

9. Exploring Amendments to Short-Term Rental Policy and an Affordable Rental Housing Fund at the City of Vancouver

At the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on June 26 and 27, 2019, due to time constraints, the Committee referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on July 10, 2019, to hear from speakers.

Submitted by: Councillor De Genova

WHEREAS

1. There are opportunities for short-term rental accommodations to contribute to affordable housing in the City of Vancouver;
2. The City of Vancouver defines a short-term rental as “a home, or room within, rented for less than 30 days at a time”. To meet the City of Vancouver requirements for a Short Term Rental, the home must be the principal residence of the applicant and a license is required;
3. Three by-laws passed by City Council amend existing by-laws and allow the City of Vancouver to license short-term rentals and enforce rules that prohibit short term rentals from operating without a business license from the City of Vancouver;
4. The City of Vancouver is in an affordability and housing crisis and is in need of effective solutions to this crisis;
5. The City of Vancouver webpage dedicated to short-term rental accommodation Information acknowledges that short-term rentals allow individuals to earn additional income, provide short-term accommodation options within the city and supports Vancouver’s tourism industry. Council heard public testimony from a number of short-term rental operators who rely on this income to pay their mortgages and save for education or retirement;
6. Council has not been presented with data showing the amount of long term rental housing supply that has been added to the market because of the City of Vancouver’s short-term Rental accommodation business license, enforcement policies and regulation;
7. The City of Vancouver cites a main reason, for the new short-term rental licensing and policy framework, is to increase the supply of long-term rental housing;
8. Other cities including Seattle, have adopted ordinances allowing for regulated growth in the short-term rental and vacation rental markets while applying a nightly tax on stays to fund affordable housing initiatives.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to examine the current Short-Term Rental Policy and report back to Council with any findings and recommendations by June 2020, including consideration for:

- a) Requiring the License holder to pay a fee, in addition to the Short-Term Rental License Fee, calculated on the number of nights the rental was booked, and, that any fees charged are allocated to the Affordable Housing Reserve;
- b) Increasing the Short-Term Rental License Fee to strengthen the capacity of the City of Vancouver to recover costs;
- c) Amending eligibility requirements to allow each owner and each renter to apply for a Short-Term Rental License in each residence;
- d) Approving a maximum number of licenses issued, and specific to each of Vancouver's distinct 23 neighbourhoods;
- e) Requiring applicants seeking or renewing a City of Vancouver Short Term Rental License to provide:
 - i) A sample of their planned listing;
 - ii) Any photographs that will be used in advertising the proposed rental;
 - iii) All specific platforms they plan to advertise with;
 - iv) Written permission of strata council, if applicable.

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