

north shore news

LETTER: District ostracizes Indian Arm residents

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

After watching the Sept. 29 District of North Vancouver council meeting and the discussion surrounding the Panorama Drive parking issue, I'm compelled to write about Coun. Roger Bassam's ignorant comments about Indian Arm residents who live outside the district boundary. His comments leave me to believe Coun. Bassam thinks residents who live in Belcarra and Metro Vancouver are free-loading, lazy and only looking for a convenient way to "access our paradise." I can tell you, living up Indian Arm full time is dangerous and nothing short of hard work. We go home no matter the weather, seas or time of day. We don't just go home when it's sunny and calm to drink cocktails on our patio, laughing about how we get away with free parking. We go home to chop wood, fix docks, maintain boats, collect water etc. As I said in my address to council during last Monday's meeting, we have explored all options and the only option we have is Panorama Drive. This isn't about avoiding "the long way" home, this is about safe and feasible access to our home and community.

For Coun. Bassam to suggest this is a case of buyer beware is also ignorant. When my family moved up Indian Arm in 1987 we couldn't foresee this becoming a problem 27 years later. No one who lives up the Arm could have anticipated the district would ostracize our community and cut off our access.

Even if we had another access, we'd be forced to move schools, banks, mail, pharmacies, storage units, recreation memberships, libraries, doctors, dentists etc. It's not government's problem, according to Coun. Bassam, but with that also goes the after-tax dollars our families spend annually. Is council really naive to the fact that as members of the North Shore community we're spending millions of dollars in their district? With an estimate of 35-40 Indian Arm families, with an average of two taxpaying members per household spending approximately \$30,000 per year, Indian Arm residents spend about \$2.4 million annually. I'd like to know how Deep Cove and North Shore businesses would feel if we took that money and spent it elsewhere.

Now tell me I am a free-loading lazy person who isn't part of your community and just looking for an easy way to access my paradise. I invite Coun. Bassam to spend a day in the life of an Indian Arm resident.

Kimberley Harburn

North Vancouver

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