

File No.: 04-1000-20-2018-239

June 15, 2018

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: **Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")**

I am responding to your request of April 24, 2018 for:

All communications between the Mayor and his office and Josh Gordon from SFU from January 1, 2018 to April 24, 2018.

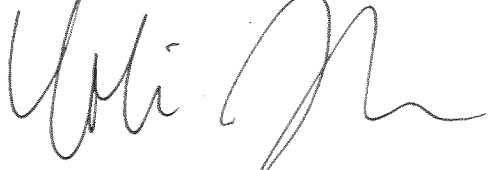
All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed, (blacked out), under s.15(1)(l) of the Act. You can read or download this section here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

Under section 52 of the Act, and within 30 business days of receipt of this letter, you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your FOI request by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number (#04-1000-20-2018-239); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request; and 4) detailed reasons why you are seeking the review.

Yours truly,

Cobi Falconer, FOI Case Manager, for

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Cobi Falconer', written over the typed name of the signatory.

Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA
Director, Access to Information & Privacy

Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca
453 W. 12th Avenue Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

*If you have any questions, please email us at foi@vancouver.ca and we will respond to you as soon as possible. Or you can call the FOI Case Manager at 604.871.6584.

Encl.

:ma

From: ["Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca)

To:

Date: 4/12/2018 10:53:42 AM

Subject: FW: News Release: Public should have a say on Empty Homes Tax revenue, says Mayor

fyi

From: Walker, Alexa

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2018 9:14 AM

Subject: News Release: Public should have a say on Empty Homes Tax revenue, says Mayor

Office of the Mayor

For Immediate Release

Public should have a say on Empty Homes Tax revenue, says Mayor

Public input on affordable housing investments to shape City recommendations

April 12, 2018 (Vancouver, B.C) - Mayor Gregor Robertson has put forward a motion to City Council next week that directs City staff to seek feedback from Vancouver residents on which affordable housing projects or initiatives they would like to see funded through the net proceeds raised by the Empty Homes Tax.

"Vancouver is the first city in North America to bring in a tax on empty homes, and we should hear directly from Vancouver residents on how they'd like to see the money spent on affordable housing projects," said Mayor Gregor Robertson. "Our main goal is to make sure that people who want to put down roots here in our city have secure and affordable housing options."

The motion asks staff to consult with the public on the allocation of Empty Homes Tax revenue, prior to a report coming back to Council with recommendations. Under the City's bylaw, revenue from the tax is to go towards affordable housing initiatives.

"There are lots of different ways the Empty Homes Tax revenue could be allocated," said the Mayor. "We could keep our winter shelters open longer. It could increase the funds for the rent bank. It could go towards buying new land for affordable housing. I'm sure people have lots of opinions on how the revenue gets allocated, which is why I want to make sure the public has an opportunity to weigh in before Council makes a decision."

Approved by Council in 2016 and implemented in 2017, the first year of the Empty Homes Tax saw a high rate of compliance with over 98 per cent of Vancouver homeowners submitting their declarations.

Based on the declarations submitted, a total of 8,481 homes were declared or deemed to be unoccupied, underutilized, or exempt for more than 180 days in 2017.

The deadline for homeowners to pay the Empty Homes Tax is April 16, 2018.

To learn more about the Empty Homes Tax and for updates on the public engagement process, please visit www.vancouver.ca/empty-homes-tax

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Alexa Walker

Communications and Policy Specialist

Office of the Mayor | City of Vancouver

Office: 604.873.7161 | Cell: 604.346.9370

Mayorofvancouver.ca

From: "Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>
To:
Date: 3/7/2018 11:09:22 AM
Subject: Fwd: News Release: More than 98 per cent of homeowners declared by Empty Homes Tax deadline

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: City of Vancouver Communications Office <CityofVancouver.CommunicationsOffice@vancouver.ca>
Date: March 7, 2018 at 10:03:01 AM PST
To: "Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>
Subject: News Release: More than 98 per cent of homeowners declared by Empty Homes Tax deadline
Reply-To: Media <City.Media@vancouver.ca>

City of Vancouver
News Release
March 7, 2018

More than 98 per cent of homeowners declared by Empty Homes Tax deadline

The Empty Homes Tax declaration period for 2017 closed on March 5, 2018 with a total of 183,911 declarations submitted, accounting for 98.85 per cent of all residential property owners in Vancouver.

As this was the first year of implementation of the tax, the findings from the 2017 declarations provide an important baseline for the City to compare all future results and better understand how the tax is influencing the behaviours of property owners.

"Vancouver housing needs to be for homes first, not just treated as a commodity," said Mayor Gregor Robertson. "We brought in an Empty Homes Tax because Vancouver has a near-zero vacancy rate and many people are struggling to find a place to rent. Thank you to the 183,911 Vancouver homeowners—just over 98 per cent—who submitted their declarations on time."

Declaration statistics for 2017

- ☐ 183,911 property status declarations submitted
- ☐ 177,562 occupied residential properties (declared principal residence and declared tenanted)
- ☐ 8,481 unoccupied/under-utilized residential properties (declared vacant, declared exempt and undeclared/deemed vacant)
 - Includes 2,132 undeclared residential properties

Unoccupied/under-utilized residential properties

A total of 8,481 residential properties were declared or deemed to be unoccupied/under-utilized for more than 180 days in 2017. This figure not only includes properties that were declared vacant, but also properties that claimed one of the various exemptions to the tax. Properties can be eligible for an exemption based on a number of reasons, including if the property was undergoing renovation or redevelopment, title transferred during the year, or the owner was residing in a hospital, long term or supportive care facility.

Properties that were undeclared at the March 5 deadline are also included in the number of unoccupied/under-utilized residential properties. These undeclared properties have been deemed vacant and are therefore subject to the Empty Homes Tax.

Declared and deemed vacant properties will be issued a Vacancy Tax bill in mid-March with payment due by April 16, 2018.

Unoccupied/under-utilized property types and locations

The majority of the 8,481 unoccupied/under-utilized properties are condominiums, which account for 60.6 per cent of this figure. Single-family residential properties account for 33.5 per cent and multi-family/other properties for 5.9 per cent.

Aligning with the high density of condos in the downtown core, the largest number of unoccupied/under-utilized properties was recorded in Downtown Vancouver. The West End and Shaughnessy recorded the highest percentages of unoccupied properties, relative to the number of residential properties in each neighbourhood that were required to declare.



Audit program

The Empty Homes Tax audit program is underway. Using a risk-based approach, as well as random audits, the program has a goal of verifying property status declarations and encouraging compliance with the new tax. As the program progresses, 2017 property status statistics may be subject to change as the audits are completed and reveal whether property owners can provide sufficient evidence to support their declarations.

As required by the Vancouver Charter, the City will report on the revenue raised by the Empty Homes Tax in an Annual Report to Council, which will be released in the fall of 2018.

Appeals process

Property owners who receive a Vacancy Tax bill and feel they have been incorrectly taxed may submit a Notice of Complaint to the City and have their case reviewed by the Vacancy Tax Review Officer. A Notice of Complaint may be submitted on the basis that either the property owner or the City made an error or omission that resulted in the property being taxed.

The Vacancy Tax Review Office will review all complaints and use the information provided to gain insight on the impact of the tax and to influence future bylaw amendments.

For more information on the Empty Homes Tax, visit vancouver.ca/ehf.

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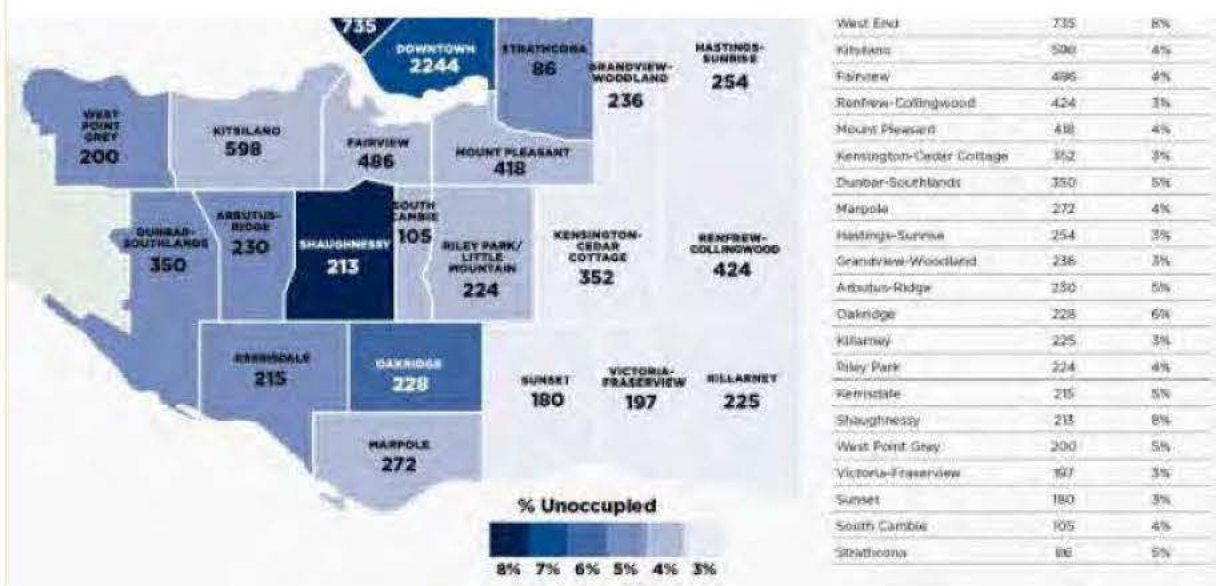
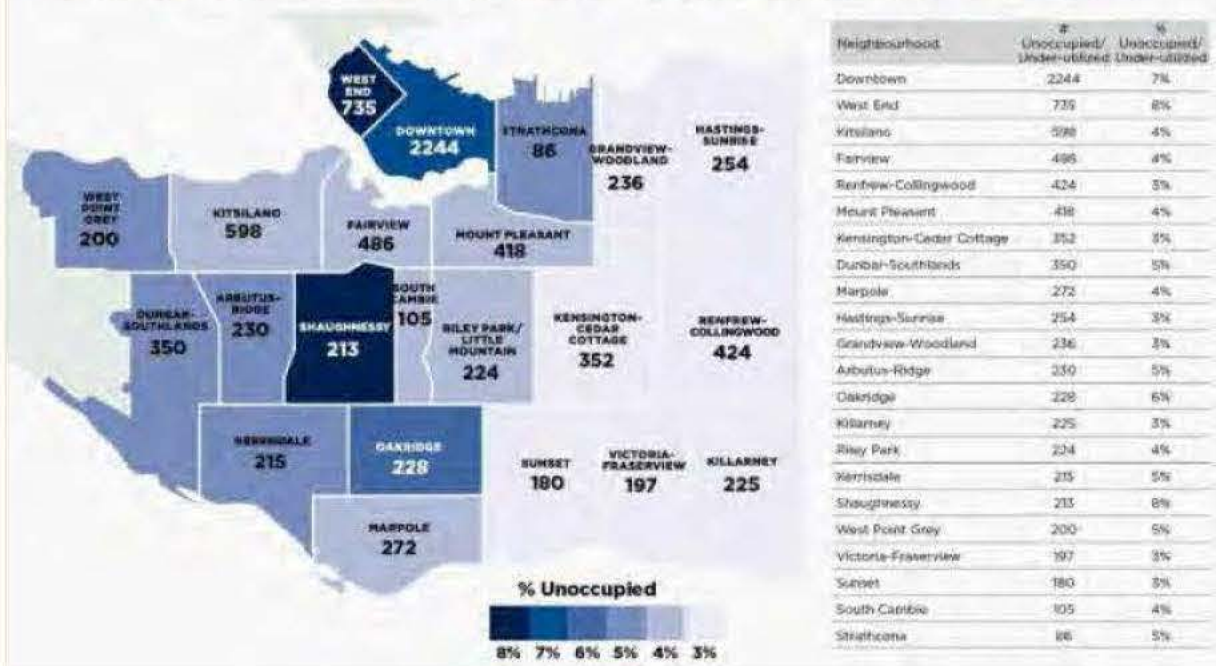
Note to Editors:

As part of the City's Housing Vancouver Strategy, The Empty Homes Tax is one of many actions the City is taking to increase the supply of rental homes and improve housing affordability in Vancouver. The program, which is the first of its kind in Canada, aims to return empty or under-used residential properties back into the rental pool for the people who live and work in the city. Net revenues from the tax will also be reinvested into affordable housing initiatives.

Media Contact:

Corporate Communications
604.871.6336
media@vancouver.ca

Percentage and number of unoccupied/under-utilized residential properties per neighbourhood



From: ["Joshua Gordon" <joshua_gordon@sfu.ca>](mailto:joshua_gordon@sfu.ca)
To: ["Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca)
Date: 2/21/2018 1:00:28 PM
Subject: Re: congrats

Hi Kevin,

Thanks for the message. It's been a couple of years, yeah - January 2016. A bit of a slog but very happy the NDP delivered. It's a pretty fundamental policy shift, so two years is actually somewhat quick. Now we wait for the details. Should be interesting!

Josh

----- Original Message -----

From: "Quinlan, Kevin" <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca>
To: "Joshua Gordon" s.15(1)(l)
Sent: Wednesday, February 21, 2018 9:34:58 AM
Subject: congrats

Nice work on getting the speculation tax in the budget. Was it two years ago you and the other academics first proposed it? Long road to get to this point. Congrats - hope all is well

Kevin Quinlan

Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor

City of Vancouver

Office: 604.873.7232

Cell: 778.995.2264