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## **Judicial Filing Signals Serious Opposition to Canmore's 'Liveability' Tax** *Advocating for Fairness and Practical Solutions*

Canmore, AB – In response to the controversial 'Liveability' Tax (Vacancy Tax), a judicial review against the Town of Canmore has been filed in the Court of Kings Bench. A grassroots group, Fair Future Canmore, is supporting the judicial review that aims to take a stand to protect property owners, uphold community values, strengthen neighbourly relations and ensure effective, fair governance.

This tax represents a troubling shift in policy, intentionally and disproportionately targeting part-time homeowners and impacting many full-time residents while failing to address Canmore's housing affordability challenges.

The judicial filing underscores the serious legal and fairness concerns at the heart of this issue. The "Liveability" Tax improperly characterizes based on the characteristics of the owner/occupier rather than characteristics of the property, violating the principles of set out under Alberta's Municipal Government Act (MGA) that residential sub-classes must be based on property characteristics. It also retroactively imposes legal and financial consequences while burdening property owners with unclear and overly complex criteria.

"The Vacancy Tax is not a solution to Canmore's housing affordability crisis. It fails to address the root issues, such as increasing housing supply or supporting affordable developments, and instead places an unfair burden on certain property owners. This policy is a distraction from real, effective solutions that could make a difference to housing affordability," said Les Skingle, Steering Committee Member, Fair Future Canmore.

Evidence shows that vacancy taxes, including those in other jurisdictions like Vancouver, have minimal impact on housing affordability. The CD Howe Institute's report on Vancouver's Empty Homes Tax revealed only modest gains in rental availability and no significant reductions in housing costs. Affordability challenges are driven by systemic factors—such as high demand and limited supply—that vacancy taxes simply cannot address. In Canmore, the tax risks further division by unfairly stigmatizing part-time residents, many of whom have contributed to the town for decades.

Part-time property owners are more than a piggy bank for Canmore Council—they are an integral part of Canmore's fabric. Their homes represent family legacies, places of connection, and shared histories. Permanent residents worry about their ability to travel, take time outside of Canmore for medical treatments and erosion of privacy. This Bylaw unfairly pressures many to sell or pay penalties, eroding the diversity and vibrancy that define our community and creating friction between neighbours.

Fair Future Canmore advocates for developing policies that unite the community and address housing affordability effectively. Collaborative, forward-thinking approaches—such as further incentivizing long-term rentals, streamlining housing development approvals and increasing the supply of housing—offer more sustainable and inclusive paths forward.





We encourage all Canmore residents to join us in our support of the judicial review in standing against the "Liveability" Tax and supporting policies that reflect fairness, inclusivity, and transparency. Together, we can build a sustainable future that works for everyone.

For more information or to join our cause, visit [FairFutureCanmore.com](http://FairFutureCanmore.com).

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