

Town of Canmore Property Tax Task Force

Terms of Reference

BACKGROUND

In 2015 the Town of Canmore adopted a [Property Tax Policy](#). This policy sets the guidance for how Council will distribute the property tax burden across various classes of property, and what factors, metrics and targets it will consider.

The Policy provides guiding principles for setting property tax rates, which include: responsiveness to economic conditions, comparability to other communities, equity within the tax base and accountability to ratepayers. The Town considers a number of principles, metrics, trends and targets when setting its annual property tax rates.

The Town has recently expanded the division of class 1 residential property into 5 sub-classes, including a new Primary Residential subclass, and created a new Livability Tax Program to be funded by the Residential subclass. Additionally, the social and economic trends, priorities and pressures within the community have evolved over time.

As such, the Town is seeking to review and update its Property Tax Policy to ensure its guiding tax principles, targets and performance metrics remain current, and that the new Livability Tax Program is appropriately considered in the Town's tax policy approach.

PURPOSE

To engage interest holders in a review of the Town's municipal tax policies, principles, targets and metrics, including tax classifications and mill rates, and to provide advice to Council on an appropriate level of taxation between subclasses.

OBJECTIVES

1. To review and understand the legislation regarding property class types, assessment calculations and taxation requirements.
2. To review trends in commercial and residential property assessments, tax rates and properties in Canmore and comparable communities.
3. To review and discuss taxation principles, tax rates, targets and metrics as applied to various classes of property in Canmore.
4. To propose an appropriate balance in taxation between municipal tax classifications, including potential tax policy metrics and targets for the Town.
5. To propose an approach and review alternatives for the Livability Tax Program, including tax policy metrics, and guidance on the use of funds.

DELIVERABLES

1. Development of a proposed distribution of municipal taxes between municipal tax classifications.
2. Development of proposed tax policy principles, metrics and targets to guide the Town's decision-making.
3. Development of proposed amendments to the Town's Property Tax Policy.
4. Preparation of a final advisory report for consideration by Council prior to establishing the 2026 Property Tax Rate Bylaw.

TIMELINE

1. Approval of Terms of Reference at Regular Council Meeting on August 19, 2025
2. Recruitment of Task Force Members September – October 2025
3. Task Force formation to occur at the Annual Organizational Meeting – October 30, 2025
4. Initial Task Force meeting – November/ December 2025
5. Meetings as required December 2025 – March 2026.
6. Preparation of report and recommendations to Council by the end of March 2026.

STRUCTURE

1. The Task Force will consist of up to 9 members as follows:
 - 3 members of Council
 - 1 representative from Tourism Canmore-Kananaskis (TCK).
 - 1 representative from the Bow Valley Builders and Developers Association (BOWDA).
 - 1 representative from the Business Improvement Area (BIA).
 - Up to 3 members from the public at large, at least one of whom shall be a non-primary resident, and all of whom shall only be residential taxpayers.
2. Administrative support for the Task Force shall be provided from the Chief Administrative Officer, the General Manager of Corporate Services, the Manager of Finance, and other staff as needed.
3. The Task Force will seek to make decisions by consensus. Where consensus is not attainable, decisions will be made by simple majority, with dissenting positions noted.
4. The Task Force shall appoint a chairperson at their first meeting. The chairperson may engage the Task Force members at their initial meeting to determine and refine its governance model in relation to its decision-making process, appropriate meeting structure, and other Task Force details.