

March 20, 2018 email

Dear name of municipality

The BC Humanist Association is gathering information about religious property tax exemptions and we would appreciate your participation. This will only take a few moments and will help us better understand how your municipality regulates religious properties in your jurisdiction.

Under the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*, local governments may grant permissive tax exemptions to exempt certain properties (beyond the exemptions provided for “houses of worship”) from taxation for a specified period. For example, a municipality may choose to exempt offices, parking lots and other property owned by a church.

Does name of municipality:

- 1) *Grant permissive tax exemptions for religious properties?*
- 2) *Require religious properties to be a registered charity with the Canada Revenue Agency to receive any exemptions?*
- 3) *Administer a public benefits test or vetting process prior to granting a permissive tax exemption to religious properties?*
- 4) *Calculate foregone tax revenues by various exemptions for religious properties? If so, is this information publicly available or could you provide us with the data?*

Finally, has name of municipality recently implemented changes to its policy on permissive exemptions?

If yes, when did this occur and what were the outcomes?

If no, is your local government considering any changes or discussions regarding permissive tax exemptions of religious properties in the near future?

Do you have any other information regarding this topic that you would like to add, such as other relevant regulations, special agreements with local religious property owners, etc?

At very least, we'd appreciate if you could attach a copy of any relevant bylaw, regulation or policy that can help us answer our questions.

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. This information will help us produce a report to help your constituents, as well as residents across British Columbia, better understand how their municipalities handle religious properties.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at exdir@bchumanist.ca.

Sincerely,

Ian Bushfield
Executive Director

April 12, 2018 email

Dear *name of municipality*

I don't believe we've received a response to our message below so I just wanted to follow up to make sure you saw it.

Can you please try to get back to us by April 20, even with just a link to where your permissive exemption policy might be found?

Thank you

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March 20 email copied below