

MOTION ON NOTICE

3. Call for Bold Provincial Actions to Tackle Vancouver's Housing Affordability

MOVER: Councillor Carr

SECONDER:

WHEREAS

1. In November of 2017 Council approved the Housing Vancouver Strategy (2018 - 2027) (the "Strategy") to address Vancouver's escalating housing affordability crisis;
2. According to the Strategy, Vancouver residents feel that housing has become a commodity for investment, resulting in a serious and growing equity gap between generations, between owners and renters, and between our lowest and highest income earners;
3. The Strategy also states that speculative demand has distorted land and housing prices, posing a critical barrier to a healthy housing market and to creating new housing that is affordable in the near and long term;
4. New data indicates almost 20 percent of new condos in Vancouver are owned by non-residents (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, December, 2017);
5. Speculation and flipping of properties generates enormous wealth for investors, but does not provide revenues to the City of Vancouver;
6. Vancouver needs revenues from development to pay for new infrastructure necessitated by that development, including roads, transportation, utilities, and fire and police services, and public amenities such as community and recreation centres, non-market housing, childcare, libraries and parks.
7. A top priority of our Housing Vancouver Strategy's 3-Year Action Plan (2018 - 2020) is to work with senior governments to address speculation, potentially through measures such as a speculation and flipping tax and restricting property ownership by non-permanent residents;
8. With a ratio of median annual household income to detached housing prices of 1:37, when 1:5 is considered to be "severely unaffordable", Vancouver is one of the world's most unaffordable cities. The severity of Vancouver's housing crisis demands bold action.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT the Mayor on behalf of Council, write to Premier John Horgan and express Council's support for bold actions that the province can take immediately, including 2018 budget measures, to curb speculation and reduce the impact of global capital on Vancouver's real estate market, including but not limited to:

- a. A restriction on foreign purchasing of property
 - b. A “speculators tax” in the form of a property tax surcharge that targets absentee foreign owners (not local owners) who own property in Vancouver but do not pay appropriate income taxes here on world-wide income.
 - c. An additional “flipping tax” on capital gains when properties are flipped within a short period of time without reasonable cause. The flipping tax should apply to presale condos prior to completion, as well as a property transfer tax on each transaction with mandatory full disclosure at the Land Title Office for all presales.
- B. THAT the Mayor on behalf of Council, request of the Premier that revenues generated by these measures be used to alleviate the housing crisis including but not limited to new non-market social and supportive housing and to retrofit older affordable non-market housing, both to maintain its availability at affordable rents and to meet climate change objectives.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to work with the provincial government to support policies that directly tackle the negative effects of global capital and speculation on Vancouver’s real estate market.

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