

Hello,

I'm emailing to show my support for a vacant home tax in the City of Guelph. Housing is hard to come by, and affordable housing even more so, and I believe this kind of initiative will help with the supply of available homes for buyers, as well as help support other affordable housing initiatives for those without the means to buy.

Any vacant home tax initiative undertaken by the City of Guelph should include the following:

1. A vacant home tax rate of 4% would provide an effective incentive to bring housing back into use, generate funds to be applied to affordable housing, and generate funds to pay for the administration of the program.
2. Mandatory declaration. This is an equitable way of ensuring that all vacant housing is subject to the program and the best means of identifying all of Guelph's legitimately vacant homes.
3. Surplus revenue should be directed to the local non-profit housing sector for quick application, to more effectively and efficiently support those in need of these services. For an effective program that is already working at the municipal level, see the City of Hamilton's Affordable Housing Program.
4. A vacant homes registry should be established, with annual inspections to circumvent demolition by neglect.
5. Effective penalties should be established, with set fines at \$10 000 for individuals and \$50 000 for corporations.
6. The program should be initiated as soon as possible, ideally in 2026.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email. I hope the council moves forward with this initiative, as I believe it will benefit the City of Guelph as a whole.

Tovah Veats