

August 26, 2019

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk Niagara Region
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, P.O. Box 1042 Thorold, ON
L2V 4T7

Sent Via Email:
Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca

Re: Vacant Home Tax

Dear Ms. Norio,

Please be advised that the Council of the City of St. Catharines, at its meeting held on August 12, 2019, passed the following motion:

WHEREAS St. Catharines currently has a years-long waiting list for social housing, extremely low apartment vacancy rates, rising apartment costs, a need for more shelter spaces and transitional housing, and a residential real estate market that has seen house values grow exponentially in a short period of time; and

WHEREAS these factors combined have resulted in St. Catharines becoming an unaffordable place to live for many, particularly those on fixed incomes, social assistance and those who earn less than the living wage; and

WHEREAS jurisdictions such as British Columbia and Vancouver have successfully implemented vacant property taxes to not only collect more revenue for social housing projects, but also to encourage real estate speculators to rent out vacant homes; and

WHEREAS the Regional Municipality of Niagara has the authority to implement a vacant home tax in St. Catharines (and all other lower-tier municipalities within Niagara);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of St. Catharines endorse the concept of a vacant home tax and vacant residential land tax and call upon the Niagara Region to investigate a vacant home tax that specifically:

- Addresses vacant residential units in St. Catharines
- Encourages turning empty St. Catharines homes into good housing for people
- Raises revenue that will directly support affordable housing in St. Catharines

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be circulated to the Office of the City Clerk at the Niagara Region, Niagara Region Housing, the local area municipalities and the City of St. Catharines City Treasurer / Director of Financial Management Services and the Director of Planning and Building Services. FORTHWITH

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the City Clerk at extension 1524.



Bonnie Nistico-Dunk, City Clerk
Legal and Clerks Services, Office of the City Clerk
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