

August 26, 2024

Attention: Mayor Andrea Matrosous, Council Members, CAO Shawn Everett, and Municipal Clerk Corrina Gilles, (for councils consideration)

Subject: Proposal for a Vacant Home Tax in the Town of Blue Mountains

I am writing to bring to your attention the growing concern of abandoned buildings within the Town of Blue Mountains. These vacant dwellings not only detract from the beauty and vitality of our community but also represent untapped potential that could be harnessed to address pressing social needs.

In light of this, I would like to propose the introduction of a "Vacant Home Tax" on these abandoned properties. The revenue generated from this tax could be allocated towards funding assisted living initiatives within our town, providing much-needed support to our residents who require it.

Currently, cities such as Toronto, Ottawa, and Hamilton have the provincial authority to impose a tax on homes that remain unoccupied. Windsor has also most recently, within the last six months, implemented a similar measure. These initiatives have been put in place to discourage external investors from holding single-family homes as investments without maintaining them. Often, these properties are left to deteriorate, negatively impacting the street view and the overall appeal of the neighbourhoods. By introducing a Vacant Home Tax, we can discourage this practice and ensure that properties are either maintained or repurposed for the benefit of our community.

I believe this concept could be a productive way to address the issue of abandoned buildings while simultaneously contributing to the well-being of our town. I kindly request that the Council consider this proposal and explore its potential benefits for the Town of Blue Mountains.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Sincerely,
Mike Dougall

