

**Subject: FW: The resurrection of the Third Crossing or how to love the con crete jungle and more pollution.**

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**CC:** Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@district.north-van.bc.ca>,  
Directors Team <managecomm@district.north-van.bc.ca>

> *A Message from Ernie Crist:*

>  
> *I see that the Third Crossing theme has been resurrected again and with a  
> vengeance. The time is opportune for we might get the 2010 Olympics. A  
> Committee consisting of various business interests has been formed to  
> promote the idea. The sales pitch is that it should be a tunnel for cars  
> but with a provision for future rail traffic. The cost would be borne  
> entirely by the private sector and it would be recouped through a toll.  
> A representative of the committee stated that a one way ticket would cost  
> \$ 2.40, but he was not sure.*

>  
> *When the group appeared before District Council, I asked who would pay  
> for the access roads? I did so because it occurred to me that a tunnel  
> for cars without access roads on both sides of the tunnel would not be  
> very successful. The answer was they did not know but assumed it would be  
> paid for by municipalities. Not that this would be much of a problem for,  
> as everybody knows, municipalities have lots of money these days  
> especially since the downloading efforts by both the Federal and  
> Provincial Government have been so successful.*


>  
> *You may remember that the Feds take \$ 400 million annually from your  
> regional gasoline bill to plough it back into the local infrastructure.  
> Except somehow the money never gets here. It goes into Federal general  
> revenue and that's the last we see of it. Where the Feds lead, can the  
> Province be far behind. They too have downloaded everything that they  
> possibly can from crime costs to social welfare, even day care, such as it  
> is.*

>  
> *But the real "bummer" is this. More concrete, freeways, overpasses and  
> underpasses etc. to accommodate more cars does not work. In fact it makes  
> the situation worse. We have this from the highest authority, namely, the  
> Americans who have seen their cities ruined trying to do so. They have  
> elevated the car to a deity and it still does not work. They are now  
> switching to Mass Transit and they are doing it with huge Federal  
> assistance. It is either that or sentence their cities to death as may be  
> seen by the bursting cancer wards.*

>  
> *The world's cities are moving away from the car solution mentality. Even  
> the auto industry has seen the light. BMW proposed that downtown Munich,  
> which is the headquarters of BMW, be closed to automobile traffic  
> altogether. The same is true for many other cities. Switching to mass  
> transit, frees up the roads for the movement of goods and saves a great  
> deal of money, they found. A tunnel exiting in a District neighborhood  
> would be the end of livability for the people living there - quite apart*

> from the financial burden the District would have to shoulder if such a  
> retrogressive step were undertaken.  
>  
> West Vancouver too poured cold water on the idea. They understand very  
> well that more cars going through West Vancouver is just not very  
> attractive. West Van would be adversely affected even if such a crossing  
> would be in North Van. It would still increase the traffic through West  
> Van.  
>  
> But don't underestimate the resolve of the promoters and their friends on  
> local Councils. In the District, Council was quick to demand a staff  
> report as to how we could help approach this issue. That we already have  
> a hundred such reports including from TPAC, which is a District Citizens  
> Transportation Advisory Committee, pointing to the absurdity of such a  
> venture did not matter. Clearly they want a more favorable response. I  
> already know how such a crossing could be achieved. It could be done by  
> ruining existing neighborhoods, by saddling the municipality with a huge  
> debt load and paying for it by opening the doors wide to developers  
> making the North Shore an extension of Vancouver's West End.  
>  
> The City of Vancouver has also nixed the plan. They have told everyone  
> that if anybody thinks that they will pay a single nickel for access  
> roads to accommodate more car traffic from the North Shore, tunnel or  
> bridge, they can wait a long time. We are not interested, they said.  
> We've got enough traffic already, they said. As one City Councillor put  
> it "we don't mind a 6 lane third crossing as long as everybody  
> understands that on Vancouver's side there will only be two lanes and not  
> a penny for more concrete". Enough said.  
>  
> On the other hand, all the experts agree that the way to solve the traffic  
> problems is via mass transit. A rail infrastructure is already in place on  
> both sides of the Inlet and could be linked up via a tunnel. There are  
> plenty of studies to prove its viability not to mention the example of  
> other places throughout the world. Additional Sea Bus crossings are also  
> possible. But the promoters of a third crossing are not interested in  
> this. They want to make money and the only way this is feasible is to  
> build a tunnel for cars and charge a toll. The Tunnel Rail component is  
> merely a camouflage to sell the oil - snake oil that is.  
>  
> Ernie Crist

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