



News Release

200 - 1627 Fort Street Victoria BC V8R 1H8

Telephone **250.405.5151** FAX: 250.405.5155

Toll Free via Enquiry BC in Vancouver 604.660.2421. Elsewhere in BC

1.800.663.7867

information@islandstrust.bc.ca www.islandstrust.bc.ca

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Islands Trust Council Approves 2024/25 Budget

Lək'wəḡən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – Islands Trust Council has approved the 2024/25 budget for the Islands Trust.

"In navigating development of the 2024/25 budget, trustees faced tough decisions and found compromises," said Islands Trust Council Chair Peter Luckham. "This budget allows Islands Trust to progress work on strategic initiatives that are important to communities. We are so pleased to have secured more than \$830,000 in grant funding for next year."

The approved budget for 2024/25 of \$10.98 million assumes that Islands Trust will maintain existing service levels, support a new Accessibility Committee, and undertake land use planning projects including:

- Housing Needs Assessments (for all local trust committees)
- Housing Strategy Action Plan Implementation Project (includes updating the Housing Options Toolkit)
- Denman Island Housing Review Project
- Gabriola Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Comprehensive Review Project
- Mayne Island Housing Options Project
- North Pender Island Housing Access and Affordability Project
- Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Major Review Project
- Salt Spring Island Ganges (Shiya'hwt/SYOW T) Village Area Plan Project
- Salt Spring Island Groundwater Sustainability Strategy Implementation Project
- Salt Spring Island Proof of Water at time of Subdivision Project

The budget also includes funding for development of an online bylaw compliance and enforcement information portal which will increase transparency and improve reporting. In addition, the budget supports projects to update the two guiding documents of Islands Trust: the Policy Statement and the Islands Trust Conservancy Plan. The budget will support continued work to advance relationships with First Nations, including a specific project in the Hornby Island Local Trust Area. The budget also includes funding for new staff positions including a protected areas management team lead, a geographic information systems coordinator, and a temporary biologist for Planning Services (100% grant funded).

Islands Trust will be continuing a stewardship education program and will continue to support administrative costs for coordination groups in the Islands Trust Area. The History and Heritage Grants in Aid program will be suspended for the second year.

Highlights of the approved 2024/25 budget:

- Total planned spending of \$10.98M, with \$9.65M directed to operations, \$983,000 directed to special projects, and \$347,000 for the purchase of capital assets
- 5.9% increase to the existing local trust area tax base plus an additional 0.5% tax revenue expected from new construction and development in local trust areas
- A 13.1% (\$45,000) increase to the Bowen Island Municipal tax levy, of which 1.1% is expected to come from new construction and development in the Municipality, with the remaining 12.0% representing a true increase to the existing tax base
- 12.7% (\$1.2M) increase in total planned spending for operations, projects, and capital purchases
- 7.6% (\$834,000) of overall budget funded by approved external grants

Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea

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

- \$276,000 in application fee revenue
- \$260,000 in investment income
- \$663,500 in planned transfers from Island Trust surplus and reserve funds

Further details of the approved 2024/25 budget are available on the Islands Trust website:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/trust-council/budget/>

– 30 –

Islands Trust is a special-purpose government representing over 30,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to many Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area's unique amenities and environment through conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation, education, and cooperation with First Nations and other agencies. The Islands Trust 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 5,200 square kilometres.

Contact:

Peter Luckham, Chair, Islands Trust Council - 250.210.2553

Russ Hotsenpiller, Chief Administrative Officer via Clare Frater, Director of Trust Area Services - 250.405.5192