



News Release

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ISLANDS TRUST INVITES COMMENTS ON ITS 2017-2018 BUDGET PROPOSAL

VICTORIA - The Islands Trust Council welcomes public comments on its \$7.7 million proposed budget for 2017-2018. There is no increase from last year in the tax requisition associated with the proposed budget, except for the Bowen Island Municipality.

“Trust Council has developed next year’s proposed budget with input from taxpayers, trustees and staff,” said Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. “We’ve carefully assessed how the Islands Trust should respond to the interests and needs of our island communities in an accountable and fiscally responsible manner.”

The highlights of the proposed budget for 2017-2018 include:

- No increase in revenue from property taxes, except from Bowen Island
- An operating budget of \$7.7 million
- A proposed 5.3 per cent increase in expenses (\$388,000) over the 2016-2017 budget
- Continued funding for 2014-2018 Strategic Plan projects.

The proposed increase in expenses will enable the Islands Trust to maintain core functions, as well as fund short-term projects identified in the Trust Council’s 2014-2018 [Strategic Plan](#). Trust Council is also proposing a one-year temporary freshwater specialist position in its 2017-2018 budget to help respond to increasing concerns about the quality and quantity of freshwater and to help Trust Council better understand and collaborate on these issues. Trust Council is proposing to use its Surplus Fund and grant revenue to cover the increase in expenses.

As members of the Islands Trust, Bowen Island Municipality taxpayers contribute a proportionate share of the cost of operations of the Trust Council and the Trust Fund Board as defined by the provincial *Islands Trust Act*. If the proposed budget is approved, property owners from Bowen Island would together contribute nearly \$253,000, an increase of about \$30,000 from 2016. Bowen Island’s contribution is determined by a provincially legislated formula.

Public comments received by February 10, 2017 will go to the Financial Planning Committee (FPC), which is responsible for developing the annual budget as well as the overall financial planning and management. The FPC will consider all feedback received by the deadline and make its budget recommendations to Trust Council. Trust Council will also review the public’s feedback, make any changes and approve the final budget at its quarterly meeting March 14-16, 2017 on Gabriola Island.

The details on the budget proposal, link to the survey and options for feedback are available at www.islandstrust.bc.ca/budget.

Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis

The Islands Trust is a federation of special-purpose local government bodies representing 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and another 10,000 non-resident property-owners. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment and amenities of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5,200 square kilometres.

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