

AGENDA INFORMATION	
☐ Regular Meeting	Date: _____
☐ Other:	Date: _____

Dept. Manager	GM/ Director	CAO
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The District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 7, 2026

AUTHOR: Mayor Mike Little

SUBJECT: Community Opinion on a Rice Lake Connector Project

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT, pursuant to section 83 of the *Community Charter*, Council seek community opinion on whether or not to pursue a Rice Lake Connector Project;

AND THAT such community opinion be obtained in conjunction with the October 17, 2026 general local election;

AND THAT the results of this process be non-binding on Council;

AND THAT staff be directed to report back to Council with proposed wording for a community opinion question to determine elector support for this project;

AND THAT Council affirm that advancing consideration of a new connection between Upper Lynn Valley and Inter River, informed by the results of this community opinion process, be identified as a priority for the incoming Council to advance during the 2027–2031 Council term through the Community Transportation Plan.

SUMMARY:

Through this report, I am asking Council to seek community opinion, pursuant to section 83 of the *Community Charter*, on whether or not to pursue a Rice Lake Connector Project or similar crossing. I am also recommending that staff be directed to prepare proposed wording for a community opinion question to be included on the 2026 general local election ballot. A non-binding public opinion question would give this Council, and the incoming Council, valuable direction to inform any future consideration of the project.

PURPOSE:

Recognizing the well-documented traffic challenges in the Ironworkers Memorial bridgehead area, I am bringing forward a proposal to add a referendum question to the 2026 general election ballot seeking the public's support for the possibility of connecting the Upper Lynn Valley area with the Inter-River community through a new bridge over Lynn Creek at or around Dempsey Road and Rice Lake Road, together with the necessary supporting road infrastructure. My intent is to give residents a direct voice in whether this potential connection should be carried forward as a priority by the next Council.

BACKGROUND:

The topography of the southern portion of the DNV is dominated by the south facing slopes of the Coastal Mountain Range and the creeks and rivers that serve to drain the corresponding watersheds. The valleys created by the significant drainage channels have made east/west travel across the District a challenge. In the early 1900s, Keith Rd was created to connect the District across the lower portion of the community. In the 1960s, the Trans-Canada provided connections over the Capilano River and Lynn Creek. Other local connections such as the Dollarton Hwy Bridge over the Seymour River, the Main Street Bridge over Lynn Creek, and Marine Drive Bridge over the Capilano River have helped with connectivity, but with all three connections over Lynn Creek occurring within only an 800m stretch, all of the traffic becomes deeply affected by congestion at the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge.

In the 1990's, The DNV considered a more northern vehicle route connecting our community. Two projects, the Montroyal Connector (Connecting Upper Delbrook to Upper Lonsdale via an extension of Montroyal Blvd), and the Braemar Dempsey Connector (Connecting Upper Lonsdale to Upper Lynn by connecting E. Braemar Rd and Dempsey Rd.) were completed to make a continuous alternate vehicle route from the Capilano River to Lynn Creek. The next project, The Rice Lake Rd Connector, was contemplated but not pursued at the time.

NOTES:

Recognizing that any connection between Upper Lynn Valley and Inter River would require a change in use of District and Metro Vancouver/GVWD lands that are currently largely greenfield, and would likely require collector or arterial road standards, there are many unknowns regarding the feasibility of a new bridge connection east of Lynn Valley at this time. These include, but are not limited to, the funding model, environmental impacts, regulatory and permitting requirements, First Nations engagement, archaeological impacts, geotechnical, natural hazard and hydrological complexities, neighbourhood and land use impacts, and other technical and constructability constraints.

These factors would need to be considered against the potential transportation system relief that could be provided by a new connection. That assessment is typically determined through a comprehensive feasibility study and business case. Undertaking this work would require new funding to complete preliminary assessments, site investigations, early design concept development, and consultation with District residents, First Nations, Metro Vancouver, TransLink, the Province, and other levels of government before reliable capital and operating costs, including staff resourcing requirements, could be understood and brought forward for Council's further consideration.

I recognize that this would be a very large investment if it were constructed, and I believe it must be weighed against the District's other transportation priorities. Those priorities are being explored and confirmed by Council through the current transportation master planning work now underway, including the recently initiated Community Transportation Plan (CTP). It is my view that this potential Lynn Creek crossing should be identified as a priority for evaluation within that process, so that it is assessed transparently alongside other network improvements, mobility priorities, funding pressures, and community objectives, and carried into the 2027–2031 Council term for further consideration.

One chapter of the Community Transportation Plan, anticipated to come forward in 2027, will focus on the road network, potential future connections, and other potential improvements. I see this as the appropriate opportunity for Council to evaluate the high-level technical benefits and public sentiment for a new Lynn Creek crossing alongside other competing priorities. The technical work is expected to include traffic modelling and network analysis to assess whether a new connection would meaningfully improve traffic operations and congestion, and how those benefits compare to the significant costs and impacts associated with such an investment.

Council will have the opportunity to guide this work through multiple Community Transportation Plan Council workshops. I am asking Council to treat the results of the community opinion process as a clear signal of public interest and, on that basis, to direct that a new Upper Lynn Valley to Inter River connection be advanced as a priority within the broader transportation planning framework during the 2027–2031 Council term, rather than being considered in isolation from the District's overall network needs, land use implications, environmental responsibilities, financial capacity, and public engagement outcomes.

OPTIONS:

1. That the motion, as presented, be supported; or,
2. That the motion, as presented, be amended; or,
3. That the motion, as presented, is not supported.

Respectfully submitted,



Mike Little
Mayor

REVIEWED WITH:		
☐ Business and Economic	☐ Finance	External Agencies:
☐ Bylaw Services	☐ Fire Services	☐ Library Board
☐ Clerk's Office	☐ GIS	☐ Museum and Archives
☐ Climate and Biodiversity	☐ Human Resources	☐ NSEM
☐ Communications	☐ Integrated Planning	☐ NS Health
☐ Community Planning	☐ ITS	☐ NVRC
☐ Development Engineering	☐ Parks	☐ RCMP
☐ Development Planning	☐ Real Estate	☐ Other:
☐ Engineering Operations	☐ Review and Compliance	
☐ Environment	☐ Solicitor	
☐ Facilities	☐ Utilities	

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