

north shore news

LETTER: Gold-rush mentality afflicts North Vancouver developers

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

I write this letter as a concerned resident of the North Shore.

The North Shore appears to be experiencing a Klondike-style "gold rush."

It's bonanza time for developers and realtors! In their frenzy to clone Metrotown, they stalk our neighbourhoods, preying on older and "surplus" properties, many of which could be sympathetically restored rather than demolished to make way for newer, trendier, denser developments.

The scale of this expansion is destroying our heritage and changing the character of local communities forever. Watch out, Lynn Valley and Edgemont Village! And what is the cost to those of us who call the North Shore home? What is the cost to the environment? To the air we breathe? To our wildlife? And to our health - and sanity? Too much of a good thing is bad for us - it's a well-known fact - and this applies to development and densification, which are spiralling out of control.

I also wonder how disaster proof these towers will turn out to be when tested for real - in an earthquake or fire, for example.

It really is time to focus on the infrastructure (e.g. hospitals, transit, roads, law enforcement, shopping) needed to support this accelerated growth. This issue has been raised repeatedly - and repeatedly sidestepped or trivialized.

Our councils must take the lead and work with our provincial and federal governments to raise awareness of the problems and to tackle them sensitively and expeditiously. Scrap the official community plans and replace them with action plans.

Council assets are shrinking, rezoning applications are growing - and our patience is running out. Our municipalities, struggling to balance revenue and expenditure, allow themselves to be seduced by the "incentives" offered by developers. Who are the winners and who are the losers? There are plenty of viable opportunities for developers elsewhere. Before they move on, perhaps they could express their gratitude to the community by collectively funding a new state-of-the-art hospital? Maybe it will find a cure for obsessive compulsive development disorder.

Irene Nevill

North Vancouver

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