



COURT RULING EXPOSES CANMORE'S LACK OF LEADERSHIP, CREATES \$10 MILLION BUDGET SHORTFALL FOR THE TOWN

CANMORE, ALBERTA — April 30, 2025 — In a significant ruling yesterday, The Alberta Court of King's Bench determined that Canmore's implementation of a vacancy tax for the 2025 tax year was improper, forcing a one-year postponement of the controversial measure.

This decisive ruling eliminates \$10.3 million from Canmore's municipal budget – a staggering 21.8% of the town's 2025 tax revenue – impacting planned housing affordability initiatives.

The financial implications of the Town's reckless drive to punish secondary homeowners means:

- \$8.9 million in planned reserves now unfunded
- \$513,000 for five new positions is eliminated
- \$305,000 in wasted legal fees is unfunded
- \$454,000 in internal transfers has been lost

"Fair Future Canmore has consistently warned for over a year that the vacancy tax represented an unjust burden on select property owners while failing to address housing affordability through collaborative solutions," said Stephen Ross, one of the appellants that appealed the vacancy tax. "Unfortunately, Town Council pushed forward with this divisive measure and now finds itself without resources to address housing in 2025."

While the Court ruled it is reasonable to interpret the *Municipal Government Act* as permissive of vacancy taxes, Fair Future Canmore calls on the Town to use this postponement to scrap the vacancy tax and develop a truly collaborative housing strategy that includes residents, all homeowners, developers, and both the federal and provincial governments.

"The lack of leadership shown by Town Council and their willingness to pit residents against each other demonstrates a real need for change – either through Council's approach or through a new Council after the next election," added Ross. "Canmore deserves leadership that addresses pressing issues through collaboration, not division."

Fair Future Canmore will continue advocating for effective housing policies while intensifying efforts ahead of the fall municipal elections to ensure Canmore's future leadership brings neighbors together rather than driving them apart.

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