

ADVOCACY UPDATE - REGULATING SHORT TERM RENTALS (STRS) IN WINNIPEG

Regulations for short term rentals (STRs) were on the agenda for Winnipeg's Executive Policy Committee (EPC) during their December 7th meeting. The minutes, recording and written submissions are available on the City Clerk's Office Decision Making Information System (DMIS) <https://clkapps.winnipeg.ca/DMIS/ViewDoc.asp?DocId=22794&SectionId=&InitUrl=>

EPC's recommendation (excerpt below) includes an extension of 60 days for the Public Service to complete their work. Also worth noting is the creation of the Manitoba Association of Short-Term Rental Owners Inc., which is highlighted in one of the written submissions along with their own "Five (and only 5) Simple Recommendations for Regulation" (excerpt below).

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time of up to 60 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on the following:

1. Solicit feedback from the general public, stakeholders, and elected officials on their experiences with short-term rentals, and on potential regulatory solutions, and that the public engagement be funded from existing resources within Planning, Property, and Development.
2. Propose amendments to the Accommodation Tax By-Law No. 70/2008 to include short-term rental accommodations in the collection and remittance of the Accommodation Tax.
3. Review the Toronto licensing and registration model for short-term rentals for application in Winnipeg and implement the requirement for a primary residence as a requirement for the operation of a short-term rental.
4. Provide recommendations for a licensing framework that considers fire, safety, land-use, and other requirements.
5. Develop, in coordination with the Winnipeg Police Service and the UN Women Safe Cities Global Initiative Steering Committee, information on Sex Trafficking and Human Trafficking for owners of short-term rentals, similar to what is available from the City of Toronto.
6. Identify any associated staffing, resource, and cost implications; and provide a schedule for implementation, including a timeline for the drafting of any required by-laws or amendments.
7. Review Business taxes as an additional taxation model for application to short-term rentals.

MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF SHORT-TERM RENTAL OWNERS - FIVE (AND ONLY 5) SIMPLE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGULATION:

<https://manitobastr.com/aboutus>

1-Tax: Bring in the accommodation taxes! (That kinda sounds like a teenager telling their parents to ground them for their own good, doesn't it?) Taxes bring a higher awareness to what we offer in tourism for our area. This is badly needed money funneling into our city! We are happy to help fix the road we all drove in here on today.

2-Licensing: A license should be required to operate a short-term rental in Winnipeg and this license number be visible on all advertisements and inside the residence to anyone entering the building. License should not be transferrable from person to person or property to property. One license per house. License be \$100 per year for a primary residence listing and \$200 per property for a secondary residence listing. \$1000 fine for operating a short term rental without a valid or current license. No cap on the number of listings to be held as secondary residences, nor cap on number of nights rented either for primary residence listings or secondary residence listings.

3-Fire: Prevention Inspection: Hard-wired inter-connected smoke alarms and a carbon monoxide detectors. This should be to the same standard that is expected in a long-term rental.

4-Neighborhood Harmony: Provision of (1) off-street parking space for each 4 guests the listing accommodates will be required. Establish clear "house rules" for guests such as quiet hours to avoid noise and disruptions, especially at night. Many and many other properties use a noise decibel monitoring system. All short-term rentals should be equipped with video surveillance systems at all entrances.

5-Criminal Background Check (including Child Abuse Registry) – should be standard for all hosts.

Note that we have also been covering the STR issue on our social media channels. In case you are not currently a follower, here are some recent posts

DEC 20TH, 2022:

As the City of Winnipeg continues in the pursuit of regulating short term rentals (STRs), AirBnB recognizes there are problems with STR hosts and guests, and are taking their own steps to better regulate activity. That said, both articles below highlight how difficult it can be to get the regulations right.

One recent news story about banning parties attempts to block the parties but makes it more difficult for those that are respectful of the rules and of the neighbors. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/2022/12/13/airbnb-new-year-eve-rules/10889630002/?fbclid=IwAR3sE96TI-URgMohlMnvftvgCb0dY2emoLc-DzB6GQZ4rIRGnlKeR5C0n1s>

Another article about criminal background checks attempts to block people with criminal backgrounds, but might not take into account if the individual is now reformed or the severity of their prior infractions. https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/2022/12/11/airbnb-bans-criminal-background-checks/10751848002/?fbclid=IwAR0nTGgM-ODvid7OIRpIEk_3cP15UQwpey-hP_mDrqDPvZ88x5ABHGWW4u8

DEC 2ND, 2022:

This CBC news article highlights the nuances of Short Term Rental (STR) regulations in Quebec and the cost to STR hosts if they don't read the fine print. Lesson learned for those awaiting the Winnipeg regulations. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/revenu-quebec-airbnb-fines-1.6669356?fbclid=IwAR1wfrdkEPvQzCVVtd7I3Kxwh8X5Onj_LYgWBilrixnTrK1xwWOkAYcya5g

ALAN FORBES

Chair, CCI MB Communication Committee 🍀



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