

Impact of short-term rentals to be studied

New data shows Vancouver has more than 5,000 properties available for short-term rentals, a total called “worrisome” by the councillor spearheading the city’s efforts to tighten rules for services like Airbnb.

“I think it’s worrisome,” said Coun. Geoff Meggs of the tally of 5,000 short-term accommodations, one of the figures included in a Sunday release from the City of Vancouver. “But I’m not surprised by it.”

“When we have the crisis that we have in housing, we can’t afford to walk past this,” Meggs said Sunday. “We are putting an enormous amount of energy to get new rental (properties) built in the city of Vancouver and requiring it to remain rental for 60 years or the life of the building. And to see that soaked up by tourism is not acceptable. We’re going to that effort so that people can live and work in the city of Vancouver.”

Sunday’s release from the city included early findings from data released by short-term rental companies, and announced that Vancouver has contracted a thirdparty consulting firm to examine 10 platforms providing accommodation rentals in Vancouver, including Airbnb, VRBO, Owners-Direct and Flipkey. **The research is intended, the statement said, “to determine how short-term rentals are affecting the availability of rental housing for families and workers in Vancouver.”**

These efforts were instigated by a council motion, moved by Meggs in April. After further analysis, city staff could present recommendations by September that would then be shared with the public for a period of consultation, said Meggs, adding he hopes council could take action by the end of the year.

The top concern, Meggs said, is determining if short-term rentals have any “negative impact on the rental stock,” adding: “We feel the numbers are high enough to indicate there is, and that’s probably driving down vacancy rates and driving up rents.”

The situation is made more acute, Meggs said, by Vancouver’s rental vacancy rate of 0.6 per cent, one of the lowest in Canada.

“We’re in a dire situation for the majority of people who want to live and work here,” Meggs said Sunday.

The city will seek public input with a survey launching Wednesday.

4 Comment(s)

[Tofino boy](#) 18 July 2016 07:02

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After that, they will do a study to see if the rain in Vancouver makes things wet.

[Art Iskandid](#) 18 July 2016 10:04

You can select any use of any accommodation, and say that it reduces the supply of living space. Of course it does. **But the reason for the shortage is that the sum of the demands is greater than the supply.**

To fix this, you need less demand - or a greater supply. If you choose to correct the situation with dumb-ass legislation, you don't address the real problem. The City has to make construction of new residential space easier, faster, and cheaper.

No can do? Then brace yourself.

[Stratos](#) 18 July 2016 10:37

Another "duh" moment brought to you by Vancouver council. **Enforce current bylaws. Residential zoning means people live there.** Hotel zoning or licenced B and B is for tourists. If I can't build a factory on my residential lot, then why do they turn a blind eye and allow a hotel? Morons!

[Nanny Ogg](#) 18 July 2016 13:42

It gets complicated. If a personal normally resides in house a) but goes for a month to house b) on holiday, can they then rent out house a) for that month?