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Edmonton Hotels Call Out Flawed City Report on Short-Term Rental Regulations

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The Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and our 80 tax-paying members are deeply disappointed with the City of Edmonton administration's report recommending against regulating commercial short-term rentals. The AHLA has long urged the city to create a regulatory framework that protects residents and housing while ensuring a fair marketplace. Instead, Administration's report ignores these concerns and favors platforms like Airbnb.

"Hotels are not afraid of competition, nor do we want to regulate homeowners who occasionally rent a room in their own home. What's troubling is that Edmonton's administration is taking direction from platforms like Airbnb, with absolutely no regard for the concerns of tourism and hospitality businesses that support the community, employ Edmontonians, and pay commercial taxes," said Tracy Douglas-Blowers, President & CEO.

Commercial short-term rental operators have distorted home-sharing by converting houses and condos into ghost hotels, removing them from Edmonton's long-term housing supply. [Research by the Urban Politics and Governance Research Group at McGill University found](#) that in Edmonton:

- In summer 2024, 1,090 whole homes were operating as permanent short-term rentals.
- Renters paid \$105.3M more in rent between 2017–2022 due to these rentals.
- The commercial short-term rental market grew 44% from 2022–2024.
- Short-term rentals earned \$58 million in 2024. The top 10% of hosts earned 54% of that revenue. Just 91 operators earned 21% of that \$58 million.

While all levels of government look for ways to improve affordability & availability of housing, Administration's report ignores the impact of commercial short-term rentals on residential housing stock and Edmonton businesses. Short-term rentals are not the only reason for the housing crisis. However, unregulated commercial short-term rentals are:

- Turning homes and condos that were built for people who live and work in Edmonton into ghost hotels.
- Inflating housing prices, reducing affordability, and driving up rental rates.
- Bringing a steady stream of transient visitors to neighborhoods and condominiums.
- Gaming municipal property tax rolls by paying residential property tax on their commercial enterprises even as they increase municipal costs for enforcement and waste management.
- Undermining current and future investment in tourism by businesses that employ Edmontonians and pay commercial property tax.

"Governments are making enormous multi-year investments to build homes to replace residential housing stock that is now being sold nightly on platforms like Airbnb. Taxpayers are subsidizing these businesses through residential property tax rates that don't reflect their commercial use," said Douglas-Blowers.

The AHLA urges City Council to reject Administration's recommendation and follow the example of cities like Toronto and Vancouver to adopt:

1. **Principal Residence Requirement** – Allow short-term rentals in owner occupied homes only.
2. **Platform Accountability** – Require platforms to ensure host compliance with local rules.
3. **Data Sharing** – Require platforms to share their data to support compliance & enforcement.

"The city's own research acknowledges that regulations limiting short-term rentals to primary residences have shown early evidence of increasing long term housing availability and lowering rents in cities like Toronto and Vancouver. These are common sense rules. When will our city wake up to the reality of commercial short-term rentals?" said Douglas-Blowers.

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About the Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA):

The Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1919 that represents the interests of Alberta's hotel industry. Their purpose is to bring together Alberta hotels to help their members prosper. The AHLA represents over 80% of guest rooms in the province. Their members are owners and operators of more than 650 hotels, motels, inns, resorts, and lodges in communities around Alberta. The AHLA is also the official health & safety association for all hotels and convention centres in the province.