February 20, 2023

Dear Councilor,

I ask you to read this with hopes that your upcoming decision with regards to STRs will be one that is measured and fair.

As you know, the small- time operators of STRs who own secondary properties in the R1 zone face the threat of being eliminated, with considerable financial impact. Looking at the surveys and other evidence, **problematic properties were overwhelmingly shown to be condos in the downtown area**. Yet as a result of the Feb 14th EPC meeting, they are being allowed to carry on with business, while the non-problematic R1 STRs are instead the ones being targeted in the proposed regulations. This makes absolutely no sense, and yet not one councilor or city representative has stepped forward to explain the logic of this.

As you can imagine, it requires a fairly significant investment to set up these properties, because in reality you are creating a home away from home for your guests- it is basically setting up a whole second household with furniture, towels, bedding, tv, kitchenware, etc. My STR property is a single family home, is the only residential property owned by my numbered company, and is located on a very busy stretch of road in central Winnipeg, but in spite of that has the unfortunate designation of R1. It is extremely well cared for and all guests carefully vetted. With that being said, I have absolutely no problem with inspections, licenses, and a 5% tax, but to be suddenly and totally stripped of the ability to use my private, peaceful property in such a harmless manner seems very unfair.

I have frequently stayed in AIRbnbs around the world – Denmark, Cape Town, Scotland, Italy, Morocco, etc – and I have always had a lovely experience, because people that own them *want* you to stay with them, and always seem to go the extra mile to make your stay as welcoming as possible. It seems that the EPC committee has a very negative understanding of STRs and it makes me question if any of them have ever stayed at them while travelling. I find that wherever I've been, that the hosts do their very best to showcase their city or area, and to me that should be seen only as a plus for tourism. STR owners can be some of our city's biggest cheerleaders. Why are we trying to shut this sector down?

There **are alternatives** to a complete shutdown of these small enterprises. At the very least, they should be gently phased out if the city is determined to eliminate them. All existing STRs that the city proposes to eliminate could be grandfathered until such time that the property sells and changes hands, or loses their license after a certain number of violations/complaints are reached – whichever comes first. This approach would not jeopardize the financial well being of those people who rely on them as a form of income.

I urge you to think creatively and to carefully weigh your decision when casting your vote at the upcoming council meeting. A strong, vibrant and global city promotes diversity, including a mix of big and small business, and niche, as well as mainstream.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,

Mel Dickin