

Dear City Council,

I am a Guelph resident ([REDACTED]) writing to support the idea of a vacant home tax in Guelph. The housing crisis is a serious issue that is leaving people on the streets and this is not acceptable in any developed country, especially a cold one, like Canada. We have the ability to improve this.

I urge you to vote in favour of the Vacant Home Tax plan.

To be effective Guelph's Vacant Home Tax should include:

1. A vacant home tax rate of 4%. This will 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. Mandatory declaration is the only 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. Direct surplus revenue to the local non-profit housing sector for quick application. See [Hamilton's Affordable Housing Funding Program](#).
4. Establish a vacant homes registry and annual inspection to circumvent demolition by neglect. Cost to be covered by vacant home owners.
5. Establish effective penalties. Set fines at \$10 000 for individuals and \$50 000 for corporations.
6. Initiate the program in 2026.

Thank you,
Claire Whitehead