

The Other Price of the Speculation Tax



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Speculation Tax notices have gone out requiring a declaration on British Columbians' private property.

The province already generates \$3 billion a year in Property Transfer Tax for a simple land title transfer.

The Speculation Tax revenue has generated more than \$200 million but it seems it's never enough.

The BC government expanded the Speculation Tax into North Cowichan, Duncan, Ladysmith, Lake Cowichan, Lions Bay and Squamish.

Cottage owners in these regions and others will be required to pay the government thousands of dollars in taxes annually or rent/sell their vacation homes.

When the Speculation Tax was launched a few years ago, the government claimed it was to improve housing.

However, BC home prices and rents increased while supply declined in the most expensive province in Canada.

Rising interest rates have created some price declines, but homes are still unaffordable with the higher mortgages rates, while the supply shortage continues.

The government claims this is all about creating housing. Yet, the easiest way to create

housing is by enabling developers and builders to build new homes.

Presently, Greater Victoria has 13 official community plans where municipalities obstruct new developments with high fees and glacially slow application processes.

Housing supply is a critical issue and BC could address it without violating the property rights of BC residents.

For example, Nova Scotia is empowering the Housing Minister to approve development permits in regions obstructing housing.

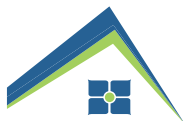
Ontario is mandating reasonable densities and putting a cap on some fees.

This sends a message to local authorities to do better.

However, the BC government has chosen the path of eroding the privacy and property rights of British Columbians.

While the financial cost to these BC residents is significant, the other price being paid is loss of freedom of choice and property ownership for ourselves and future generations.

There are far more effective and preferable options to housing supply and affordability than BC's costly and ever-expanding Speculation Tax.



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