

From: Nathan Rotman <nathan.rotman@airbnb.com>

Date: October 23, 2019 at 4:09:20 PM CST

To: Dawn Schikowski <DSCHIKOW@regina.ca>

Subject: [External email] **Re: City seeks public input on short-term rentals**

Dear Dawn Schikowski,

Thank you for inviting Airbnb to provide feedback as part of the City of Regina's consultation on short-term rentals.

Across our country, tens of thousands of Canadians are engaging in home sharing to help make ends meet, share experiences with visitors and support neighbourhood small businesses. The money Airbnb hosts earn from home sharing is a much needed path to economic security. For many, earning money through home sharing is making it possible for them to afford to stay in their homes. In fact, Airbnb hosts report spending more than half the money they earn through the platform on expenses like mortgage payments and household bills. These hosts include retirees and empty nesters sharing the extra space in their home and young people and couples that rely on home sharing to help pay their mortgage, save for unexpected expenses or make necessary renovations.

Regina's 430 active listings (as of Oct 1, 2019) are make travelling to Regina more affordable and support small businesses across the city. The Regina short-term rental market is predominantly used by residents of Saskatchewan, visiting the city for medical appointments, services, shopping and to visit friends and family. 27% of all guest arrivals in the last year are visitors from elsewhere in Saskatchewan and likewise 19% are visitors from Alberta. This is corroborated by Tourism Saskatchewan's own statistics which report that visiting friends and relatives is the primary reason for travel to Regina, and is also the top choice for accommodation. This highlights the need to take a cautious approach to regulating what is a common activity for families from across the province.

Across Canada there is a diversity of regulatory regimes which work to regulate short-term rentals. We would like to suggest that each city not look at what others have done, but consider their own circumstances. After all, every city is unique and has unique tourism opportunities, convention attraction and short-term housing needs. Regina, for instance has one of Canada's higher housing vacancy rates at 7.7%. New construction has outpaced demand for rentals helping to increase the vacancy rate putting pressure on building owners in the city.

For example, the City of Calgary recently passed a very sensible by-law on short-term rentals. In that Calgary has a very unique housing and employment situation, we worked closely with city staff to share ideas and best practices. The by-laws introduced in Calgary are smart for Calgary's economy. They include an online registration system and some very general regulations to ensure the safety of guests and neighbourhoods.

Airbnb would welcome the opportunity to further discuss regulatory best practices with city officials to share our experiences from around the globe. Specifically, to your question about the city's role, we wanted to share our commitment to safe and healthy neighbourhoods with you. Our host community wants to do everything they can to be good neighbors in the places they call home, which is why we launched our Neighbour Tool. Anyone can go to airbnb.com/neighbors to share specific concerns they might have about a listing in their

community. Hosting is a big responsibility and those who fail to meet our standards and expectations will be subject to suspension or removal. We also have a new legal issues portal specifically for working with and supporting the work of local law enforcement and that can be found at airbnb.com/lert.

We also wanted to share some information about our **Trust and Safety priorities**. Our community's safety, both online and offline, is our priority. There have been more than 8.5 million guest arrivals in Airbnb Canada listings in the last year and negative incidents are extremely rare. Even so, we're constantly working to improve our platform, our policies, and our protections, because even one incident is one too many. In fact, Trust and Safety is its own department with offices spanning the globe in San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Dublin, and Singapore. Our team is made up of engineers, 24/7 response agents, data scientists, product managers, designers, law-enforcement liaisons, crisis managers, and victim-advocacy specialists, in addition to policy, privacy, cybersecurity, insurance, and fraud experts—all working together to keep our community safe.

Safety features - the basics

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- **Profiles:**
 - Each and every person on Airbnb has a profile page with important information about themselves. In order to book or host, you must provide us a full name, date of birth, phone number, email address, and payment information.
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- **Secure Messaging:**
 - Through the Airbnb platform, we also have a safe and easy way for guests and hosts to get to know each other directly before requesting or approving a reservation. Our secure on-platform messaging tool is there for both sides to ask each other questions before
 - requesting or accepting a reservation and to set clear expectations — something we highly recommend doing. Additionally, our messaging tool helps hosts and guests stay in touch as needed throughout the trip to ensure everything goes well.
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- **Reviews:**
 - Our review system enables you to see what other community members have said about a potential guest, host, or home. Guests and hosts
 - publicly review each other
 - and can only do so after the reservation is complete, so you know the feedback is based
 - on actual experiences.
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Additional protection

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- **24/7 Global**
- **Response & Assistance:** In the rare event that any issue should arise, Airbnb's global Customer
- Service and Trust and Safety teams are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in 11 different languages to help make things right with rebooking assistance, as well as refunds, reimbursements, and support programs like our Host Guarantee and Host Protection
- Insurance. If, for instance, you arrive at a listing and it's not as advertised, all you need to do is reach out to our team and we are here to help.
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- **Host Guarantee:**
 - Hosts are protected by our [Million](#)
 - [Dollar Host Guarantee](#), which covers listings for up to \$1,000,000 USD in damage --
 - and it's free for all hosts and every single booking.
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- **Insurance:**
 - Our [Host](#)
 - [Protection Insurance](#) provides home sharing hosts with additional protection against
 - third party claims of property damage or bodily injury up to \$1,000,000 USD. Additionally,
 - [Experience](#)
 - [Protection Insurance](#) is primary liability insurance coverage for Experience hosts'
 - liability to a third party in the event a guest or other third-party suffers bodily injury or property damage during an Experience.
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More information can be found on our Trust landing page (<https://www.airbnb.com/trust>) which covers much of what I listed above.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues and other priorities with the city of Regina.

Thank you,

Nathan Rotman
Airbnb Canada