

# Inner City Coalition

*Of Calgary Society*



## **3. TAX FAIRNESS**

*Property taxes, user fees,  
and service charges*

*We believe the current system  
is unfair to a wide range of  
Calgarians and has negative  
planning implications for the  
City as a whole.*

### **Issue**

The property tax system is fundamental to supporting municipal services and planning strategy. It has to be fairly administrated and it must treat all citizens in an equitable manner. Current market based assessment policies are raising taxes in Established Communities at a faster rate than city-wide averages. Fixed income seniors and low income families are being driven out of their homes and neighbourhoods.

### **Background:**

The diversity of established communities is being compromised. ICC and others are concerned regarding the fairness and impact of the current tax system, called Market Value Assessments (MVA). Taxes in established communities have increased at a much greater rate than those in equivalent suburban areas. There is no relationship between taxes paid and services received. Since a majority of low income and fixed income citizens live in the inner city, they have been hit the hardest.

This tax system also penalises renovation and maintenance but rewards deterioration and demolition. Heritage structures and valued streetscapes are being lost. Communities are homogenized in character and affordability is reduced.

While the Market Value Assessment falls under Provincial jurisdiction, Council can request changes as well as develop taxation policy that:

- Mitigates the imbalances,
- Create alternatives to protect low and fixed income residents,
- Reflects the cost of services, and is based on measurable criteria,
- Provides future certainty for homeowners, and
- Ensures diversity in communities.

### **QUESTION**

*What policy initiatives would  
you implement to mitigate the  
imbalances of Market Value  
Assessment and ensure  
taxation fairness?*

**[www.icccalgary.ca](http://www.icccalgary.ca)**

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