

LETTER: Non-resident property tax to be formally debated

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

I write to clarify [Jane Seyd's article on Oct. 6 \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/west-vancouver-floats-non-resident-tax-plan-1.2360334\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/west-vancouver-floats-non-resident-tax-plan-1.2360334), which may have left the mistaken impression that West Vancouver council has already voted to impose a non-resident property tax levy.

Housing affordability is and remains a major concern for council.

While local governments have to deal with the effects of the housing crises first hand, we have very limited ability to do anything to address it, particularly on the demand side.

To this end, council recently approached the provincial government about the concept of allowing municipalities to levy a higher rate of property tax on those who do not claim their home as a principal residence. However, council has not yet made a formal request to the province to make the necessary legislative changes.

Even more importantly, council has not yet decided that such a property tax levy is worthwhile.

If council does make a formal request and if the province amends the legislation to allow municipalities to set different residential property tax rates, council would then have to work out the details of such a tax and carefully weigh the pros and cons, to ensure it would work as intended, before moving forward the initiative.

A final decision could only be made in an open council meeting after robust public consultation.

Craig Cameron
Councillor, West Vancouver

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