

To: Los Angeles City Council
Date: August 10, 2015
Re: Home-Sharing

I bought my house in the Melrose Hill neighborhood more than six years ago, and spent several years in it as a bachelor. In that time, I installed (properly-permitted) solar panels and a new heating system, and helped out my neighbors with some repairs and upgrades of their own.

I got married last fall, here in LA. My wife would have moved into my cozy 1BR bungalow with me if not for the fact that she cares for her 80-year old mother. With three of us under one roof, a larger home was a necessity. I wanted to hold on to my bungalow if possible, but a long-term tenant was not a workable solution for various reasons. AirBNB allowed me both the flexibility to occasionally use the bungalow for visiting family, and to net enough above the monthly upkeep costs to allow me to float two mortgages simultaneously. In doing so, I am paying nearly \$10,000 in annual property taxes on two small homes to the city of LA, along with transient occupancy taxes via my short-term guests at the bungalow.

I feel that it is worth noting that my rental house's exterior has been maintained to a much higher standard as a short-term rental than it ever was when I was living in it. Also, I leave my guests with detailed recommendations for nearby bars and restaurants, generating more business for Mom 'n Pop establishments in the immediate vicinity than I was ever able to give to those establishments myself. Ergo, AirBNB has caused me to *improve* my neighborhood more than I had done as an owner-occupier, rather than having the opposite effect. The icing on the cake is that I am meeting interesting people from all over the planet, and showing them a bit more of "real Hollywood life" than they're likely to find in a sterile hotel room.

While it may be true that some kinks need working out, it seems to me that the "sharing economy" is the direction of the prevailing winds. When choosing between spitting into that wind and creating a mess, or hitching a ride with the wind in the form of considerable additional tax revenue, it would seem to me that the latter is the city's prudent course of action. I hope that you will come to the same conclusion.

Best,
John Charles Meyer
Los Angeles AirBNB host