

**From:** Transportation, Minister TRAN:EX [<mailto:Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 04, 2014 11:54 AM  
**To:** Jas Chonk  
**Cc:** OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX; McRae.MLA, Don LASS:EX; Stilwell.MLA, Michelle LASS:EX; Sturdy.MLA, Jordan LASS:EX  
**Subject:** 229889 - Gabriola Island Fixed Link Study

Sheila Malcolmson, Chair  
Islands Trust Council  
c/o [jchonk@islandtrust.bc.ca](mailto:jchonk@islandtrust.bc.ca)

229889 - Gabriola Island Fixed Link Study

Dear Chair Malcolmson:

Thank you for your e-mail of September 19, 2014, regarding the provincial government's recently announced study of the feasibility of a fixed link connecting Nanaimo to Gabriola Island.

Connecting coastal communities in a sustainable manner remains a priority for the ministry, and the feasibility study is consistent with the ministry's long-term strategy to look for innovative opportunities to achieve savings and reduce the pressure on ferry fares. After a significant number of Gabriola residents petitioned the government, we agreed to undertake this study so that future discussions about a fixed link can be based on current, factual information.

The feasibility study will examine potential locations for a fixed link, estimate the costs of a fixed link, and compare these costs with the existing ferry service. The feasibility study will get underway this fall and is expected to be completed in spring 2015. The ministry will post more details about the study once a consultant is in place.

Regarding the recent Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) report on our coastal ferry system, while I feel the report overstates the impact on ridership and the economy, I do recognize that ferry fare increases affect ridership. That is why it is important the government continue to explore different ways, including fixed links, to reduce the cost of connecting coastal communities.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Todd G. Stone  
Minister

Copy to: Premier Christy Clark  
Honourable Don McRae, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation,  
And MLA, Comox Valley  
Michelle Stilwell, MLA, Parksville-Qualicum  
Jordan Sturdy, MLA, West Vancouver-Sea to Sky