



# Appendix A – Delegation Presentation Material

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**Mairi Welman & Elizabeth FitzZaland, Salt Spring Solutions** - To present on equitable engagement with constituents across the Trust Area.

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**Jennifer Margison, Friends of the Gulf Islands Society** - To comment on the significance of the Trust Policy Statement.



May 2025

To: Islands Trust Council

In spring 2023 Salt Spring Solutions published *Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for Salt Spring Island* to provide decision-makers with an integrated approach to addressing the local housing crisis.

To follow up, in the early summer of 2023 Salt Spring Solutions hosted a professionally facilitated workshop to review and discuss how to move forward on the five strategies, inviting key organizations which have some responsibility for solving the housing crisis. These included the Capital Regional District - Salt Spring Island Office, Capital Regional Housing Corporation, Islands Trust – Salt Spring Local Trust Committee, Islands Trust - Regional Planning, North Salt Spring Waterworks District, and the Provincial Housing Ministry. Everyone attended except the Provincial Housing Ministry. An report on the actions agreed upon during the workshop was distributed to all the participants.

The following year, in 2024, we hired an independent consulting firm with decades of expertise in public engagement to design and execute a community engagement project on the framework. While we had consulted extensively with housing and community planning professionals, environmental experts, and local agencies and organizations while writing the report, we were also interested in learning from the people most impacted by the housing crisis what they thought of the proposed solutions in our report.

Due to limitations on funding and organizational capacity, Islands Trust public engagement typically uses a limited set of tools and often does not reach the whole community. Ironically, the people in the Trust Area community who are most in need of progressive policy innovation are those who have the least capacity to participate in traditional public engagement activities such as public meetings, town halls and information sessions. In this project, along with gathering feedback on specific ideas on housing, we also hoped to demonstrate the utility of using equitable engagement methods which we believe can be replicated across the Trust Area to great advantage, and which will increase the diversity of voices heard by Local Trust Committees, Trust Council Committees and Trust Council itself.

In late fall 2024 we hosted seven focus groups with 42 participants, conducted 12 one-on-one interviews with landlords and developers, and hosted a publicly accessible online survey, which attracted 657 participants.

The attached report will provide you with some highlights from the survey and focus groups who were asked for their opinions on three specific housing strategies:

- Promoting clustered housing to protect rural areas
- Readyng Ganges Village for increased housing
- Enabling accessory dwellings in appropriate locations

These strategies are scaleable across the Trust Area.

In 2025, on the two-year anniversary of the publication of *Homes for Islanders*, we have evaluated which of the recommendations in the framework have been advanced and which have not. Our report card is also attached.

When Salt Spring Solutions began working on the housing issue, we were an organization of grassroots activists. Over the past six years we transformed into an organization that also did the homework. We have learned about the topic, we have listened to what people have to say, we have met with elected officials and staff of the various agencies that have some role in solving the housing crisis, we have collaborated with the Trust by participating in task forces and program committees and advisory committees, we have spoken to experts in a variety of professions and connected with other small rural communities who have found their own customized housing solutions, we have collected up all the reports and studies and synthesized them into one integrated framework of solutions, we have hosted quarterly meetings with housing advocates on the other Southern Gulf Islands, and we have engaged specifically with the broader public who are rarely able participate in government processes.

It is our hope that Council members will find this report helpful when deciding how to engage more equitably with constituents across the islands, and that the Regional Planning Committee and the Executive Committee find the input regarding housing solutions useful.

Sincerely,  
Mairi Welman and Elizabeth FitzZaland  
Co-Chairs



We envision a resilient Salt Spring Island community  
that works together to equitably care for the ecology and the community as one.



May 2025

## Homes for Islanders – Public Feedback & Report Card

In spring 2023 Salt Spring Solutions published *Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Framework for Salt Spring Island* to provide decision-makers with an integrated approach to addressing the local housing crisis.

The framework recognizes the unique conditions on Salt Spring Island that make solutions to the housing crisis especially challenging to implement. We identified opportunities for local governments and community organizations to work together to provide more inclusive housing on Salt Spring Island while simultaneously protecting the natural ecosystems and advancing climate action. The framework draws from interviews and discussions with professionals and advocates in housing, rural planning, conservation, and governance, as well as from a thorough review of relevant data, research, local and provincial reports, and best practices.

The framework wove together, for the first time, the information from the various organizations that each hold some piece of responsibility for moving the dial on housing and presented a comprehensive set of solutions. It is not a list of novel ideas but rather a synthesis of research and best practices that have been previously vetted locally and/or implemented with success in other rural communities with similar issues and values. This approach helped identify key housing challenges and prioritize actionable and sustainable solutions.

The recommendations in the framework fall within five key strategy areas:

**Strategy 1:** Coordinated and properly resourced local approach to housing

**Strategy 2:** Effective Public Education, Engagement, and Dialogue on housing

**Strategy 3:** Preservation of rural areas and nature space through clustered housing

**Strategy 4:** Readyng Ganges Village for more housing

**Strategy 5:** Accessory Dwellings for housing, in the right places

At publication we presented the framework and the key strategies to local organizations involved in housing, local food security, community planning, ecosystems protection, economic development, and climate action, including the Salt Spring Foundation, Salt Spring Island Conservancy, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmland Trust, Transition Salt Spring, elected officials from the Trust and CRD, our MLA, the Ministers of Housing, Finance, and Municipal Affairs, the Premier and others.

In early summer of 2023 Salt Spring Solutions invited the following key organizations to a professionally facilitated workshop to review and discuss how to move forward on the five strategies :

- Capital Regional District - Salt Spring Island Office
- Capital Regional Housing Corporation
- Islands Trust – Salt Spring Local Trust Committee
- Islands Trust - Regional Planning
- North Salt Spring Waterworks District
- Provincial Housing Ministry

Some organizations sent multiple representatives, however the Minister of Housing declined.

The following year, in 2024, we hired independent consulting firm SPUR Communications to design and execute a community engagement project on the framework. While we had consulted extensively with housing and community planning professionals, environmental experts and local agencies and organizations, we were also interested in learning from the people most impacted by the housing crisis what they thought of the proposed solutions in our report.

The purpose of this second round of engagement was to explore lived experiences with housing issues on Salt Spring, and get feedback on three of the five strategic actions:

- Promoting clustered housing to protect rural areas
- Readyng Ganges Village for increased housing
- Enabling accessory dwellings in appropriate locations

We hosted seven focus groups with 42 participants, conducted 12 one-on-one interviews, and hosted a publicly accessible online survey, which attracted 657 participants.

The interviews and focus groups were specifically designed to engage the people most often underrepresented in typical government public engagement processes – members of the **workforce, local employers, landlords** of existing rentals (both permitted and unpermitted), **local developers** interested in providing workforce housing, and **people who are insecurely housed**. The online survey was designed to provide the rest of the community with an avenue for feedback. Highlights are provided below.

## Engagement Project Highlights:

Key themes emerged across the entire engagement process, highlighting the interconnected challenges of **affordability, infrastructure, regulatory barriers, and environmental sustainability**.

Please see the information sheets attached which report the focus group highlights.

The public online survey was open for two weeks and was **completed by 657 community members** (5.57% of the population), 67% of participants were homeowners, and 19% were renters. The survey allowed us to capture segments of the population other than those represented in the focus groups and interviews.

## Survey Highlights:

### Promoting clustered housing to protect rural areas

The majority (70%) of respondents support **clustered housing to preserve rural areas**. When asked why they support it, many respondents emphasized the ecological benefits of clustered housing, such as preserving green spaces, reducing land disturbance, protecting ecosystems, and promoting water conservation.

Almost 70% of the respondents strongly or somewhat support the concept of **creating special zoning for clustered housing to preserve undeveloped areas, effectively reallocating density spread over large areas into consolidated clusters to benefit from shared services and limit sprawl**. This indicates broad agreement with clustering housing for ecological and community benefits.

### Enabling Accessory Dwellings in appropriate locations

**Expanding opportunities for legal suites and ADUs** received the most substantial support, with 71% backing the initiative, and only 11% opposing it.

Participants who approve of ADUs were then asked if they support **changing zoning regulations** to allow ADUs with sufficient potable water and permitted wastewater disposal.

There is strong community interest in expanding housing options by permitting ADUs in various areas, reflecting a desire for more flexible housing solutions: 61% of survey participants support allowing ADUs across the island, 12% favour concentrating such development near Ganges Village, and 14% suggest focusing them along major roads. A smaller portion, 7%, oppose these developments altogether, while 5% were undecided.

## **Readying Ganges Village for increased housing**

Most respondents (73%) believe **increasing housing in Ganges Village is necessary to address Salt Spring Island's housing needs**. This strong support highlights a community consensus around the role of Ganges as a central hub for addressing the island's housing challenges. However, a minority expressed concerns or uncertainty, reflecting diverse perspectives that should be considered in planning processes. These include potential impacts on infrastructure, community character, and alignment with broader sustainability goals.

When asked **how Salt Spring should prioritize access to limited infrastructure and resources**, such as potable water, the feedback indicates a community preference for prioritizing non-market rental housing and cautious resource management to meet the most urgent housing needs without overburdening infrastructure.

Most respondents (86%) support **identifying areas outside the Ganges floodplain zone for infrastructure investment, new development, and homes that the community can support**. This points to the need to more critically and creatively plan the existing village area and consider expansion areas less impacted by future sea level rise.

**When asked what type of development is most appropriate for Ganges Village** most respondents (75%) identified low-rise multi-unit buildings as the most appropriate type of development for Ganges Village. Mixed-use developments, such as apartments above or adjacent to commercial businesses, and townhouses were also popular, each chosen by 51% of respondents. Mid-rise buildings (3-5 storey) received support from 40%, while smaller-scale options like duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes were preferred by 25%. Detached single-family homes were less favoured, with only 17% supporting homes on small lots and 8% favouring homes on medium to large lots.

There was strong support (76%) for **pre-zoning land in Ganges for housing**. This suggests that respondents are in favour of planning ahead to ensure adequate housing land is available in the most suitable areas, particularly near the village to reduce sprawl. This would also help **streamline permitting and approval processes**, of which 64% of respondents were in favour.

**Pre-servicing land in and around Ganges for housing** also met with support (63%) indicating the community sees value in preparing land for development with necessary infrastructure to avoid delays and improve housing availability.

As well, 63% either strongly or somewhat support **limiting private home sizes** to reduce environmental and servicing impacts.

## Focus Group Feedback Highlights



### Homes for Islanders

## What we heard

We led an inclusive engagement process to gather islanders' perspectives on local housing solutions. While the online survey was open to all, we also created specific opportunities to hear from those often excluded from housing conversations—people with unique insights and lived experiences. Our engagement process included three key approaches: focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and an online community-wide survey, each designed to capture diverse perspectives and deepen understanding.

### ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

We asked a series of questions to understand gaps, public perception and promising strategies in current planning and regulation, shaping the following three key housing recommendations:

**1** Clustered Housing

**2** Housing in Ganges

**3** Accessory Dwelling Units



### Focus Groups

We hosted **seven** focus groups with **42 participants**. The groups were designed to gather input from renters, employers, the local workforce, and those in precarious housing, fostering low-barrier, meaningful discussions with often-overlooked voices.

### Interviews

We interviewed **12 housing providers**—including landlords and local developers interested in building workforce housing—to gain insights into Salt Spring's rental market and barriers to building more homes.



### Survey

Our community survey gathered **657 responses**, capturing diverse perspectives on Salt Spring's housing landscape.



The engagement findings illustrate a community united by the urgency of the housing crisis but uncertain about how best to achieve solutions that balance growth with preservation. There is broad support for innovative and sustainable housing models and concerns about regulatory barriers, infrastructure gaps, and potential overdevelopment.

These engagement insights form the foundation for actions by governments and regulatory agencies that reflect the diverse needs and values of Salt Spring Island's residents while emphasizing equity, sustainability and community resilience.

## Developers & Investors

Through one-on-one interviews with **four local developers and investors**, we explored their challenges and opportunities in creating housing. Their insights highlighted rental market pressures, regulatory barriers, and potential solutions to support housing providers and tenants.



### Did you know?

A rezoning application can take **many** years to process, even for small projects, creating significant delays and deterrents in creating new housing.

### Requests for policy reform



There is a desire for Islands Trust, Capital Regional District, Island Health and other regulatory bodies to review and update regulations to respond to current needs, simplifying the development process.

Participants shared stories of wanting to build housing but **feeling stuck**—one described how excessive regulation, zoning rules, and infrastructure limitations made **even small projects feel impossible**.



*Excessive regulation and high costs deter private AND non-profit developers and public funders. Pragmatic streamlining is needed to align with the economic realities of developing community housing.*

### IMPACT ON INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Restrictive zoning impedes the implementation of housing solutions like tiny home villages, co-housing neighbourhoods, eco-villages, secondary suites, etc. These models could creatively address housing shortages. Providing by-right zoning with clear guidelines could facilitate responsible development.



## Private Landlords

Through one-on-one interviews with **eight private landlords**, we examined barriers to maintaining and expanding rental housing, including limited financing options, rising costs, and regulatory risks. Landlords highlighted that complex permitting processes and rising operational and development costs make sustaining and growing rental options difficult, increasing the affordability gap for tenants and underscoring the need for more flexible policies and support.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Many private landlords on Salt Spring Island rely on rental income to sustain their farms and businesses. Yet, many face financial strain as the costs of operating and maintaining rental units increases faster than rental income.

### Suggested financial incentives



Participants proposed solutions such as tax breaks, subsidies, or grants to offset development costs. For instance, offering property tax reductions for landlords who provide long-term affordable rentals could encourage more investment in the rental market.

Some landlords said they want to provide affordable housing but feel **discouraged by the high costs of compliance and insurance**, especially for older units or those outside zoning norms.



*Formalizing illegal units would help increase the availability of safe, compliant housing. However, the process is expensive and often raises landlords' costs. Without supportive policies like tax breaks or grants, formalizing these units might reduce affordability for tenants, limiting the overall benefit.*

### AFFORDABILITY GAP FOR TENANTS

Landlords expressed concern that the rental rates needed to cover their costs are often beyond what many residents can afford. This results in vacant units or pressure to rent to higher-income individuals from off-island.



# Renters

We hosted a focus group with **ten renters**, during which we discussed housing instability, rising rental costs, and limited tenant protections. This highlighted the challenges of securing affordable and stable housing on Salt Spring Island.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Short-term rentals have made it harder for long-term renters to find housing on Salt Spring Island. Many homes that once housed families and workers have been converted into Airbnb and vacation rentals, worsening the housing crisis.

## Tiny homes and co-op housing offer hope



Many renters support alternative housing models, such as tiny home communities, cooperative housing, and legalizing more accessory dwelling units.

Several renters spoke about feeling **pushed out by short-term rentals** and a lack of secure, affordable housing. Many called for **more long-term and diverse options** that reflect community needs.



*Stop housing being used for purposes that don't serve the local community.*

## TENANT SUPPORT IS NEEDED

Many renters feel they have little power in disputes with landlords and are often subjected to sudden rent hikes and unfair evictions. Local agencies and organizations should find ways to help educate local renters about their rights and strengthen connections with the BC Rental Tenancy Branch.



## Homes for Islanders



# Workforce

We hosted a focus group with **eight workforce participants** to explore the impact of housing shortages on staff retention. Participants highlighted issues like the need for housing near workplaces, ongoing rent increases, and the ripple effect on essential services and the local economy.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The shortage of affordable workforce housing on Salt Spring Island has forced many essential workers to leave, negatively impacting local businesses and services. Increasingly our workforce is one that commutes over on the ferry.

### Interest in community-oriented solutions



Many workers prefer living in co-op housing or intentional communities that are mostly prohibited by current zoning. Workers also support rules that guarantee affordability and secure tenure.

Employers and workers alike said it's nearly **impossible to stay on Salt Spring without secure housing**. Unstable rentals are making it harder to retain staff and stay connected to the community.



*Farmworkers are priced out of the housing market. Clustering small-scale housing on farms can provide housing security for workers and create more economically viable local farms. Food security requires housing security.*

### LACK OF HOUSING AFFECTS ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Healthcare, education, and retail workers struggle to find housing, affecting staffing at clinics, schools, and local businesses.



## Employers

We hosted a focus group with **eight employers** to explore how the housing shortage impacts business operations and staff retention. Employers reported that the lack of affordable housing is a large barrier to hiring and keeping employees, leading to reduced services and increased costs.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Some businesses on Salt Spring Island have had to cut back services or shorten hours due to staff shortages caused by the lack of affordable housing. Many employers say housing is the most significant barrier to hiring and retaining workers.

### Support for clustered and multi-family housing



Many employers advocate for clustered housing near workplaces and villages to reduce commuting challenges and stabilize the workforce.

**Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)** are already in use on Salt Spring, with some participants highlighting more widespread legalization of them as **the fastest way to address housing shortages.**



*You have to build housing into your business plan if you want to attract and keep employees.*

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS AN ECONOMIC ISSUE

Without solutions, employers fear the island will face business closures, reduced services, and an exodus of younger workers.



## Homes for Islanders

# Insecurely housed

We hosted a focus group with **15 insecurely housed participants** to explore housing instability and barriers to safe, affordable housing. Participants shared experiences of living in cars, trailers, and boats due to limited affordable housing options. Many emphasized that fines, evictions, and lack of services make it even harder to secure stable housing.



### DID YOU KNOW?

A significant number of long-term residents on Salt Spring have lost their homes as properties were converted to short-term rentals, contributing to shortages and worsening issues related to homelessness and housing instability.

### Alternative Housing Needs Support



People want tiny homes, cluster housing, and shared-resource communities, but regulatory barriers prevent these developments. Without zoning reforms, many affordable solutions remain out of reach.

## 50-70 people

...are currently estimated to live full-time aboard boats in Ganges Harbour. This is one of the only housing options for islanders with very low income but unfortunately presents significant safety and ecosystem risks.



*Many people are open to living in communal housing with collective spaces, workshops, and gardens. They would rather live in smaller places and share resources if it means they can stay and contribute.*

### RED TAPE BLOCKS SOLUTIONS

Strict zoning laws, building codes, and service regulations make it difficult for various communal housing options, like tiny homes villages, and other clustered developments. These rules also prevent people who want to offer help, such as providing free safety inspections, from doing so.

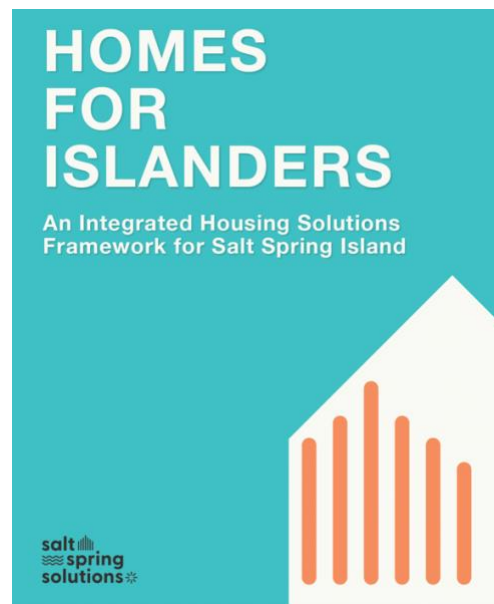


*"Insecurely housed" refers to individuals living in temporary or unstable housing without long-term security, such as boats, trailers, vehicles, or informal structures lacking essential services or legal protections.*

Since *Homes for Islanders* was published in 2023 there have been provincial legislative changes that significantly impact housing planning and development in B.C.

Although the Islands Trust was exempted from most of the legislative requirements, there remains the option to opt-in and/or create Salt Spring Island versions of these new mandates that are aimed at creating more inclusive and affordable communities. Specific actions in *Homes for Islanders* could be more impactful if the Local Trust Committee opted into provincial programs now adopted by most local governments in B.C.

The economic landscape in B.C. has also changed dramatically since 2023. Economic uncertainty and high development costs are translating into restrained government spending, pricier projects and greater scrutiny and caution from lenders. The for-profit development sector is cooling at the same time as government subsidy for non-market development is becoming scarce. Locally this means it is even more challenging now to create viable purpose-built rental and below market housing than it was just two years ago. Greater flexibility and creativity are needed to accomplish the intent of several of the actions in the Framework, especially in densifying Ganges.



## REPORT CARD:

In 2025, on the two-year anniversary of the publication of *Homes for Islanders*, we evaluated which of the recommendations in the framework have been advanced and which have not. Our report card is attached.

# Report Card – Spring 2025 Status

## Summary of Strategies

complete



underway



no action



### Strategy 1: Coordinated and Properly Resourced Local Approach to Housing

Actions	Initiator	Status
1.1 Establish and resource a local housing entity.	CRD	no action
1.2 Expand the scope of the CRD's proposed Rural Housing Program for the Southern Gulf Islands to include SSI.	CRD	complete
1.3 Develop an implementation-focused SSI housing strategy.	CRD	underway
1.4 Hire or identify an experienced housing planner to overview housing work and coordinate with the CRD and other partners.	Islands Trust	no action

### Strategy 2: Effective Public Education, Engagement, and Dialogue on Housing

Actions	Initiator	Status
2.1 Educate elected officials and staff on public education and engagement best practices and current methods.	Islands Trust, CRD, NSSWD	underway
2.2 Develop and resource a Public Education and Engagement Policy.	Islands Trust, CRD, NSSWD	underway



## Strategy 3: Preservation of Rural Areas and Nature Space through Clustered Housing

Actions	Initiator	Status
3.1 Create a public education and engagement program about the benefits of compact development.	Islands Trust	
3.2 Update the <i>OCP</i> and <i>Land Use Bylaw</i> to enable and incentivize more compact, clustered development, increase contiguous land protection in rural areas, and cap detached housing size.	Islands Trust	
3.3 Engage with appropriate partners to establish a coordinated approach for covenants for housing affordability and land protection.	Islands Trust	
3.4 Create agency capacity to negotiate and administer housing agreements.	CRD	
3.5 Update priorities and policies for acquiring new local and regional parks to be ready for opportunities that may become available through conservation communities and to clarify how to use or transfer densities from CRD-owned properties.	CRD	
3.6 Allocate resources from the Regional Housing Trust Fund to support the development of rural-scale, covenant-restricted affordable housing.	CRD	
3.7 Make water supply research and mapping publicly available and provide clear direction on where density can best be accommodated by water resources.	Islands Trust and NSSWD	
3.8 Proactively share research on actual domestic water use and non-revenue water use (system leaks) with the public.	Islands Trust and NSSWD	
3.9 Provide sustained advocate to the Province to lower proof-of-water requirements to reflect actual usage and provide support for more housing.	Islands Trust and NSSWD	
3.10 Create agency capacity and external partnerships to participate in design and implementation of homeplate zoning and conservation community regulations.	Conservancies, Land Trusts, and Interested Organizations	

## Strategy 4: Readyng Ganges Village for More Housing

Actions	Initiator	Status
4.1 Proactively and respectfully engage with local First Nations to explore how to work better together.	Islands Trust and CRD	
4.2 Actively pursue alternatives to the water moratorium for community housing in Ganges Villages and for non-market housing and ADUs district-wide.	NSSWD	
4.3 Allocate resources for better leak monitoring, resolution, and reporting to significantly reduce system leaks and increase public confidence in system management.	NSSWD	
4.4 Hold a joint public meeting to share the findings of the 2020 Water Service Optimization Study and outline the process ahead.	NSSWD and CRD	
4.5 Coordinate to revise and adopt proof-of-water requirements and system capacity assumptions based on actual use and prioritize water services for compact and non-market housing in and near Ganges Village.	NSSWD and Islands Trust	
4.6 Create and implement a regional interagency strategy for sustained advocacy to revise requirements and standards for alternative water supply and conservation practices.	NSSWD, CRD, and Islands Trust	
4.7 Prioritize remaining sewer service capacity for non-market housing, ADUs, and multi-unit community housing in and near Ganges Village.	CRD	
4.8 Expand the processing capacity of the Ganges Wastewater Treatment Plant and associated infrastructure, and develop infrastructure for repurposing treated grey-water for non-potable uses in Ganges Village.	CRD	
4.9 Map and plan for projected sea level rise in Ganges Village and alternative development areas for future village growth.	Islands Trust, CRD, and Transition Salt Spring	
4.10 Coordinate planning and prioritize infrastructure investments to support residential development in future village growth areas located outside the projected sea-level rise zone.	Islands Trust, CRD, and MOTI	
4.11 Catalogue all ALR properties in Ganges Village.	Islands Trust	
4.12 Engage the Agricultural Land Commission in developing an approach for removing all or most ALR in Ganges Village from the reserve.	Islands Trust	
4.13 Establish a comprehensive and innovative interagency planning process for Ganges Village.	Islands Trust	

## Strategy 5: Accessory Dwellings for Housing, in the Right Places

Actions	Initiator	Status
5.1 Provide public information and education on the impacts and benefits of ADUs.	Islands Trust	
5.2 Integrate recommendations from the Housing Action Program Task Force in the proposed Bylaw 530 for ADUs or equivalent, and renew effort to permit long-term occupancy of ADUs and tourist accommodations in all residential zones.	Islands Trust	
5.3 Explore creating a density bonus program to conditionally allow through a housing agreement additional ADUs that achieve high ecological or energy standards or that maintain affordability.	Islands Trust	
5.4 Update zoning regulations to modernize and limit short-term accommodation uses.	Islands Trust	
5.5 Resource a business licensing system for short-term rentals in line with best practices.	CRD	
5.6 Resource internal capacity for managing private housing agreements for ADUs with affordability controls.	CRD	
5.7 Identify funding for capital grants and other incentives for private development of ADUs under housing agreements.	CRD	
5.8 Provide recommendations for where ADUs can be best located based on available water supply information.	SSIWPA	
5.9 Revise policies to define ADUs as an intensification of an existing water service instead of a new hook-up.	NSSWD	
5.10 Remove barriers to legalizing ADUs within the NSSWD.	NSSWD	
5.11 Explore innovative policies and practices for encouraging water conservation, developing alternative sources of non-potable water, and restricting treated domestic water for interior uses only.	NSSWD	



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June 5, 2025

### **Delegation to June 2025 Trust Council Meeting**

Dear Trustees, Staff, Honoured Guests and Members of the Public

My name is Jennifer Margison, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Board and members of the Friends of the Gulf Islands Society. I come to you from Galiano Island.

Today I want to speak to the recent letter from the Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, written in response to the Trust Council's second request for a review of the Islands Trust Act, governance, and structure.

His letter contains some clear messages and expectations. He states:

“Land use planning to preserve and protect the Trust area and its unique amenities and environment is the core responsibility of the Islands Trust. This reflects the ecological mandate of the Trust, the toolkit deliberately supplied by government, and that island communities have a role to play in local environmental stewardship.”

He goes on:

“It is my expectation that the Trust Council recognizes that this requires careful deliberation and consideration of perspectives to manage expectations of growth, development and local economies without exceeding the carrying capacity of local ecosystems and preserving unspoiled natural amenities.”

These are powerful and important phrases. Let me highlight a few:

- *Core responsibility*
- *Ecological mandate*
- *Environmental stewardship*
- *Managing growth and development without exceeding the carrying capacity of local ecosystems*
- *Preserving unspoiled natural amenities*

We strongly support these principles.

We believe the Minister has made it clear: the fundamental purpose of the Trust has always been, and remains, the protection of the natural environment. And that the Trust Policy Statement must contain policies to uphold that purpose.

In support of this message—and in anticipation of the upcoming community engagement on the draft Trust Policy Statement—Friends of the Gulf Islands presents a petition to you today. This petition has already received nearly 900 signatures from people across the Trust Area.

Here is what it says, addressed to Minister Kahlon and to Trust Council:

We request that the new Trust Policy Statement not be approved until it:

- Affirms that the term “*environment*” in the legislated Object of the Islands Trust Act refers specifically to the natural environment—not residential development or infrastructure.
- Affirms that the Trust’s top priority is protection of the islands’ land and marine ecosystems, and their rural character.
- Requires each island to establish clear development limits.
- Limits development to what can be supported by each island’s drinking water supply while also protecting water needed by natural systems.
- Requires each island to produce a build-out report to determine the maximum population if all existing lots were developed or subdivided.
- Ensures that any decisions allowing more intensive land or water use be guided by independent, up-to-date scientific data, local knowledge, and traditional Indigenous knowledge and practices.

Let me close by saying: this is about the future of the Gulf Islands.

The environment didn’t get much attention in the last two elections. We are lucky to have Green Party representation in some Trust areas, but we know that environmental progress is under threat around the world.

This is our opportunity.

The Islands Trust is not an ordinary government body. It is unique—a one-of-a-kind institution with a legislated preservation mandate.

We urge you to ensure that the revised Trust Policy Statement—and all the decisions you make as trustees—truly reflect that mandate. Fully. Faithfully. Effectively.

Only by protecting our environment from further degradation will we be able to support thriving communities, meaningful partnerships with First Nations, responsible housing solutions for workers and seniors—and offer both residents and visitors the chance to breathe deeply, feel renewed, and give thanks for these remarkable islands.

This is a gift we’ve been given. Please—let’s cherish it.

Thank you.