

Dear Homeowners –

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors for the Columbia Community Land Trust. We have received some questions about whether short-term rentals (such as rentals through Airbnb) are permitted in homes that were sold by CCLT or that are subject to the CCLT Ground Lease. We thought it would be helpful to provide to provide this response to all homeowners so that everyone has the same information.

Respectfully, short-term rentals are not allowed in any homes that are located on lots subject to CCLT's Ground Lease. Specifically, Section 4.5 of the Ground Leases provides that homeowners shall not sublease the home or land without the CCLT's consent. Rental of the home (or any room in the home) through Airbnb or any similar platform constitutes a sublease to a third party. Again, such a sublease to a third party is prohibited without the CCLT's consent. To date, CCLT has not approved any subleases. Additionally, for your information, Section 4.5 of the Ground Lease goes on to say that if the CCLT does approve a sublease in a specific situation, the homeowner cannot charge the renter more than the monthly fee which CCLT charges the homeowner. In other words, no homeowner can sublease any portion of a home for a profit, even if the CCLT were to approve a specific sublease.

Similarly, Section 4.1 of the Ground Lease requires that each home be used only for residential purposes and only for those residential purposes allowed by the applicable zoning code. The City of Columbia currently considers short-term rentals to be a commercial use similar to a bed and breakfast or hotel. These type of uses are generally prohibited within residential zoning districts. Therefore, offering a home or any portion of a home for rent as a short-term rental constitutes a violation of the residential use only restriction and violates the requirement that homes only be used in compliance with the applicable zoning regulations.

While we recognize there are a wide range of opinions on short-term rentals, the CCLT's position on short-term rentals is that short-term rentals are simply inconsistent with the CCLT's goal of preserving homeownership opportunities through owner-occupied homes. Owner occupancy is an important component of CCLT's mission. Therefore, if you have offered your home for rent as a short-term rental in the past, CCLT would respectfully ask that you not do so in the future.

Finally, please note that CCLT is always happy to discuss this issue – and any others that may come up. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.