

**Build up not out**

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Byline: Michael Geoghegan

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Not wanting to destroy the old-town ambience of its community, Victoria has generally said no to highrise condominium projects. The Agricultural Land Reserve hems in most municipalities on the Saanich Peninsula, so that has left communities such as Colwood, Langford and Sooke as the new centres of economic and population growth for the area.

When everyone else was busy saying no, Langford cashed in and attracted a large number of big-box retailers, which has helped make Langford the envy of most other municipalities within the CRD. Colwood in the meantime has now realized that condo towers will have million-dollar views of both water and mountains.

Also, unlike single-family homes, condos actually pay more in property taxes than they consume in municipal services. Thus these new towers and the revenue they bring will allow Colwood to start providing the same level of service and public amenities that residents of Langford have now come to enjoy.

The long-held dream of utilizing the south end of the E&N railroad would finally become economically viable. This is because you will finally have enough population living in the western communities to make a commuter rail line between downtown Victoria and West Shore economically viable.

Best of all, by building up rather than out, it will allow for much of the green space and farmland in the region to be preserved.

Michael Geoghegan,

Saanich.