



## Langford to protect mobile home owners

New policy requires compensation, disposal costs from developers

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Mobile home owners whose homes can't be moved and are threatened by development will have to be fairly compensated under a new policy adopted by Langford council.

Mayor Stew Young is also promising a 10-year tax holiday to developers building mobile home parks in his municipality, similar to the policy for new seniors' and affordable housing.

"I'd like to see some new mobile home parks out here. That would be an encouragement for affordable housing," Young said.

"It's awesome," said Mike McCormick, who lives in Hidden Valley mobile home park on Florence Lake. McCormick, with neighbour Dennis Patterson, has been lobbying for the policy for Langford's seven parks.

Under the policy adopted by Langford council this week, approval of redevelopment of manufactured home parks is subject to the applicant arranging and paying for disposal of manufactured homes that cannot legally be relocated.

Approval will also be subject to a comprehensive plan for compensation, to the satisfaction of council, "in addition to mandatory payment under the Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act."

The provincial act states a landlord who gives a tenant notice for redevelopment must pay that tenant the equivalent of 12 months rent. Langford would also require payment of a value equivalent to the assessed value of a mobile home that cannot be relocated.

Applicants will also have to advise tenants on options for relocating. That would include opportunities for market and non-market housing and other mobile home park opportunities.

The municipality will also establish a reserve fund, fed by 10 per cent of the taxes it receives from mobile homes. It will be available to manufactured home park associations to assist in areas such as the redevelopment of neighbourhoods.

Young cautioned that the new policy shouldn't be looked at as manna from heaven for anyone sitting in a rotting, old mobile at the end of its life. Rather, it's an attempt by the municipality to insert an element of fairness into the redevelopment process.

"It doesn't mean if you own a mobile home and it's falling down that there will be a windfall from a developer. There will be a fair process that will have to be adhered to," Young said.

Langford doesn't have any redevelopment applications for mobile home parks on the table, but given skyrocketing land values, they are inevitable, Young said. He added that there's probably about 600 mobile homes within Langford's boundaries.

Young said that he doesn't want to see conflict created by development plans involving mobile home parks. "Essentially, you're buying a mobile home park and the land use on that is for mobile home park and I won't be changing it unless there's co-operation," Young said.

Terrill Welch, spokesperson for mobile home residents in Pedder Bay, said the policy encourages more manufactured homes "which directly translates into affordable housing." Pedder Bay mobile home residents are locked in a legal dispute over eviction notices they've received to make way for redevelopment of their mobile home park in Metchosin.

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