

Rural residents get a lot of free rides

Re: “Rural areas don’t share urban issues,” letter, July 16.

The headline “rural areas don’t share” is correct. And the letter-writer says it with pride! But I remind him that where we sleep is not likely where we live: i.e. play, shop, work, learn. Here’s a short list of some things he likely enjoys that he doesn’t pay for.

From Metchosin, he can’t get to the airport or ferries without travelling on roads and bridges paid for by taxpayers of other municipalities. His garbage doesn’t get a free ride to Hartland or his children get to the University of Victoria except on roads paid for by Saanich.

A visit downtown for work or a trip to the Victoria Day Parade, Canada Day fireworks, Symphony Splash and a return trip home across the Blue Bridge are paid for by residents of Victoria. Worse, he pays only 50 per cent of the cost of his police service while most of us must pay the full amount.

Does he use Red Cross, Cancer Society, Salvation Army, St. John Ambulance, major church cathedrals, independent schools and dozens of other social services that benefit from tax exemptions provided by urban taxpayers?

Does he enjoy arts and culture services and facilities such as the art gallery, Royal Theatre or Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre, all paid for only by urban residents?

He and all those self-serving folks in our small municipalities and rural areas enjoy their low taxes because of my generosity. I don’t call it sharing when you get a free ride.

James D. Anderson

Saanich