

LETTER: Making strata owners pay more is a bad idea

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Dear Editor:

I've been reading that Mayor Darrell Mussatto and Mayor Richard Walton believe "poor" asset-rich (there's an oxymoron) single family homeowners are paying more than their fair share of municipal taxes and believe something should be done about it ([North Van Mayors Push for Property Tax Reform June 17 \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/north-vancouver-mayors-push-for-property-tax-reform-1.2280912\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/north-vancouver-mayors-push-for-property-tax-reform-1.2280912)).

Since neither mayor would risk his political career by imposing more taxes on local business, by inference, they are saying that condo owners, or more correctly, strata property owners, should be paying more. Mayor Mussatto and his "slate" have for years allowed densification of the city well in excess of the Official Community Plan, the vast majority of which has been, yes, stratas. As a strata owner, it's hard to sympathize with poor single family homeowners who, apart from selling, have several options to cash in on the ever-increasing value of their property, while the strata owner has none.

I would bet that the city generates more in taxes from strata units than from the single family homes that could be set on the same "footprint." Going forward in the city, the strata owners will be the group that more and more will be carrying the municipal tax burden. Taxing strata owners a higher portion of taxes would be extremely unfair as it's clear that this group pays relatively more than the single family homeowner, especially considering the number of people who could be included in a single family home.

It's interesting to ponder the reason why Mayor Mussatto – who espouses affordable housing, a great many of which are strata units – would even consider increasing the tax share on this group.

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