



# News Release

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## Islands Trust Council Approves 2017-2018 Budget

Gabriola Island - The Islands Trust Council approved a budget of \$7.7 million for 2017-2018 at its March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting on Gabriola Island. Details of the approved budget are available on the Islands Trust [website](#).

"This budget allows Trust Council to continue services at current levels and advance its strategic priorities," said Peter Luckham, Chair of the Islands Trust Council. "The approved budget includes input from trustees, staff and the public to ensure we uphold our mandate to preserve and protect the Trust Area."

The approved budget represents an increase of \$411,503 over the 2016-2017 budget without increasing revenue from property taxes.

The Islands Trust Council is in the third year of a four-year term and many of its strategic initiatives are well underway. Funded initiatives include a temporary freshwater specialist position, transition costs associated with a potential Salt Spring Island incorporation, special projects focused on; freshwater, housing affordability, First Nations and public engagement. These initiatives are largely funded by a transfer from the General Revenue Surplus Fund, grants, and a Salt Spring Island special property tax requisition for co-ordination of watershed management on Salt Spring Island.

"The approved budget includes a \$125,000 grant from the Province for transition costs associated with the potential incorporation of Salt Spring Island and for development of a long term adaptation strategy for the Islands Trust," said Luckham.

On March 13, 2017, the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development announced his decision to order a September 9, 2017 vote on Salt Spring Island incorporation.

Property owners within the Bowen Island Municipality will contribute \$242,680 in 2017-2018, an increase of \$19,262. As residents within the Islands Trust Area, Bowen Island taxpayers contribute a proportional share of the operating costs of Trust Council and the Trust Fund Board as defined by the provincial *Islands Trust Act* and by a provincially legislated formula based on property assessments.

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of 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 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 islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

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

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