From: Oksana Gorilei
Financial Analyst

To: Council City of Winnipeg
Winnipeg Executive Policy Committee

Date: February 12th, 2023

Dear Council and Winnipeg Executive Policy Committee Members,

I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to submit comments and thoughts about proposed changes in Short-Term Rental (STR) Regulations as a Winnipeg Citizen and customer of Airbnb services around the world.

I have been travelling a lot for the last 15 years (due to business trips or just as a tourist) and considering Airbnb as a good rental alternative for 5-7 days trip. In my opinion, Airbnb provides more options for accommodations, access to unique experiences in the local area. It also offers the flexibility to stay in a variety of locations and to explore different areas of the country. In addition, Airbnb hosts offer helpful tips about local attractions, giving travelers insights that they may not be able to get from other sources. For example, I was able to get recommendations about the neighborhood's best restaurants, attractions, and activities.

At the same time, I would like to emphasize the following advantages of Airbnb for the economy of any city, including Winnipeg:

1) Winnipeg city attracts approximately 3.5 million visitors every year, resulting in an estimated $609 million in direct expenditure. Airbnb brings more travelers to cities and these travelers help stimulate local economies through increased sales from hospitality, restaurants and retail businesses. Visiting tourists also help to generate revenues for the city. Airbnb also helps create jobs in the local hospitality industry, as well as business opportunities like property management, cleaning and maintenance services, and even culinary services.

   Airbnb benefits local cleaners in many different ways. By cleaners having the option of vacation rental cleaning, they have the opportunity of fair pay and a wider option of jobs. Among 1,507 active listings in Winnipeg, there are 73.4% = 1,106 entire home/apartments. If we assume that one cleaner covers 2-3 apartments on a monthly basis, it gives us around 400 new jobs (please refer to http://insideairbnb.com/winnipeg/) Appr only cleaning budget comprises up to 7.3 mln CAD *(365 days × 85% average occupancy rate/4 days – average length of stay * 3 hours of cleaning apartment-avg, * 30 cad/ hour - cost of cleaning per hour*1,106 houses/apartments)*

2) Short-term rental opportunities offered by Airbnb encourages home ownership as potential homeowners can take advantage of the rental income that Airbnb brings in. This helps to improve and stabilize community housing markets;

3) There are several other providers of short-term rentals in Winnipeg Vrbo, Homeaway, FlipKey, and others. More competitors in the short-term rental market is a positive trend, as it can lead to better customer choice and lower prices. Additionally, it can also drive up service quality in other areas, such as responsiveness and cleanliness.

According to recent survey research made by CBC Manitoba, Winnipeg is estimated to have a deficit of up to 3,507 short-term rental units. New rules will shut down a part of short-term listings in Winnipeg resulting an increase of deficit.

Airbnb first launched in Winnipeg in the summer of 2019. And obviously, hosts have become more experienced and got more knowledge every day/year. Any young industry requires regulations and support at the same time, especially taking to account advantages for the local economy.

In my opinion STR Regulations are required more detail analysis of the best Airbnb practices in Canada due to current version is mostly focused on the restrictions rather than opportunities for the industry development.

Best regards,
Oksana Gorilei

Oksana Gorilei

February 12th, 2023