



May 16, 2025

Honourable Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4

Sent via email: Ravi.Kahlon.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Re: Request for Salt Spring Island Housing Opportunity Support

Dear Minister Kahlon,

The North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) would like to thank you and the Province for your support of our improvement district over the last 2 years. In particular, we are grateful for the \$10 million one-time funding to enhance the climate resiliency of our water system by raising the Duck Creek weir at St. Mary Lake.

Our Board is now reaching out to present a unique opportunity to support affordable and workforce housing on Salt Spring Island. On March 31, 2025, the District approved a limited release of water supply from the Maxwell Lake side of our system—which serves Ganges—following a 10-year moratorium on new connections. This short-term allocation permits up to 50,000 m³ of water annually, the equivalent of approximately 300 multi-unit dwellings.

This is a rare and timely opportunity to address the Island's urgent housing needs. As outlined in the recently released Islands Trust interim Housing Needs Assessment, the 5-year housing need projection for Salt Spring Island is 821 units. However, as confirmed by Provincial staff, NSSWD does not have the jurisdiction to direct new connections to specific types of housing. While we have engaged with the Islands Trust to prioritize affordable and workforce housing, we believe that stronger action is needed and are therefore seeking assistance from the Province.

We have worked collaboratively with the Islands Trust, the Capital Regional District (CRD), and Ministry staff to reach this point, and our housing priorities are well-aligned. *We respectfully ask the Province to empower the Islands Trust or NSSWD with the regulatory tools necessary to ensure these new water connections are allocated to where they are needed most in our community, and if possible, for BC Housing to immediately prioritize any potential new projects/partnerships within the Ganges area.*

Every Drop Counts



This short-term availability of new connections is part of NSSWD's broader [Building Resiliency Strategy](#). Just last week, 74% of our residents voted in favour of a \$12 million loan referendum to fund a new treatment plant at Maxwell Lake. Step by step, we are advancing toward a climate-resilient water system that will help secure our limited supply for the future.

As a small local government organization with limited powers, we are doing all we can to make the most of the tools at our disposal to benefit residents and local businesses. We understand that housing challenges in larger communities are a key Ministry focus, but we ask that you also consider this rare opportunity for meaningful progress in our rural community.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Pyper", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Pyper
Chair, Board of Trustees
North Salt Spring Waterworks District

cc. Rob Botterell, MLA Saanich North and the Islands
Tara Faganello, Assistant Deputy Minister
Jessica Brooks, Executive Director, Planning and Land Use Management
Mark Boysen, Chief Administrative Officer, NSSWD

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