-Term Rental Regulation Bylaw in 2018.

During the review of your 2024 application, it was noted that short-term rental space was one element away from being a self-contained dwelling unit. In response our department requested to review your advertisement before approving the licence, to verify the short-term rental aligned with your declared business plan and the City regulations. The communication referenced by Ms. Crockett is most likely your statements provided to the bylaw officer, and the information and communication regarding

 Reply

 Forward









