

A Vision for the Islands Trust

What do you get when you take 26 passionate community leaders from the islands in the Salish Sea and ask them, “What’s your vision for the place you live, 20 or even 40 years down the road?”

This may sound a bit like a “such-and-such walked into a bar...” joke but in fact it was a serious conversation (although there was some laughter) that took place in a meeting room, not a bar. The 26 participants were the elected representatives from the 13 island areas that make up the Islands Trust. As part of our three-day Trust Council meeting, we devoted the bulk of an afternoon to a facilitated session intended to help us capture and distill our emerging shared vision for the Trust Area.

The results were distilled into a big, colourful info-graphic created as we talked by a graphic recorder (see it at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/media/342013/2016septembertcvision-graphic.png>). Here’s a summary:

1. **Caring, connected, diverse communities:** healthy, resilient, inclusive
2. **Healthy natural environment:** clean and green islands; vibrant full forest ecosystems; healthy oceans; more protected areas; increased wildlife
3. **Reconciliation and collaboration with First Nations:** caring for land and sea together; increased awareness of and respect for First Nations; island spirit-places are protected and respected
4. **Thriving local businesses and farming:** more locally-grown food; eat local
5. **Water stewardship;** long-term, integrated water management; protected water resources; alternative sources
6. **Diverse, green, affordable housing:** neighbourhood nodes/clusters, different types of housing, land ownership options (eg co-ops, land trusts); better use of current built environment (eg convert large houses into multi-unit homes); homes with small ecological footprints (energy efficient; solar powered; using local materials)
7. **Supportive (appropriate) technology:** electric vehicles; electric-assisted vehicles
8. **Renewable energy:** solar, wind, wave

Much of this is congruent with the Islands Trust’s mandate and Policy Statement (the document that captures the Trust’s general goals and vision), which is a welcome confirmation that we are on the right track.

But also, there are new themes: an emphasis on developing relationships with First Nations, the use of environmentally sustainable technologies, and affordable and diverse housing forms are all goals that have come to the foreground in recent years.

As this is no joke, there is no punch line. Instead, Trust Council is, hopefully, more unified and focused as it heads into 2017. I invite you to consider and have conversations about your vision for the island.

New Island Planner for Denman

I'd like to introduce Denman Island's new Island Planner, Marnie Eggen. Marnie replaces Rob Milne, who has relocated to Victoria, as the lead planner for Denman. We will be seeing her at local trust committee meetings, and she is the person to talk to about applications, planning projects and all kinds of land use-related issues.

Marnie has a Masters of Planning (Rural Planning and Development) and has worked for the Islands Trust for seven years as a planner in the Gabriola Island office.

"I like working for Islands Trust for many reasons," says Marnie. "One of them is the unique mandate to preserve and protect, and another is that the organization is committed to delivering planning services with a high level of professionalism."

Marnie has worked on Denman Island in various capacities over the years, and so is coming into her new position with some knowledge of the island and its community.

"Denman is a beautiful island. One of the great attributes that makes Denman Island different from other islands is its abundance of fresh water (lakes, wetlands, streams). It's evident that these resources are highly valued on the Island by the way that they are stewarded and afforded protection," she says.

Contact Planner Eggen at denmanplanner@islandstrust.bc.ca or at 1-250-2063.