



Islands Trust

Regional Planning Committee Revised Agenda

Date: Friday, May 1, 2026
Time: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Location: Electronic Zoom Meeting

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **AGENDA**
 - 2.1 **Review of the Agenda**

Late items, new items and re-ordering of the agenda
 - 2.2 **Approval of Agenda**
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**
4. **DELEGATIONS**

None.
5. **CORRESPONDENCE**
 - 5.1 **2026-02-13 Chair Patrick Re: Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy Amendments Feedback** 4 - 5
6. **ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION**
 - 6.1 **Draft Minutes of Previous Meetings**

For review and approval

 - 6.1.1 **Regional Planning Committee Draft Minutes of Feb. 6, 2026 Regular Meeting** 6 - 13
 - 6.2 **Resolutions Without Meeting**

None.
 - 6.3 **Follow up Action List** 14 - 17

For review
7. **BUSINESS - WORK PROGRAM ITEMS**

7.1	2025/26 Annual Report - Approval of Regional Planning Committee Section - Request For Decision	18 - 21
	That Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Report for approval by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.	
7.2	Change of Date for Regional Planning Committee November Meeting - Request For Decision	22 - 23
7.3	Communication Summary and Options for Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) - Report	24 - 59
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to prepare an internal communications policy for staff reports, presentations, and related projects, to improve how the methodology and rationale used in the Land Information Screening Tool are communicated. 2. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to expand and refine the Land Information Screening Tool information in the Housing Options Toolkit to add a more technical and thorough summary of the tool’s methodology, rationale, and intended use to compliment the current plain language tool posted online as Tool 4 – Land Information Screening Tool. 3. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to bring forward, through future work planning and budget processes, the following option(s) identified in this report: [insert option number(s) as selected by the Committee] 	
7.4	Work Plan Update - Request For Decision	60 - 64
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Regional Planning Committee amends its active projects list by replacing completed Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 1.2.3 - Improve bylaw enforcement policies and procedures to be administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with the aim of restoring public confidence with Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 2.3.2 - Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan. 2. To request staff to draft business cases to address the following Trust Council key initiatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. [list] 	
8.	BUSINESS - OTHER	
	8.1	65 - 71
	<i>Minor Project Criteria - Request For Decision</i>	
9.	BUSINESS - NEW	
10.	WORK PROGRAM	
	For review and referral to Trust Council before each quarterly TC meeting	
11.	NEXT MEETING	
	The next Regional Planning Committee regular meeting is July 24, 2026 at 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.	

12. CLOSED MEETING

If desired:

That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter, Part 4, Division 3, s.90, (quote the pertinent section here, for example, (1)(a) personal information about...) and that the recorder and staff [attend/not attend] the meeting.

13. RISE AND REPORT

If desired

14. ADJOURNMENT

*Approximate time is provided for the convenience of the public only and is subject to change without notice.



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February 13, 2026

File: 0110-20

Friends of the Gulf Islands Society
www.friendsofthegulfislands.ca

VIA EMAIL: info@friendsofthegulfislands.ca

Dear Friends of the Gulf Islands Society,

Re: Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy Amendments Feedback

Thank you for your submission and for your continued engagement on bylaw compliance and enforcement matters. The purpose of this Bylaw Enforcement Review project is to have policies and procedures that are administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with an aim of restoring public confidence. We recognize the importance of any concern raised regarding fairness, transparency, and maintaining public confidence.

The question of Local Trust Committee (LTC) involvement in enforcement was considered directly by the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) in July 2025, including in light of the Ombudsperson's comments. RPC acknowledged the need to maintain a clear separation between elected officials and front-line enforcement staff, and concluded that the draft policy achieves that separation while providing a clearer framework for strategic, policy-level direction rather than operational decision-making. Trust Council reviewed the same matter in September 2025, agreed with RPC's assessment, and endorsed the draft policy.

Determining whether a contravention exists, how evidence is gathered, and how an investigation proceeds remain professional responsibilities of staff. Any LTC direction made regarding proactive enforcement must occur through resolutions made in open meetings.

Section 12 of the draft policy amendments formalizes practices that already exist in many local trust areas rather than creating new powers. It enables an LTC, if it chooses, to adopt discretionary enforcement policies or procedures within its area. These may address matters such as prioritization or deferral in light of available resources, the relative impact of different types of contraventions, community priorities, approaches to notification or proactive enforcement, as well as the use of discretion in closing files, and regular reporting.

.../2

The revised policy also provides greater clarity around staff discretion and reinforces the importance of consistent professional judgment. Decisions to open, prioritize, investigate, or close files remain operational decisions made by staff within the approved policy framework.

Staff are necessarily remote and visit episodically. Local trust committees have continuous, on-the-ground knowledge of local conditions, history, access constraints, and community impacts. When enforcement decisions are made entirely off-island, without meaningful local input, residents experience the system as arbitrary and unresponsive and this may erode public trust. A bylaw enforcement process that cannot be adjusted in light of local knowledge is more likely to produce unfair outcomes. Local Trust Committees enact many of the Bylaws for their residents and are therefore accountable for ensuring they are applied in a way that takes account of people's unique circumstances, and prioritizes infractions of most concern to the community.

You raised concerns about the potential for favouritism or corruption. These are serious matters. Trustee conduct is governed by provincial legislation and Trust Council standards of conduct, which require trustees to act impartially, provide equal service, discharge their duties without fear or favour, and uphold public confidence in the integrity of Islands Trust governance. These obligations apply to all trustees, including when acting through LTC resolutions. As you may know, the Province is currently reviewing standards of conduct, and Trust Council will consider any necessary updates to its policies once that work is complete.

With respect to environmental harm, the intent of the policy is to support timely responses where impacts may be significant. Professional judgment in applying that intent remains with staff, informed by available expertise and established guidance.

Thank you again for your continued interest in this work and for contributing your perspective.

Sincerely,



Laura Patrick
Chair, Islands Trust Council
lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca

Cc: Mairead Boland (Chair, Regional Planning Committee)



Regional Planning Committee Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date: February 6, 2026
Location: Electronic Meeting

Members Present: Mairead Boland, Saturna Island Local Trustee, Chair
Sam Borthwick, Denman Island Local Trustee, Vice Chair
Tobi Elliott, Gabriola Island Local Trustee, Executive Committee Representative
David Graham, Denman Island Local Trustee
Aaron Campbell, North Pender Island Local Trustee
Laura Patrick, Salt Spring Island Local Trustee (ex officio)

Member Regrets: None.

Staff Present: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services
Warren Dingman, Bylaw Enforcement Manager
Patricia Woodruff, Biologist
Erica Wheeler, Species At Risk Program Coordinator
William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Sheree Rialp, A/Planning Services Administrative Assistant / Recorder

Others Present: Three members of the public were in attendance.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Boland called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and acknowledged that participants of the meeting were attending all across the territories of the Coast Salish peoples.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Review of the Agenda

No new or late item was presented for consideration.

2.2 Approval of Agenda

By general consent the Regional Planning Committee approved the agenda as presented.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No member of the public offered comment.

4. DELEGATIONS

4.1 Maxine Leichter, Friends of the Gulf Islands Society

Maxine Leichter spoke to the Bylaw Enforcement Review project and the following points were noted:

- the new bylaw enforcement policy is improved
- timely response to environmental concerns and cumulative effects are under-considered
- change the policy so that local trust committees are not involved in bringing cases forward, or discontinuing bylaw enforcement cases

Committee discussion included:

- islands are rural in nature, without resident bylaw enforcement officers
- local trust committees are exercising governance-level decisions about whether enforcement actions continue to serve the public interest
- the structure of local trust committees with an external chair from another island supports decision-making integrity
- local trustees are best suited to action Ombudsperson feedback about exercising fairness via exceptions to standard processes

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 2025-10-17 Nancy Wigen

Received for information.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION

6.1 Draft Minutes of Previous Meetings

For review and approval.

6.1.1 Regional Planning Committee Draft Minutes of July 18, 2025 Regular Meeting

By general consent the Regional Planning Committee approved the minutes as presented.

6.1.2 Regional Planning Committee Draft Minutes of September 8, 2025 Special Meeting

By general consent the Regional Planning Committee approved the minutes as presented.

6.1.3 Regional Planning Committee Draft Minutes of January 13, 2026 Special Meeting

DRAFT

It was noted that on p.3, a point discussing the need to hire a third person or third party for local trust committee projects should be altered. Chair Boland suggested that the bullet point be removed in full for clarity.

By general consent the Regional Planning Committee approved the minutes as amended.

6.2 Resolutions Without Meeting

6.2.1 RPC RWM 2025-01 Convene RPC Special Meeting on Sept. 8, 2025

For information

6.2.2 RPC RWM 2025-02 Cancel RPC Regular Meeting on Oct. 31, 2025

For information

6.2.3 RPC RWM 2025-03 Adopt Fiscal Year 2026/27 Regular Meeting Dates

For information

6.2.4 RPC RWM 2025-04 Convene RPC Special Meeting on Jan. 13, 2026

For information

6.3 Follow-up Action List

Committee discussion included:

- target date for Freshwater Sustainability Strategy Frequently Asked Questions document and Implementation Plan is updated to July 1, 2026
- it is helpful if the previous date is retained when a new date is added
- cleanup of Follow-up Action List is desired for the July 18 regular meeting

Trustee Elliott joined the meeting at 10:29 a.m.

7. BUSINESS – WORK PROGRAM ITEMS

7.1 Integrating Biological Information into Land Use Decisions

Biologist Patricia Woodruff presented her work on species at risk in the Trust Area and integrating biological data with planning decision-making. Species at Risk Coordinator Erica Wheeler presented her work on species at risk and conservation action in the Trust area.

Committee discussion included:

- how does Islands Trust compare to other municipalities in protecting species at risk?

- some leading municipalities have moved from no net loss to seeking positive gain of species habitat during development
- there is interest in indicators for species at risk: how many exist and are they common across islands?
- indicators monitored over time can tell an encouraging story
- beyond protected areas, fenced private property could be indicative when reviewing species at risk
- what other information is needed for an updated State of the Islands report with indicators?
- the Land Information Screening Tool being discussed later in the meeting collates available data to support decision-making of elected officials

7.2 Freshwater Strategy – Update

Senior Freshwater Specialist William Shulba presented the update, noting the accomplishments of the strategy and its effects on planning outcomes, such as development permit areas and the Gabriola Official Community Plan project.

Committee discussion included:

- a trustee did not receive the updated agenda containing the update report
- discussion of the report should occur again at Regional Planning Committee’s next regular meeting on May 1, 2026
- work is required on transparency and communicating progress updates so that trustees understand what strategy components are being produced and when
- information sharing challenges exist between Trust-wide strategic projects and the local trust committee level
- groundwater recharge mapping resources in the Freshwater Atlas identify information such as areas of significance for groundwater recharge
- this work can be viewed on a regional scale or used on for parcel-based assessment
- development of a process flow-through tool for decision makers
- structural data work has largely occurred, and project implementation on islands will accelerate
- a Freshwater Help Desk that supports staff, applicants, and consultants will help facilitate coordination and resource access, and track inquiries

Regional Planning Committee recessed at 11:55 a.m. and resumed at 12:26 p.m.

Committee discussion continued:

- the Suitable Land Analysis has become the Land Information Screening Tool
- local ground truthing of mapping in this tool reveals gaps on Denman Island
- work involving multiple jurisdictions requires coordination in knowledge and action
- a communications plan and Frequently Asked Questions document for the Freshwater Strategy have not materialized

- watersheds were designated in Official Community Plans predating this project
- proof of water and flaws in vulnerability maps for the southern Gulf Islands

Chair Boland indicated that item 7.2 would be revisited later in the meeting due to a trustee with a resolution for consideration briefly losing connection to the meeting.

7.3 Housing Action Plan – Update

Director Cermak delivered the update and discussed the Land Information Screening Tool and methodology, which is uploaded to the Islands Trust website and available to the public. He provided a demonstration of the tool's application.

Committee discussion included:

- sea level rise and available data sets for coastal risk mapping
- will trustees be able to ask detailed questions of this tool?
- deeper feedback has been sought at the local trust committee level while using the tool for Official Community Plan work
- if Regional Planning Committee wants to work on the methodology of this tool, the committee could make it a top priority on their project list via resolution
- a trustee is concerned about the tool being used with some unanswered questions about it still outstanding
- a use case demonstration is desired, such as for a subdivision application
- the tool is a new way to visualize considerations that planners already apply in the course of their work
- it was applied during development of Mayne Island's housing review project
- damage to the public trust occurred when suitable land analysis mapping was released on Gabriola
- slides from a presentation on the mapping were released without methodology or an explanation of its layers
- there are questions about the methodology of weightings in the mapping layers
- should local trust committees play a role in the discretionary weightings of this tool?
- this is an internal tool for staff use, but there are political ramifications to the maps it generates
- the intention is not to question staff expertise, but so that trustees can better understand and defend the work in public
- residents may zoom in on a red layer on their lot and react much differently than a planner looking at abstract or regional information
- there should be a narrative story for each map that is produced
- build confidence in the system by bringing the community along in development of the tool and its mapping layers and weightings
- it is Regional Planning Committee's job to help improve planning processes for local trust committees

RPC 2026-001

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Regional Planning Committee request staff to provide options and recommendations to improve communication on the methodology and rationale used to create models in the Land Information Screening Tool (LIST), and that these can accompany any public release of maps or models that support LTC projects.

CARRIED

Chair Boland indicated that the Committee would return to item 7.2.

7.2 Freshwater Strategy – Update

Committee discussion continued:

- a trustee seeks a process flow to answer how the elements of the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy interact with local trust committee decision-making
- this could help incoming trustees learn about existing freshwater information
- explain how the components that have been developed help support land use planning activities
- a template would be more suited to implementation plan work

RPC 2026-002

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Regional Planning Committee request staff to provide a summary of the components of the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy and their links to land use planning.

CARRIED

7.4 Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy Review – Request for Decision

Director Cermak introduced the Request for Decision, explaining changes applied to the draft Trust Council Policy 5.5.1 and introducing an implementation plan. Manager Dingman highlighted that the policy provides bylaw compliance and enforcement officers more discretion for closing files and mediating solutions between parties. Committee discussion included:

- “restoring public confidence” is suggested as a project name
- the tone of bylaw enforcement notice letters is a concern
- encouraging voluntary compliance is important to balance with letters being technically correct in outlining contraventions
- letters should be reviewed by the communications specialist as well as the bylaw enforcement team
- enforcement should be civil in communications, but enforcement action must be meaningful to uphold bylaws
- implementation plan reporting will occur every six months with metrics

RPC 2026-003

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee endorse and refer to Trust Council:

- a. The revisions to draft Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy 5.5.1 as shown in the draft attached to the Request for Decision dated January 29, 2026;
- b. The draft Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Best Practices Manual, and
- c. The Bylaw Compliance & Enforcement Policy Review and Portal Implementation Plan.

CARRIED

Committee discussion continued:

- restoring public trust is a goal for this work
- Regional Planning Committee should respond in writing to the delegation from Friends of the Gulf Islands which raised the issue of the separation of bylaw enforcement and elected officials
- elected officials direct enforcement priorities
- the benefit of trustee discretion is in the application of local knowledge and relief for issues that are not enforcement priorities
- abuse of this power is taken seriously and governed by the oath that trustees take

RPC 2026-004

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee request staff to assist the Chair in drafting a response to the letter from Friends of the Gulf Islands regarding the Bylaw Enforcement Policy update.

CARRIED

8. BUSINESS – OTHER

None.

9. BUSINESS – NEW

None.

10. WORK PROGRAM

Committee discussion included:

- put in dates associated with item sub-deliverables

Director Cermak indicated that Regional Planning Committee could indicate its desired level of involvement with the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy review process. Chair

DRAFT

Boland indicated that the current Request for Proposal should continue and it would be helpful for the Committee to receive updates on the process.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next Regional Planning Committee regular meeting is May 1, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

12. CLOSED MEETING

The Committee did not close the meeting.

13. RISE AND REPORT

As the Committee did not close the meeting, there was no need for the Committee to discuss this option.

14. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Mairead Boland, Chair

Certified Correct:

Rob Kroeker, Planning Services Administrative Assistant

Minutes are not official until adopted at a subsequent meeting.

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

24-Aug-2022

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
0%	1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to create a Freshwater Sustainability Strategy Frequently Asked Questions document.	Morgana van Niekerk William Shulba	Target: 01-Jul-2026	In Progress

16-Feb-2024

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
45%	1 Staff to develop a Freshwater Sustainability Strategy implementation plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Planning Committee, Trust Programs Committee, Trust Council and key staff, and that is operationalized through multi-year work plans, budget requests, and program-specific implementation plans.	Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 01-Jul-2026	In Progress

05-Dec-2024

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
100%	1 Trust Council Direction: Staff to work with Regional Planning Committee to review their budget requests and provide any reductions for incorporation into the March budget. No business cases at time of request. Subsequent issue identified and business case submitted.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 31-Jan-2025	Completed

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

07-Feb-2025

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
100%	1 Staff to include in the May RPC agenda the discussion of a mid term independent review of the 10 year Freshwater Strategic Plan and accomplishments to date.	Rob Kroeker Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 09-May-2025	Completed
100%	2 Staff to report back about the status of the Freshwater Atlas at the July 2025 RPC meeting.	Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 18-Jul-2025	Completed
100%	3 Staff to update the Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit and Housing Strategic Action Plan for the May 2025 RPC meeting, and provide options for a presentation for Trustees at a later date.	Robert Kojima Stefan Cermak	Target: 09-May-2025	Completed
10%	4 RPC recommend that Trust Council request staff to revise policy 6.5.4 "Grants and Donations Administration" to develop clear guidance for staff and Trust bodies when applying for external grant funding opportunities by aligning approval limits with procurement policies and to establish clear approval and reporting processes.	David Marlor	Target: 28-Feb-2026	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

09-May-2025

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
100%	1 Regional Planning Committee requests staff to make amendments, as agreed at the Regional Planning Committee's May 9, 2025 meeting, to Trust Council Policy 5.5.1 and the Best Practices Manual, and to send the documents to the Ombudsperson for review.	Robert Kojima Stefan Cermak Warren Dingman	Target: 18-Jul-2025	Completed
100%	2 that Regional Planning Committee request staff make minor updates to the Housing Options Toolkit identified in the Request For Decision of May 9, 2025 and as discussed.	Robert Kojima Stefan Cermak	Target: 18-Jul-2025	Completed
100%	3 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to forward the housing needs reports to Executive Committee, but also wish to convey our lack of confidence in the data, its usefulness, and belief that it could cause harm.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 27-May-2025	Completed
100%	4 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to draft business cases to address the following Trust Council key initiatives: a. Map eelgrass and kelp forests. b. Develop a growth management planning framework that includes data on growth trends and projections, geological and hydrological capacities, infrastructure, and development rates. c. Conduct an independent review of the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy by a qualified external party and that the scope include, but not be limited to: - Assessing the effectiveness and outcomes of the strategy to date, - Identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, - Evaluating alignment with Trust Council strategic objectives and other key initiatives.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 18-Jul-2025	Completed

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

18-Jul-2025

Progress	Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
9%	1 Staff to report back to Regional Planning Committee on Trust Council policies, held by the Director of Planning Services, to address Trust Council's key initiative to review, and where appropriate, amend, combine or rescind policies, and to prioritize the crown referrals procedure.	David Marlor Stefan Cermak	Target: 31-Oct-2025	In Progress
76%	2 that Regional Planning Committee request staff amend the eelgrass mapping business case to include an option to partner with First Nations' marine divisions and other relevant organizations in the Trust Area toward completing the work. (COMPLETE) that Regional Planning Committee request that the business case for the Development of a Growth Management Planning Framework be revised as a multi-year strategy, and that staff assess how the biologist's work on ecosystem indicators, and build out maps and suitable land analysis tools be incorporated in that framework, before the next stages are envisioned.	Clare Frater Stefan Cermak	Target: 28-Feb-2026	In Progress



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** May 1, 2026
From: Trust Area Services **Date Prepared:** April 23, 2026
SUBJECT: 2025/26 ANNUAL REPORT – APPROVAL OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE SECTION

RECOMMENDATION: That the Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Report for approval by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

1 PURPOSE: Committees are provided with their draft sections of the annual report for review and approval so that Trust Council is able to easily approve its annual report in June 2026 without further editing from staff or trustees at the Trust Council meeting.

BACKGROUND: Preparation of the Islands Trust Annual Report is undertaken by Trust Area Services Communications staff, reporting to the Executive Committee and consistent with Trust Council’s [Annual Report Policy 6.10.1](#). The Executive Committee approved the format and outline of the 2025/26 Annual Report at its meeting on January 14, 2026.

2 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL: Under Trust Council’s Policy, all LTCs and Council committees are expected to review and approve their sections at regular meetings in order to have the report approved by Trust Council at its June 2026 meeting.

FINANCIAL: None.

POLICY: No implications for existing policy

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS: The process for development of the Annual Report is outlined in Trust Council’s Annual Report policy 6.10.i. Once each committee has approved its section, staff will create a draft Annual Report for review by the Executive Committee on June 4, 2025 and consideration of Trust Council in June. Upon approval by Trust Council, staff will send the Annual Report to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs and circulate it as indicated in Trust Council’s policy.

FIRST NATIONS: Information about First Nations relations may be included within committee reports.

OTHER: None.

3 RELEVANT POLICY(S): Trust Council’s Annual Report policy 6.10.i; *Islands Trust Act*

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendation: That the Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Report for approval by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

Alternative: That the Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2025/26 Annual Report for approval (as amended) by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

Prepared By: Morgana van Niekerk, A/Communications Specialist

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services / April 23, 2026

Regional Planning Committee

Role

The Regional Planning Committee (RPC) provides policy and planning advice to Islands Trust Council by identifying and reporting on emerging issues related to the Committee's areas of responsibility: development management, community planning, and sustainable community. The Committee also develops guidelines, policies, and models for use by staff and local trust committees.

Members serving in 2025/26

Mairead Boland	Saturna Island Local Trustee, Chair
Sam Borthwick	Denman Island Local Trustee, Vice-Chair
Aaron Campbell	North Pender Island Local Trustee
David Graham	Denman Island Local Trustee
Tobi Elliott	Gabriola Island Local Trustee, Executive Committee Representative
Laura Patrick	Salt Spring Island Local Trustee, Chair Trust Council, Ex-Officio Member

2025/26 Highlights

In the 2025/26 fiscal year, the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) completed the activities related to the following Islands Trust Strategic Plan items:

Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy Review

- Extensively reviewed and endorsed revisions to Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement policies and procedures including:
 - Islands Trust Council Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy 5.5.1
 - Islands Trust Bylaw Compliance & Enforcement Best Practices Manual
 - Implementation plan

Housing Strategy Action Plan

- Revised the Housing Options Toolkit
- Revised the Housing Strategic Action Plan
- Completed an Engagement Framework template
- Completed creation of a housing-related definition for model Land Use Bylaws
- Received the Tiny Homes on Wheels Enablement Project final report and AVICC presentation materials
- Received the Islands Trust Housing Needs Reports

Protection of Ecosystem Health in All Land Use Planning Decisions

- Received two presentations from a Registered Biologist funded through an Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) grant to support species-at-risk recovery by strengthening the integration of biological information into Islands Trust decision-making and projects

Fresh Water Sustainability Strategy

- Advanced the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy (FWSS) through various local trust committee (LTC) major projects amending respective Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws including:
 - Development of a Freshwater Footprint methodology for the Gabriola Island LTC
 - Development of watershed resiliency mapping for the Gabriola; Denman; and Mayne Island LTCs
- Received a demonstration of an online Freshwater Atlas

During this period, the Committee also reviewed Minor Project Criteria in order to advise Islands Trust Council on the provision and allocation of resources to deliver planning services.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee and Trust Programs Committee
For the Meeting of: June 16, 2026

From: Executive Committee
Date Prepared: March 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Change of dates for Regional Planning Committee and Trust Programs Committee November meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Executive Committee request the Trust Programs Committee to cancel the November 26, 2026 Trust Programs Committee meeting and schedule a special meeting on January 7, 2027, and

THAT Executive Committee request the Regional Planning Committee to cancel the November 27, 2026 Regional Planning Committee meeting and schedule a special meeting on January 8, 2027.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER COMMENTS:

Due to the election, there is a desire for local trust committees to meet sooner than later for orientation. The council committees' meetings also need to occur, but those can occur early in 2027. Priority should be given to local trust committees given their legislative role. Because the Financial Planning Committee (FPC) is made up of the chairs of the other council committees, the full FPC membership will not be complete until all council committees have met and decided the chair and representative on FPC.

1 PURPOSE:

To resolve a conflict between meeting dates in November 2026.

2 BACKGROUND:

At its regular meeting on February 25, 2026, the Executive Committee reviewed the schedule of local trust committee and council committee meetings scheduled for November and early December in 2026. As these meetings are the first meetings of these committees, they are intended to be orientation sessions. There are two conflicts in the meeting schedule:

- November 26 Trust Programs Committee meeting conflicts with the Saturna Island Local Trust Committee meeting.
- November 27 Regional Planning Committee meeting conflicts with the South Pender Island Local Trust Committee meeting.

The Executive Committee passed the following resolution:

that Executive Committee recommend to Trust Council that the November 26 Trust Programs Committee meeting and the November 27 Regional Planning Committee meeting be rescheduled.

3 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL:

The change will allow trustees appointed to the two committees to attend regardless of the local trust committee they are from.

FINANCIAL:

There are no financial implications.

POLICY:

There are no policy implications.

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS:

Staff will find alternative dates for the two committee meetings, and then conduct a resolution-without-meeting to adopt the new time and dates for the meetings.

FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS:

There are no First Nations Relations implications.

OTHER:

There are no other implications.

4 RELEVANT POLICY(S):

Trust Council Meeting Procedures Bylaw 101

5 ATTACHMENT(S):

No attachments.

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendation:

THAT Executive Committee request the Trust Programs Committee to reschedule November 26, 2026 Trust Programs Committee meeting to January 7, 2027, and

THAT Executive Committee request the Regional Planning Committee to reschedule the November 27, 2026 Regional Planning Committee meeting to January 8, 2027.

Alternative:

As requested by Executive Committee

Prepared By: Director, Legislative and Information Services

Reviewed By/Date: Chief Administrative Officer/March 31, 2026



DATE OF MEETING: May 1, 2026
TO: Regional Planning Committee
FROM: William Shulba, P. Geo, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Planning Services
COPY: Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services
SUBJECT: Communication Summary and Options for Land Information Screening Tool (LIST)

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to prepare an internal communications policy for staff reports, presentations, and related projects, to improve how the methodology and rationale used in the Land Information Screening Tool are communicated.
2. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to expand and refine the Land Information Screening Tool information in the Housing Options Toolkit to add a more technical and thorough summary of the tool’s methodology, rationale, and intended use to compliment the current plain language tool posted online as Tool 4 – Land Information Screening Tool.
3. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to bring forward, through future work planning and budget processes, the following option(s) identified in this report: [insert option number(s) as selected by the Committee].

REPORT SUMMARY

This report responds to the following Regional Planning Committee resolution:

“That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to provide options and recommendations to improve communication on the methodology and rationale used to create models in the Land Information Screening Tool (LIST), and that these can accompany any public release of maps or models that support LTC projects.”

The Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) is an Islands Trust planning support tool within the Housing Options Toolkit that is used to screen and compare areas for potential residential density and intensity based on environmental, freshwater, geohazard, transportation, and infrastructure considerations.

Current staff resources provide primary means of communicating, interpreting, and applying LIST. These resources include the technical memorandum prepared to guide staff in the use, methodology, and governance of LIST, the Housing Options Toolkit Tool 4 summary, and presentation materials that can be used to communicate LIST to local trust committees and staff.

The Housing Options Toolkit is a standalone document that situates LIST within a broader suite of planning tools available to support housing-related projects. Within that document, Tool 4 provides a summary-level description of LIST and functions as an existing communication option developed through the Housing Options Toolkit project.

That summary may be expanded, refined, or supplemented if additional explanation of methodology or rationale is considered necessary for future projects or public release of associated maps and models.

This report provides a suite of communication options for Regional Planning Committee (RPC) consideration, identifies the intended audience for each option, and outlines associated staff, timing, and potential budget implications. Special consideration is warranted given the current point in the electoral term, the staff resources required to develop any additional communication materials, and the need to ensure that any public-facing explanation remains proportionate to the intended use of LIST as a planning support tool.

BACKGROUND

The Land Information Screening Tool (LIST), formerly referred to as the Suitable Land Analysis (SLA), is an Islands Trust planning support tool within the Housing Options Toolkit used to screen and compare areas for potential residential density and intensity based on environmental, freshwater, geohazards, transportation, and infrastructure considerations. As described in Tool 4 of the Housing Options Toolkit, LIST is a mapping tool and spatial decision-support framework that integrates a range of existing geospatial layers, each representing an environmental, social, or infrastructural factor contributing to relative land suitability. It is intended to support land use planning for housing through a consistent, island-scale screening approach.

LIST builds on a series of prior Islands Trust technical initiatives, including Sensitive Ecosystem Mapping, Steep Slope Hazard Mapping, Groundwater Recharge Mapping, and Watershed Resiliency Mapping. These initiatives established the datasets, technical standards, and modelling processes that underpin the current tool. LIST advances this work by integrating island-wide raster layers into a composite screening model while allowing additional layers to inform interpretation and planning review.

LIST is organized around three types of data. Type I layers are island-wide raster datasets that contribute directly to the composite screening map. These include freshwater sustainability layers such as groundwater recharge, aquifer vulnerability, saltwater intrusion risk, and watershed resiliency; ecosystem protection layers such as sensitive ecosystems, species and ecological communities at risk, and forest structure; hazard avoidance layers such as steep slopes; and community integrity layers such as road adjacency. Type II layers are vector overlays used to identify discrete features, constraints, or areas of interest that do not contribute directly to the model output but inform interpretation. Type III layers are confidential or restricted datasets that are not part of the model itself but may provide important contextual information for internal planning review.

The current Tool 4 summary in the Housing Options Toolkit functions as one existing communications product for LIST. It provides a high-level / plain language explanation of the tool, its core data structure, and the role of weighting and classification in generating a single screening output. In addition to the Housing Options Toolkit summary, staff currently rely on the technical memorandum and presentation materials to explain LIST methodology and outputs in internal and local trust committee settings.

LIST was advanced to several local trust committees during early 2025, including North Pender, Mayne, Denman, Gabriola, and Hornby, through introductory presentations that described the purpose, methodology, themes, weighting structure, and planning role of the tool. These presentations provided an initial overview of how the model works, but they produced mixed results and did not fully resolve questions regarding the rationale for selected layers, the meaning of weighting, or the interpretation of outputs in a planning context. This has led to the present request from the Regional Planning Committee for options to improve communication of both methodology and rationale, particularly where LIST-related maps or models may accompany LTC projects or public release.

The focus of this report is therefore not to revise the LIST model itself, but to identify communication options that may improve understanding of the model for different audiences. Those options must be considered in relation to staff capacity, timing, maintenance requirements, and the role of LIST as a planning support tool within the Housing Options Toolkit.

ANALYSIS

Current Communication Context

LIST is currently supported by several communication tools that serve different purposes and audiences. These include the technical guidance memorandum (Attachment 1) prepared for staff, the Tool 4 summary (Attachment 2) within the Housing Options Toolkit, staff reporting to LTCs and RPC, and slide presentations (Attachment 3) used in introductory discussions with local trust committees. These materials provide the primary means of explaining what LIST is, how it functions, and how it may be used in housing-related planning discussions. These existing materials are complementary, audience-specific, and not intended to be redundant.

The technical memorandum provides the most complete explanation of methodology, data types, classification, weighting, implementation, and governance. The Housing Options Toolkit provides a shorter, standalone summary intended to situate LIST within a broader suite of housing planning tools. Staff reports and presentation materials provide practical communication tools for use in discussions with trustees and committees. The current question is therefore not whether communication exists, but whether the present suite of materials is sufficient for future public-facing release of LIST-related maps or models supporting LTC projects.

Methodology and Rationale as Distinct Communication Needs

The RPC resolution refers to both methodology and rationale; these should be treated as related but distinct communication needs.

Methodology refers to how LIST models are constructed. This includes the use of ArcGIS Pro Suitability Modeler, the multiple-criteria decision analysis framework, the classification of Type 1 raster layers, the weighting structure between layers, and the use of Type 2 and Type 3 overlays to support interpretation. Existing staff materials already communicate most of this information in varying levels of detail.

Rationale refers to why specific layers, themes, and weighting structures were selected. This includes planning intent, alignment with the Islands Trust Policy Statement, local planning context, potential incorporation of locally derived data, and the professional judgment used to translate environmental, freshwater, geohazard, transportation, and infrastructure data into a regional screening model. This aspect is more interpretive and may be more difficult to communicate consistently, particularly where elected officials or members of the public wish to understand why one factor was given greater influence than another.

Audience Considerations

Different audiences require different levels of explanation. Planning staff require technical and operational guidance to apply the tool consistently. Local trust committees require enough explanation to understand the tool's purpose, structure, limitations, and implications for planning discussions. The public may require a shorter, more accessible explanation focused on intended use, limitations, and general rationale rather than detailed model construction.

A single communication product may not be equally effective for all audiences. A highly technical explanation may be appropriate for staff but may not be suitable for trustees or public release. Conversely, a summary-level explanation may be useful for public understanding but insufficient for staff application or internal governance. This suggests that the communication issue is not solely about adding more information, but about matching communication products to audience and purpose.

Timing, Resource, and Work Program Considerations

Any new communication product will require staff time to prepare, review, maintain, and update. This includes drafting content, confirming technical accuracy, aligning messaging across planning and GIS staff, and revising materials when underlying datasets or model configurations change. Depending on the option selected, additional work may be absorbed within existing staff capacity or may require future budget consideration. Moreover, the actions should be identified within the Housing Strategic Action Plan in order for staff to be able to apply resources this term.

Timing is a relevant factor. The current electoral term is approaching its conclusion, and the degree of benefit associated with developing new communication materials should be considered in relation to staff workload, near-term LTC project needs, and whether implementation would realistically occur before the next term. Lower-effort options may be more feasible in the near term, while more substantial communication products may be better considered as future work program items.

Implications of Public Release

The RPC resolution specifically references communication materials that may accompany public release of maps. Public release increases the importance of clarity regarding intended use and limitations. LIST is a planning support tool, not a regulatory determination, not a parcel-specific approval tool, and not a conservation designation tool. Accompanying materials need to communicate these limitations clearly to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.

Public-facing materials need to strike an appropriate balance between transparency and complexity. Too little explanation may create confusion or mistrust. Too much technical detail may be difficult to follow or may invite interpretation beyond the intended planning use of the tool. This balancing exercise is central to the options presented in this report.

Communication Options

Option 1 – Refine Housing Options Toolkit 4

This option would involve refining and expanding Tool 4 of the Housing Options Toolkit to accompany any future public release of LIST-related maps or models that support LTC projects. The document would expand on the explanation, in plain language, what LIST is, what it is intended to do, how the map should be interpreted, the methodology, and key limitations on use. It would not attempt to reproduce the full technical methodology or describe all data inputs in detail.

The intended audience for this option would be members of the public, community groups, applicants, and trustees seeking a simple introduction to the tool. This option would be useful where the objective is to improve transparency without requiring readers to engage with the full technical memorandum or a more detailed methodology summary.

The main advantage of this option is that is proposed to be prepared within existing staff capacity if scoped modestly. It would provide a clearer minimum level of explanation when LIST-related maps are shared publicly and could help reduce confusion about intended use. Its main limitation is that it may not provide enough detail to satisfy questions regarding why particular layers or weighting structures were selected. It would therefore improve communication of purpose and limitations more than communication of detailed rationale. This is based on staff resources, which may not be available if not a priority project.

Option 2 – Standardized LIST Presentation Package

This option would involve developing a standardized slide presentation package for use by staff in discussions with local trust committees, advisory planning commissions, and potentially community meetings. The package would explain what LIST is, the broad methodology used to create it, the rationale for included themes and layers, the meaning of weighting, the limitations of outputs, and the distinction between screening and regulatory decision-making. Speaker notes or accompanying guidance could be included to support consistent delivery by staff.

The intended audience for this option would be trustees, advisory bodies, and meeting participants. This option responds well to the fact that LIST has already been introduced to several LTCs through presentation materials and that communication issues have emerged in those settings.

The main advantage of this option is that it would provide a consistent and repeatable format for presenting LIST across islands and projects. It would support staff in workshop settings and could improve trustee understanding of both methodology and rationale. Its limitation is that presentations are primarily useful in meeting contexts and are less effective as a standalone public reference unless paired with another product. This option would require moderate staff effort to develop, maintain, and tailor to specific islands or projects where needed.

Option 3 – Public-Facing LIST Web Information Product

This option would involve creating a public-facing web-based product, such as a dedicated web page, StoryMap, or ArcGIS Experience, that explains LIST methodology, rationale, themes, layers, intended use, and limitations in a more interactive format. Depending on scope, this option could include visual explanation of the composite map, selected input layers, and plain-language interpretation guidance.

The intended audience for this option would be the public, trustees, partner agencies, and other external users who may wish to understand LIST in more detail. This option would provide the greatest accessibility and public transparency where maps or models are made available beyond internal staff use.

The main advantage of this option is that it offers the strongest public-facing communication format and could present complex information in a more accessible and engaging way. Its main limitation is that it would require the greatest staff effort, technical coordination, and ongoing maintenance. It exceeds current work program capacity and would require resourcing considerations.

Option 4 – LIST Internal Communications Policy for Staff Reports and Public Release

This option would involve preparing an internal communication policy to guide how LIST is communicated out in staff reports, presentations, and any public release of maps. Rather than creating a new standalone public product, this option would establish a minimum communication standard for staff use. The policy could create a template with explanatory content, such as a standard description of LIST, key methodology statements, limitations language, and direction on when supporting materials should accompany a map or model.

The intended audience for this option would be staff. Its purpose would be to support consistency in how LIST is described and reduce variability in messaging across reports, projects, and islands.

The main advantage of this option is that it would be a staff resource to facilitate the implementation of LIST within specific projects and initiatives. Its limitation is that it would not, on its own, provide a new public-facing explanation of methodology or rationale. It would be strongest when paired with one of the other options, particularly Option 1, Option 2, or Option 3.

Overall Option Considerations

These options are not mutually exclusive. Internal consistency measure, such as Option 4, could be added to the list of operational changes being considered by management. An internal policy amendment could be paired with a more public-facing option, such as Option 1 or Option 2, if the Regional Planning Committee wishes to improve communication without committing to a larger product at this time. A more substantial option, such as Option 4, may be more appropriate as a future work program item if there is continued demand for broader public access and explanation.

Rationale for Recommendation

The recommended resolutions are intended to respond directly to the Regional Planning Committee request while remaining proportionate to the current use and audience of the Land Information Screening Tool. LIST already has an established suite of staff-facing and trustee-facing communication materials, including the technical memorandum, the Housing Options Toolkit summary, staff reporting, and presentation materials.

The first recommendation would establish an internal communications policy for staff reports, presentations, and related LTC project materials. This is the most immediate and practical step available to staff. A protocol would improve consistency in how LIST is described, clarify the minimum content that should accompany maps or models, and reduce the risk of varied messaging between projects, islands, or presenters. This option is relatively modest in scope and can strengthen communication without reopening the model itself.

The second recommendation would expand and refine the Land Information Screening Tool section of the Housing Options Toolkit to serve as the primary source for public-facing documents. This builds on an existing Islands Trust communication product rather than creating an entirely new document stream. The Housing Options Toolkit functions as a standalone planning resource; this option provides a logical location for a clearer and more complete summary of LIST methodology, rationale, intended use, and limitations. It improves public and trustee access to summary information while keeping the more detailed technical guidance in staff materials.

The third recommendation would allow the Regional Planning Committee to identify, during discussions at the RPC meeting, whether one or more additional options from this report be brought forward through future work planning and budget processes. This is an important governance step, as some of the options identified in the report would require additional staff resources, coordination, and potentially budget to prepare and maintain.

Framing these as future work plan items allows the RPC to express interest in further communication products without committing staff to undertake work that may not be achievable within current capacity or within the remainder of the present electoral term.

This approach provides a staged and pragmatic response. It improves consistency in the near term, strengthens an existing public-facing summary document, and preserves flexibility for the Committee to identify any further communication products it wishes to consider through future planning and budgeting processes.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not proceed with any additional communication materials at this time

The RPC may choose not to direct any further work at this time and to continue relying on the existing suite of LIST communication materials, including the technical memorandum, the Housing Options Toolkit summary, staff reporting, and presentation materials. Staff advise that the implication of this alternative is that no additional staff time or budget would be required in the near term. The limitation of this approach is that concerns regarding consistency and clarity in communicating LIST methodology and rationale may remain unresolved.

2. Amend or prioritize other actions in the Housing Strategic Action Plan

The Housing Strategic Action Plan includes the following actions:

- Action 11: Undertake suitable land (for development) analysis using existing evidence based mapping data.
- Action 12: Incorporate new data on social and economic implications of housing location into suitable land analysis.
- Action 13: Undertake work with First Nations to identify and incorporate indigenous interests into suitable land analysis

Discussions in this report revolve around RPCs request to improve communications regarding the completed Action 11. RPC may recommend prioritizing advancing Actions 12 and 13 before improving communications for Action 11. RPC may also recommend that Trust Council amend the Housing Strategic Action Plan to include more actions related to communications either in relation to Action 11, under Objective A: Identify and Communicate Hosing Needs and Activities, or other.

NEXT STEPS

Staff expect to update the RPC on the Housing Strategic Action Plan at their next regular business meeting.

Next steps will depend on Regional Planning Committee direction. If the Committee adopts the recommended resolutions, staff would prepare an internal communication policy, revise the Land Information Screening Tool section of the Housing Options Toolkit, and, if requested during the business meeting, identify one or more additional communication options for consideration through future work planning and budget processes. If no further direction is provided, staff would continue to rely on existing LIST communication materials in support of LTC projects.

Submitted By:	William Shulba, P.Geo, Senior Freshwater Specialist	April 22, 2026
Concurrence:	Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services	April 23, 2026

ATTACHMENTS

1. Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) Technical Guidance Memorandum
2. Housing Options Toolkit – Tool 4: Land Information Screening Tool
3. Example LIST Introductory Presentation



MEMORANDUM

File No.: Land Information Screening Tool
March 31, 2026

TO: Islands Trust Planning Services

FROM: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager
William Shulba, P.Geo, Planning Services, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Kendra Hopper, Information Services, GIS Coordinator
Patricia Woodruff, Planning Services, Biologist

SUBJECT: Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) Technical Guidance Document

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide technical guidance for the implementation and use of the Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) within the Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit. LIST is a spatial decision-support tool designed to screen and compare areas for potential residential development, informed by environmental conditions, freshwater sustainability, geohazards, transportation, and infrastructure considerations.

BACKGROUND

The Islands Trust Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) is a spatial decision-support framework developed to assist planners, trustees, and community partners in identifying regional areas of opportunity for increased residential density and intensity.

LIST is a technical component of the Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit. It is intended to inform policy exploration and planning analysis at a regional scale rather than to determine site-specific outcomes. The tool integrates existing geospatial datasets, each representing an environmental, hydrological, hazard, or infrastructural factor that contributes to relative land suitability.

The primary geospatial datasets used in LIST are derived from publicly available provincial sources, including the BC Data Catalogue, as well as professionally produced spatial data developed by or on behalf of the Islands Trust. These regionally consistent, island-wide datasets are processed using industry-standard GIS suitability modelling tools based on a multiple-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) framework to assign relative suitability ratings and generate a composite screening map.

In addition to island-wide datasets used in suitability scoring, LIST incorporates island-specific spatial information that identifies localized constraints, exclusions, or areas requiring site-specific consideration. These datasets are typically vector-based (polygons, lines, or points), may be derived from field observations or site-specific mapping, and are applied as overlay layers rather than as inputs to suitability scoring. Examples include protected areas, riparian buffers, archaeological or heritage sites, covenants, and other locally relevant features.

Together, these datasets enable LIST to provide regionally consistent screening while retaining the flexibility to reflect island-specific conditions and constraints. This structure ensures that housing-related planning discussions are informed by data appropriate to its scale, purpose, and level of accessibility, while preserving the need for professional judgment and site-level review.

OUTCOMES AND DELIVERABLES

The primary output of the Land Information Screening Tool is a composite screening map that presents relative land suitability as a gradient to support regional comparison and planning discussions within the context of the housing toolkit. The resulting map is intended to illustrate patterns of opportunity and constraint across an island rather than to determine parcel-level outcomes.

LIST is delivered on an island-by-island basis and is provided to planning staff as an internal ArcGIS Online web map. The web map includes the composite screening output, contributing Type 1 input layers, and relevant Type 2 and Type 3 overlay layers. This format allows staff to explore how individual environmental, freshwater, hazard, transportation, and infrastructure factors influence overall screening results and to present this information clearly to Local Trust Committees.

In practice, planners use LIST to compare areas across an island, explore housing-related planning scenarios, and focus policy discussions on locations where increased residential density and intensity may warrant further consideration. The tool supports early-stage evaluation, helps prioritize areas for additional analysis or engagement, and provides a shared, evidence-based reference for discussion with trustees and community stakeholders.

LIST outputs are intended to inform, not replace, professional planning judgment, regulatory review, or site-specific studies. The screening map is one component within a broader planning toolkit and must be interpreted in conjunction with existing bylaws, development permit areas, overlay constraints, and other applicable legislation.

DATA TYPES

For the purposes of the Land Information Screening Tool, spatial data inputs are categorized into three distinct data types based on scale, spatial coverage, analytical function, and access considerations. This classification clarifies how datasets are incorporated into the screening model, supports methodological consistency across islands, and establishes clear boundaries between analytical inputs, interpretive overlays, and restricted information.

- **Type 1 data** consists of island-wide raster datasets that are used directly in the suitability scoring process. These datasets provide continuous coverage across an island and are processed through the suitability modelling workflow using standardized classification criteria and weighting to evaluate relative land suitability. Type 1 data forms the analytical foundation of LIST and is used to generate the composite screening map.
- **Type 2 data** consists of island-specific vector datasets that identify localized constraints, exclusions, or areas requiring site-specific consideration. These datasets do not require island-wide coverage and are applied as overlay layers rather than as inputs to suitability scoring. Type 2 data provides contextual information that supports interpretation of screening results and informs planning review at the parcel or site scale.
- **Type 3 data** consists of site-specific vector datasets that function as overlays similar to Type 2 data but are subject to access, confidentiality, or data-sharing restrictions. These datasets are not publicly available and are used internally to inform planning review where sensitive environmental, cultural, archaeological, or regulatory information must be considered. Type 3 data does not influence suitability scoring and is managed in accordance with applicable legislation, data-sharing agreements, and organizational policy.

The sections below describe each data type in greater detail, including accepted formats, minimum technical requirements, access considerations, and intended use within LIST. This structure ensures that island-wide screening results are generated using consistent analytical inputs while allowing localized and sensitive information to inform interpretation without altering the integrity of the core suitability model.

Type 1 Data: Island-wide Suitability Layers

Type 1 data consists of island-wide raster datasets used directly in the suitability scoring process. A raster layer represents spatial information as a continuous grid of uniformly sized cells, with each cell assigned a value reflecting a specific environmental, hydrological, geohazard, or infrastructural characteristic. These datasets provide full spatial coverage across an island and represent regionally consistent factors relevant to identifying areas of opportunity for increased residential density and intensity. Type 1 datasets incorporated into LIST are derived from authoritative public sources or professionally produced spatial data.

Type 1 datasets are processed through the suitability modelling workflow using standardized classification criteria and weighting to evaluate relative land suitability. Each dataset is normalized or reclassified to enable comparison and combination with other Type 1 inputs, resulting in a composite screening map. Because these datasets directly influence model outputs, they must meet defined technical standards to ensure consistency, repeatability, and defensibility.

Type 1 datasets must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Data format: Raster (GeoTIFF preferred)
- Spatial resolution: Appropriate for island-scale analysis (typically 30 × 30 metres or finer)
- Spatial extent: Full land area coverage of the relevant island(s)
- Coordinate system: UTM Zone 10N, NAD83 (CSRS)
- Data values: Standardized, classifiable, or continuous values suitable for suitability scoring
- NoData handling: Clear and consistent treatment of non-applicable or excluded areas
- Metadata: Documentation of data source, date, processing steps, assumptions, and data steward

TYPE 1 DATA: SUITABILITY MODELLING LAYERS		
Theme	Type 1 Layer	Source
Ecosystems	Ecosystem Resiliency	B.C. M.O.E; Madrone Environmental Services Ltd.; Parks Canada; Galiano Conservancy; Islands Trust GIS
	Species & Ecological Communities At Risk	B.C. Conservation Data Centre
	VRI Dominant Age	Vegetation Resource Inventory
Freshwater	Groundwater Recharge Potential	Islands Trust Freshwater Atlas
	Watershed Resiliency	Islands Trust Freshwater Atlas
	Groundwater Well Density	Islands Trust Freshwater Atlas
	Risk of Saltwater Intrusion	Islands Trust Freshwater Atlas
Geohazards and Infrastructure	Road Adjacency	Islands Trust GIS; GeoBC Digital Road Atlas
	Steep Slopes	Islands Trust GIS; GeoBC - Terrain Resource Information Management

Type 2 Data: Site-specific Overlay Layers

Type 2 data consists of island-specific vector datasets that identify localized constraints, exclusions, or areas requiring site-specific consideration. These datasets do not influence suitability scoring and are not incorporated into the composite calculation. Instead, they are applied as overlay layers to support interpretation of screening outputs and to inform planning review at the parcel or site scale.

Type 2 datasets are typically vector-based (polygons, lines, or points) and may be derived from field observations, localized studies, regulatory mapping, or community-contributed information. Unlike Type 1 datasets, Type 2 data does not require full island coverage and is not normalized or weighted within the model.

Type 2 overlays provide essential contextual information by identifying areas where development may be constrained, excluded, or subject to additional regulatory review. These datasets support professional judgment and ensure that localized environmental, cultural, and regulatory considerations are reflected alongside island-wide screening results.

Type 2 datasets must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Data format: Vector (polygons, lines, or points), including ESRI Shapefile, File Geodatabase Feature Class, GeoPackage, or convertible KML/KMZ
- Spatial reference: UTM Zone 10N, NAD83 (CSRS) preferred (other coordinate systems accepted and reprojected as required)
- Geometry: Clearly defined and topologically valid features
- Attributes: Fields identifying feature type, relevance or significance, and data source
- Metadata: Documentation of purpose, data collection method, scale, date, author or organization, and contact information

TYPE 2 DATA: SUITABILITY OVERLAY LAYERS		
Theme	Type 2 Layer	Source
Admin and Planning	Roads	Digital Road Atlas
	Parcel Fabric	Land Title and Survey Authority of British Columbia
	Riparian Areas DPAs	Islands Trust GIS and Planning
	ALR	Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
	Covenants	BC Assessment; Islands Trust Conservancy and GIS
	Parks & Protected Areas	Islands Trust GIS, Islands Trust Planning
	Water Service Areas	Islands Trust GIS, Islands Trust Planning
Environmental	Marine Shore Adjacency	Islands Trust GIS, Islands Trust Planning
	Young Forest	Derived from SEM data – Islands Trust GIS
	Forest Contiguity	Cabin Forestry for Islands Trust
	Critical Habitat	Environment Canada

Type 3 Data: Restricted or Non-Public Overlay Layers

Type 3 data consists of site-specific vector datasets that function similarly to Type 2 overlays but are subject to access, confidentiality, or data-sharing restrictions. These datasets are not publicly available and are not included in publicly released screening products. Type 3 data is used internally to inform planning review where sensitive environmental, cultural, archaeological, or regulatory information must be considered.

Type 3 datasets may represent archaeological sites, cultural heritage resources, sensitive ecological features, species at risk habitat, or information provided under specific data-sharing agreements with Indigenous governing bodies or partner agencies. These datasets do not influence suitability scoring and do not require island-wide coverage. Instead, they are applied as internal overlays to flag areas requiring additional consultation, procedural safeguards, or regulatory compliance.

Access to Type 3 datasets is managed in accordance with applicable legislation, data-sharing agreements, and Islands Trust policy. Use of this data is restricted to authorized staff and planning processes to ensure responsible stewardship of sensitive information.

Type 3 datasets must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Data format: Vector (polygons, lines, or points)
- Spatial reference: UTM Zone 10N, NAD83 (CSRS) preferred
- Geometry: Clearly defined and topologically valid features
- Metadata: Documentation of data source, purpose, access restrictions, and applicable data-sharing or confidentiality requirements
- Governance: Use and access limited to authorized staff in accordance with legislation, agreements, and organizational policy

TYPE 3 DATA: SUITABILITY OVERLAY LAYERS		
Theme	Type 3 Layer	Source
First Nation and Archeological	Heritage Site & Archeological Sites	Archaeology Branch, Ministry of Forests
Environmental	Species at Risk	B.C. Conservation Data Centre

* Not for Public Viewing

METHODOLOGY

The Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) applies a structured and transparent methodology to evaluate relative land suitability using multiple spatial criteria. The analysis is implemented in ArcGIS Pro using ESRI's Suitability Modeler, which is based on a multiple-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) framework.

MCDA is a recognized decision-support approach used in land use planning to systematically evaluate, standardize, weight, and combine diverse environmental, hydrological, hazard, and infrastructural factors within a consistent analytical framework.

ESRI's Suitability Modeler was selected because it provides a transparent, reproducible, and industry-standard environment for raster-based spatial modelling. The tool enables planners and GIS staff to document classification schemes, weighting values, and model expressions within a structured workflow that can be reviewed, updated, and re-run as new data becomes available. This ensures methodological consistency across islands and over time.

Analytical Framework

The LIST methodology follows a consistent sequence of steps.

Island-wide datasets suitable for raster-based analysis are first identified and prepared as Type 1 inputs. These datasets are standardized to ensure comparability across layers. Each dataset is then classified into a common suitability scale.

Relative weights are applied to reflect the influence of each factor within the overall screening model. The weighted raster layers are combined using raster algebra within the Suitability Modeler environment to generate a composite screening surface representing relative land suitability.

Island-specific overlay datasets (Type 2 and Type 3 data) are subsequently applied to support interpretation and planning review but are not incorporated into suitability scoring. This structured workflow ensures that screening results are repeatable, transparent, and scalable across islands while preserving the ability to incorporate localized context through overlays.

Data Preparation and Standardization

All Type 1 datasets are prepared using a common spatial reference, resolution, and analysis extent prior to modelling. Source datasets are processed as required to ensure technical compatibility, including rasterization of vector inputs where appropriate and alignment of cell size and spatial extent to ensure consistent pixel-by-pixel comparison across layers. NoData values are handled consistently to prevent unintended distortion of model results. Areas outside the analysis scope, marine areas, or lands intentionally excluded from consideration are explicitly defined. Data quality checks are performed to confirm spatial alignment, completeness, and logical consistency prior to inclusion in the suitability workflow.

Each dataset is classified or normalized so that resulting values represent relative suitability within a consistent numeric scale. Standardization of source datasets that vary in measurement units and data structure ensures that no dataset disproportionately influences results due solely to its original value range. Where necessary, spatial processing techniques such as buffering, proximity analysis, or density calculation are applied to convert source data into raster inputs appropriate for regional screening analysis.

Preprocessing is a critical step in ensuring that the model compares like with like. Without standardization, differences in source format, scale, or spatial extent could introduce analytical bias unrelated to actual planning conditions. By applying a consistent preparation workflow to all Type 1 datasets, the LIST supports transparent comparison between layers and ensures that subsequent classification, weighting, and combination are based on a common technical foundation.

Suitability Classification and Scoring

Each Type 1 dataset is translated into a standardized suitability scale to enable comparison and combination across diverse planning factors. Because source datasets vary in units, measurement scales, and classification systems, they are reclassified into discrete suitability classes prior to combination.

For each dataset, source values or categories are assigned to qualitative suitability classes (for example, Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low) that reflect the relative appropriateness of an area for increased residential density and intensity within the context of housing-related planning objectives. These qualitative classes are then converted into numeric suitability factors on a common scale to support raster-based calculation within the model.

This standardization step is necessary to ensure that very different types of information can be meaningfully assessed together within a single screening framework. Ecological classes, groundwater indicators, slope values, and infrastructure proximity measures do not begin on a common measurement basis. Reclassification into a shared suitability scale allows each dataset to contribute to the model according to planning relevance rather than according to its original format or range of values.

Classification decisions are informed by:

- Professional planning judgment
- Established environmental and hazard management practices
- Alignment with Islands Trust priorities related to ecological integrity and freshwater sustainability
- Risk considerations associated with residential density and intensity

Classification schemes are layer-specific and reflect whether higher or lower source values correspond to greater or lesser suitability in a planning context.

Weighting and Combination

Two related but distinct processes occur within the LIST model: suitability scoring within individual layers, and weighting between layers in the composite analysis.

Within each Type 1 dataset, source attributes are classified into standardized suitability factors. This process assigns relative suitability values (e.g., Very High to Very Low) to the underlying characteristics of that dataset. For example, specific ecosystem types, groundwater recharge classes, or slope ranges are translated into numeric suitability factors based on planning intent, technical analysis, and professional judgment. This step determines how conditions within a single layer contribute to suitability and is undertaken through technical professional review.

Once all layers are standardized to a common suitability scale, relative weights are applied between layers to reflect their overall influence within the screening model and to support community planning objectives. Layer weighting addresses the relative importance of one planning factor compared to another (e.g., freshwater sustainability relative to road adjacency). Weighting decisions are informed by planning objectives, professional expertise, and risk-based considerations associated with residential development.

Within the Suitability Modeler environment, weighted raster layers are combined using raster calculations to generate a composite screening surface. The resulting output represents the cumulative influence of all classified and weighted factors under the defined model structure. Both classification schemes and layer weights are explicitly configured and documented within the model. Any adjustment requires modification of model parameters and re-execution of the analytical workflow, ensuring consistency, transparency, and reproducibility.

The table below defines how each Type 1 dataset is classified and weighted within the LIST model. Source data are standardized into a common suitability scale, enabling multiple planning factors to be systematically combined into the composite screening map. The table also distinguishes between suitability scoring applied within individual layers and the relative weighting assigned between layers in the overall model.

THEME	LAYER	OVERALL SUITABILITY WEIGHTING	LAYER UNITS		CLASSIFICATION VALUE	SUITABILITY	SUITABILITY FACTOR
Ecosystems	Sensitive Ecosystems	15	Primary Class	N/A	0	Very High	10
				Young Forest	0.33	High	7
				Seasonally Flooded	1	Very Low	1
				Mature Forest	0.66	Moderate	3
				Herbaceous	1	Very Low	1
				Cliff	1	Very Low	1
				Sand	1	Very Low	1
				Wetland	1	Very Low	1
				Woodland	1	Very Low	1
				Older Forest	1	Very Low	1
	Riparian	1	Very Low	1			
	Freshwater	1	Very Low	1			
	At Risk Species & Ecological Communities	15	Risk Scale	None	0	Very High	10
				Yellow	0.33	High	6
				Blue	0.66	Moderate	3
Dominant Age	10	Age Scale Percentage	Red	1	Low	1	
			Cleared	0	Very High	10	
			Pole/Sappling	10-20	High	8	
			Young Forest	40-60	Moderate	5	
			Mature Forest	60-100	Low	2	
Freshwater	Groundwater Recharge Potential	10	Potential Raster Class	Old Forest	>100	Very Low	1
				High Discharge	0.0-0.1	Low	5
				Low	0.1-0.2	High	8
				Moderate	0.2-0.4	High	8
				High	0.4-0.8	Low	2
	Combined Resiliency	10	Resiliency Risk Class	Very High	>0.8	Very Low	1
				Very High	0.8-1.0	Very Low	1
				High	0.5-0.8	Low	1
				Moderate	0.3-0.5	Moderate	5
				Low	0.1 - 0.3	High	9
				Very Low	0 - 0.1	Very High	10
	Groundwater Well Density	10	Wells per Km ²	Very Low	<1	Very High	10
				Low	1-10	High	8
				Moderate	10-20	Moderate	4
				High	20-30	Low	2
				Very High	>30	Very Low	1
	Risk of Saltwater Intrusion	10	Risk Class	Very Low	VERY LOW	Very High	10
				Low	LOW	High	8
				Moderate	MODERATE	Moderate	5
High				HIGH	Low	2	
Very High				VERY HIGH	Very Low	1	
Geohazards and Infrastructure	Road Adjacency	10	Distance (m)	Very Near	<200	Very High	10
				Near	200-400	High	8
				Moderate	400-600	Moderate	5
				Far	600-800	Low	2
				Very Far	800-1000	Very Low	1
	Steep slopes	10	Degree Slope	Very Low	0-5	Very High	10
				Low	5-9	High	9
				Moderate	9-15	Moderate	5
				High	15-30	Low	1
			Very High	>30	Very Low	0	

IMPLEMENTATION

The Land Information Screening Tool is intended to support housing-related planning discussions by identifying regional areas of opportunity for increased residential density and intensity in a manner informed by ecological integrity, freshwater sustainability, geohazard considerations, transportation, and infrastructure context.

The LIST is a decision-support tool and not a regulatory instrument. Its outputs are intended to inform professional planning judgment, policy development, and community discussion, rather than to prescribe specific land use outcomes. The composite suitability map is most appropriately used to identify areas where further planning exploration may be warranted, including consideration of zoning, housing policy, servicing alignment, and growth strategy discussions.

Areas identified as having lower relative suitability should not be interpreted as conservation designations or development prohibitions. Conversely, areas identified as having higher relative suitability do not imply development approval or reduced regulatory oversight. All proposals remain subject to existing bylaws, development permit areas, environmental requirements, site-specific studies, and applicable provincial legislation.

Documentation and Reproducibility

The LIST methodology is documented to ensure transparency, defensibility, and repeatability. Technical documentation includes data sources, processing steps, classification criteria, weighting structures, and model configuration details. This documentation is maintained separately from this memorandum as supporting technical material. As datasets are updated or refined, the suitability model can be re-run using the established workflow to maintain consistency across analyses. Model expressions, processing scripts, and implementation steps are preserved as part of the technical record and may be appended where required to support review, audit, or replication.

Use of Data

Type 2 and Type 3 datasets are not incorporated into the suitability scoring process and do not influence composite suitability values. Instead, these datasets are applied as overlay layers to provide contextual information, identify localized constraints or exclusions, and flag areas requiring additional review. This separation preserves the methodological consistency of the island-wide suitability analysis while ensuring that site-specific, sensitive, or restricted information appropriately informs planning interpretation and professional judgment. Overlay data supports responsible application of the LIST without altering the standardized regional screening framework.

Internal Technical Review and Staff Coordination

Planning and GIS staff are responsible for maintaining the technical integrity of the LIST. This includes reviewing underlying datasets, confirming classification schemes and layer weights, and ensuring that overlay layers are current and appropriately applied. Prior to presentation to a Local Trust Committee, staff review the composite suitability output alongside Type 2 and Type 3 overlays to identify any contextual considerations requiring clarification. Staff interpretation ensures that the tool is applied consistently and that results are presented within their appropriate analytical scope and limitations.

Any proposed technical adjustments to classification thresholds, weighting structures, or model configuration are evaluated internally to confirm methodological consistency and alignment with Islands Trust planning objectives before re-running the model.

Internal review also provides the opportunity to identify data gaps, assess whether newly available information warrants a model update, and confirm that any island-specific constraints are being appropriately interpreted through overlay layers rather than through informal adjustment of core model outputs. This process supports a consistent line between technical model administration and planning interpretation.

Local Trust Committee Workshop and Model Discussion

The LIST may be presented to a Local Trust Committee (LTC) as part of housing-related planning discussions. Workshops provide an opportunity for trustees to understand how the model operates, how individual layers contribute to overall suitability, and how relative weighting reflects planning objectives.

Trustee discussion may include consideration of relative layer weighting within the model to reflect local planning priorities, provided that adjustments remain consistent with Islands Trust mandate, adopted policy direction, and technical standards. Any proposed modification to layer weights must be formally documented and implemented by staff through re-execution of the established modelling workflow to ensure transparency and comparability.

Attribute-level classification within individual datasets — including ecological classes, hazard thresholds, freshwater risk categories, or provincially defined standards — is based on authoritative source data and professional technical interpretation. These classifications are not subject to ad hoc modification through workshop discussion. Changes to classification criteria, threshold definitions, or source dataset selection require formal technical review, documentation of rationale, and administrative approval prior to model revision.

The addition or removal of Type 1 datasets from the suitability model similarly requires formal staff review to ensure methodological integrity and consistency across islands. All model revisions are version-controlled and recorded to maintain a clear analytical history of adjustments over time.

Community Engagement and Public Communication

The LIST may be used to support community engagement by illustrating regional patterns of relative suitability and explaining how environmental, freshwater, and infrastructure considerations influence planning discussions. When shared publicly, outputs are presented with appropriate context regarding limitations, intended use, and the distinction between screening-level analysis and site-specific evaluation. Restricted (Type 3) data is not displayed in public-facing materials. Community feedback may inform future planning discussions and, where appropriate, may be considered in subsequent model review processes through established governance procedures.

Model Maintenance, Updates, and Governance Controls

The LIST is intended to function as a controlled and updateable planning support tool. As underlying datasets are revised, improved, or replaced, the analysis may be re-run using the established methodology to maintain technical defensibility, consistency, and planning relevance. The model configuration, including classification schemes, layer weights, and associated technical documentation, is retained as part of the formal technical record. All modifications are tracked and version-controlled to maintain a clear record of what was changed, when the change was made, and the rationale supporting it.

Substantive modification of the LIST, including changes to Type 1 layer selection, suitability classification schemes, or layer weighting, is to occur only through a documented review process led by planning and GIS staff. Where model adjustments are considered in response to evolving planning priorities, trustee discussion, community input, or improved data availability, those changes must be formally evaluated, documented, and implemented through revision of the model configuration. They are not to be introduced through ad hoc interpretation, informal adjustment, or presentation-level modification of outputs.

This governance approach is necessary to preserve methodological integrity, comparability, and transparency across islands and over time. It ensures that LIST remains a professionally administered decision-support tool that can evolve in response to improved data and planning needs without compromising analytical consistency or public accountability.

SUMMARY

This memorandum provides technical guidance for the implementation and use of the Islands Trust Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) within the Housing Options Toolkit. LIST is a GIS-based decision-support tool designed to identify regional patterns of relative suitability for increased residential density and intensity, informed by ecological integrity, freshwater sustainability, geohazard considerations, transportation, and infrastructure context. The tool supports housing-related planning by providing a consistent and evidence-based framework for screening land across an island and identifying broad areas where additional planning exploration may be warranted.

The memorandum establishes a clear and defensible framework for how spatial data is incorporated into LIST. Inputs are classified into three data types: Type 1 island-wide raster datasets used in suitability scoring; Type 2 site-specific vector overlays used to inform interpretation and planning review; and Type 3 restricted or non-public overlays used internally where sensitive information must be considered. Technical standards, access considerations, and documentation requirements are defined for each data type to ensure consistency, transparency, and appropriate professional oversight. This structure allows regionally consistent screening to be undertaken while preserving the flexibility to reflect island-specific conditions, local constraints, and data governance requirements.

The methodology underpinning LIST is implemented using ArcGIS Pro and ESRI's Suitability Modeler within a multiple-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) framework. This approach enables diverse environmental, hydrological, hazard, and infrastructure factors to be systematically standardized, classified, weighted, and combined in a repeatable and transparent manner. The methodology distinguishes between suitability scoring within individual layers and weighting between layers in the composite model, ensuring that both the internal logic of each dataset and the broader planning influence of each factor are explicitly documented. Supporting technical documentation, including model configuration, processing logic, and implementation steps, is maintained separately to ensure reproducibility and facilitate future updates.

The principal deliverable of LIST is a composite screening map presented through an internal ArcGIS Online web map on an island-by-island basis. The web map includes the composite screening output, contributing Type 1 input layers, and relevant overlay layers, allowing planning staff to review how different environmental, freshwater, hazard, transportation, and infrastructure factors shape the overall screening pattern. In practice, LIST supports early-stage planning analysis, policy exploration, and structured discussion with Local Trust Committees by providing a shared evidence base for comparing areas across an island and focusing attention on locations where increased residential density and intensity may merit further consideration.

The memorandum introduces a framework for maintaining and updating the tool over time. Model configuration, including classification schemes and layer weights, is documented and retained as part of the formal technical record. Substantive changes to Type 1 layer selection, classification, or weighting are to occur only through a documented review process led by planning and GIS staff, with changes formally recorded and version-controlled. This governance approach ensures that LIST remains transparent, comparable, and professionally administered as new datasets become available, planning priorities evolve, and additional islands are advanced through the screening process.

The guidance set out in this memorandum positions LIST as a practical and defensible planning support tool for housing-related policy work within the Islands Trust Area. Used within its intended scope, LIST strengthens planning conversations by clarifying regional patterns of opportunity and constraint, supporting transparent communication with trustees and communities, and ensuring that land suitability screening remains grounded in consistent methodology, high-quality spatial data, and appropriate professional oversight.



TOOL 4 – Land Information Screening Tool

Introduction

The Land Information Screening Tool (LIST) is a mapping tool that integrates a range of existing data layers to support land use planning for housing. As a spatial decision support framework it integrates multiple geospatial layers, each representing an environmental, social, or infrastructural factor that contributes to overall land suitability.

The tool builds on Islands Trust’s history of technical initiatives such as Sensitive Ecosystem Mapping, Steep Slope Hazard Mapping, the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy, Freshwater Atlas, Groundwater Recharge Mapping, and Watershed Resiliency Mapping. These earlier projects established a foundation of datasets, technical standards, and modelling processes. The LIST takes the next step by providing a composite lens through which relative land suitability can be consistently assessed across islands.

Data Layers

The ‘Type I’ mapping layers are the data layers that contribute to the presentation map. These are island-wide raster layers that directly contribute to the LIST layer. These layers must be spatially continuous and support spatial overlay analysis in ArcGIS Pro’s Suitability Modeller. The Type 1 data layers in the current version are:

1. Freshwater Sustainability – Groundwater recharge, aquifer vulnerability, saltwater intrusion and watershed resiliency mapping layers incorporates these hydrological conditions directly into suitability calculations.
2. Ecosystem Protection – Sensitive ecosystems, at-risk ecological communities, and structural forest stages are included as mapping layers to incorporate biodiversity.
3. Hazard Avoidance – Landforms with steep slopes are included to identify unsafe or unsustainable development.
4. Community Integrity – A road adjacency layer is included to incorporated connected communities, avoiding sprawl while supporting sustainable density.

Type II Layers are vector layers that identify discrete features or non-suitable areas. These layers may be used to define land that is ‘Not Applicable’ to this analysis, e.g. Parks and Protected Areas, or conversely areas of environmental interest or concerns such as shoreline types. These layers can be readily modified to incorporate external mapping that does not meet the Type I raster standards, or are not regional datasets, e.g. local conservancy mapping products.

Type III layers are raster layers that are not part of the modeller, provide important data, but which are confidential, e.g. Archaeological or other Indigenous information. By enabling contributions from stewardship groups and First Nations, the LIST recognizes that community-based data can identify cultural sites, habitat corridors, and other values that may not appear in regional datasets.



Islands Trust

The LIST more than a technical model — it is a planning framework grounded in sustainability. It provides both high-level, island-wide indicators (Type I data) and fine-grained, site-specific considerations (Type II data), ensuring that land use decisions are both evidence-based and context-aware.

The Model displays the integrated Type I data layers into a single suitability layer, with land classified along a spectrum of less suitable to more suitable.

Weighting: Weighting means giving priority to different criteria or factors that play a role in overall suitability. Each criterion or layer may have a different impact on the final decision. Weighting helps rank these criteria based on their importance in decision-making. The total percentage is capped at 100 with the various Type I layers weighted equally. This weighting can be adjusted by planners, local trust committees, or others.

Original Classification: is the original classification that came with the layer, these are not adjustable.

ISLANDS TRUST LAND INFORMATION SCREENING TOOL

Attachment 3



To preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, First Nations, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.



Islands Trust

The Land Analysis Screening Tool (LIST) is designed to evaluate and prioritize areas across the Islands Trust region for sustainable development while emphasizing environmental conservation and community resilience.

The tool integrates data on ecological sensitivity, freshwater sustainability, transportation, infrastructure, and slope stability to support informed land-use decisions.

Objectives of the Land Analysis Screening Tool is to:

- Identify areas suitable for additional residential density while prioritizing environmental conservation.
- Support evidence-based land-use decisions using geospatial analysis.
- Integrate ecological, social, and economic factors into planning.
- Align with Official Community Plans (OCPs) and Land Use Bylaws (LUBs).

The methodology involved collating and processing datasets related to:

- Ecological Sensitivity: critical habitats, protected areas, biodiversity zones.,
- Freshwater Sustainability: Groundwater vulnerability, recharge zones.
- Watershed Resiliency Mapping,
- Transportation & Infrastructure: Accessibility, road networks, service availability.
- Slope Stability & Geohazards: Identifying landslides, erosion-prone areas.

•

The methodology involved using existing maps and spatial information:

- Use of ArcPro's Suitability Modeler Tool to apply weighted scoring systems.
- Application of Multiple-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) for prioritization.
- Overlaying datasets to assess suitability for residential expansion.

Protect
Environment

Preserve
Freshwater

Infrastructure
Sustainability

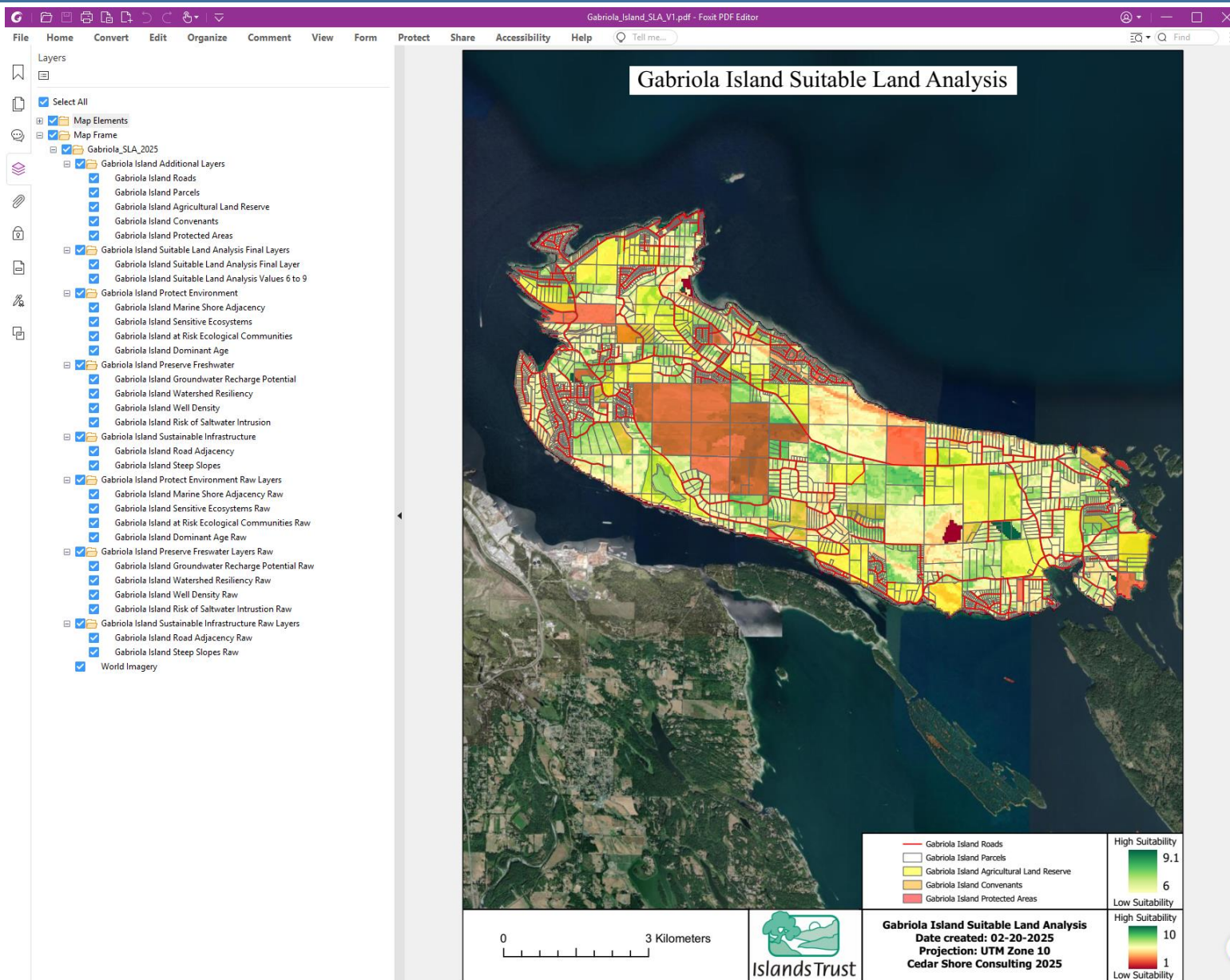
Land Information Screening Tool

THEME	OVERALL THEME WEIGHTING	SUITABILITY WEIGHTING	LAYER	REFERENCE NAME
PROTECT ENVIRONMENT	40	10	Marine shore adjacency	Methods for Determining High Value Biodiversity Areas and Identifying Land Securement Options Within the Islands Trust Area
		10	Sensitive Ecosystems	Howe Sound Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping to Sensitive Ecosystem Mapping
		10	At Risk Ecological Communities	Methods for Determining High Value Biodiversity Areas and Identifying Land Securement Options Within the Islands Trust Area
		10	Dominant Age via Vegetation Resource Inventory	Forest Inventory Strategic Plan
PRESERVE FRESHWATER	40	10	Groundwater Recharge Potential	Islands Trust Area Groundwater Recharge Mapping Project
		10	Watershed Resiliency	Watershed Resiliency Mapping in the Islands Trust Area Report
		10	Groundwater Well Density	GIS process Kernel Density of the BC Groundwater Wells Registry (GWELLS)
		10	Risk of Saltwater Intrusion	GIS Modelling of Sea Water Intrusion Risk Along British Columbia's Coast
SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE	20	10	Road Adjacency	Digital Road Atlas geodatabase
		10	Steep Slopes	Processed LIDARBC Digital Elevation Model

THEME	LAYER	OVERALL SUITABILITY WEIGHTING	LAYER UNITS	ORIGINAL CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION VALUE	SUITABILITY	SUITABILITY FACTOR
PRESERVE FRESHWATER	Groundwater Recharge Potential	10	POTENTIAL RASTER SCALE	HIGH DISCHARGE	0.0-0.1	LOW	5
				LOW	0.1-0.2	HIGH	8
				MODERATE	0.2-0.4	HIGH	8
				HIGH	0.4-0.8	LOW	2
				VERY HIGH	>0.8	VERY LOW	1
	Watershed Resiliency	10	RESILIENCE RASTER SCALE	VERY HIGH	0.8-1.0	VERY LOW	1
				HIGH	0.5-0.8	LOW	1
				MODERATE	0.3-0.5	MODERATE	5
				LOW	0.1 - 0.3	HIGH	9
				VERY LOW	0 - 0.1	VERY HIGH	10
	Groundwater Well Density	10	WELLS per Km ²	VERY LOW	<1	VERY HIGH	10
				LOW	1-10	HIGH	8
				MODERATE	10-20	MODERATE	4
				HIGH	20-30	LOW	2
				VERY HIGH	>30	VERY LOW	1
	Risk of Saltwater Intrusion	10	RISK CLASS	VERY LOW	VERY LOW	VERY HIGH	10
				LOW	LOW	HIGH	8
				MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE	5
				HIGH	HIGH	LOW	2
				VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY LOW	1

THEME	LAYER	OVERALL SUITABILITY WEIGHTING	LAYER UNITS	ORIGINAL CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION VALUE	SUITABILITY	SUITABILITY FACTOR
PROTECT ENVIRONMENT	Marine shore adjacency	10	SHORE ZONES	Man-made	0.5	MODERATE	5
				Unknown	0.5	MODERATE	5
				Rock Cliff	0.6	LOW	3
				Channel	0.7	LOW	2
				Mud Flat	0.7	LOW	2
				Gravel Flat	0.9	VERY LOW	1
				Gravel Beach	0.9	VERY LOW	1
				Rock with Gravel Beach	0.9	VERY LOW	1
				Sand Beach	1	VERY LOW	1
				Estuary, Marsh or Lagoon	1	VERY LOW	1
				Rock with Sand Beach	1	VERY LOW	1
				Sand Flat	1	VERY LOW	1
				Rock Platform	1	VERY LOW	1
				Sand and Gravel Beach	1	VERY LOW	1
				Sand and Gravel Flat	1	VERY LOW	1
	Rock, Sand and Gravel Beach	1	VERY LOW	1			
	Sensitive Ecosystems	10	PRIMARY CLASS	NA	0	VERY HIGH	10
				YOUNG FOREST	1	VERY LOW	1
				SEASONALLY FLOODED	1	VERY LOW	1
				MATURE/OLD FOREST	1	VERY LOW	1
				HERBACEOUS	1	VERY LOW	1
				CLIFF	1	VERY LOW	1
				SAND	1	VERY LOW	1
				WETLAND	1	VERY LOW	1
				WOODLAND	1	VERY LOW	1
				OLDER FOREST	1	VERY LOW	1
				RIPARIAN	1	VERY LOW	1
				FRESHWATER	1	VERY LOW	1
	At Risk Ecological Communities	10	RISK SCALE	NONE	0	VERY HIGH	10
				YELLOW	.33	HIGH	6
BLUE				.66	MODERATE	3	
RED				1.0	LOW	1	
Dominant Age	10	AGE SCALE PERCENTAGE	Cleared	0	VERY HIGH	10	
			Pole/Sappling	10-20	HIGH	8	
			Young Forest	40-60	MODERATE	5	
			Mature Forest	60-100	LOW	2	
			Old Forest	>100	VERY LOW	1	

THEME	LAYER	OVERALL SUITABILITY WEIGHTING	LAYER UNITS	ORIGINAL CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION VALUE	SUITABILITY	SUITABILITY FACTOR
SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE	Road Adjacency	10	DISTANCE (m)	VERY NEAR	<200	VERY HIGH	10
				NEAR	200-400	HIGH	8
				MODERATE	400-600	MODERATE	5
				FAR	600-800	LOW	2
				VERY FAR	800-1000	VERY LOW	1
	Steep slopes	10	DEGREE SLOPE	VERY LOW	0-5	VERY HIGH	10
				LOW	5-9	HIGH	9
				MODERATE	9-15	MODERATE	5
				HIGH	15-30	LOW	1
			VERY HIGH	>30	VERY LOW	0	



- The results of the Land Information Screening Tool have been compiled into a ESRI Webmap for presentation and review by Planning Staff
- This is a static tool, thereby desired changes in suitability weighting cannot happen dynamically.
- The project team has addressed the need for an online dynamic approach to this tool that can be an engaging tool for planners, LTCs, and the public. This webmap advanced this and replaced the layered PDF presentation method (left).

Role of the Land Analysis Screening Tool in Policy Integration

Supporting Land-Use Planning

- Official Community Plans (OCPs): Aligning zoning & density allocations.
- Land Use Bylaws (LUBs): Ensuring sustainable regulations.

Collaboration, Partnerships, and Community Engagement

- Use of third-party government information and academic research
- Potential for Collaborating with First Nations, local interest groups, and other agencies.

Enhancing access to data and public transparency in planning decisions.

Challenges

Data Availability & Accuracy

- Inconsistent or incomplete spatial data from island to island can limit the tool's effectiveness.
- Standardizing data collection especially with environmental data
- Working with data source agencies can improve accuracy.

Complex Ecosystem Interactions

- Environmental factors like groundwater, biodiversity, and climate resilience are interdependent.
- Dynamic models and adaptive strategies may enhance analysis.

Balancing Conservation vs. Development

- Growth pressures may conflict with ecological protection.
- Transparent, science-based planning may help mitigate conflicts.

Opportunities

Improved Data-Driven Decision-Making

- GIS and MCDA create objective, evidence-based land-use assessments.
- Structured data management supports better planning and policy decisions.

Proactive Conservation Planning

- Early identification of sensitive areas helps prevent environmental degradation.
- Specific focus on a certain value or theme may support long-term sustainability.

Facilitating Climate Resilience & Sustainability

- The tool helps align development with climate adaptation needs.
- This promotes resilient communities and ecosystems.

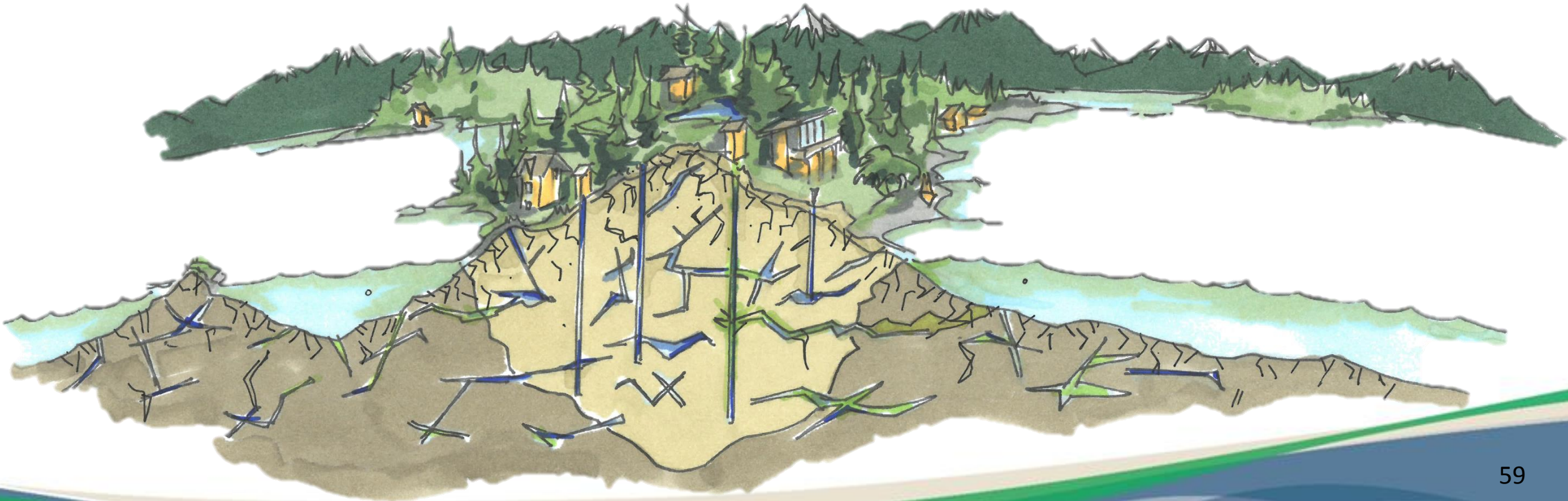
Collaborating with First Nations

- Increased housing density should not impact First Nations' interests, rights, and cultural sites.
- Early engagement ensures respectful and equitable planning.

ISLANDS TRUST LAND INFORMATION SCREENING TOOL



Islands Trust





REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** May 1, 2026
From: **Stefan Cermak** **Date Prepared:** April 22, 2026
 Director, Planning Services
SUBJECT **Work Plan Update**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Regional Planning Committee amends its active projects list by replacing completed Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 1.2.3 - *Improve bylaw enforcement policies and procedures to be administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with the aim of restoring public confidence* with Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 2.3.2 - *Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan*.
2. To request staff to draft business cases to address the following Trust Council key initiatives:
 - a. [list]

DIRECTOR of PLANNING SERVICES COMMENTS: The proposed work plan amendments and business cases are proposed as per Trust Councils Strategic Plan and resolutions.

-
- 1 **PURPOSE:** To consider amendments to the Regional Planning Committee work program resulting from actions since Trust Council’s adoption of a new Strategic Plan in March 2025.
 - 2 **BACKGROUND:** Trust Council adopted a new [Strategic Plan](#) during its March 2025 regular business meeting. Trust Council subsequently amended the Strategic September 17, 2025, by replacing Key Initiative 2.3.2 “Design a plan to advocate to enhance community access to funding for housing in the Trust Area” with: “Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan.”

The Strategic Plan has numerous initiatives assigned to the Regional Planning Committee (RPC).

RPC Top Priorities

The Strategic Plan has prioritized the following key initiatives for RPC:

Key Initiative 1.2.3: Improve bylaw enforcement policies and procedures to be administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with the aim of restoring public confidence

Key Initiative 2.1.3: Update and Implement the Freshwater Sustainability

Strategy (2022-2032)

Key Initiative 2.3.2: Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan

Key Initiative 3.2.4: Monitor progress of protection of ecosystem health in all land use planning decisions

Each key initiative is discussed below.

Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy Amendment

Trust Council adopted amendments to Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Policy 5.5.1 and its accompanying Best Practices Manual. Trust Council also adopted an implementation plan that commits staff to report back with a report on monitoring and evaluation on a semi-annual cycle effective September 2026.

As the implementation plan operationalizes the new policy, this key initiative should be considered complete and may be removed from the RPC work program.

Update and Implement the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy

Trust Council approved reviewing the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy (FWSS). This review will include seeking an independent mid-term assessment of the strategy by a qualified external party. However, Trust Council did not support resourcing the drafting of an implementation plan defining the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Planning Committee, Trust Programs Committee, Trust Council and key staff, nor its operationalization through multi-year work plans, budget requests, and program-specific implementation plans.

RPC may request staff to draft a business case to complete the FWSS, including engaging an independent qualified external party to draft an implementation plan, as per original RPC direction. Staff have not recommended a business case at this time, pending Trust Council's consideration of the review.

Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan

In February 2026, RPC received a briefing on updates to the Housing Options Toolkit and the status of the Land Information Screening Tool (LIST)(Action 10 of the Housing Strategic Action Plan). Following consideration, RPC carried the following [draft] resolution:

That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to provide options and recommendations to improve communication on the methodology and rationale used to create models in the Land Information Screening Tool (LIST), and that these can accompany any public release of maps or models that support LTC projects.

A separate report related to the resolution is included in the May 1, 2026 RPC agenda.

Monitor progress of protection of ecosystem health in all land use planning decisions

The Islands Trust successfully received a grant from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to support recovery of species at risk across the Islands Trust area by improving incorporation and integration of biological information into Islands Trust decision making process and projects. The funding enabled the Islands Trust to hire a full-time biologist from February 2025 until March 2026.

In February 2026 RPC received a report and presentation summarizing work completed to date and work projected to be completed by the end of the fiscal period and the grant funding period. The final deliverables should be available at the next regular business meeting and include a *State of the Islands Species at Risk* summary.

Trust Council received a similar presentation during their March 2026 regular business meeting and carried the following [draft] resolution:

That Islands Trust Council request staff to explore opportunities to establish a partnership with UBC's Conservation Lab for addressing priority needs in incorporating biology into decision making in land use planning and with the Conservancy.

Staff previously met with Dr. Martin, who leads the UBC Conservation Lab, in August 2025, to discuss potential collaboration. Subsequent follow-up communications did not receive a response. As noted during Trust Council discussions, further information would be required before determining whether this work can proceed.

RPC Future Projects

Trust Council's Strategic Plan identifies several future initiatives for RPC. These have been placed on the future projects list with updates.

Key Initiative 2.1.2 Develop a growth management planning framework that includes data on growth trends and projections, geological and hydrological capacities, infrastructure, and development rates.

On July 18, 2025, RPC requested that the draft business case for the development of a Growth Management Planning Framework be revised as a multi-year strategy, and that staff assess how the biologist's work on ecosystem indicators, and build out maps and suitable land analysis tools be incorporated in that framework, before the next stages are envisioned.

This direction was considered by the Trust Programs Committee, which passed the following motion:

That Trust Programs Committee recommend that Financial Planning Committee add \$150,000 to the draft 2026/27 budget to support advancement of the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, as of July 2025, key initiatives 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.3.1, 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, in cooperation with First Nations and in a manner that considers the Islands Trust Conservancy's plans for ecosystem mapping and analysis, through development of a business plan for a multi-year, joint Trust Programs Committee/Regional Planning Committee-led project to fund a:

1. Consultant (selected via Request for Proposal) to:
 - o conduct needs assessment and
 - o develop strategy for:
 - data/mapping layer acquisition,
 - partnership development,
 - data analysis,
 - indicator development, monitoring and reporting.

2. Capacity funding to support involvement of First Nations' staff in development and implementation of the project.
3. Strategy development for long-term funding, investigation of the use of reserve funds, and potential grants.

On September 9, 2025, Regional Planning Committee (RPC) considered Trust Program Committee's motion and carried the following motion:

That Regional Planning Committee indicate support for Trust Programs Committee resolution *TPC-2025-063* and requests staff to develop a business case with appropriate budget for Phase 1 (initial development) of a multi year project related to ecosystem health and community resiliency indicators, scoping in relevant agencies, academics, First Nations partners, that will co-develop the project framework and methodology.

That Regional Planning Committee request staff to develop a strategy for long term funding, investigation of the use of reserve funds, including funding partnerships and potential grants, as indicated in resolution *TPC-2025-063*.

The resulting business case "*Trust Area Resilience Assessment Initiative*" was not supported by Trust Council.

RPC may consider resubmitting the business case; however, given the Fall 2026 election timing and delays in updating the Policy Statement, staff recommend not advancing it at this time. Alternatively, RPC may consider a more modest request, such as updating land disturbance mapping to advance elements of the initiative.

3 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL: RPC's updated work program would be amended to addresses Trust Council's Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL: None.

POLICY: Work program amendments align with Trust Council policies.

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS: None.

FIRST NATIONS: Many of the projects may be of interest to Indigenous Governing Bodies.

OTHER: None.

4 RELEVANT POLICY(S):

- [Policy 2.3.1](#) Council Committee System
- [Policy 6.2.1](#) Priority Setting/Review Guidelines
- [Policy 6.7.1](#) Work Program, Follow-up Action List and Priorities Matrix

5 ATTACHMENT(S): Trust Council Strategic Plan - summary table

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendations:

1. That Regional Planning Committee amends its active projects list by replacing completed Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 1.2.3 - *Improve bylaw enforcement policies and procedures to be administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with the aim of restoring public confidence* with Trust Council Strategic Plan Key Initiative 2.3.2 - *Implement the Housing Strategic Action Plan*.
2. To request staff to draft business cases to address the following Trust Council key initiatives:
 - a. [LIST]

Alternatives:

- That Regional Planning Committee recommend to Trust Council, via the Executive Committee, that the Regional Planning Committee’s top three priorities be:
 - [list]
- That Regional Planning Committee request staff to draft business cases to address the following Trust Council key initiatives:
 - [List]

Prepared By: Director, Planning Services



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** January 13, 2026
From: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager **Date Prepared:** December 19, 2025
SUBJECT: **Minor Project Criteria**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Regional Planning Committee advise using the attached Minor Project Initiation Criteria and their implementation in the Director's determination of the allocation of resources for local trust committee Minor Projects.

1 PURPOSE: To provide Regional Planning Committee with a summary of criteria that has been developed by the Local Planning Team for LTC Minor Projects.

2 BACKGROUND: The Regional Planning Committee's Terms of Reference include the following:

- Advising on the provision and allocation of resources to deliver local planning services to island communities;
- Developing guidelines, policies and models for use by staff and local trust committees and/or Trust Council as requested by Trust Council.

Trust Council's Priority Setting/Review Guidelines Policy ([6.2.1](#)) states that each local trust committee may undertake one smaller project at any one time (other than Salt Spring, which may have a maximum of three projects). These 'Minor Projects' are in addition to any Major Projects approved by Trust Council and supported by the Regional Planning Team. Other than stating that Minor Projects are amendments to an official community plan and/or land use bylaw that take six to 12 months to complete, and / or require a budget of less than \$5,000, Trust Council's Best Management Practices for Delivery of Local Planning Services ([5.9.1](#)) provides limited guidance on the approval of Minor Projects. Projects are identified by each LTC, and do not need a business case, and a budget is allocated by the Director from funding provided by Trust Council in the annual budget. These Minor Projects are to be supported by planners from the Local Planning Team, typically the senior planner assigned to that local trust committee.

The Local Planning Team has identified an absence of criteria or guidelines for the initiation of Minor Projects, along with delays in completing on-going Minor Projects within endorsed timelines, as issues with some of the projects that these planners have been supporting. Some projects that started with appropriate timelines drag on into multiple fiscal years, with scope creep or extended community engagement, while other projects that are arguably trivial are prioritized at the expense of updating significant policies and regulations in the same or other local trust areas.

In order to assist in allocating limited resources efficiently, fairly, and equitably, the attached criteria have been developed with the assistance of the Local Planning Team to provide guidance to the Director of Planning Services in approving Minor Projects.

The attached 'Minor Project Initiation Criteria' proposes criteria by which new, and on-going, Minor Projects should be considered for approval of funding and allocation of staff time by the Director. Key criteria proposed include:

- There should be adequate budget and planner and other staff resources available to realistically support the substantial completion of the project within the estimated timeline.
- A new project should not be approved until any on-going project is completed, specifically this would include post-hearing staff work such as referrals to EC and the Minister, communications and other implementation measures.
- Projects should be within the jurisdiction of the LTC and the expertise of planners; advocacy, communications, administrative bylaws or relationship-building initiatives should not be considered as Minor Projects, but should be carried out with other funding and supported by other staff, such as Trust Area or Legislative Services.
- Minor projects should result in substantive amendments to an OCP or LUB that will advance a Trust Council priority, address a Trust-wide planning issue, implement an OCP by updating a Land Use Bylaw, implement model policies or regulations, or address specific land use issues.
- LTCs should not re-visit issues that have already been considered in the same or the previous term. This may be difficult for some trustees that feel that the mistakes of the previous term need to be corrected; however subsequent bylaw changes often tend to be minimal.
- Discretion to address minor issues is also included, such as technical amendments or completing Major Projects.
- On-going Minor Projects that have not been progressing should not be funded indefinitely, particularly where timelines are extended and project scope is expanded or changed repeatedly. In situations where projects are exceeding timelines or scope is expanding, LTCs may need to consider submitting a business case for a Major Project.

The approach recommended in the attached would shift the approval of LTC Minor Projects towards trust-wide priorities, a narrower focus on amending bylaws to address key land use issues, and increased accountability to complete projects in a timely manner, and away from the long-standing approach of broadly supporting local trust committees' autonomy to undertaken each LTC's chosen initiatives with funding and planner time.

Staff's recommendation supports Trust Council's approval of the Islands Trust 2025 Operational Review within which contained recommendations to:

- Not initiate any new projects in the 2026/26 fiscal year that are already underway,
- Trust Council, Executive Committee and the Conservancy Board adopt the practice of not directing staff to undertake any new work without **first requesting a project feasibility assessment to determine the operational impacts and preliminary implementation options.**

Staff's recommendation is for RPC advise using the proposed criteria and recommend that the Director implement the criteria for new or on-going Minor Projects. With Trust Council's direction that no new projects be initiated in the coming fiscal year, this will permit the criteria to be introduced to local trust committees during the post-election orientation with effective implementation in early 2027. It would also allow staff to develop supporting documentation such as checklists for potential new projects and to make revisions to the criteria.

Alternatively, RPC could identify changes or additions to the proposed criteria and request staff report back with minor changes.

Finally, if RPC does not support the use of these criteria, it may simply receive the RFD for information.

3 NEXT STEPS

1. Staff would implement the criteria in review and approval of future Minor Projects.

4 ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Draft Minor Project Criteria

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendation: That the Regional Planning Committee advise using the attached Minor Project Initiation Criteria and their implementation in the Director's determination of the allocation of resources for local trust committee Minor Projects.

Alternatives:

1. That RPC direct staff to not proceed with implementation of the Minor Project Criteria at this time.
2. That RPC receive for information.

Prepared By: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services

Minor Project Initiation Criteria

1. **Purpose:** To establish policy direction for the Director in determining how to allocate resources to local trust committee Minor Projects.
2. **Background:** In addition to any Major Projects approved by Trust Council and supported by the Regional Planning Team, Trust Council policy [6.2.1](#) states that each local trust committee (other than Salt Spring) may initiate one smaller project to undertake at any one time. These Minor Projects are limited in scope, budget, and timeline, and are intended to be delivered by a local trust committee's assigned planner. Minor Projects are identified by the LTC, and do not need a business case, with a budget allocated by the Director of Planning Services. In order to ensure that limited resources are allocated efficiently, fairly, and equitably, and that projects well-defined, this policy has been developed to provide guidance to the Director of Planning Services in approving Minor Projects.
3. **Existing Policy**
Trust Council Policy [5.9.1](#) (Best Management Practices for Delivery of Local Planning Services) sets out the following Goals for Planning Services projects:
 - 3.1 LTC planning projects are well-defined and planned;
 - 3.2 LTC projects reflect community and First Nations expectations;
 - 3.3 Staff, trustees, the public, and partners have certainty and clarity around how projects get allocated, resourced, and carried out, leading to realistic expectations;
 - 3.4 Resource allocation is efficient, fair and equitable;
 - 3.5 OCPs and LUBs are systematically updated on a regular basis;
 - 3.6 Planning is both proactive and adaptive;
 - 3.7 Local Planning implements Trust-wide planning initiatives and tools (eg. strategies, model bylaws).

The policy also states that Minor OCP/LUBs reviews may be undertaken as part of a LTCs normal work program, pending available Local Planning Team resources and includes the following definitions:

Minor Policy/Regulatory Work – amendments to an official community plan and/or land use bylaw that take six to 18 months to complete, and / or require a budget of less than \$5,000.

Local Planning Team - a Planning team consisting of senior planners assigned to undertake day-to-day planning functions of assigned local trust committees, including managing minor bylaw amendments, processing of major applications and referrals, responding to enquiries, and administering local trust committee meetings.

4. Minor Project Criteria:

Minor projects are funded from a single fund allocated annually by Trust Council and disbursed by the Director. These Minor Projects do not require a business case that is approved by Trust Council during the annual budget cycle, may be initiated at any time, and are supported by the planner assigned to the local trust committee.

Planners typically are assigned to more than one local trustee committee, and are also assigned complex applications, support local trust committee business meetings, and provide general support for the local trust committee. As budget resources are limited and planner time may be otherwise allocated, the Director, with advice from the Regional Planning Manager, may not be able to approve all Minor Projects identified by local trust committees.

Additionally, local trust committees may wish to advance projects that, while considered a local priority, do not align with Trust Council priorities and would come at the expense of other potential work.

This policy seeks to ensure that Minor Projects are well-defined and planned; that resources are allocated efficiently, fairly, and equitably; and support planning projects that implement Trust-wide initiatives.

The Director should assess proposed new Minor Projects, and on-going Minor Projects that are extending into a new fiscal year, based on the following criteria:

- 4.1 The project should not be contrary to any Trust Council policy or resolution;
- 4.2 The project would be expected to result in amendments to an OCP, LUB, or administrative Bylaws;
- 4.3 There are adequate staff resources available to support the project;
- 4.4 The project should reasonably be expected to be substantially completed within 18 months;
- 4.5 Costs should not be expected to exceed the maximum amount identified in policy;
- 4.6 Community engagement should not be proposed or anticipated to exceed that typical for a minor project (e.g. only one of the following: notification, Community Information Meeting, Public Hearing);

- 4.7 Work on an on-going Minor Project in the same local trust area has been completed;
- 4.8 The project should address issues within the jurisdiction of the LTC and should not be intended to solely result in advocacy actions or policies;
- 4.9 Amendments to administrative bylaws should be initiated or supported by Legislative Services, be Trust-wide, and should not be considered for a local trust committee Minor Project;
- 4.10 Minor projects should not be relationship building initiatives, communications or educational initiatives, applications for a grant, or mapping products not related to bylaw amendments.
- 4.11 The project should not be substantively similar to a project already undertaken by the LTC in the current or previous term;
- 4.12 The project should not be a bylaw enforcement policy or initiative, these should be supported by Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement;
- 4.13 The project should not be an amendment for an individual property, these should be considered by application, including by sponsorship where appropriate;
- 4.14 The project should address one or more of the following:
 - 4.14.1 A strategic plan priority (e.g. ecosystem protection, housing, reconciliation);
 - 4.14.2 A broad land use issue that is not included, or not adequately addressed, in current bylaws (e.g. vacation rentals, a new provincial statutory requirement, implementation of Policy Statement directives);
 - 4.14.3 Implementation of OCP policies through land use bylaw amendments, particularly for a recently completed Major Project;
 - 4.14.4 A technical review or update that would address errors or omissions in the bylaw or changes to land tenure (e.g. new parkland);
 - 4.14.5 A review of policies and regulations for a specific area (e.g. a village plan);
 - 4.14.6 A review of policies and regulations for a specific land use (e.g. agriculture, home occupations);
 - 4.14.7 A review of an out-of-date associated islands bylaw;

4.14.8 Implementation of model policies or regulations (e.g. new DPA, new subdivision regulations, TUP guidelines, DAI bylaw).

4.15 The Director may consider allocating Minor Project funding for completion of a Major Project where the Major Project has been substantially completed in the previous fiscal year and limited funding is requested for steps such as a hearing or implementation.

4.16 The Director may consider not approving additional funding and resource allocation for on-going projects in the following circumstances:

4.16.1 Little substantive progress has been made and the project has substantively exceeded the timeline;

4.16.2 The scope of the project has expanded or altered substantially;

4.16.3 No significant or meaningful bylaw amendments are being considered;

Where the scope or timeline of an on-going Minor Project has exceeded that originally approved, the Director may recommend that a local trust committee submit a business case for a Major Project to complete the work.

Active Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

1. *Improve bylaw enforcement policies and procedures to be administratively fair, reasonable and transparent with the aim of restoring public confidence (Strategic Plan Initiative 1.2.3)*

Activity:

- a. Review and amend Trust Council Policies 5.5.1 & 7.1.2
- b. Create a plain language Best Practices Manual

Responsible

Robert Kojima
Stefan Cermak
Warren Dingman

Dates

Rec'd: 13-Mar-2024
Target: 05-Mar-2026

2. *Update and Implement Freshwater Sustainability Strategy (2022-2032)(Strategic Plan Initiative 2.1.3)*

Activity:

- a. Independent review and update
- b. Draft an Implementation Plan
- c. Freshwater Atlas Update

Responsible

Stefan Cermak
William Shulba

Dates

Rec'd: 12-Feb-2020
Target: 10-Sep-2026

3. *Monitor progress of protection of ecosystem health in all land use planning decisions (Strategic Plan Initiative 3.2.4)*

Activity:

- a. Research and data collection
- b. Data analysis and integration
- c. Collaboration

Responsible

Patricia Woodruff
Stefan Cermak

Dates

Rec'd: 31-Mar-2025
Target: 31-Mar-2026

Regional Planning Committee

d. Apply/implement pilot monitoring

e. Build capacity and training

Staff Biologist drafting recommendations of how to integrate biological information into planning related decisions - emphasis on species at risk as per grant funding

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

1. <i>Review all Trust Council policies, and where appropriate, amend, combine, or rescind (all committees) (Strategic Plan Initiative 1.2.5)</i>	Responsible	Date Received
<p>Review and report to RPC.</p> <p>All Trust Council policies held by the Director of Planning Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Policy 4.1.4; 4.1.9; 4.1.13; 4.1.14; 4.1.15 (General LTC policies) ·Policy 4.2.2 (APC Operating Policy)* ·Policy 5.3.1; 5.3.2; 5.3.3; 5.3.5 (Community Planning) ·Policy 5.4.1; 5.4.2; 5.4.3; 5.4.4 (Land Use Regulation) ·Policy 5.5.1 (Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement) ·Policy 5.6.1 (Application Processing) ·Policy 5.7.1 (Policy Statement Checklist) ·Policy 5.9.1; 5.9.2 (Best Management Practices and Outer Islands) ·Policy 6.1.1 (First Nations Engagement Principles) <p>* Being lead by Director of Legislative and Information Services while reporting to Governance Committee</p>	Stefan Cermak	31-Mar-2025
2. <i>Improve processes for prioritizing funding for ongoing OCP reviews (Strategic Plan Initiative 2.2.1)</i>	Responsible	Date Received
<p>RPC continue to refine prioritization matrix.</p> <p>Matrix reviewed numerous times. Minor project prioritization criteria reviewed by RPC Jan. 2026.</p>	Stefan Cermak	31-Mar-2025

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

3. <i>Map Eelgrass and kelp forests (Strategic Plan Initiative 3.3.1)</i>	Responsible	Date Received
<p>Partner with First Nations' marine divisions and other relevant organizations in the Trust Area toward completing the work.</p> <p>Maintain contact and retrieve data from with consultants (Hatfield) funded by the Canada Space Agency Hatfield to lead the design and development of the Eelgrass Explorer (E2) system for mapping eelgrass in the intertidal areas across the entire British Columbia coast. Expected 10m resolution data available target date: May 2027.</p>	Stefan Cermak	03-Feb-2020
4. <i>Update OCPs and LUBs to incorporate new Policy Statement polices (Strategic Plan Initiative 2.2.2)</i>	Responsible	Date Received
	Stefan Cermak	31-Mar-2025
5. <i>Develop a growth management planning framework that includes data on growth trends and projections, geological and hydrological capacities, infrastructure, and development rates (Strategic Plan Initiative</i>	Responsible	Date Received
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Draft a business case, for phase 1 (initial development), of a multi-year project. Co develop with partners. Develop with a funding strategy (grants, reserve funds, partnerships, etc). ·Developed a business case with TAS and TPC: <i>Trust Area Resilience Assessment Initiative</i>. ·March 2026: Trust council does not support Business Case as per approved Operational Review (September 2025). 	Stefan Cermak	31-Mar-2025

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

6. *Update OCPs and LUBs to foster climate change resilience (considering topics such as Coastal Douglas-fir protection, foreshore and nearshore environments, and groundwater) (Strategic Plan Initiative 4.2.3)*

Responsible

Date Received

Strategic Plan assigned key initiative to: LTCs
Biologist drafting materials in relation to issue.

Stefan Cermak

31-Mar-2025