February 13, 2023

Dear Executive Policy Committee

Short-term rentals of fully furnished and fully equipped suites, for the Winnipeg region, is one of the most positive aspects of what Winnipeg can offer to our visitors. Here are some of the reasons why our organization has set aside a small collection of furnished suites for rent:

- Some of our buildings have suites that are difficult to rent – layout and price is a factor. Instead of having that suite sit vacant in our inventory, we are able to lease the furnished suite for short-term and long-term.
- The online apps available for short-term rentals is set up in a way to protect our organization from undesirable renters. With this type of program, we are able to choose the type of clientele the suits our standards, thus giving us an opportunity to decline or accept the intended guest.
- Since our buildings have 24 hour, in person, surveillance, the chances of us having issues with any guests is zero to none. Along with our security staff, our buildings are staffed with very experienced building operations managers at all times. We pride ourselves in how our buildings are maintained and monitored, for the comfort of all our residents.
- The number of furnished (short-term) suites we have on inventory is a very small percentage. The benefits of having this option outweighs any hyped-up negative views that we are facing today.
- As noted above, we only rent out suites that are difficult to rent as un-furnished units. Having additional fees (taxes) tacked onto the fully furnished suite rentals will have a negative impact on our buildings and to the Winnipeg tourism industry. Our pricing already exceeds the standard pricing of a typical hotel because we offer full kitchens (something standard hotels do not offer). Our suites are a small niche in comparison to typical hotels.
- MOST IMPORTANTLY - Many of our short-term renters are people who are moving to Winnipeg but have not yet established a home here in the city. As well, we have had guests stay with us because they are in the process of moving houses and their new space isn't ready. Since rentals suites and houses are difficult to find quickly (especially for people who are not living here yet) our spaces offer short term accommodations that suit their every day needs – such as a fully equipped kitchen. This aspect of short term rentals is becoming more important to the Winnipeg areas since we are seeing an influx of immigrants making their way to our city. Why would the city want to add yet another tax for people who are trying to make Winnipeg their home?

In short, regulating short-term rentals to a level that makes it difficult to offer fully furnished suites to a small number of tourists or Winnipeg dwellers is very short-sighted on City's part and is another example of how our city representatives are wasting taxpayers dollars by focusing on matters that hinder growth and the spirit of entrepreneurship in Winnipeg. City of Winnipeg should focus more time and effort on things that matter – starting with cleaning up the homeless encampments around the downtown areas (river banks etc.), or crime in the downtown areas, or making downtown Winnipeg a more desirable and safe place to live. These are the things that matter most to the majority of citizens in Winnipeg and will also make Winnipeg more attractive to new-comers. Regulating and taxing furnished suites is not an attraction.

Heidi Spletzer

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