

EDITORIAL: A bridge too far

North Shore News

September 23, 2015 12:00 AM

Like many, we were caught off guard by the province's announcement it would investigate the costs and benefits of a fixed link to the Sunshine Coast.

With only 30,000 residents, what could justify building kilometres of new highways and or bridges?

But, a prudent government does these types of studies before making brash spending decisions and so we patiently await the study's results, albeit with a dose of skepticism, and an eye to the foreseeable impacts.

A fixed link would surely trigger a building boom in Gibsons and Sechelt, making the Sunshine Coast even more of a bedroom community than it already is. A new crop of commuters would join the already existing ones who've mastered the art of the slow zipper merge on the Lions Gate Bridge.

But the province didn't mention anything about the costs and benefits of building more lanes or a new Lions Gate to accommodate the Sunshine Coast's sprawl.

Tempting as a newer, wider bridge might be, let's remember there is about 300 metres between the end of the Stanley Park causeway and the first traffic light on West Georgia Street. And there's another one about 300 metres beyond, and so on. Even with a mythical four-or-more-lane Lions Gate, we suspect traffic would back up in much the same way it does now.

The congestion we endure and expensive infrastructure we must fund are the unavoidable consequences of building a city across rivers and mountains as we have over the last 100 years.

You'd think we'd have learned our lesson by now.

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