To whom it may concern,

As a consumer of short term rental locations/airbnb rentals, I have been following with interest the debate on how to regulate them and how Winnipeg should move forward with this industry.

I must say, I find it maddening that Winnipeg seems to be behind the curve with most innovative new businesses that we all like to use (Uber comes to mind as just one of many examples).

The regulations that are being considered would essentially make the Airbnb's almost obsolete in Winnipeg. For my city council to say no to such a large influx of cash via the tax dollars they bring in when we are in such dire straits financially begs the question why?

For instance, the City of Winnipeg has just released a report siting an 83 million dollar shortfall for our budget. The hardest hit seem to be, of course, the very essential services such as transit and our crumbling health care infrastructure. They go on to mention over spending $52.5 million dollars just on snow clearing alone! In a city that is a snow majority for most of the year it is astounding that we are not on task in terms of budgeting for something we can count on taking place as sure as the mosquitoes returning for summer.

It is obvious to any layman that we need all the revenue we can find to help alleviate these very real and very serious concerns. It would then seem like a "no brainer" to allow the Short Term Rental business that have established themselves to be profitable and beneficial to Winnipeg flourish. Not only do they bring in tourists who spend their dollars shopping and eating at restaurants, they also employ a few thousand of people in Winnipeg who in turn go spend their hard earned money locally as well.

What especially frustrates me as a Winnipegger is that in other Canadian cities such as Regina, Calgary, etc who were able to find a common sense and balanced regulation approach that is beneficial for both visitors and residents. Why can't Winnipeg? Why are we comparing short term rentals in Winnipeg to cities that bare no resemblance to ours. One study on affordability in the report even referenced cities on foreign continents like Taiwan and Iceland! How does that make any sense?

Yet here we find ourselves on the precipice of the City Council nearly shutting all of these businesses down and putting so many local people out of work? Then I hear on the news that council is saying no thank you to millions of dollars in revenue during the highest inflation/cost of living we have ever seen?

I implore you to rethink your approach. Please look to our neighbouring prairie cities for regulation guidance and to please not throw away what is a wonderful contribution to what can be, an amazing city to live in and travel to.

Jennifer Shepherd