

Regional Planning Committee Agenda

Date: Thursday, April 27, 2023
Time: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Location: Coast Bastion Hotel
10 Gordon Street, Nanaimo BC

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 **Letter dated March 9, 2023 RE Temporary Use Permits for Housing Advocacy** 3 - 11
 - 5.2 **Salt Spring Solutions Integrated Housing Framework for Salt Spring Island** 12 - 14
6. **ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION**
 - 6.1 **Draft Minutes of Previous Meetings** 15 - 19

For review and approval
 - 6.2 **Resolutions Without Meeting**

None.
 - 6.3 **Follow up Action List** 20 - 23

For review
7. **BUSINESS - WORK PROGRAM ITEMS**
 - 7.1 **Project Tracking - BRF** 24 - 28
 - 7.2 **Applications Report - BRF** 29 - 31

7.3	Request from Gabriola LTC to add "Shoreline Protection review" to projects - BRF	32 - 33
7.4	Housing Action Scan - BRF	34 - 42
7.5	Annual Report - RFD	43 - 47
7.6	2024/25 Business Case and Current Fiscal - RFD	48 - 51
7.7	Housing Strategy - RFD	52 - 92
8.	BUSINESS - OTHER	
8.1	Agricultural Land Commission Exclusion Regulation - BRF	93 - 96
8.2	Governance Review - Annex 1 Recommendations - BRF	97 - 120
9.	BUSINESS - NEW	
10.	WORK PROGRAM	
	For review and referral to Trust Council before each quarterly TC meeting	
10.1	Current Work Program (Top Priorities and Projects)	121 - 125
10.2	Discussion of Priorities	
11.	NEXT MEETING	
	Wednesday, September 6, 2023.	
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.	

Tony Law

[REDACTED], Hornby Island, BC V0R1Z0
[REDACTED]

To: **Islands Trust Council**
and **Hornby Island Local Trust Committee**

09 March 2023

re: Temporary Use Permits for Housing and for Short Term Rentals
- advocacy for changes to the *Local Government Act*

Temporary use permits (TUPs) are a potentially valuable tool for local trust committees, Bowen Island Municipality, and other local governments, to address non-permanent housing solutions and the use of dwellings for short term rentals.

However, provincial regulations governing the use of temporary use permits - *Part 14, Division 8, of the Local Government Act* - specify requirements originally put in place for commercial and industrial uses. These requirements create challenges in using TUPs for housing and short term rentals.

I encourage the Islands Trust to approach the Ministry of Municipal Affairs - and to work with other local government (such as through AVICC and UBCM) - to advocate for amendments to the *Local Government Act* to make TUPs a more useful tool for local governments to address the important issues of housing and short term rentals.

At the end of this letter are suggested amendments to the *LGA*.

First, here is some background and rationale.

- Housing and TUPs

Most LTA's and many other communities are facing housing challenges. Permanent solutions are hard to achieve.

In the meantime, desperate residents are seeking at least a short term option. There are owners of larger lots who are willing to provide an option by allowing a housing-challenged resident to temporarily place a removable dwelling unit (tiny home, mobile unit, caravan, recreational vehicle, etc) on their land as interim measure. Alternatively, an existing accessory building could be temporarily adapted for residential use.

In many cases, situations are so desperate, and landowners keen to help, that such solutions are being put in place despite not conforming with land use regulations. But non-permitted uses don't provide a secure situation. In other cases, landowners are holding off because the use is not permitted.

Generally, additional residential density on a property is considered through a rezoning application. But this is an onerous and expensive process for the applicant and the local government. A public hearing would likely reveal concerns about the inappropriateness of adding permanent density to a property in order to address a non-permanent arrangement between a current landowner and resident.

TUPs are a more appropriate permitting tool for this purpose. In fact, this option has been used by some local governments elsewhere. It is available in the Hornby Island and Denman Island LTAs, but there have been few, if any applications in these LTAs.

These seem to be the barriers:

- the requirement for a public hearing;
- the limited term of TUPs (3 years + renewal for 3 years);
- the assumption that a subsequent TUP cannot be applied for.

- Short term rentals and TUPs

Local governments in the Trust Area and throughout BC are faced with the challenge of whether to permit the burgeoning activity of short term rentals and if so how. Some communities are deciding to not permit the use at all. Others are trying to find ways to manage it.

Many municipalities are using business licences enabled under the community charter. These are not available to regional districts or local trust committees. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has made it clear that the Islands Trust's "authorities in legislation are in relation to land use and planning" (business licenses are not a land use planning authority) and that if a regional district were to request business license authority, the Ministry and the regional district would need "to come to a common understanding of matters such as costs, impacts and enforcement implications of business licensing in a more rural context before pursuing a more general authority."

As it is, there is a limit to what can be regulated by business licenses authority compared to what can be addressed through land use authority.

With respect to using land use authority to allow and manage short term rentals, there are two options:

- a) to allow the use through zoning regulations;
a local government would have limited capacity to manage the vacation rentals because any tightening up of regulations or discontinuation of the permitted use would result in existing uses being lawfully non-conforming.
- b) to allow the use on a site-specific basis through temporary use permits;
a local government would be able to manage the use through having the ability to decide when, where and how to issue permits that would eventually expire.

Some local governments are already using TUPs to manage vacation rentals, including:

The Town of Gibsons
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen
Thompson- Nicola Regional District
Columbia Shuswap Regional District
Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee
Galiano Island Local Trust Committee
North Pender Island Local Trust Committee

However, as with housing, there are issues that make them a much less-than-perfect fit for this use:

- the requirement for a hearing;
- the limited term of TUPs (3 years + renewal for 3 years);
- the assumption that a subsequent TUP cannot be applied for.

- Temporary Use Permits - background

In 1985, the *Municipal Amendment Act* added s.975 to the *Municipal Act* to enable local governments to issue “temporary commercial and industrial permits”. These provided a way to consider allowing commercial and industrial uses that were not permitted in a zoning bylaw.

The legislation requires:

- a) a hearing – on the basis that a proposed use would not have been subject to a public hearing in conjunction with establishing the OCP and zoning regulations;
- b) a term limitation of 2 years for a permit – and a further two years for its renewal - on the basis that a particular use being proposed was expected to be of short duration or subject to potential rezoning if an applicant wished to continue it permanently after a test period.

In 1998, the legislated provision for temporary commercial and industrial permits was continued in the new *Local Government Act*.

In, 2010 , the *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act* , made a number of amendments to the *Local Government Act*. Temporary permit powers were amended to eliminate all references to commercial and industrial uses. What is now referred to as a temporary use permit (TUP) can allow any use that is not permitted by a zoning bylaw, including for example residential, agricultural and institutional uses. The maximum period for a TUP and a renewal were both increased from 2 to 3 years. All other regulations relating to TUPs remained the same.

- The changed context for Temporary Use Permits

The context for Temporary Use Permits has changed.

There are two meanings for the word “temporary”:

- “lasting for only a limited period of time”;
- “not permanent”.

When temporary commercial and industrial permits were first introduced, it was with the expectation that they would be applied to uses lasting for only a limited period of time.

Now, a number of local governments are utilizing TUPS to permit housing and vacation rentals as a valued alternative to permanently entrenching the use in zoning regulations.

TUPs are the only available land use planning tool for managing non-permanent uses.

- Suggested changes to Part 14, Division 8, Temporary Use Permits

In order to enable temporary use permits to be more useful for permitting non-permanent housing and short term rentals, here are three suggested additions to the legislation.

These would not impact how the regulations would be applied to other uses.

- Suggested addition to address requirements for a hearing:

(6) Section 494 (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) with respect to public notice and hearing requirements do not apply if a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a) with respect to issuing a temporary use permit that would:

a) permit the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

b) permit one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

Section 494 was put in place to provide an opportunity for a hearing about proposed commercial and industrial uses that had not been subject to a hearing when an OCP and zoning regulations were established. Although an additional dwelling unit or the use of an existing unit for paying guest accommodation are not as significant uses as commercial and industrial activities, there is still a case to be made for an opportunity for public input on whether and how such uses should be permitted.

This public input can be considered at a public hearing for an OCP/LUB amendment to establish policies to specify where temporary use permits for non-permanent housing and short term rentals may be considered and guidelines for permit conditions in advance of any permits being considered.

For example,

- policies could make statements like:

“Temporary use permits for non-permanent dwelling units shall only be considered on...lots larger than 2ha....or....on lots in the R2 zone....or.....on lots outside of areas known to have problems with the quantity and quality of water supply....or....?”

“Temporary use permits for short term rental of dwelling units shall only be considered on...lots zoned for residential use.....or....on lots in the R2 and Agricultural zones....or....?”

- guidelines for non-permanent dwellings could include requirements such as

...the dwelling must be removable or an existing accessory building that can be reconverted for non-residential use...

....the dwelling must be no larger than xxx square metres....

....the dwelling must be set back at least xx metres from any lot line...

- guidelines for short term rentals could include requirements such as:

...the short term rental use should not involve more than x bedrooms...

...the short term rental should not operate for more than x months in a year...

Having such policies and guidelines in the OCP, subject to a public hearing, will eliminate the need for a public hearing for each individual application because there will have been public input into establishing where and how the use would be conducted (as would have been the case in establishing zoning regulations).

- **Suggested addition to address the term of a permit:**

(2.1) Despite 497(2), a temporary use permit may be renewed up to 3 times if the permit permits either:

a) the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit;

b) one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes.

Allowing a local government discretion to renew such a permit three times, rather than once, would provide an applicant with a sense that, while the use is not being permitted permanently there is an opportunity for it to be extended. This would also allow local governments to review the appropriateness of the permit on a regular basis, including consideration of evidence of non-compliance with permit conditions.

- **Suggested addition address to possible subsequent permits:**

(2.2) Following the expiration of a permit, the person to whom the temporary use permit has been issued may apply for a new permit to be considered for the same use.

A frequently stated reason for apprehension about the use of temporary use permits for non-permanent housing or for short term rentals is the assumption that when the permit expires, that's it – the use can not be subsequently re-permitted on the lot.

As I read it, the *Local Government Act* is silent on this matter. which suggests that there is no prohibition of a subsequent application. But this would be usefully clarified by a definitive statement.

- Local Government Act, Part 14, Division 8,

Here is the text of this division.

Suggested additions are inserted in ***bold italic***.

Temporary Use Permits

Designation of temporary use permit areas

492

For the purposes of section 493, an official community plan or a zoning bylaw may

- (a) designate areas where temporary uses may be allowed, and
- (b) specify general conditions regarding the issue of temporary use permits in those areas.

Temporary use permits for designated areas and other areas

493

(1) On application by an owner of land, a local government may issue a temporary use permit as follows:

- (a) by resolution, in relation to land within an area designated under section 492;
- (b) by bylaw, in relation to land within an area outside a municipality, if there is no official community plan in effect for the area.

(2) A temporary use permit may do one or more of the following:

- (a) allow a use not permitted by a zoning bylaw;
- (b) specify conditions under which the temporary use may be carried on;
- (c) allow and regulate the construction of buildings or structures in respect of the use for which the permit is issued.

(3) If a local government delegates the power to issue a temporary use permit under this section, the owner of land that is subject to the decision of the delegate is entitled to have the local government reconsider the matter.

Public notice and hearing requirements

494

- (1)** If a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a), it must give notice in accordance with subsections (2) to (4) of this section.
- (2)** The notice must state
- (a)** in general terms, the purpose of the proposed permit,
 - (b)** the land or lands that are the subject of the proposed permit,
 - (c)** the place where and the times and dates when copies of the proposed permit may be inspected,
 - (d)** the time and date when and, if applicable, the place where the resolution will be considered, and
 - (e)** if the meeting at which the resolution will be considered is conducted by means of electronic or other communication facilities, the way in which the meeting is to be conducted by those means.
- (3)** The notice must be published in accordance with section 94 [requirements for public notice] of the Community Charter at least 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (3.1)** If the local government has adopted a bylaw under section 94.2 [bylaw to provide for alternative means of publication] of the Community Charter, the notice must be published by at least one of the means of publication specified in the bylaw not less than 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (3.2)** If the local government has not adopted a bylaw under section 94.2 of the Community Charter, the last publication of the notice must be not less than 3 days and not more than 14 days before the adoption of the resolution to issue the permit.
- (4)** Section 466 (4) to (8) [specific requirements in relation to notice of public hearing] applies to the notice as if the resolution were a bylaw.
- (5)** If a local government proposes to adopt a bylaw under section 493 (1) (b), the following sections apply:
- (a)** section 464 [requirement for public hearing];
 - (b)** section 465 [public hearing procedures];
 - (c)** section 466 [notice of public hearing];
 - (d)** section 469 [delegating the holding of public hearings];
 - (e)** section 470 [procedure after public hearing].

(6) Section 494 (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) with respect to public notice and hearing requirements do not apply if a local government proposes to pass a resolution under section 493 (1) (a) with respect to issuing a temporary use permit that would:

a) permit the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

b) permit one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes, provided the official community plan or zoning bylaw has designated areas where a temporary use permit may be issued for this particular purpose and has specified general conditions regarding the issue of permits for this use.

Permit conditions: undertakings respecting land

495

(1) As a condition of issuing a temporary use permit, a local government may require the owner of the land to give an undertaking to

(a) demolish or remove a building or other structure, and

(b) restore land described in the permit to a condition specified in the permit by a date specified in the permit.

(2) An undertaking under subsection (1) must be attached to and forms part of the permit.

(3) If the owner of the land fails to comply with all of the undertakings given under subsection (1), the local government may enter on the land and carry out the demolition, removal or restoration at the expense of the owner.

Permit conditions: additional security requirements

496

(1) In addition to any security required under section 502, a local government may require, as a condition of issuing a temporary use permit, that the owner of the land give to the local government security to guarantee the performance of the terms of the permit.

(2) If there is a requirement for security under subsection (1), the permit may provide for

(a) the form of the security, and

(b) the means for determining

(i) when there is default under the permit, and

(ii) the amount of the security that forfeits to the local government in the event of default.

Term of permit and renewal of permit

497

(1) The owner of land in respect of which a temporary use permit has been issued has the right to put the land to the use described in the permit until the earlier of the following:

- (a) the date that the permit expires;
- (b) 3 years after the permit was issued.

(2) A person to whom a temporary use permit has been issued may apply to have the permit renewed, subject to the restriction that a temporary use permit may be renewed only once.

(2.1) Despite 497(2), a temporary use permit may be renewed up to 3 times if the permit permits either:

- a) the short-term rental use of an existing permitted residential dwelling unit;***
- b) one temporary dwelling unit to be used for residential purposes.***

(2.2) Following the expiration of a permit, the person to whom the temporary use permit has been issued may apply for a new permit to be considered for the same use.

(3) Subsection (1) and sections 495 [permit conditions: undertaking respecting land] and 496 [permit conditions: additional security requirements] apply in relation to a renewal under subsection (2).

.....

Thank you for considering this.

I hope it is helpful.

Sincerely,

Tony Law

Formerly:

- Hornby Island Local Trustee (1996-2018)
- Chair, Islands Trust Council's Task Force on Community Housing
- President, Islanders Secure Land Association (a Community Land Trust)
- Executive Director, Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation
- Appointee, Comox Valley Regional District Select Committee on Homelessness and Housing

Integrated Housing Framework for Salt Spring Island

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We are alarmed by the critical lack of housing options in our community for working class and vulnerable residents. The unhindered development of larger resource-intensive single-family homes is having multiple adverse impacts on our island.



Deforestation and soil erosion, loss of green space and wildlife corridors, stressed freshwater resources, increased vehicle trips and greenhouse gas emissions, the prevalence of unregulated housing, and the destabilizing of our island economy and social fabric are some of the existing impacts we anticipate will worsen without proactive, coordinated intervention and persistent leadership on housing.

Publication of our Integrated Housing Framework, and dialogue with key stakeholders is the first step in what we hope will be an ongoing and inclusive discussion about addressing a key challenge that is eating away at the core of our community well-being.

Countless reports have been written on housing needs and housing strategies, however none of them has sufficiently stepped out of their organizational silos to consider the big picture, or to examine the complexities of inter-agency cooperation and problem-solving. Our framework pulls together and articulates the various threads of responsibility, and advocates for housing solutions that have been implemented with success in other rural communities.

We are interested in solutions that have been shown to minimize environmental impacts and GHG emissions, maximize forest and farmland preservation, make efficient use of existing infrastructure and resources, and improve the diversity, availability, and affordability of long-term homes for local community members.

We are providing recommendations for a housing framework that increases long-term housing options through a combination of local strategic actions. Instead of being an exhaustive list of all possible solutions, we have focused on areas where local leadership is necessary and possible.

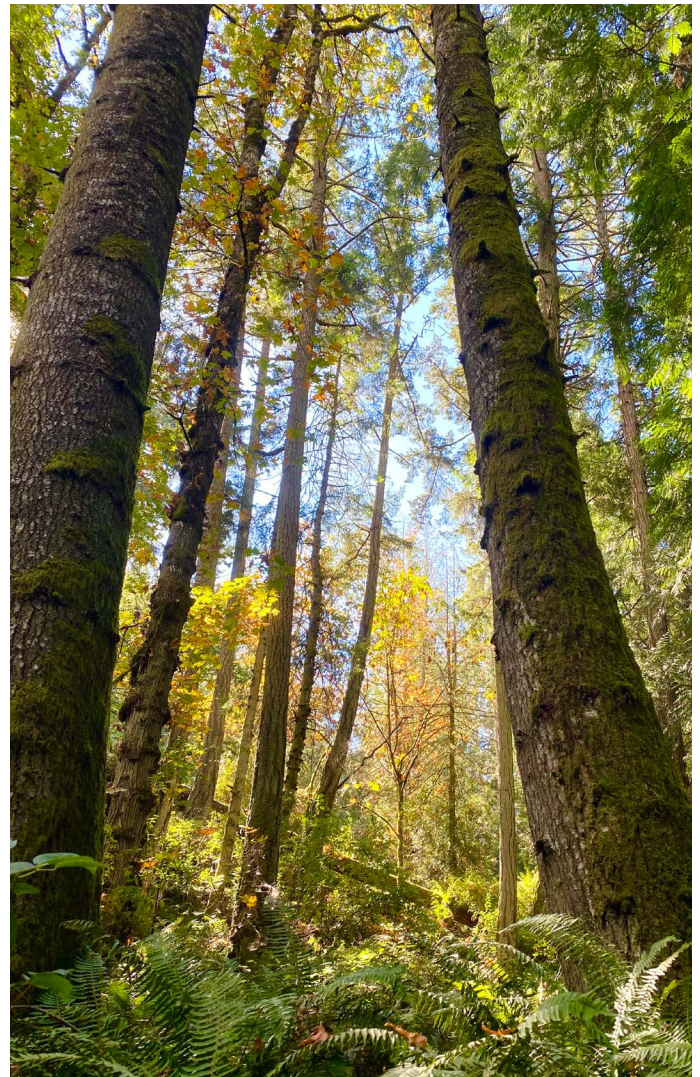
We envision a resilient Salt Spring Island community that works together to equitably care for the ecology and the community as one.

THE FRAMEWORK HAS FIVE KEY STRATEGIES

- Strategy 1:** Coordinated and Properly Resourced Local Approach to Housing
- Strategy 2:** Effective Public Education, Engagement, and Dialogue on Housing
- Strategy 3:** Preservation of Rural Areas and Nature Space through Clustered Housing
- Strategy 4:** Ready Ganges Village for More Housing
- Strategy 5:** Accessory Dwellings for Housing, in the Right Places

Our strategies begin to address the environmental, economic, and social issues integral to housing solutions by:

- Being achievable within the existing local, regional, and provincial regulatory context
- Supporting smaller scale housing types that are known to have less adverse impacts on the natural environment than typical single-family development
- Supporting efficient use of land, water services and infrastructure
- Not requiring large-scale land clearing of existing forests or harm to sensitive ecosystems
- Being financially viable to develop and operate
- Improving the availability and/or affordability of long-term housing options for a range of household types (single person, couples, families with children, etc.) and incomes
- Being compatible with and/or enhancing island community characteristics, such as self-sufficiency, interdependence, neighbourliness, and low-impact living
- Supporting increased uptake of transit and/or active transportation



Who has responsibility and who are the essential partners in each strategy?

STRATEGY 1	
Coordinated and Properly Resourced Local Approach to Housing	
Responsibility	Capital Regional District (CRD)
Essential Partners	SSI Local Trust Committee (SSI LTC), Local First Nations, Local Non-Profit Housing Organizations, North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD), Island Health, BC Housing
STRATEGY 2	
Effective Public Education, Engagement, and Dialogue on Housing	
Responsibility	Islands Trust, CRD and NSSWD
Essential Partners	Salt Spring Residents of all demographics, Salt Spring Businesses, Local Indigenous Elders, Interested Community Groups, Professional External Communications & Engagement Advisors
STRATEGY 3	
Preservation of Rural Areas & Nature Space through Clustered Housing	
Responsibility	Islands Trust, CRD, NSSWD, Conservancies, Land Trusts and Interested Organizations
Essential Partners	SSI LTC, Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance (SSIWPA), Local First Nations, NSSWD, and Other Relevant Water Systems, SSI Conservancy, Islands Trust Conservancy, SSI Farmland Trust
STRATEGY 4	
Readying Ganges Village For More Housing	
Responsibility	CRD, Islands Trust, NSSWD, Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI), Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), Community Groups
Essential Partners	SSI LTC, Local First Nations, Provincial Government
STRATEGY 5	
Accessory Dwellings for Housing, in the Right Places	
Responsibility	Islands Trust, CRD, SSIWPA, NSSWD
Essential Partners	Private Property Owners



Regional Planning Committee Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date: February 1, 2023
Location: Electronic Meeting

Members Present: Laura Patrick, Chair
Sam Borthwick, Vice Chair
Alex Allen, Hornby Island Local Trustee
Mairead Boland, Saturna Island Local Trustee
Aaron Campbell, North Pender Island Local Trustee
Tobi Elliott, Executive Committee Representative
David Graham, Denman Island Local Trustee
Mikaila Lironi, Lasqueti Island Local Trustee
Peter Luckham, Ex Officio Member

Staff Present: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services
Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services
David Marlor, Director, Legislative Services
Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager, Southern Team
Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner
William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Chloe Cookson, Administrative Assistant/Recorder

Others Present: Three members of the public were present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and acknowledged that participants of the meeting were attending from traditional, treaty and unceded territories of many First Nations.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Review of the Agenda

No late items or changes were considered.

2.2 Approval of the Agenda

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

3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No member of the public indicated a desire to speak.

4. DELEGATIONS

None.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION

6.1 Draft Minutes of Previous Meeting

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

6.2 Resolutions Without Meeting (RWM)

None.

6.3 Follow-up Action List

Chair Patrick noted that some of the in-progress items on the list are on the day's agenda and Director Cermak spoke to the other items in progress.

7. BUSINESS – WORK PROGRAM ITEMS

7.1 Freshwater Sustainability Strategy (FWSS) Business Case – Request for Decision (RFD)

Planner Chadwick presented the Request for Decision. Committee discussion included:

- the goal to have an improved web presence and to share data,
- the connection between freshwater sustainability and housing,
- scale of ambition in terms of population and budget,
- the use of staff resources, and,
- the scope of the project.

Trustee Borthwick joined the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

RPC 2023-008

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee forward to the Financial Planning Committee, for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2023/24 Budget, the business case for \$35,000 to support communications related to the implementation of the Islands Trust Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.

DEFEATED

RPC 2023-009

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee forward to the Financial Planning Committee, for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2023/24 Budget, the business case for \$10,000 related to the implementation of the Islands Trust Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.

CARRIED

7.2 Housing Needs – RFD

Planner Chadwick presented the Request for Decision. Committee discussion included:

- the housing crisis in the Islands Trust Area,
- the effectiveness of round tables, and,
- the utility of a working group to provide feedback and prepare for discussions of the direction for housing.

RPC 2023-010

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee appoint a working group of the following three members to provide feedback to staff for the development of the education session for housing and to identify potential strategic directions on housing for discussion by the Regional Planning Committee: Trustee Lironi, Trustee Elliott, and Trustee Allen.

CARRIED

RPC 2023-011

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee recommend staff schedule a staff-lead online education session focusing on housing challenges and solutions for Trust Council following the update of the Islands Trust Community Housing “Toolkit”.

CARRIED

Committee recessed at 12:14 p.m. and resumed at 12:45 p.m.

8. BUSINESS - OTHER

8.1 Local Trust Committee (LTC) Project Prioritization – Briefing (BRF)

The briefing was presented for information.

8.2 Review of Funding Requests

Director Cermak presented the Review of Funding Requests. Committee discussion included:

- the possibility of changing or removing the placeholder budget, and,
- the option to provide specific examples of how the budget would be used.

RPC 2023-012

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee remove the placeholder budget for budget year 2023/2024.

DEFEATED

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee reduce the placeholder budget to \$20,000 for the 2023/2024 budget year.

RPC 2023-013

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

to amend the motion “that Regional Planning Committee reduce the placeholder budget to \$20,000 for the 2023/2024 budget year” by replacing “\$20,000” with “\$30,000.”

CARRIED

RPC 2023-014

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee reduce placeholder budget to \$30,000 for the 2023/2024 budget year.

CARRIED

8.3 Denman Island Local Trust Committee (DE LTC) Electronic Meeting Costs – BRF

Director Cermak presented the briefing. Committee discussion included:

- the varied needs of the different Local Trust Areas (LTAs) regarding in-person, hybrid, and electronic meetings, and,
- the value of having staff present at LTC meetings.

9. BUSINESS – NEW

None.

10. WORK PROGRAM

10.1 Work Program - BRF

Director Cermak presented the Work Program Briefing. Committee discussion included:

- the possibility of amending Committee policies, and,
- the potential to add a working group to review the table of recommendations for Regional Planning Committee.

RPC 2023-015

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that Regional Planning Committee request Planning Services Staff to review recommendations in Annex 1 of the Governance Report to provide an update with current Planning operations.

CARRIED

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 27th, 2023.

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 adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Minutes are not official until adopted at a subsequent meeting.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Certified Correct:

Chloe Cookson, Planning Services Administrative Assistant



Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

12-May-2021

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to bring back further analysis on fee-per-lot structure, including consideration of a cap and park dedication. No action taken in two years. Should be on project list. No priority. Recommend removal.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 16-Nov-2022	In Progress

03-Nov-2021

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee defer the business case for Strategic Plan Item No. 2.4 - to implement Freshwater Sustainability recommendations related to the development of a Freshwater Stewardship Outreach Plan to the 2023/24 budget year.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 16-Nov-2022	Completed

13-Jan-2022

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to report on incorporating Local Trust Committee strategic planning within the Trust Council strategic plan.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 16-Nov-2022	Completed

09-Feb-2022

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
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Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

09-Feb-2022

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff develop an Islands Trust Freshwater Sustainability Strategy policy document.	Sonja Zupanec Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 29-Dec-2023	In Progress
2 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to identify options for the implementation of the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.	Sonja Zupanec Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 16-Nov-2022	Completed

18-May-2022

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Senior Freshwater Specialist Shulba will provide a briefing that provides details Groundwater Sustainability Science Program at the next RPC meeting.	William Shulba	Target: 16-Nov-2022	Completed

24-Aug-2022

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to create a Freshwater Sustainability Strategy Frequently Asked Questions document.	William Shulba	Target: 29-Dec-2023	In Progress
2 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to bring back a proposal for a budget request for next steps for the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.	Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 16-Nov-2022	Completed

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

17-Jan-2023

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee request staff to report back with: a. More information and details outlining what a web-based knowledge sharing portal connected to the Islands Trust webpage would look like, how it would function, who the audience is, and why it should or should not be separate from the current one webpage dedicated to the Freshwater Sustainability program. b. Greater breakdown of how \$25,000 in the draft business case would be used to develop a portal and what maintenance costs may or may not occur, and can it be phased. c. Examples of similar portals. d. If there is a possibility of obtaining a grant to support this project. e. How this project could be used to leverage future grant funding.	Narissa Chadwick Stefan Cermak William Shulba	Target: 01-Feb-2023	Completed

01-Feb-2023

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 that Regional Planning Committee recommend staff schedule a staff-lead online education session focusing on housing challenges and solutions for Trust Council following the update of the Islands Trust Community Housing 'Toolkit'.	Stefan Cermak	Target: 29-Sep-2023	In Progress

Follow Up Action Report

Regional Planning Committee

01-Feb-2023

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
2 that Regional Planning Committee requests Regional Planning Services Staff to review recommendations in Annex 1 of the Governance Report to provide an update with current Planning operations.	Robert Kojima Stefan Cermak	Target: 27-Apr-2023	Completed

07-Mar-2023

Activity	Responsibility	Dates	Status
1 Trust Council direct the Regional Planning Committee and the Trust Programs Committee to consider how the Montreal Charter on Biodiversity impacts the work of the Islands Trust and share their thinking back with Trust Council in this calendar year.	Clare Frater Stefan Cermak	Target: 05-Dec-2023	In Progress



BRIEFING

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023
From: Robert Kojima,
Regional Planning Manager **Date Prepared:** April 12, 2023
SUBJECT: Major Project Tracking

PURPOSE: To provide Regional Planning Committee with a summary of the status of the approved Major and Extraordinary Local Trust Committee (LTC) Projects for the current fiscal year, along with a summary of the approved Minor LTC Projects.

BACKGROUND: Recently adopted changes to Trust Council policies have resulted in re-structuring of Planning Services to create a Regional Planning Team to support Major (and extraordinary) LTC projects. Major Projects involve a significant scope of work, have an annual budget exceeding \$5,000, have an approved business case and have an assigned planner from the Regional Planning Team. The process for approving a Major Project involves:

1. Identification by LTC as a priority project, this may include some work to define the issue.
2. Endorsement of a business case by the LTC.
3. Review of the business case by RPC and FPC.
4. Approval of the business case by Trust Council as part of the annual budget process.

The attached table provides a summary of the Major Projects approved and funded by Trust Council at the March Trust Council meeting. Some of the projects are on-going from previous year(s), others are new. Regional Planning Team members have been assigned to each project, as shown in the attached table. However, RPC should be aware that the Regional Planning Team is now fully committed, and that the team is not currently at the full establishment of 3 Full Time Equivalents (FTE):

- Planner Zupanec is currently working 0.6 and a portion of her time is also dedicated to supporting the Northern Planning team.
- Planner Chadwick is currently dedicating a portion of her available time (approximately 0.2) as the Mayne LTC's Island Planner.

On-going vacancies and the limited number of experienced planners within the organization continue to constrain our ability to staff the Regional Planning Team at the full 3 FTE complement. While the current active projects are staffed and funded, RPC may be challenged in recommending additional new projects for next fiscal year if several of the current on-going projects are not substantially completed by the end of the fiscal year. This further extends to dedicating planning staff to the Regional Planning Committee as staff resources are from the Regional Planning Team. Staff have prepared a model timeline for a typical Major Project (attached), which outlines a schedule for completion of Major Projects within 2 years. This model timeline is intended to be adapted by the project manager and LTC for each major project, but does provide a timeline and milestones that would result in completion of a project within a 2 year window.

In addition to approved LTC Major Projects, each LTC may designate up to one Minor Project at a time. Trust Council policy defines a Minor Project as a project that can be completed in less than a year, is

minor in scope, can be undertaken with a budget of \$5,000 or less and can be resourced within the budget and available planning staff. Minor Projects are managed by the LTC's assigned Island Planner or a Planner 2 if feasible. An annual budget of \$36,500 has been assigned to support LTC Minor Projects, to be allocated by the Director of Planning Services. The currently approved Minor LTC projects are shown in the attached 'Summary Table of Minor Projects'.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Summary Table of Major Projects
2. Model Major Project Timeline
3. Summary Table of Minor Projects

FOLLOW-UP: Staff will report to RPC regularly on the status of projects.

Prepared By: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services / April 14, 2023

Local Trust Committee Major Project Tracking

2022- 2026 Term

Updated: March 2023

Local Trust Committee	Name	Project Type	Project Manager	Project Phase	Current Status	Date initiated	Date Completed	Budget Allocation	Budget Expended	Notes
DE	Housing Review	Targeted Major Project	Narissa Chadwick	Initiation	Active	19-Jan-21		\$ 18,000		Initial LTC meeting held
GB	OCP/LUB	OCP/LUB Review	Narissa Chadwick	Pre-project	Active	1-Apr-23		\$ 18,000		Kick-off meeting with APCs held
GM	OCP/LUB Targeted Amendments	Targeted Major Project	Sonja Zupanec	Consultation	Active	12-Feb-15		\$ 16,000		Work is on-going
HO	OCP Amendments	Targeted Major Project	Sonja Zupanec	Drafting	Active	6-Nov-20		\$ 15,000		Project is on-gping
SS	Ganges Village Area Plan	Targeted Major Project	Louisa Garbo	Consultation	Active	8-Jun-20		\$ 86,500		
SS	OCP/LUB (CDF and Housing)	Targeted Major Project	Louisa Garbo	Analysis	Active	6-Oct-20		\$ 96,000		
RPC	Freshwater Sustainability Strategy	Targeted Major Project	Sonja Zupanec	Analysis	Active	12-Feb-20		\$ 10,000		William Shulba to support
RPC	TBD	Targeted Major Project		Initiation	Pending			\$ 30,000		funding is for 'RPC Projects Placeholder'
								\$ 289,500	\$ -	

Model LTC Major Project Work Plan*

	PROJECT WORK PLAN			
Meeting	Milestone	Target Dates	Comments	Cost
	Phase 0: Pre-Project	Year 0		
	LTC identifies topic areas and problem	April to June		
	LTC may engage community, consider options, direct staff to draft business case	April to Sept		
	LTC endorsement of Business Case, forwarded to Committees	Sept - Oct		
	Phase 1: Project Initiation	Year 1		
	Preliminary research & data gathering	March - April		
	Project launch: communications to First Nations, landowners, stakeholders, agencies, and community meeting.	April - May		
	Development of Terms of Reference for APC or working groups	April - May		
	Endorsement of Project Charter	June		
	Phase 2: Analysis			
	Data gathering, research, drafting of discussion paper(s)	May - Sept		
	Special APC or Working Group appointments and referrals	June		
	Preliminary analysis of data/mapping	June - July		
	LTC review of discussion papers	August - Sept		
	Phase 3: Consultation			
	First Nation, stakeholder and public engagement	July - Dec		
	On-going analysis of data/mapping	Sept - Dec		
	Phase 4: Drafting			
	LTC Review of consultation results and policy options	Jan - Feb		
	Review of draft bylaw language	Feb - March		
	Direction to prepare bylaw(s)	March		
	Phase 5: Legislative	Year 2		
	LTC Review of draft bylaws, early referrals	April - June		
	Legal Review (targeted)	June		
	Community Information Meeting	June		
	Consideration of revisions and 1 st reading	July		
	Consideration of amendments and 2 nd reading	Sept		
	Community Information Meeting/Public Hearing	Oct		
	3 rd reading, Executive Committee, Minister	Oct - Nov		
	Final Adoption	Dec - Jan		
	Phase 6: Implementation			
	Procedural updates	Nov - Dec		
	Bylaw amendment communication(s)	Dec - Jan		
TOTAL				

*refine timeline and milestones as required. Add rows as needed.

Local Trust Committee Minor Project Tracking

2022- 2026 Term

Updated: April 2023

Local Trust Committee	Name	Project Manager	Project Phase	Current Status	Date initiated	Date Completed	Budget Allocated - 2023-24	Date Approved, Director Planning Services	Budget Expended	Budget Balance	Project Description	Notes
B-W												
DE	Farming Regulations Review	Marlis McCargar	Legislative	On-going			\$ 2,000			\$ 2,000	Amend LUB	costs for ads, CIM, PH
GB	Ecological Protection Zone	Stephen Baugh	Legislative	On-going			\$ 2,000			\$ 2,000	Finalize amendment	GB BL 313 (costs for ads, CIM, PH)
GL	Groundwater	Narissa Chadwick	Legislative	On-going	1-Apr-23		\$ 5,000	31-Mar-23		\$ 5,000	Amend DPA	Transition to Kim in May for public hearing
GM	Keats Island Shoreline Protection Review	Marlis McCargar	Legislative	On-going	31-Jan-19		\$ 4,000			\$ 4,000	Amend OCP/LUB to implement shoreline protection	Review is complete; further public consultation. Costs for public review, rm booking,ads, CIM, PH.
HO										\$ -		Major project approved, no minor project identified
LA	OCP/LUB Review (targeted)	Stephen Baugh	Analysis	On-going	8-Jan-18		\$ 4,000			\$ 4,000	Further technical and minor policy amendments	analysis to identify technical and policy amendments.
MA	Housing Options	Narissa Chadwick	Analysis	On-going	1-Apr-23		\$ 1,000	31-Mar-23		\$ 1,000	Community consultation	Completion of business case by Sept for 23/24
NP	Groundwater	Narissa Chadwick	Drafting	On-going	1-Apr-23		\$ 2,500	31-Mar-23		\$ 2,500	Implement a groundwater DPA	LTC to review at May meeting, likely transition to Brad
NP	LUB Review	Kim Stockdill	Legislative	On-going	1-Apr-23		\$ 3,000	31-Mar-23		\$ 3,000	Finalize new LUB	Public hearing in May
SA										\$ -		LTC meeting in May
SP										\$ -		LTC meeting in May
SS	Housing Action Program	Louisa Garbo	Legislative	On-going	May-23		\$ -			\$ -		Bylaw 530, Tiny homes village proposal
TH	LUB Amendment - Unzoned Marine Area	Marlis McCargar	Pre-project		Jul-23		\$ 2,500			\$ 2,500		Project Charter to be completed July 4
							\$ 26,000			\$ 26,000		

BRIEFING

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023

From: Robert Kojima,
Regional Planning Manager **Date Prepared:** April 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Applications Report

PURPOSE: To provide Regional Planning Committee with a summary of the number of applications received and processed in the previous fiscal year.

BACKGROUND: While RPC is not directly involved in current planning (development application review, as well as inquiries and other planning functions provided directly to individuals), the committee's terms of reference include overseeing the procedures for processing applications and advising on the provision and allocation of resources to deliver local planning services. Application statistics provides RPC with an overview of resource needs and allocation, along with long term trends, and provide information on those LTAs experiencing the most growth pressure and thus potentially a metric for prioritizing OCP/LUB reviews. The detailed application statistics for the 2022-23 fiscal year are attached and are summarized in the table below, along with five year averages for each category of application.

Application Type	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	5 year Avg
BP, SUP, CL, LCB	308	314	462	464	396	389
Land Use Permits, Subdivision, ALR, BoV	133	129	170	160	106	140
Rezoning	12	9	13	4	8	9

The first category are primarily building permit reviews (BP), along with Siting and Use Permits (SUP – Denman and Hornby only), with some Crown Land referrals (CL) and Liquor referrals (LCB). The second row are Land Use Permit applications (DP, DVP and TUP), along with subdivision referrals, ALR applications and Board of Variance appeals. The five year trends show a significant spike in building activity and associated permits in 2020 through 2022, with a return to longer term averages in the most recent fiscal year.

The vast majority of the applications, reviews and referrals tracked in the application report are processed by planners assigned to the Current Planning Team. The Current Planning Team has been implemented as a result of the Local Planning Services Review with the objectives of providing greater consistency and efficiency in application processing, reducing silos between the regional offices and to provide training, support and mentoring to the assigned planners to build proficiency in application review. Presently, the Current Planning Team consists of:

- 1 Planning Technician, who reviews all building permit referrals and preliminary plans, all Siting and Use Permits, most Crown referrals and some subdivisions.

- 1 Planner 1 (Southern Team), who processes Land Use Permits (DVP, DP, TUP), some subdivisions and ALR applications.
- 1 Planner 1 (Salt Spring), who processes Land Use Permits, Soil Deposit and Removal Permits, some subdivisions and ALR applications
- 2 Planner 2s (Northern Team), who process Land Use Permits, some subdivisions, ALR applications; each Planner 2 is approximately 0.5 current planning, as each is also assigned one LTC due to an Island Planner vacancy.

A Regional Planning Manager is also assigned to provide support, guidance and advice to the team. Island Planners assigned to LTCs process most rezonings, complex subdivisions and some Land Use Permits.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Applications Statistics report

FOLLOW-UP: Staff will provide summary reports to RPC annually.

Prepared By: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services / April 17, 2023



Islands Trust

Application Statistics

Applications Received: April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

	NORTHERN TEAM									SALT SPRING		SOUTHERN TEAM								TOTAL	
Application	EX	DE	GB	GM	HO	LA	TH	SUM	/FTE	SS	/FTE	GL	MA	NP	SA	SP	SUM	/FTE	SUM	/FTE	
ALR	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.20	1	0.25	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.50	4	0.31	
BOV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	1	0.25	0	0	3	0	0	3	0.75	4	0.31	
CL/BP/SUP/LCB	0	26	59	27	18	0	7	137	27.40	165	41.25	16	25	41	6	6	94	23.50	396	30.46	
DP	0	3	3	2	2	0	0	10	2.00	6	1.50	6	0	3	0	0	9	2.25	25	1.92	
DVP/FPE	0	0	6	3	2	0	0	11	2.20	12	3.00	5	5	2	0	3	15	3.75	38	2.92	
HAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	
OTH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	
RZ	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.40	2	0.50	2	0	0	2	0	4	1.00	8	0.62	
SC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	
SDP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	4	1.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	4	0.31	
SRP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	
SUB	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	5	1.00	6	1.50	1	1	0	0	0	2	0.50	13	1.00	
TUP	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	0.60	4	1.00	3	1	6	0	1	11	2.75	18	1.38	
TOTAL	0	31	71	34	25	0	8	169	33.80	201	50.25	34	32	55	8	11	140	35.00	510	39.23	

FTE = # of planner positions (North = 5, SS = 4, South = 4)

Application	EX	DE	GB	GM	HO	LA	TH	SUM	FTE	SS	FTE	GL	MA	NP	SA	SP	SUM	FTE	SUM	FTE
CL,BP,SUP,LCB	0	26	59	27	18	0	7	137	27.40	165	41.25	16	25	41	6	6	94	23.50	396	30.46
Permits/Referrals	0	5	11	7	7	0	0	30	6.00	34	8.50	16	7	14	0	5	42	10.50	106	8.15
RZ	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.40	2	0.50	2	0	0	2	0	4	1.00	8	0.62
TOTAL	0	31	71	34	25	0	8	169	33.80	201	50.25	34	32	55	8	11	140	35.00	510	39.23

Application	EX	DE	GB	GM	HO	LA	TH	SUM	FTE	SS	FTE	GL	MA	NP	SA	SP	SUM	FTE	SUM	FTE
OPEN	0	6	11	6	11	2	2	38	8	38	10	16	6	7	5	2	36	9	112	9

To: Regional Planning Committee

For the Meeting of: April 27, 2023

From: Renée Jamurat, RPP MCIP, RPM –
North Office

File No.: 2935-06

SUBJECT: Request to add 'Shoreline Protection review' to RPC projects

DESCRIPTION OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide brief context to the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) on the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request to add an Islands Trust – wide Shoreline Protection review to the RPC projects list for the RPC's consideration.

BACKGROUND:

At the March 30th, 2023 Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) regular business meeting, Trustees discussed the matter of shoreline protection planning and zoning on Gabriola Island, and the benefit of doing a regional review of the entire Islands Trust area for shoreline protection.

The LTC gave direction to staff to draft a report to the RPC for this request, and passed the following resolution:

It was Moved and Seconded,

Draft a report to the Regional Planning Committee to advise of the GB LTCs request to have the Gabriola Local Trust Area included in a regional review of shoreline protection and planning and request that the RPC look at Mannion Bay on Bowen Island as an example as part of that.

CARRIED

CONSIDERATIONS:

Regional Perspective

- The [Islands Trust Strategic Plan 2018-2022](#) identifies preservation and protection of marine ecosystems as an objective. The strategic plan lists undertaking a review of Local Trust Committee-Bowen Islands Municipality foreshore policies and regulatory bylaws and develop model policy and regulatory bylaws for the protection of the foreshore and nearshore as a strategy. In response, the Regional Planning Committee received The Shoreline Review Model Bylaw Report in 2021 (attached). The report lacked a model bylaw but could be used to inform future work.
- The Islands Trust maintains a "[Marine Shorelines](#)" webpage with related information.

Local Trust Area Perspective

- There are numerous shoreline projects that have been undertaken in previous years; past examples of shoreline review projects include:
 - The [Keats Island Shoreline Protection Discussion Paper](#) for the Gambier Island LTC in 2020, reviews the existing Islands Trust policies and regulatory bylaws to recommend policy changes (amendments) to the OCP and Land Use Bylaws (LUB).

Bowen Island Municipality (BIM) – Mannion Bay Management Strategy

- 2013 - BIM identified the Mannion Bay Management Strategy as an objective their Strategic Plan.
- 2014 – BIM developed a [5 step options plan](#).
- 2016 - BIM Public Beaches And Water Areas [Bylaw No. 418](#) was adopted.
- 2016 - BIM obtained a 30 year tenure [\(Licence of Occupation\) for Mannion Bay](#).

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Shoreline Protection Model Bylaw Report, March 2021.

AVAILABLE OPTIONS:

n/a

FOLLOW-UP:

The briefing may inform the RPCs discussion on work plan priorities. Staff will provide an update to the Gabriola Island LTC of the results and directions from this consideration.

Prepared By: Renée Jamurat, RPP MCIP, RPM – North Office

Reviewed By: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services

Date: April 14, 2023

BRIEFING

To:	Regional Planning Committee	For the Meeting of:	April 27, 2023
From:	Jason Youmans Auxiliary Planner	Date Prepared:	April 18, 2023
Copy:	Chief Administrative Officer Director, Trust Area Services		
SUBJECT:	Housing Action Scan		

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the memorandum is to provide the Regional Planning Committee with an overview of housing initiatives underway at Islands Trust and a summary of external developments that may affect Islands Trust's approach to housing issues in the coming year. Information is organized across three categories:

- 1) Trust Council and Committees;
- 2) Local Trust Committees; and
- 3) External Developments

It concludes with a brief overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Islands Trust as they relate to addressing islander's housing needs.

This memo demonstrates that while Trust Council and LTCs have taken numerous steps to address the "housing equity and workforce shortage crisis" identified by Trust Council, these actions have not generally been coordinated with other government entities or been embedded within the type of strategy or action plan that could open the door to greater assistance from senior government.

TRUST COUNCIL:

Resolutions

Over the past two years Trust Council has passed the following resolutions related to housing:

December 2021: Trust Council declares that a Housing Equity and Workforce Shortage Crisis exists on many islands

March 2021: Trust Council affirms that S.3 of the Islands Trust Act includes the concept of and protection of healthy and inclusive communities including (but not limited to) housing and transportation

September 2022: Trust Council refers the concept of "carrying capacity" to the Regional Planning Committee for study and recommendations (Not Completed)

September 2022: Trust Council resolves to coordinate a round table on housing, to include BC Housing, key ministers, housing leaders from island communities, and others, within the first six months of the new term (Not completed, although staff suggest that the April 2023 UBCM Housing Forum attended by several trustees may advance this objective)

September 2022: Trust Council resolves to host a panel session about housing challenges and solutions in the Islands Trust Area as part of trustee education (Not completed, although staff suggest that this may be best once forthcoming housing toolkit is completed)

September 2022: Trust Council requests Executive Committee to develop a communications strategy and materials to support awareness of the housing affordability advocacy request and rationale (Not Completed)

September 2022: Trust Council requests the Chair to write to the Province to:

- outline the particular housing affordability challenges in the Trust Area; and
- request that the Province explore what can be done to create housing solutions specific to rural islands in the Trust Area, including options for stable, secure funding (Completed)

Budget

FY 2023/24 Budget

Denman Island Housing Project - \$18,000

Salt Spring Island Housing Challenges and Solutions + CDF Project - \$96,000

Hornby Island OCP and LUB Update (includes housing) - \$15,000

Gabriola Island OCP and LUB Update (includes housing) - \$18,000

Regional Planning Committee placeholder (could include housing) - \$30,000

FY 2022/23 Spending

Denman Island Housing Review - \$494.62

Mayne Island Housing Project - \$1,395.80

Salt Spring Island Housing Challenges and Solutions - \$3,569.75

FY 2021/22 Spending

Gabriola Island Housing Options and Impacts - \$3,383.25

Mayne Island Housing Project - \$153.75

Salt Spring Island Housing Challenges and Solutions - \$6,575.59

FY 2020/21 Spending

Trust Council Housing Initiatives - \$9,092.02

Gabriola Island Housing Options and Impacts - \$4,221.04

Galiano Island Affordable Housing - \$2,038.63

Mayne Island Housing Project - \$375.55

Salt Spring Island Affordable Rental Housing – Cottages - \$624.85

South Pender Island Alternative Housing - \$1,033.50

Advocacy

November 2022: [TC Chair writes Murray Rankin](#) (Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing) requesting an exploration of rural island housing solutions.

January 2022: [TC submits resolution for consideration](#) to the Association of Vancouver Island Coastal Communities (AVICC) advocating for Provincial funding and support in the development of affordable housing projects in rural areas.

Policy

The Islands Trust Policy Statement does not address housing specifically beyond a handful of policies about growth management and density limits.

However, the 2018-2022 Islands Trust Strategic Plan does contain the following strategic directions:

4.4: Implement the following high priority actions outlined in the Affordable Housing in the Trust Area: Strategic Actions for Islands Trust previously referred by Trust Council.

i. Review the Islands Trust Policy statement and give consideration to:

- a) giving affordable housing a greater profile for its role in sustainable communities*
- b) including a reference to affordable housing in its policy direction to LTCs and municipalities.*

ii. Review the Islands Trust Policy statement to ensure that it:

- a) includes clear and well-thought out definition of ‘affordability’*
- b) includes clearly articulated vision, goal and objectives for affordable housing*
- c) gives affordable housing a greater profile for its role in sustainable communities*
- d) includes a reference to affordable housing in its policy direction to LTCs and municipalities.*

These directions have been considered in the development of draft Policy Statement amendments.

The 2018-2022 Strategic Plan also contains directions to develop model bylaws related to floor area ratio, density bonus, and building stratas.

First Nations

In responding to housing-related development or LTC policy projects, area First Nations emphasize that their interest is in seeing their members return to island. They are asking what Islands Trust is doing to make this happen.

First Nations are also asking how increased residential development aligns with commitments to the protection of cultural heritage/culturally important sites.

Freshwater

Future changes in residential density should align with areas where there is abundant freshwater. To that end, Islands Trust is funding the development of groundwater availability studies for islands experiencing housing challenges.

To date, only the groundwater availability study for the southern gulf islands has been completed.

Groundwater availability assessments for the northern islands and Salt Spring Island require funding.

Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVRs)

Seven LTCs have authorized proactive STVR enforcement (Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Salt Spring Island, Galiano, North Pender, and Mayne).

There are currently 160 open STVR files across all Local Trust Areas. It is anticipated that additional files will be opened as bylaw compliance and enforcement staff undertake a review ahead of the summer season.

Data Gathering

Housing Needs Assessments were developed as follows:

2018 – [Southern Gulf Islands](#)

2018 – [Northern Gulf Islands](#)

2020 – [Salt Spring Islands](#)

To remain compliant with provincial legislation concerning housing needs assessments, Islands Trust will have to update the southern and northern island assessments this year.

Other important data-gathering initiatives include the acquisition from Statistics Canada and infographic presentation of demographic information from the 2021 Census which should be available shortly.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE:

- Commissioned and received report and draft bylaw for floor-area ratio as a tool to limit housing impact on lands;
- At its February 2023 meeting:
 - Appointed a working group of the following three members to provide feedback to staff for the development of the education session for housing and to identify potential strategic directions on housing for discussion by the Regional Planning Committee: Trustee Lironi, Trustee Elliott, and Trustee Allen.
 - Recommended that staff schedule a staff-lead online education session focusing on housing challenges and solutions for Trust Council following the update of the Islands Trust Community Housing “Toolkit”.
- At its August 2023 meeting:

- Requested the RPC Chair to work with staff to develop an RFD to Trust Council recommending that Trust Council:
 - write to the Province to:
 - outline the particular housing affordability challenges in the Trust Area, and
 - request that the Province explore what can be done to create housing solutions specific to rural islands in the Trust Area, including options for stable, secure funding;
 - request the Executive Committee develop a communications strategy and materials to support awareness of the housing affordability advocacy request and rationale;
 - host a session with a panel about affordable housing challenges and solutions in the Trust Area as part of trustee education; and
 - coordinate a roundtable on housing, to include BC Housing, key ministers, housing leaders from island communities, and others, within the first six months of the new term.
- Regional Planning Team staff are developing a baseline update, housing strategy and housing toolkit to assist LTCs and planners to better execute housing policy, regulation, and development projects in the Trust Area.
- Staff are developing a draft Islands Trust Housing Strategy for Regional Planning Committee discussion.

LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEES/BOWEN ISLAND MUNICIPALITY:

Following are local trust committee housing actions or projects undertaken over the last few years or currently underway.

Gambier Island

- N/A

Bowen Island Municipality

- Supported numerous rezonings that resulted in affordable, special-needs, and/or staff housing secured by housing agreement
- Removed minimum lot size for detached secondary suites
- Attached secondary suites permitted Island-wide
- Introduced business licensing for STVRs

Lasqueti Island

- N/A

Denman Island

- Rezoning approval in early 2023 for up to 20 units of affordable rental housing in the Denman village core
- 2022-2024 – OCP and LUB review project specifically targeting housing flexibility

Hornby Island

- LTC Chair letter to BC Housing CEO in support of Beulah Creek Housing Project
- 2022-2024 – OCP and LUB review project targeting four topic areas, one of which is housing

Gabriola Island

- Rezoning approval for up to 24 units of affordable rental housing in the village core
- 2023-2024 – OCP and LUB comprehensive review project currently underway with a specific focus on housing

Thetis Island

- N/A

Salt Spring Island

- Rezoning and development permit approval for multi-family seniors housing
- Bylaw in process to authorize accessory dwelling units on many island properties
- Funded a housing task force which produced a report of recommendations
- Standing resolution to not enforce bylaws concerning non-permitted housing unless there are health and safety concerns

Galiano Island

- Rezoning approvals for two multi-family affordable housing developments
- Removed option to apply for temporary use permits for short-term vacation rentals, in part to keep units in the long-term housing stock

North Pender Island

- Introduced floor area limits for single-family dwellings

South Pender Island

- Introduced floor area limits for single-family dwellings
- Introduced temporary use permit requirement for all types of short-term vacation rentals and home-based business B&Bs

Mayne Island

- Rezoning approval for multi-family affordable housing development
- Introduced flexible housing zoning in appropriate area of the island
- Increased permitted floor area for suites and cottages on smaller lots

Saturna Island

- N/A

EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS:

Homes for People

Government of British Columbia Housing Action Plan announced April, 2023.

Legislation has not been drafted, but potential changes highlighted in the plan announcement that may or may not affect islands in the Trust Area include:

- Allowing up to four dwelling units on single-family lots (likely only in municipalities);
- Mandating that secondary suites be allowed across the Province;
 - Forgivable loans for secondary suite renovations that secure 5 years of affordable rental rates;
- Greater BC Housing investment in multi-family affordable housing;
- Implementing a house flipping tax;
- Expanding the speculation and vacancy tax to additional areas.

To date staff have been unable to determine how Islands Trust will be considered in these new Provincial initiatives and which provisions will apply and which will not.

Staff will continue to seek information and advise Trust Council accordingly as more information becomes available.

CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund

\$4 billion federal fund “to drive transformational change within the sphere of control of the local government regarding land use planning and development approvals.”

Staff have been advised by CMHC that individual local trust committees can apply, not Trust Council as a whole. Islands with populations under 10,000 would apply for the rural stream. Salt Spring Island may have to apply for the urban stream.

Applications for the 2023 intake must be received this summer, date TBD.

To be eligible for funding, LTCs will need to:

- present an application, including an action plan that outlines supply growth targets and specific initiatives to grow housing supply and speed up housing approvals;
- have a minimum of 5 initiatives in your action plan;
- commit to a housing supply growth target within the action plan that increases the average annual rate of growth by at least 10%. The growth rate must also exceed 1.1%;
- complete or update a housing needs assessment report (this requirement may be waived if you recently completed or updated a housing needs assessment); and

- agree to follow the program's reporting requirements

Staff assessment is that few LTCs are sufficiently advanced in their housing initiatives to make successful applications for this funding intake. However, LTCs may wish to begin positioning themselves for a future intake.

[CRD Rural Housing Strategy](#)

The Capital Regional District is considering the development of a Rural Housing Program to implement its recent Rural Housing Strategy. This program could impact delivery of affordable housing in the Southern Gulf Islands.

Staff are currently unaware of any other regional district housing programs that may affect communities in the Islands Trust Area.

STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES/OPPORTUNITIES/THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Significant community interest in, and support for, new housing solutions; and • Significant trustee interest in, and support for, new housing solutions	• Limited range of tools to support housing options; • Limited staff time to devote to housing-related projects; • Fragmented governance structure; and • Over-reliance on private property owners being landlords, rather than larger non-profit or developer/strata-owned multi-family units
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Substantial incoming investment from senior levels of government to help address housing issues; • Forthcoming Islands Trust Housing Toolkit will enable consistent, replicable methodology for LTC housing projects; and • Potential Islands Trust Housing Strategy will streamline federation level housing initiatives.	• Small populations mean it is difficult to attract investment from senior government or regional districts; • Limited water resources to support additional housing; • Additional housing may conflict with other conservation objectives; and • Unique jurisdictional character of IT will make it difficult to apply for and to use funding unless RD's and Province are willing to partner

ATTACHMENT(S):

N/A

FOLLOW-UP:

This report is for trustee information only. No further action is required.

Prepared By: Jason Youmans, Auxiliary Planner

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services / April 18, 2023

REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023
From: Trust Area Services **Date Prepared:** April 17, 2023
SUBJECT: 2022/23 ANNUAL REPORT – APPROVAL OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE SECTION

RECOMMENDATION: That the Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2022/23 Annual Report for approval (as amended) by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of 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 2023 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 2022/23 Annual Report at its meeting on February 22, 2023.

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 27- 29, 2023 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 14, 2023 and consideration of Trust Council in June. Upon approval by Trust Council, staff will send the Annual Report to the Minister of 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 2022/23 Annual Report for approval by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Alternative: That the Regional Planning Committee approves the attached text for inclusion in the 2022/23 Annual Report for approval (as amended) by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Prepared By: Morgana van Niekerk, A/Communications Specialist

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services / April 18, 2023

Regional Planning Committee

Role

The Regional Planning Committee (RPC) provides policy and planning advice to 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

Members serving during the 2022-2026 term are:

Laura Patrick, Salt Spring Island (Chair)
Sam Borthwick, Denman Island (Vice-Chair)
Aaron Campbell, North Pender Island
Alex Allen, Hornby Island
David Graham, Denman Island
Mairead Boland, Saturna Island
Mikaila Lironi, Lasqueti Island
Tobi Elliott, Gabriola Island (Executive Committee Representative)
Peter Luckham, Thetis Island, Islands Trust Chair (Ex Officio Member)

Members serving during the 2018–2022 term were:

Laura Busheikin, Denman Island (Chair)
David Maude, Mayne Island (Vice-Chair)
Scott Colbourne, Gabriola Island (appointed December 20, 2021)
Jeanine Dodds, Mayne Island
Doug Fenton, Thetis Island (appointed January 12, 2022)
Kees Langereis, Gabriola Island
Timothy Peterson, Lasqueti Island
Kate-Louise Stamford, Gambier Island
Jane Wolverton, Galiano Island
Laura Patrick, Salt Spring Island (Executive Committee Representative)
Peter Luckham, Thetis Island, Islands Trust Chair (Ex Officio Member)

2022/23 Highlights

In the 2022/23 fiscal year, the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) completed the following Strategic Plan items and presented them to Trust Council:

- Completed Groundwater Mapping Assessment for Southern Gulf Islands
- Received a Shorezone Polygon Mapping Summary Report "Eelgrass in the Gulf Islands Trust Area"
- Applied Healthy Watersheds Initiative Funding toward an 8 minute video: "Indigenous Perspectives on Water"
- Completed Heritage Conservation Overlay Mapping Phase 1. Phase 1 concluded with a report illustrating the importance of the work, approach, and data required to develop planned project

approach toward managing heritage. It defined the study area, cultural heritage, legislation, and a data dictionary. Phase 1 also drafted a project and engagement plan for phase 2

- Trust Council adopted RPC sponsored policy amendments to increase efficiency and effectiveness of Planning Services including:
 - Best Management Practices for Delivery of Local Planning Services to Local Trust Committees ([Policy 5.9.1](#)). Adopted June, 2022
 - Delegation of Land Use Permits ([Policy 4.1.15](#)). Adopted June, 2022
 - Priority Setting/Review Guidelines ([Policy 6.2.1](#)). Adopted Sept, 2022
- Funded a Housing Forum for planning staff
- New Trustees received orientation

Islands Trust Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement

In 2022-23, Islands Trust Bylaw staff once again focused on compliance and enforcement and investigating unlawful short-term vacation rentals across multiple local trust areas. The issue of widespread vacation rental use on the islands continues to cause a high level of concern, as it decreases housing supply and impacts housing options.

The easing of COVID-19 restrictions meant a return to regular site visits and an end of the role of bylaw enforcement staff responding to public complaints regarding the wearing of masks and concerns about large gatherings.

In March 2023, the Trust Council received a comprehensive staff report detailing current bylaw compliance and enforcement procedures. Trust Council subsequently requested the Office of the Ombudsperson to undertake a review of the enforcement related policies and practices and to make recommendations to bring them into conformity with best practices. This review will be completed in the 2023/24 fiscal year.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023
From: Director, Planning Services **Date Prepared:** April 19, 2023
SUBJECT: 2024/25 Business Cases and Current Fiscal Fund Allocations

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to draft the following FY 2024/25 business cases for consideration at the next regular business meeting:
 - Complete Eelgrass Mapping,
 - Implement the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy,
 - Update Housing Needs Assessments, and
 - Advance Development and Implementation of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy and Toolkit.
2. That the Regional Planning Committee allocate the following funds from the Regional Planning committee placeholder in the current 2023/24 fiscal period for the following:
 - Housing Needs Gaps Analysis (\$10,000),
 - Graphic Design and Communications related to a Housing Strategy (\$5,000), and
 - Suitable Land Analysis (\$15,000).

DIRECTOR COMMENTS: These recommendations have been drafted before the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) has identified its priorities and without an updated Trust Council Strategic Plan for the new 2022-2026 term. The recommendations advance current Islands Trust Council Strategic Plan Objectives and continue to build on the existing Regional Planning Committee's Work Program.

- 1 **PURPOSE:** To request staff to draft business cases for Regional Planning Committee (RPC) consideration at the next regular RPC meeting and to consider allocating resources to advance the current work program.
- 2 **BACKGROUND:** The next scheduled regular RPC meeting is September 6, 2023. One purpose of the September meeting will be to advance business cases to the Financial Planning Committee and Trust Council for their consideration to include in fiscal year 2024/25 budget. Staff seek RPC guidance as to what business cases it would like to develop.

Staff also present opportunities for the RPC to advance Work Program by allocating some or all of its placeholder funds.

Proposed Business Cases

Based on the RPC Work Program and legislative requirements, business cases may be drafted for the following items (grouped under [Islands Trust Council Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Objectives](#)):

Preserve And Protect Marine & Freshwater Ecosystems

1. **Complete Eelgrass Mapping.** (*Strategic Plan #2.2*) The Islands Trust Council received “Shorezone Polygon Mapping Summary Report; [Eelgrass in the Islands Trust Area](#)”, dated March 2022. The mapping was created via interpretation of historical data with aerial images which were then formed into polygons on mapping software. Over half (59%) of the Eelgrass polygons were of High or Medium Confidence, with 41% having Low Confidence. Those Low Confidence polygons should not be considered accurate in terms of either overall placement or area for management or monitoring purposes and should be surveyed by other means in the future (towed camera, sidescan or dive surveys) to create accurate polygons. This project is of value to the Islands Trust Conservancy as well as Trust Areas Services and Planning Services.
2. **Implement the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.** (*Strategic Plan #2.4 & 2.5*) Trust Council approved RPC’s business case proposal to increase web presence for the [Freshwater Sustainability Strategy](#) and related programs and projects for the current fiscal period. A vital step in advancing implementation of the strategy is to complete a groundwater availability assessment in the Northern Islands.

Strengthening Housing Affordability Throughout the Islands Trust Area

3. **Housing Needs Assessments.** This is legislatively required and a priority for the 2024/25 budget. Needs assessments were undertaken for the Northern Islands and the Southern Islands in 2018. Needs assessments were done for Salt Spring Island and Bowen Island in 2020. All of these have used 2016 census data. Updates using a consistent methodology are required.
4. **Trust Council Housing Strategy and Toolkit.** A separate “Development of a Trust Council Housing Strategy” Request for Decision (RFD) is included in the April 27, 2023 RPC Agenda Package. The RFD recommends drafting a business case related to the implementation of a Housing Strategy. The RFD also recommends use of current fiscal resources to further develop a Housing Strategy and develop housing needs communications. First Nations engagement should be at the drafting stage of the strategy. The RFD proposes a special meeting date to brainstorm Housing Strategy elements if staffing resources are secured. A look into the meeting calendar suggests July 19, 21, or 27 as the few reasonable options available. First Nations could be invited into this brainstorming session.

Current Fiscal Considerations

The RPC has a \$30,000 placeholder for the current fiscal period. These funds could be applied to inform or advance deliverables relevant to business cases proposed above.

1. **Housing Needs Gaps Analysis.** The legislatively required Housing Needs assessments would benefit from a more robust and consistent methodology. Resources could be applied to identifying the gaps in the current Housing Needs Assessment methodology in order to inform the business case for next fiscal.
Estimated cost: \$10,000. Estimated staff time: 40 hours.
2. **Housing Strategy Communications.** Development of a Trust Council Housing Strategy and Toolkit are included in a separate RFD in the April 27, 2023 agenda package. The RFD provides rationale for refining a Housing Strategy and applying resources to graphics and communications in the current fiscal period.
Estimated cost: \$5,000. Estimated staff time: 40 hours.

3. **Suitable Land Analysis.** Planning Services in general, and development of a Housing Strategy in particular, would benefit from suitable land analysis. For example: suitable land analysis maps would project development potential according to zoning and infrastructure and help answer the basic question: how much land might ultimately be developed, at what density, and where. Various data is also available to identify the rate of development such as building permits, hydro usage, improvement district water usage, and ferry travel. These maps would be compared to values expressed in the Policy Statement and local trust area Official Community Plans when LTCs consider bylaw amendments.

Opportunities and constraints could be layered over suitable land analysis maps and include numerous layers. For example, constraints may include suitable habitat to protect species at risk, sensitive ecosystems, known cultural heritage areas, and parks and protected areas. Sea level rise data could be included where available. Opportunities may include layers such as groundwater availability, proximity to transit, and other identified community values.

Resources to develop Trust Area wide suitable land analysis maps with opportunities and constraints are not available; however, it may be feasible to develop a list of available data to inform such maps and pilot them on priority areas such as those LTCs amending Official Community Plans and Land Use Bylaws to address the housing crisis. It may also be feasible to join RPC funding with specific LTC funding to develop a robust template. The resources estimate assumes the sharing of resources. To advance suitable land analysis with opportunity and constraint considerations this fiscal, resources would be applied to hiring a graphic information systems / mapping specialist to work with Planning Services. This work would not include mapping from the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy.

Estimate cost: \$15,000. Estimated staff time: 120 hours.

3 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL: The Islands Trust Council has not begun a new strategic planning process for the new 2022-2026 term. As such, the current Strategic Plan is being applied to support recommendations to Trust Council for next fiscal business cases.

FINANCIAL: Feasible assignment of RPC placeholder funds for the current fiscal.

POLICY: N/A

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS: Development of business cases will be as requested by the RPC.

FIRST NATIONS: Proposed business cases to preserve and protect marine & freshwater ecosystems will enhance known First Nations interests. Proposed business cases strengthening housing affordability throughout the Islands Trust Area primarily consider developing a Housing Strategy, itself proposed to be developed in consultation with First Nations.

OTHER: None

- 4 **RELEVANT POLICY(S):** Council committee System Policy 2.3.1; Regional Planning Committee Terms of Reference Policy 2.3.2; Policy 6.2.1 Priority Setting/Review Guidelines; Policy 6.7.1 Work Program, Follow-Up Action List and Priorities Report

- 5 **ATTACHMENT(S):** None.

RESPONSE OPTIONS

Recommendation: Approve the recommendations as drafted:

1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to draft the following FY 2024/25 business cases for consideration at the next regular business meeting:
 - Complete Eelgrass Mapping,
 - Implement the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy,
 - Update Housing Needs Assessments, and
 - Advance Development and Implementation of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy and Toolkit.
2. That the Regional Planning Committee allocate the following funds from the Regional Planning committee placeholder in the current 2023/24 fiscal period for the following:
 - Housing Needs Gaps Analysis (\$10,000)
 - Graphic Design and Communications related to a Housing Strategy (\$5,000), and
 - Suitable Land Analysis (\$15,000).

Alternative: Amend the recommendations after discussion of RPC priorities:

1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to draft the following FY 2024/25 business cases for consideration at the next regular business meeting:
 - **List items...**
2. That the Regional Planning Committee allocate the following funds from the Regional Planning committee placeholder in the current 2023/24 fiscal period for the following:
 - **List items...**

Prepared By: **Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services**



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023

From: Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner **Date Prepared:** April 18, 2023

SUBJECT: Development of a Trust Council Housing Strategy
Development of a Housing Project Toolkit

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to proceed with next steps required to advance the development of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy as identified in the April 27, 2023 Housing Strategy Request for Decision.
2. That the Regional Planning Committee request staff to proceed with next steps required to advance the Housing Project Toolkit in accordance with the workplan attached as Appendix 4 to the April 27, 2023 Housing Strategy Request for Decision.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS:

Development of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy could improve organizational focus on an issue of importance to Island communities. Widespread use of the Housing Project Toolkit by staff and LTCs will improve organizational efficiency by streamlining the housing project process. A Housing Strategy and Toolkit advance the current Islands Trust Council Strategic Plan objective to strengthen housing affordability throughout the Islands Trust Area. Advancement of these priorities is subject to staff availability which is uncertain. Funding of these initiatives is discussed in the Request for Decision concerning Business Cases for the 2024/25 fiscal year elsewhere the April 27, 2023 Regional Planning Committee agenda package.

1 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is:

1. To provide background and rationale to support the development of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy. The report outlines suggested goals, objectives and actions based on review of housing policy work undertaken in the Islands Trust over the past 30 years. The report also recommends next steps for the development of the Islands Trust Housing Strategy (to include an implementation plan).
2. To provide an update on the development of a Housing Project Toolkit, including some draft components of that toolkit for RPC review. It also lays out recommendations for next steps in development of the toolkit.

2 BACKGROUND:

Addressing housing need in the Islands Trust Area has been a key interest for the Islands Trust for decades. In December 2021, Trust Council declared a Housing Equity and Workforce Shortage Crisis. Prior to this, much work was done by

community organizations, other agencies as well as LTCs and the LPC (former RPC) to understand and address island housing issues.

One objective in the 2018-2022 Trust Council Strategic Plan is to “Strengthen housing affordability throughout the Islands Trust Area.” Actions under this strategy related to the Trust Policy statement are being addressed through the Trust Policy Statement review process. Actions related to model bylaws were paused and the \$5,000 allocated to completion of those options was redirected by the RPC in the Fall of 2022 to support a planning staff workshop focused on addressing housing. That workshop took place on March 1.

The funding was used to hire a former Islands Trust planner for a short period of time to do background work and help design and deliver the workshop. Background work included collection, review, and the creation of an annotated bibliography of all the available documents related to addressing housing need in the Islands Trust Area. This included 30+ documents spanning about 30 years. During this process staff recognized that the work was similar to that which would be required as pre-work in the development of a housing strategy and a housing toolkit.

Staff have taken the process of reviewing documents and their recommendations one step further and identified key objectives and related actions. This list has been reviewed by a number of Islands Trust planning staff as well as CRD Manager of Service delivery for the Southern Gulf Islands, who was a longtime Islands Trust planner responsible for a considerable amount of the federation-wide work on housing done to date, including the organization of a well-attended Islands Trust Housing Forum and the resulting Baseline on Community Housing Report. This work builds directly on that work, as well as the work done by many other Islands Trust Planners, consultants and community organizations.

This list of housing objectives and actions proposed in Appendix 1 is provided to the RPC to initiate discussion related to the development of a Trust Wide Housing Strategy/Action Plan.

The housing report review and staff planning workshop also revealed that there is actually a limited range of actions within LTC jurisdiction to tackle the islands’ housing challenges and that most of those actions have been identified in past reports. The challenge has been in maintaining focus on those options and implementing them in a systematic way. Staff hope that by creating a housing project toolkit planners and LTCs will have easy-to-use tools to assist in the design and implementation of LTC housing projects and facilitate a smooth process for viable affordable housing development applications.

Why is an Islands Trust Council Housing Strategy Needed?

Housing challenges in the Trust Area are growing: Housing challenges in the Islands Trust Area have existed for decades. The rapid and dramatic increase in land value is pushing community members who provide vital services either off the islands or into unhealthy living conditions. Focused and strategic direction will help address these challenges efficiently and effectively.

Housing strategy will provide focus for decision making: A Trust Council housing strategy will help prioritize actions and provide focused direction related to how funding for Local Trust Committees is prioritized and how staff resources are managed to assist LTC with their housing projects and related work (groundwater availability assessments, build out maps with opportunities and constraints overlay). A housing strategy will also provide focus related to the development of necessary communications, partnership, advocacy for policy changes and resource support from senior levels of government.

Housing Strategy will make Islands Trust ready for funding opportunities: Senior government and other agencies are rapidly developing funding programs to support housing. These programs have tight timelines. Having a strategy in place will enable the Islands Trust to more easily pivot toward funds that become available without having to go through a detailed decision-making process.

Housing Strategy will provide focus for communication with the Province: Recent Provincial programs supporting housing have revealed that the unique needs of the Islands Trust are not understood by the Province. Communication with the Province regarding the Islands Trust's needs for support must be direct and focus specifically on what the Province could and should be doing to help. A strategy will help focus messaging. A strategy can also prioritize this communication. The sharing of the strategy with the province will be a significant step related to this communication.

Housing Strategy will focus regional district collaboration: It is only through collaboration with regional districts that many programs and services supporting housing need can be delivered. This includes permitting different approaches to housing through alternative development approvals and distributing grant funding (that Islands Trust may acquire through other means) to subsidize the building of housing or housing supports such as cisterns and septic systems.

Housing Strategy will help focus communities: A housing strategy will be a transparent demonstration that the Islands Trust is taking a number of steps to address housing need. It may help focus interested and eager community groups on tasks that will support the implementation of the Strategy.

Housing Strategy will ensure Trust-wide guiding principles and priorities inform decision making: Fostering sustainable, inclusive and resilient communities and acknowledge the interdependencies between healthy communities and healthy ecosystems.

Housing Strategy Goals

A Trust-Wide Housing Strategy will need to have goals. From staff perspective the goals of the strategy should include two key focuses.

1) Land Use = WHAT to Build and WHERE to Build it. This is the area within the Islands Trust's jurisdiction. An example goal is as follows:

Increase housing options in suitable locations throughout the Islands Trust Area to address housing need.

- Suitable locations are those that have reliable potable water, are outside of sensitive ecosystems, and are located close to community services and amenities. Location suitability also considers First Nations interests.
- Housing options include multi-family rental, accessory dwelling units, secondary suites and other forms of housing that address housing need.
- Increasing housing options is facilitated through LTC projects. Trust Council allocated budget and staff time.

2) Partnership and Advocacy = HOW Housing will be Built and Supported. This requires funding and other support (including potential policy change) from other partners. An example goal is as follows:

Increase co-ordination with Regional Districts, the Province and the Federal Government to encourage support for housing that addresses housing need in the Islands Trust Area.

- The unique and multi-agency governance structure of the Islands Trust requires focussed co-ordination, particularly with regional districts to support programs that are beyond regulating land use but serve the Islands Trust mandate (eg. education, providing infrastructure, providing subsidies for housing related supports like rainwater cisterns). Such coordination has been lacking to date.
- The unique jurisdictional existence and evolution of Islands Trust communities has lead to regulatory challenges that need provincial attention. As well, the Islands Trust is often overlooked by funding programs designed by the province and the federal government as the Islands Trust does not provide services or infrastructure.

See Appendix 2 for a discussion of objectives and actions that appear in the table in Appendix 1.

Why is an Islands Trust Housing Project Toolkit Needed?

Numerous LTCs have indicated that addressing their island's housing challenges is a top priority. Anticipating multiple housing-related projects over the coming months and years, it would be best if those projects proceed according to a consistent, replicable methodology across the Trust Area. The toolkit's component parts will fill gaps identified by LTCs, staff and community members in recent years, so that Islands Trust can be better prepared to respond to current and emerging housing challenges, and be ready to apply for funding opportunities when they emerge.

Housing Project Toolkit Components

See Appendix 3 for a summary of the toolkit component parts. Staff have attached a selection of tools that are nearing completion for the RPC's review in appendices to this report. They have not been formatted yet for stylistic consistency. See Appendix 4 for a workplan regarding projected completion and resources required for each of the toolkit components. As each tool is completed it will become available for staff and LTC use. Some tools have already been used by planners helping LTCs scope their housing projects.

The Islands Trust Housing Project Toolkit is divided into two sections. The first will provide useful documents to help guide LTC-driven policy and regulatory projects. The second will help facilitate smooth rezoning and other development applications by non-profit housing provider.

The tools included in appendices to this RFD are as follows:

- Appendix 5: Tool 1 – Housing Pre-Project Process
- Appendix 6: Tool 2 – Discussion Paper Guidance
- Appendix 7: Tool 4 – Housing Profiles
- Appendix 8: Tool 5 (Excerpt) – Baseline Summary Table
- Appendix 9: Tool 5 (Excerpt) – Community Housing Table
- Appendix 10: Tool 6 – Zoning and Policy Options Table
- Appendix 11: Tool 9 – Roles and Responsibilities Table

Not included, and with rationale why, are:

- Tool 3: Annotated Bibliography – Too large at 20+ pages. Will be made available following addition of recently-discovered documents and final formatting.
- Tool 5: Baseline Report – Affordable Housing in the Trust Area – In progress, and too large.
- Tool 7: Housing Action Plan Template – Not Started
- Tool 8: Suitable Land Analysis Guidance – Not Started
- Tool 10: Affordable Housing Application Project Workflow – In Progress
- Tools 11 to 15: Affordable housing application template tools – Not Started

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Next steps in the development of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy and Housing Toolkit will depend in large part on staff availability. Progress on the strategy and toolkit to date has been made possible through the redirection of funding from unfilled positions elsewhere in the organization, which has enabled keeping an auxiliary planner working on the project past the \$5,000 in RPC funding that was used to undertake the document review, annotated bibliography and assist in designing and delivering the staff housing workshop.

Near-term ability to retain the current auxiliary planner is uncertain as empty positions may be filled and the auxiliary planner may no longer be available. In the event that one or both of these scenarios play out, it is unclear how further work on the housing strategy or toolkit will proceed this fiscal year. If that is the case, RPC should be prepared to submit a business case for next year's budget cycle to fund staffing for its housing-related work.

Beyond development of the Housing Strategy itself, its implementation over the coming years will also require sustained and substantial resources.

Staff anticipate the following next steps in relation to the development of an Islands Trust Housing Strategy:

- **Special RPC Meeting**– Workshop strategy goals, objectives and actions (with possible invitation to First Nations)
- **Staff** – Revise goals, objectives and actions
- **Staff** – Create strategy document to include implementation plan and business case
- **RPC Meeting** – Review and endorse strategy document, implementation plan and business case
- **Consultant and staff** – Graphic design for strategy document and communications plan
- **December Trust Council Meeting** – Present strategy to Trust Council for endorsement

Staff anticipate the following next steps in relation to the Islands Trust Housing Strategy:

- **Staff** – Continue to work through the component pieces in a manner consistent with the workplan attached as Appendix 4.
- **Staff** – Make component pieces available to trustees, staff and public as soon as they are available.

3 IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

ORGANIZATIONAL: Pursuing the Strategy and Toolkit work described herein will require allocation of staff resources that will in turn be unable to pursue other planning work.

FINANCIAL: The corresponding Business Case RFD in the April 27 RPC agenda package proposes the following allocations from the 2023/24 RPC budget in support of the Housing Strategy and Housing Toolkit:

- \$5,000 – Housing Strategy Graphic Design and Communications
- \$10,000 – Housing Needs Assessment Gap Analysis
- \$15,000 – Suitable Land Analysis

POLICY: N/A

IMPLEMENTATION/COMMUNICATIONS: Proposed spending for the 2023/24 fiscal year includes \$5,000 for graphic design related to the Housing Strategy. It is anticipated that other communications work related to the Strategy and Toolkit this fiscal year will be managed in-house.

FIRST NATIONS: To date, First Nations have not been engaged in the Strategy development process, but staff understand that their participation is important and that First Nations have previously communicated their peoples' desire to live on the Islands again. Staff will need to better understand this interest and how best to facilitate it within the greater Strategy.

OTHER: None

- 4 **RELEVANT POLICY(S):** Council committee System Policy 2.3.1; Regional Planning Committee Terms of Reference Policy 2.3.2; Policy 6.2.1 Priority Setting/Review Guidelines; Policy 6.7.1 Work Program, Follow-Up Action List and Priorities Report

5 ATTACHMENT(S):

Appendix 1: Housing Strategy Actions List (DRAFT)
Appendix 2: Housing Strategy Objective and Actions Discussion
Appendix 3: Housing Toolkit Component Parts
Appendix 4: Housing Toolkit Workplan
Appendix 5: Tool 1 – Housing Pre-Project Process
Appendix 6: Tool 2 – Discussion Paper Guidance
Appendix 7: Tool 4 – Housing Profiles
Appendix 8: Tool 5 (Excerpt) – Baseline Summary Table
Appendix 9: Tool 5 (Excerpt) – Community Housing Table
Appendix 10: Tool 6 – Zoning and Policy Options Table
Appendix 11: Tool 9 – Roles and Responsibilities Table

RESPONSE OPTIONS

1. Identify alternative next steps

The RPC could choose to identify alternative next steps. The RPC will need to provide staff with clear direction on the alternative next steps.

2. Do not proceed with the development of the Islands Trust Housing Strategy

If the RPC does not proceed with the development of a housing strategy, Islands Trust will not be well-positioned to address its communities' housing challenges using an approach recognized by senior levels of government and the funding programs they are expected to develop in the coming years. A housing strategy will allow the organization to move methodically through actions that are within its jurisdiction. In the absence of a federation-wide strategy, Islands Trust will rely exclusively on the planning projects of individual LTCs and their land-use planning efforts to address the housing and workforce crisis.

3. Do not proceed with the next steps in the development of the Islands Trust Housing Toolkit beyond what has been started this fiscal.

The RPC could have staff finish what has been started on the Toolkit and not proceed with the remaining until next fiscal. If staff resources are not available, a business case can be developed to identify cost for next fiscal.

Prepared By: Narissa Chadwick

Reviewed By/Date Stefan Cermak, Director, Planning Services / April 20, 2023

Islands Trust Housing Action List (Draft Ideas) Internal to Islands Trust Requiring Support and \$\$

Identify and Communicate Housing Need and Activities	
N1	Create Housing Profiles for all LTCs using consistent methodology
N2	Update housing needs assessments to include data about housing impacts on businesses and community services
N3	Develop communications materials identifying housing needs and activities being done to address need
Develop Trust-Wide Consistency in Housing Policy and Project Processes	
C1	Revise Islands Trust Policy Statement to provide vision for affordable housing and support a variety of housing types compatible with maintaining the integrity of Trust Area ecosystems
C2	Prioritize funding to LTC housing projects that will result in model bylaws for housing (Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw)
C3	Identify, and recommend LTCs to adopt, consistent definitions of affordable housing and other housing-related terms
C4	Create housing toolkit for Planners and LTCs to include recommended process for LTC housing projects and list of land use planning options to address housing need
C5	Create a model engagement/project process for LTCs that will educate and effectively engage communities in affordable housing discussions
Identify Suitable Land for Additional Housing - LTCs	
S1	Use evidence-based research (eg. groundwater availability, sensitive ecosystem) to identify suitable locations for zoning to address housing need
S2	Consider social and economic implications of housing location in evaluation of suitable land for additional housing
S3	Consider First Nations interests when identifying land suitable for additional development
Encourage Local Trust Committee Land-Use Policy Review	
LU1	Encourage LTCs to update OCPs to facilitate the development of housing to address housing needs
LU1	Encourage LTCs to create opportunities through zoning for housing forms that address housing needs
Streamline and Support Process for NGO-Led Rezoning Applications	
NGO1	Develop communications materials (including costs) on pre-development steps for community organizations
NGO2	Resource a technical services fund to commission professional reports for site-specific affordable housing projects or a granting function to support pre-development costs for affordable housing
NGO3	Convene pre-development meetings to assess feasibility for all proposed multi-family re-zoning applications
Support Housing Affordability Through Housing Agreements and Land Acquisition	
HA1	Adopt revised Housing Agreement template for multi-family developments
HA2	Co-ordinate with Regional Districts to develop a simple program to administer housing agreements
HA3	Explore how Islands Trust could hold land for housing in a manner consistent with its mandate
HA4	Encourage LTCs to develop policies that will encourage and facilitate land donation
Develop Partnerships to Improve Existing and Deliver New Housing	
P1	Establish regional interagency cooperation such as round tables to coordinate servicing and zoning requirements, and remove barriers, in support of the development of affordable housing
P2	Work with Regional Districts to facilitate the development and implementation of affordable housing strategies for the islands
Advocate for Policy Changes That Will Address Housing Challenges On the Islands	
AP1	Encourage Island Health to develop support and guidance for unplumbed sewage disposal such as composting toilets and alternative water solutions such as graywater recycling and rainwater catchment
AP2	Advocate for changes at the Provincial and regional level to support tiny homes on wheels
AP3	Enable improvement districts to access infrastructure grants
Advocate for Funding to Support Housing Need on the Islands	
AF1	Advocate for the provincial government to fund growth-limits assessment like groundwater availability studies to support “preserve and protect” mandate.
AF2	Encourage BC Housing and CMHC to incorporate a low density, rural framework within capital funding programs
AF3	Advocate for ongoing provincial funding to help address housing need in the Islands Trust (eg staff capacity, funding to build housing, housing authority (explore use of Municipal and Regional District Tax)

Islands Trust Housing Strategy

Actions and Objectives Discussion

The following document provides an explanation of the objectives and corresponding draft actions included in the proposed Strategy table in Appendix 1.

Objectives

Below is a list of potential objective that could be included in a Trust Council housing strategy. As identified in the accompanying Request for Decision, these emerged from staff review of all the known documents related to addressing housing need in the Islands Trust Area. Proposed objectives have been reviewed by a number of Islands Trust planning staffs as well as the CRD's Manger of Services for the Southern Gulf Islands who was a longtime Islands Trust planner with a focus on housing issues. Some of the actions under these proposed objectives are already being undertaken.

Objective are organized into actions that are internal to the Islands Trust and actions that require partnership and advocacy.

Objectives Internal to the Islands Trust

1) Identify and communicate housing need

Identifying housing need is the starting point for implementing policies and actions related to housing in every Local Trust Committee. Needs assessments were undertaken for the Northern Islands and the Southern Islands in 2018. Needs assessments were done for Salt Spring Island and Bowen Island in 2020. All of these have used 2016 census data. Updates using a consistent methodology are required. This is a priority for the 2024/25 Trust Council budget.

In the meantime, to help inform current LTC projects, 2020 census based housing profiles are being developed to provide a snapshot of housing need. Once more detailed needs assessments are completed, this information can be supplemented with more detailed information. Partnership with regional districts to update housing needs assessments should be explored.

Communication identifying the unique nature of the housing crisis in island communities is critical to facilitating more focussed and specific attention to these needs by regional districts, the Province and the federal government as well as those who own property and live in the Islands Trust Area. Communication work could include improving the Housing page on the Islands Trust webpage to facilitate easy access to the tools in the housing toolkit as well as LTC project work.

2) Develop Trust-wide consistency in housing policy and project processes

Consistency in housing policy begins with supporting a vision for housing affordability in the updated Islands Trust Policy Statement. It includes having consistent housing-related definitions of affordable housing and other housing-related terms across the Trust Area and prioritizing LTC housing projects as a means of developing model bylaws and engagement processes addressing housing need. The 2023 Housing Project Process Toolkit for planners and LTCs will be useful in supporting process

consistency. See Toolkit update on page 6 of the Request for Decision and a selection of draft toolkit components in Appendices 5 through 10.

3) Use the best available data related to environmental and social impacts to identify suitable land when contemplating density increases as an option for addressing housing need

Housing options related to increasing affordability generally involve increasing density. Suitable land for density increase is land that has a reliable source of potable water, is less ecologically sensitive than others and is close to community services and amenities. The Islands Trust has a number of sources of data related to aspects such as saltwater intrusion and the potential for aquifer contamination and groundwater aquifer vulnerability. Groundwater availability assessments adds another critical lens. Groundwater availability assessments have been done for the southern islands and are recommended for all other islands before additional density is considered. The Islands Trust conservancy has data on sensitive ecosystems that can also be used in evaluating suitable land.

4) Encourage Local Trust Committee Land-Use Policy Review

Land use is the primary tool the Islands Trust has to help meet housing need. OCP policies need to permit flexibility to build a diversity of housing in a diversity of locations. Creative solutions may be necessary. This could include the development of housing for workers and volunteers in areas that are not currently zoned for such housing. It could also include supporting different approaches to housing such as RV parks or tiny home villages. Land use regulations implement OCP policies. Examples include supporting secondary suites in addition to cottages and/or other accessory dwelling units, pre-zoning land to support a specific type of housing (eg. rental) or to increase density, increasing building height to support development of housing above a business and requiring workforce housing a condition of commercial, industrial and institutional zoning. OCP policy and subsequent LUB zoning changes must be in accordance with the Islands Trust Policy Statement which includes principles guiding decision making such as prioritizing environmental protection, limiting the rate and scale of development and fostering sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities. These policies can all work together to create housing solutions.

5) Streamline and Support Processes for Non Profit-Led Rezoning Applications

A number of recent housing studies concerning the Islands Trust identifying steps the Islands Trust can take to support an increase in multi-family zoning, identify a need to streamline and support the processes for non-profit-led rezoning applications. Because of the limited scale of development, providing multi-family affordable housing is generally the purview of not-for-profit community organizations with government support, rather than the private sector. These organizations have identified challenges with moving through the pre-development phase. Convening a pre-application meeting to identify all steps and costs involved and updating guidance materials will help to streamline the process. Resourcing a technical services fund or providing grants, through regional districts or a housing service, to help cover the costs of consultants and professional reports would help expedite the development process and reduce the upfront costs to community organizations.

6) Support Housing Affordability Through Housing Agreements and Land Acquisition

Housing agreements are the tool used to protect the affordability of different types of housing. The Islands Trust has several housing agreements for various multi-family developments. Recent multi-family rental housing projects have identified the need for a revised template for housing agreements to help streamline the process. A housing agreement program for accessory dwelling units in partnership with a regional district, particularly if a subsidy for development has been provided, could be explored. Given the high cost of land, opportunities for the Islands Trust to hold donated land for housing could also be explored. LTC can look at developing policies to encourage and facilitate the donation of land to address housing need.

Actions Requiring Partnership and Advocacy

7) Develop Partnerships to Improve Existing, and Deliver New, Housing

As previously identified, the unique and multi-agency governance structure of the Islands Trust requires focussed co-ordination, particularly with regional districts to support programs that are beyond regulating land use but serve the Islands Trust mandate (eg. education, providing infrastructure, providing subsidies for housing related supports like rainwater cisterns). Such coordination has been lacking to date. The organization of regionally-focussed roundtables to coordinate servicing and zoning requirements and remove barriers is one kind of action this type of roundtable could focus on. Having key Provincial staff at the table will be necessary to ensure that funding programs and legislative changes supporting housing recognize and support the unique needs of the Trust Area.

8) Advocate for Policy and Process Changes That Will Address Housing Challenges on the Islands

Housing challenges on the islands are unique and require unique solutions. There are a number of actions that would support housing needs in the Islands Trust Area that require policy change by a number of agencies. For example Island Health's regulations do not currently support sewage disposal that does not discharge into a septic system. The BC Building Code does not support tiny homes on wheels and improvement districts are not able to apply for infrastructure grants.

9) Advocate for Funding to Support Housing Needs on the Islands

Addressing housing need in the Islands Trust Area requires staff resources and funding. Advocacy could include encouraging the provincial government to do and/or fund elements of suitable land assessments including groundwater availability studies to support the "preserve and protect" mandate. It could include encouraging BC Housing to consider the unique interest of the Islands when they are allocating funding. It could include collecting and using the Municipal and Regional District Tax that can be acquired from vacation rentals to support housing need. Some of the uses for funding include building housing, subsidizing housing supports (eg. septic and water catchment systems), increasing Islands Trust staff capacity to address housing and funding of regionally focussed housing.

The table in Appendix 1 provide a list of potential action under each of these potential objectives.

ISLANDS TRUST HOUSING PROJECT PROCESS TOOLKIT

Toolkit Components

The Islands Trust Housing Project Process Toolkit is divided into two sections. The first will provide useful documents to help guide LTC-driven policy and regulatory projects. The second will help facilitate smooth rezoning and other development applications by non-profit housing providers.

Part I: LTC Housing Projects

Tool 1: Housing Pre-Project Workflow

This simple flowchart provides a path for LTCs and planners to follow in the early days of a new housing project. It demonstrates the significant forethought and research required before an LTC begins drafting and considering bylaws.

Tool 2: Housing Project Discussion Paper Guidance

This guidance document provides an overview of the topics to be addressed in a comprehensive discussion paper to the LTC at the outset of a housing project. It outlines the documents that should be referenced for an understanding of the past, present, and future housing landscape for the subject island.

Tool 3: Annotated Bibliography of Housing Reports

This is a summary of all¹ reports authored or commissioned by Islands Trust, or provided to Islands Trust, since 1994. Staff should – and trustees may – wish to reference these reports as they initiate new housing projects.

Tool 4: Housing Profiles

These concise, attractive profiles will summarize relevant housing-related information pulled from the most recent Statistics Canada Census and Housing Needs Assessment data. They are a useful public-facing document that describes some of the housing challenges communities are facing.

Tool 5: Baseline Report – Affordable Housing in the Trust Area

In 2016 Islands Trust published a baseline report on housing policy and regulation in the Islands Trust Area. That report included both a summary table on current policies and regulations, as well as extensive excerpts of those policies and regulations. The baseline report was updated in 2019, and staff have done so again for inclusion here. The summary table has been updated with new columns for “flexible zoning” and “alternative dwelling units” to reflect emerging trends in zoning to address housing challenges.

The inventory of affordable and community housing has been updated to reflect rezonings and new construction since the last update in 2019.

¹ Currently known

Tool 6: Zoning and Policy Options Table

The range of actions they can take within their zoning authorities is reasonably limited. This table attempts to capture all the known zoning options that a local trust committee may wish to employ and the supportive OCP policies that would be necessary to ensure policy consistency. This table could be considered as a menu from which LTC's can draw. Staff also plan to develop a more detailed version of the table with some measure of analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

Tool 7: Housing Action Plan Template

The recently-announced Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Accelerator Fund requires local governments to submit five-point to seven-point housing action plans. Staff recommend that if LTCs wish to apply for senior government funding for housing initiatives then they should consider modelling their housing projects according to the housing action plan template.

Tool 8: Suitable Land Analysis Guidance

If a local trust committee is considering an increase to the density or intensity of residential development in areas where the OCP does not already anticipate it, the LTC should undertake a suitable land analysis that layers all available applicable freshwater and ecosystem information, as well as relevant socio-economic data, to identify land that is most appropriate for increased development. The Suitable Land Analysis Guidance will provide recommended inputs for such an analysis. Important to note is that groundwater availability analyses will likely form the foundation of this assessment, which if the Island does not already have one available, will have to be incorporated into any project business case and timeline.

Tool 9: Housing Roles and Responsibilities

This simple table provides a concise reminder of the roles and responsibilities of various government agencies as they relate to the provision or regulation of housing the Gulf Islands.

Part 2: Affordable Housing Applications

Tool 10: Affordable Housing Application Project Workflow

This workflow table lists important milestones in the rezoning process. Key to a successful affordable housing rezoning application will be a robust pre-application meeting with Islands Trust staff, other agencies of jurisdiction and the project proponents to learn about the proposed project and for each agency to give a sense of potential barriers and anticipated costs of overcoming same.

Tool 11: Pre-Development Breakdown

Staff have heard from several affordable housing applicants that they did not anticipate the high cost of demonstrating water and sewer servicing capabilities and other soft costs associated with

their rezoning applications. This document will attempt to describe the anticipated reports that affordable housing rezoning applicants may be asked to provide by LTCs. Through this, applicants can gain a better understanding of their up-front soft costs (soft costs are things like engineering reports whereas hard costs are primarily construction costs such as labour and materials).

Tool 12: Affordable Housing Agreement Template

Islands Trust housing agreement templates need to be updated to consider BC Housing funding formulas. For example, BC Housing requires some market housing to help finance subsidized units. Staff could work with Islands Trust legal counsel, and may consult affordable housing providers, to update the housing agreement template to reflect current practices.

Tool 13: Terms of Reference Template

Where an island has a Development Approvals Information (DAI) Bylaw, staff will draft an example terms of reference.

Tool 14: Proof of Water Guidance

Where a new affordable housing development will not be served by a community water system, staff could develop guidance for applicants that identifies the specific engineering methodology that Islands Trust will request in order to demonstrate that the development will have access to sufficient potable water to meet resident needs. This guidance will be developed in coordination with Islands Trust Senior Freshwater Specialist and may be reviewed by engineering professionals outside of Islands Trust, in government and the private sector, for comment.

Tool 15: Water Management Plan Template

Where a new affordable housing development will not be served by a community water system, staff will develop guidance for applicants that identifies the specific engineering methodology that Islands Trust will request in order to demonstrate that the development will have access to sufficient potable water to meet resident needs. This guidance will be developed in coordination with Islands Trust Senior Freshwater Specialist and may be reviewed by engineering professionals outside of Islands Trust, in government and the private sector, for comment.

LTC Housing Project Process Toolkit

WORKPLAN

Part 1: LTC Housing Projects				
Tool	Status	Budget Needs¹	Resource Needs	Estimated Completion
1. Housing Roles and Responsibilities Table	Complete	\$0	N/A	Complete
2. Housing Pre-Project Workflow	80%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	May 15, 2023
3. Housing Project Discussion Paper Guidance	90%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	May 15, 2023
4. Annotated Bibliography of Housing Reports	95%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	May 15, 2023
5. Housing Profiles	15% ²	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	September 15, 2023
6. Community Housing Baseline Report	65%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	May 15, 2023
7. Zoning Options and Policy Table	95%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	May 15, 2023
8. Suitable Land Analysis	10% ³	\$15,000	• Staff time • Staff coordination	July 15, 2023
9. Housing Action Plan Template	0%	\$0	• Staff time	May 30, 2023

¹ Budget needs assume work is done in-house. If outside consultants are required due to understaffing, RPC can anticipate significant budgetary requirements in the order of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

² Template complete, but only two islands have been populated.

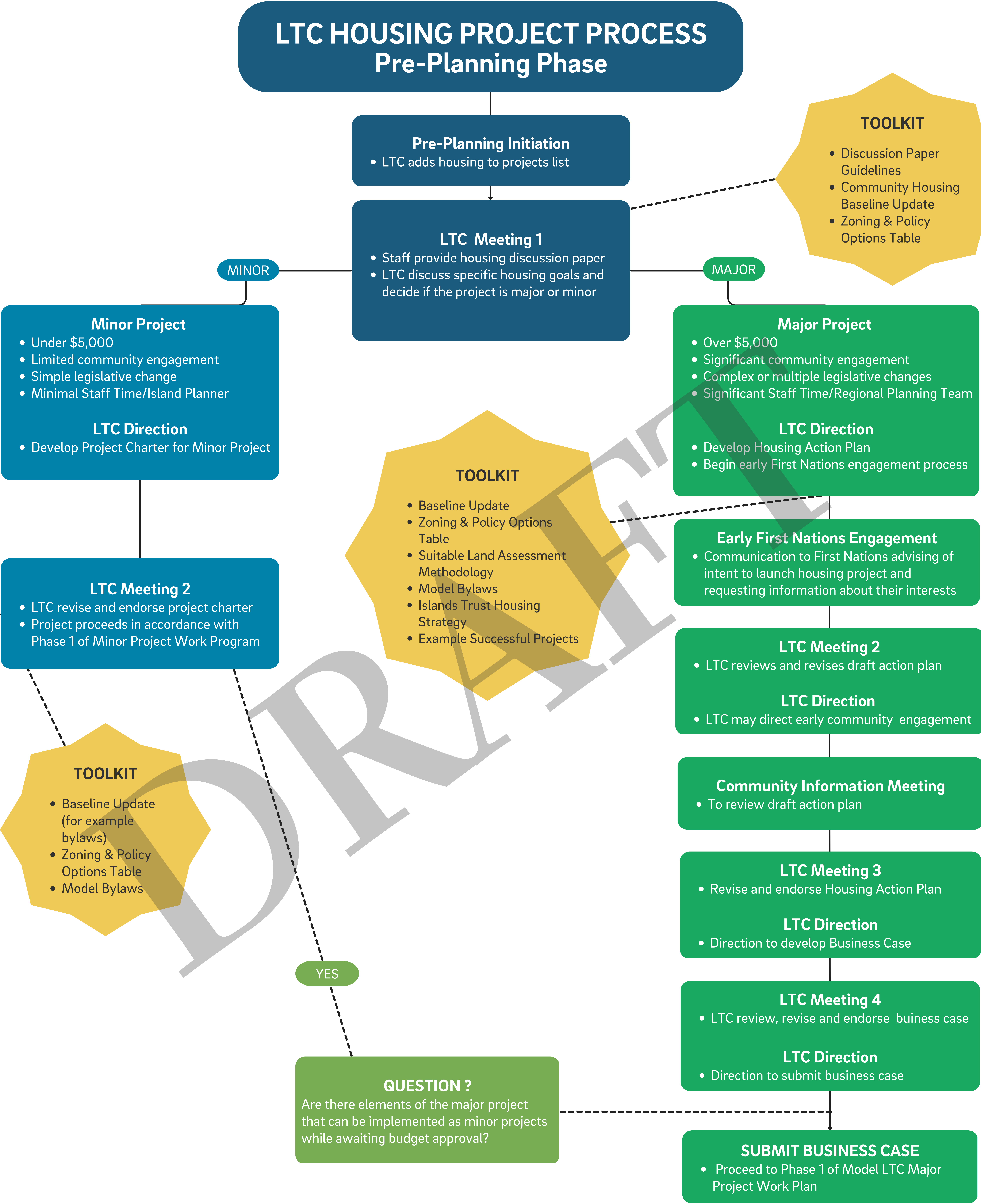
³ Based on Mayne Flexible Zoning Project work

			• Staff coordination	
Part 2: Affordable Housing Projects				
Tool	Status	Budget	Resources Required	Timeline
10. Affordable Housing Application Project Workflow	60%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	June 1, 2023
11. Estimated Pre-Development Cost Breakdown	0%	\$2,500 ⁴	• Staff time • Staff coordination • External review	Fiscal 2024/25
12. Affordable Housing Agreement Template	0%	\$5,000	• Legal review • External review • Staff time • Staff coordination	Fiscal 2024/25
13. Terms of Reference Template	0%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination	July 15, 2023
14. Proof of Water Guidance	0%	\$2,500	• Staff time • Staff coordination (with senior freshwater specialist) • External review	Fiscal 2024/25
15. Water Management Plan Template	0%	\$0	• Staff time • Staff coordination (with senior freshwater specialist)	September 1, 2023

⁴ Assumes some private sector consultation

TOOL 1

Housing Pre-Project Workflow



TOOL 2

Housing Discussion Paper Guidelines

A well-researched and structured housing discussion paper provides trustees, staff and community members with a snapshot of the information they need to start developing a housing project and/or housing action plan that responds to local needs and can be implemented in a timely way with the resources available to the LTC. The discussion paper will review relevant work from the recent past, current housing need, policy and regulation, and suggest zoning and policy options that align with the LTCs housing objectives and community need.

Recommended components of a housing discussion paper are as follows:

1) Background

- What is the role of the LTC in Housing? How does it related to the role of other Jurisdictions?
- What work has been done related to housing in the community?
 - List reports and key initiatives and their outcomes
 - Summarize previous LTC housing projects

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 3 – Annotated Bibliography of Reports

TOOL 9– Housing Responsibilities Table

2) Housing Need

- Review Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) and any other relevant reports¹
 - What does StatsCan and other data say about housing on the Island?
 - What are the identified needs based on previous needs assessments and community experience (seniors, families, workers)?
 - Is further information is required?

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 3 – Annotated Bibliography of Reports

TOOL 4 – Housing Profiles (where available)

3) Policy Review

- Summarize overarching policy perspective on housing per OCP
- Are there directive OCP policies that have not been implemented?
- How does the LUB currently support housing need?

¹ Local community groups sometimes undertake extensive and helpful community planning exercises that could/should be incorporated into Islands Trust work.

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 5 – Baseline Report – Affordable Housing in the Trust Area

4) Review Existing Land Zoned for Multiple Dwellings/Affordable Housing

- Are there properties that are currently zoned or being rezoned to accommodate multiple units where total permitted density has not been used? Are these options worth exploring?

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 5 – Baseline Report – Affordable Housing in the Trust Area

5) Identify Options for LUB and OCP Amendments

- Based on review of existing policies and regulations, which options in the options table are suitable to the communities context?
- Frame the options chosen in a way that make sense to the community

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 6 – Zoning and Policy Options Table

6) Identify a Process to Determine Suitable Land Analysis²

- Suitable land includes: proximity to community services, existence of infrastructure (roads, water, sewage? Septic and septic potential), availability of groundwater, lower impact of development to environment
- What tools are available to determine the impact of increase in density and intensity of residential land use in different areas of the Islands? (check conservation profiles, groundwater data, DRASTICS mapping)
- If information is insufficient, identify gaps that should be filled/budgeted for in the business case. It is recommended that if a water availability assessment does not exist for the Islands recommend that this be considered as part of the business case.

What Housing Toolkit tools can help me?

TOOL 8 – Suitable Land Analysis Guidance

² If additional residential density is being considered by the LTC

7) Next Steps

- Recommend next steps based on Workflow for Major Projects

Example Reports:

Mayne Island: 27/03/2023 LTC Staff Report

DRAFT

Island Housing Profile

Population and Dwelling Characteristics	2021 Census
Total population	1,391
Population over 60	720
Population change 2016-2021	+ 19.4%
Total private dwellings	881
Change in dwellings 2016-2021	+ 5.5%
Private dwellings occupied by full-time residents	695
Private households	655
Household couples with children	90
One parent households	55
Median income of individuals**	\$31,400
Median income of households of 2+**	\$77,500
Households spending 30% or more of total income on housing *	100
Households in housing that is unsuitable or in need of repair*	105
Households in core housing need	105

Renter Households	
Full-time residents who rent*	85
Median monthly shelter costs*	\$670
% tenants in subsidized housing*	22.2%
% tenants spending 30% or more on shelter*	27.8%

Owner Households	
Full-time Residents who own*	570
Median monthly shelter costs*	\$608
Median value of properties	\$645,000

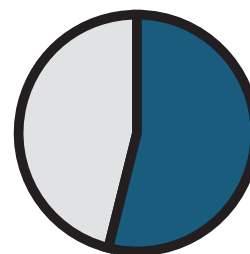
* Based on 25% sample data (Census)

** Before tax income (Census)

Subsidized = refers to whether a renter household lives in a dwelling that is subsidized. Subsidized housing includes rent geared to income,



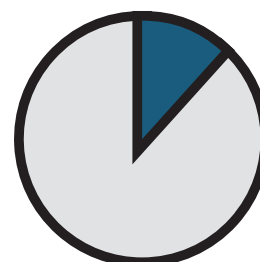
50%
Full-time Occupied
Dwellings



52%
Population
of age 60+



22%
Households spending
30% + on housing,
or are in unsuitable
housing or in need of
repair, or are in core
housing need.



6%
Residents who rent
41%
Residents who own

TOOL 6

Zoning and Policy Options Table

ZONING OPTIONS TO ADDRESS HOUSING NEED

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
ZONING – REVIEW OF EXISTING	
Review and amend existing land zoned for affordable and/or multi-family development	Review all existing lands zoned for affordable, seniors or similar housing and amend the zoning to be less specific or restrictive where housing either hasn't been developed or has not been developed to full zoned potential. Housing providers have said that flexibility in form is key (single large building, rowhouses, detached cottages, etc) to adapt to changing market and funding conditions during lag between zoning approval and construction start.
Review existing undeveloped or under-developed land zoned commercial/industrial	Review existing undeveloped or underdeveloped commercial zones, to potentially permit residential or mixed uses.
Review existing definitions to remove “un-variable” restrictions	If a regulation (such as a floor area limit for cottages) is included in the definition of a term, then it can't be varied through a development variance permit. Such restrictions could be removed from the definitions section of the land use bylaw and added to the main body of document so they could be varied. This would enable greater flexibility for land owners.
ZONING – FORM/USE	
Secondary Suites	Permit secondary suites in some, or all zones or areas of the island. Secondary suites are self-contained dwelling units that are separated from the principal unit but within the same building, whether below, above or adjoined to the principal residence on the side.
Cottages/Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Permit secondary Accessory Dwelling Units in some, or all zones or areas of the island. An ADU is a small detached dwelling and may take the form of a suite within an accessory building (“carriage house”), or in a stand-alone structure on the lot (“cottage”/“garden suite”) or on a lane (“laneway house”) for full-time residential use.
Alternative Dwelling Units (AltDUs)	Permit alternative dwelling units that do not presently comply with BC Building Code, such as tiny homes on wheels, yurts, and recreational vehicles, as either principal or accessory dwelling units.

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
	LTCs should be aware that regional districts with building permitting authority are unlikely to be supportive of such a policy change and that Islands Trust has a mandate to work in cooperation with regional districts and other agencies.
Single-Family Dwelling Variations	There are a range of residential forms that don't fall neatly into single-family zoning or multi-family. These include duplexes, rooming houses, boarding houses and flex housing ¹ . LTC's may wish to consider supporting these forms in zoning.
Manufactured / Tiny Home / RV Parks	Zone suitable land for a serviced manufactured home, tiny home, or residential RV park.
Multi-Family Dwelling Units (Market)	Permit the construction of multiple dwelling units on a single lot, whether in a single building, or several buildings. These are typically in the form of townhouses, row houses, apartments and/or condominiums. Can be for purchase or rental. See "Residential Rental Tenure Zoning" below.
Multi-Family Dwelling Units (Affordable)	Permit the construction of multiple dwelling units on a single lot, whether in a single building, or several buildings, only if undertaken by a government or non-profit organization and/or with rent/purchase/resale price controlled by housing agreement.
Permit principal residential use of currently non-residential lots	Permit under-used or unviable commercial or other-zoned properties to be used as principal residential.
Permit the conversion of commercial accommodation to residential use	Consider rezoning existing built commercial accommodation units for residential use in coordination with regulating STVRs. TUPs could also be used in some situations.
ZONING – DENSITY	
ADUs/AltDUs/Secondary Suites permitted in non-residential zones	Permit non-residential zones to have some accessory housing where it is not currently permitted, or increase the number of units where it is already allowed. Educational, institutional, health care, commercial, industrial, even some park zones, could all accommodate housing. Consider removing the requirement in current bylaws that accessory dwellings may only be occupied by owners or employees of that associated business.
Multi-Family Density Bonus	In suitable areas the LTC could introduce density bonus regulations that establish a base permitted density, as well as a provision for additional density in exchange for a contribution of affordable housing.

¹ Housing that can be easily adapted to meet the present and future needs of occupants as family size and care needs evolve.

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
Subdivision Density Bonus	In suitable areas the LTC could introduce density bonus regulations that establish a base permitted lot density, as well as a provision for additional density in exchange for the contribution of affordable housing or cluster housing that preserves unique amenities and the environment.
Flexible Zoning Model	Establish zoning that permits additional dwellings on a lot within a maximum total combined floor area for all dwellings. LTC should consider whether additional dwellings should be subject of affordability controls.
Increase Density	If the LTC simply wants to increase the number of residential units that can be built on the island, regardless of affordability, it can upzone land in suitable areas to allow either multi-family development and/or greater density through subdivision.
ZONING – CONSERVATION DENSITY	
Conservation Density Bonus/ Homeplate Zoning Model²	Allow for flexibility of number of dwellings and/or dwelling type and size within maximum homeplate or total floor area (e.g., 500m ²) in exchange for conservation covenant.
Ecovillage Zoning Model³	Allow existing subdividable properties to be developed according to conservation design principles as a strata development with flexible dwelling types and sizes while placing large portions of property in a conservation covenant. Incorporate the ecological building principles of the Eco-Density Bonus and maintain full protection of the most sensitive ecosystems through DPAs.
Eco-Density Bonus⁴	Encourage ecological and energy and efficient water homes by allowing a provision to add a dwelling unit if the owner builds to a higher ecological standard (e.g., solar panels, rainwater harvesting, ecological building materials, grey water recycling, net zero energy, solar hot water, etc.). These provisions will help reduce the operating costs and ecological impacts of dwellings.
ZONING – SIZE, SITING AND MISCELLANEOUS	
Mixed-Use Zoning	Permit residential use above ground-floor commercial uses. Height/storey limits could be raised to permit two storeys of residential above ground-floor commercial/industrial.
Floor Area/Footprint Limits	Limit the size of permitted dwellings in order to discourage undesirable forms of residential development and commercial accommodation uses in residential zones.
ZONING – TENURE	

² Proposed in *Salt Spring Island Housing Action Task Force, Summary of Recommendations, 2021*

³ Proposed in *Salt Spring Island Housing Action Task Force, Summary of Recommendations, 2021*

⁴ Proposed in *Salt Spring Island Housing Action Task Force, Summary of Recommendations, 2021*

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
Residential Rental Tenure Zoning	Section 481.1 of the Local Government Act allows local governments to introduce zoning that requires all or some portion of housing in a zone to be occupied under residential rental tenure. LTCs could consider introducing such zoning in one or more areas of the island.
Strata Subdivision of ADUs	Review and reconsider regulations that restrict secondary suites/ADUs from becoming separate real estate entities through building strata subdivision. This has been proposed as a way to encourage entry-level home ownership.
ZONING – WORKFORCE HOUSING	
Require Workforce Housing as a Condition of new/amended Commercial / Industrial / Institutional Zoning	Commercial/Industrial/Institutional zoning could be amended to require the provision of a certain number of workforce housing units as a condition of new development.
On-Site Workforce Housing	Ensure all commercial zones permit on-site workforce housing.
Off-Site Workforce Housing	Identify and zone locations for off-site workforce housing.
ZONING – SENIORS HOUSING	
Zone for multi-family seniors housing	Similar to general multi-family zoning, LTCs can zone to permit larger developments exclusively for elderly people, provided such is a defined use in the land use bylaw.
Accommodate Aging in Place	Introduce sufficiently flexible residential zoning provisions so that elderly people can stay on their properties longer. The mechanisms to do this are largely addressed elsewhere in this options document in secondary suites, ADUs, AltDUs and flexible housing/zoning.
ZONING – AGRICULTURE	
Consistency with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulations	Ensure that land in the ALR is zoned to permit maximum residential use in a manner consistent with current ALC regulations.
Consider additional density for non-ALR farmland	For large working farms the LTC could consider granting additional dwelling units for farmworker use, or allowing additional dwelling units for such occupancy in return for restrictions on future subdivision potential.

OCP POLICY OPTIONS TO ADDRESS HOUSING NEED

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
GENERAL POLICY	
Suitable Land	As per Local Government Act Section 473(1), an official community plan must include statements and map designations respecting the approximate location, amount, type and density of residential development required to meet anticipated housing needs over a period of at least 5 years. An official community plan must include housing policies respecting affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing. An LTC must consider the most recent housing needs report when developing or amending an OCP. OCPs should also contain policies to direct residential growth based on: • Freshwater availability; • Limiting disturbance of sensitive ecosystems; • Proximity to social/economic/transportation services; and • Other criteria the community identifies as important. Areas suitable, or not suitable, for additional residential growth, can be mapped and included as OCP schedules.
Growth/Population Limits	Some island OCPs contain population/growth limits. LTCs seeking to expand available housing options should be mindful of these policies and may have to amend such if warranted.
DEFINITIONS	
Affordable Housing	OCPs and LUBs should contain a consistent definition of affordable housing. This definition should not be so restrictive as to preclude the mixing of market and non-market units, as BC Housing-backed projects often require some measure of market-rate housing to subsidize the non-market units. Affordable housing definition should be consistent across Islands Trust Area.
Other Definitions	LTCs should strive for consistency in OCP housing-related definitions across the Islands Trust Area.
ZONING – FORM/USE	
Secondary Suites	Introduction of secondary suite zoning should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce zoning to permit secondary suites in

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
	residential zones”) or more detailed that addresses specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process or identifies the land use designations where the use could be permitted.
Cottages/Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)	Introduction of zoning that permits ADUs should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce zoning to permit accessory dwelling units in the following land use designations”) or more detailed to address specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process or identifies the land use designations where the use could be permitted.
Alternative Dwelling Units (AltDUs)	Introduction of AltDU zoning should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce zoning to permit alternative dwelling units in the following land use designations”) or more detailed to addresses specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process or identify the land use designations where the use could be permitted. Because most AltDU forms are not permanent, LTCs may not wish to permit them outright, and instead introduce policies to guide either rezoning applications or TUP applications where AltDUs are proposed. LTCs should be aware that regional districts with building permitting authority are unlikely to be supportive of such a policy change.
Single-Family Dwelling Variations	Introduction of zoning that permit SFD-like forms should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce zoning to permit [insert desired housing form here] in the following land use designations”) or more detailed to address specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process or identify the land use designations where the use could be permitted.
Manufactured / Tiny Home / RV Parks	If an LTC is to consider proactively zoning land for this use, the OCP should have supportive policies that establish the criteria by which suitable land will be identified. Alternatively, if an LTC does not wish to proactively zone for this use the OCP should include supportive and guiding policies in the event that a rezoning or TUP application for such a use is received.
Multi-Family Dwelling Units (Market)	It is unlikely that LTCs will wish to proactively zone land for market-rate multi-family development. However, in the event that an LTC appears to be heading in this direction the OCP should have supportive policies that establish the criteria by which suitable land will be identified.

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
	Alternatively, if an LTC does not wish to proactively zone for this use, the OCP should include guiding policies in the event that a rezoning or TUP application for such a use is made.
Multi-Family Dwelling Units (Affordable)	LTCs may wish to proactively zone for this use, or at least ensure that rezoning applications for this use have a high probability of success. As such, the OCP should have supportive policies that establish the criteria by which suitable locations will be identified. Alternatively, if an LTC does not wish to proactively zone for this use the OCP should include guiding policies in the event that a rezoning application for such a use is made. These should include land use designations where such a use will be considered and general expectations around housing affordability. Staff recommend that affordable housing be permitted in most land use designations. This will remove the need for an OCP amendment when an application is received, thus speeding the rezoning process.
Permit principal residential use of currently non-residential lots	Introduction of zoning that permits commercial zoned lots to be used for principal residential use should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy.
Permit the conversion of commercial accommodation to residential use	Allowing residential use of commercial-accommodation-zoned land should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy.
ZONING - DENSITY	
ADUs/AltDUs/Secondary Suites permitted in non-residential zones	Introduction of this zoning permission should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce zoning to permit ADUs/AltDUs/Secondary Suites in non-residential land use designations as accessory uses to non-residential uses”) or more detailed to address specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process
Multi-Family Density Bonus	If LTCs plan to proactively rezone specific Island areas to allow multi-family zoning with a provision for additional unit density contingent on a specified provision of affordable housing, the OCP should have supportive policies that establish the criteria by which suitable land will be identified and guidance regarding the market/non-market unit mix and affordability expectations.
Subdivision Density Bonus	If LTCs plan to proactively rezone specific Island areas to allow increased lot density with a provision for additional lot density contingent on a specified provision of lots for affordable housing, the OCP should have supportive policies that establish the criteria by which suitable land will be identified and guidance regarding the market/non-market unit mix and affordability expectations.

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
Affordable Housing Amenity Zoning – Multi-Family	LTCs can identify areas (land use designations) where they would be willing to entertain rezoning applications for multi-family development contingent on the provision of affordable housing. The OCP should have clear guidelines about the community’s amenity expectations.
Affordable Housing Amenity Zoning – Subdivision	LTCs can identify areas (land use designations) where they would be willing to entertain rezoning applications for increased lot density contingent on the provision of land for affordable housing. The OCP should have clear guidelines about the community’s amenity expectations.
Flexible Zoning Model	Introduction of this zoning permission should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policy. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may introduce flexible housing zones”) or more detailed to address specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process
Increase Density	If the LTC plans to proactively rezone specific areas of the Island to allow increased lot density it would have to ensure that those areas are in an OCP land use designation with the appropriate maximum lot density.
ZONING – CONSERVATION DENSITY	
Conservation Density Bonus/ Homeplate Zoning Model	Because of the expectation that portions of a property developed under a homeplate zoning model would set aside land for conservation, forestry or farming, use of such a zoning provision would likely only come via rezoning application where the terms of the corresponding covenants could be negotiated. As such, an LTC wishing to support this option should ensure that its OCP contains guiding policies to assist staff and LTCs in navigating such an application.
Ecovillage Zoning Model	Because of the expectation that portions of a property developed under an ecovillage zoning model would set aside land for conservation, forestry or farming, use of such a zoning provision would likely only come via rezoning application where the terms of the corresponding covenants could be negotiated. As such, an LTC wishing to support this option should ensure that its OCP contains guiding policies to assist staff and LTCs in navigating such an application.
Eco-Density Bonus	Because of the expectation that the green building provisions of the zoning would have to be controlled by covenant, use of such a zoning provision would likely only come via rezoning application where the terms of the corresponding covenants could be negotiated. As such, an LTC wishing to pursue this option should ensure that its OCP contains guiding policies to assist staff and LTCs in navigating such an application.
ZONING – SIZE, SITING AND MISCELLANEOUS	
Mixed-Use Zoning	Introduction of zoning that permits residential use above commercial, or where height/storey limits are lifted for residential use above commercial should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policies.

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
Floor Area/Footprint Limits	Introduction of zoning that limits residential floor areas or footprints should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policies.
TENURE	
Residential Rental Tenure Zoning	Islands OCPs should contain a policy acknowledging that LTCs could exercise this power under the Local Government Act.
Strata Subdivision of ADUs	If LTCs wish to entertain strata subdivision of ADUs from the principal dwelling on a lot, then OCPs should contain policies to guide decisions when such an application is received. Such policy could be brief and simple (“The LTC may consider strata subdivision of an accessory dwelling unit from a principal dwelling unit on a lot”) or more detailed that addresses specific community concerns that arise during the community planning process
WORKFORCE HOUSING	
Require Workforce Housing as a Condition of Commercial / Industrial / Institutional Zoning	If LTC wish to proactively zone commercial/industrial/institutional areas to require workforce housing for new development, such zoning should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policies.
Seasonal Workers Housing	If LTCs wish to proactively zone land to permit seasonal worker housing, such zoning should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policies. More likely such a use would be established by rezoning/TUP application, in which case the OCP should include guiding policies in the event that an application for such a use is made. These should include land use designations where such a use will be considered and guidance about housing form and servicing.
SENIORS HOUSING	
Zone for multi-family seniors housing	If LTCs wish to proactively zone land to permit multi-family senior’s housing, such zoning should not contravene, and ideally be supported by, OCP policies. More likely such a use would be established by rezoning/TUP application, in which case the OCP should include guiding policies in the event that an application for such a use is made. These should include land use designations where such a use will be considered and guidance about housing form and servicing.
Accommodate Aging in Place	See policy rows above about ADUs, AltDUs, and flexible housing/zoning.
AGRICULTURAL/FARM LAND	

OPTION	POLICY SUPPORT
Consistency with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) regulations	Most OCPs likely already contain a policy that ALR land will be regulated in a manner consistent with the ALC's policies and regulations. Regardless, LTCs may wish to revisit those policies to ensure that any zoning changes that amend residential use of ALR land are consistent with OCP policy.
Consider additional density for non-ALR farmland	If LTCs intend to amend the zoning of large non-ALR farms, such a change should be consistent with OCP policy. Such a policy could consider minimum lots sizes and other criteria by which land could be considered for such a zoning change.
DENSITY TRANSFER	
Density Transfer Mechanism	OCPs should contain policies to guide the transfer of latent residential development potential away from areas where such development is undesirable (sensitive ecosystems, groundwater recharge areas, car-dependent areas, etc) and toward areas where development is more desirable. These policies should be clear and easy for landowners to engage.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY OPTIONS TO ADDRESS HOUSING NEED

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
Application Processing	LTC's could pass a standing resolution to dedicate extra resources to land use applications for affordable housing projects.

Baseline Snapshot of Housing Policy in the Trust Area (2023)

ISLAND	AFFORDABLE HOUSING ZONES	DEFINITION OF AFFORDABILITY IN OCP/LUB	ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS/COTTAGES (ADUs) PERMITTED IN LUB	SECONDARY SUITES PERMITTED IN LUB	FLEXIBLE ZONING ¹ PERMITTED IN LUB	ALTERNATIVE DWELLING UNITS (AltDUs) ² PERMITTED IN LUB	OCP VISION/ GOALS/ OBJECTIVES ADDRESSING AFFORDABLE HOUSING	OCP POLICY GUIDANCE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING REZONING APPLICATIONS	OCP DIRECTION FOR LTC/COUNCIL TO AMEND LUB FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING	HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (requires updating every 5 years)	AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY
Hornby	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes (RVs)	Yes	Yes	Yes	2018	No
Denman	Yes (Rental Tenure Affordable housing)	Yes	With TUP	Yes	No	Yes (RV, bus, tent, yurt, etc.)	Yes	Yes	Yes	2018	No
Lasqueti	No	No	Seasonal Occupancy	No	No	Yes (RV, bus, tent, yurt, etc.)	Yes	No	No	2018	No
Gabriola	Yes (rental tenure affordable housing)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (RVs for up to two years if valid building permit for SFD)	Yes	Yes	Yes	2018	No
Thetis	No	No	Seasonal Occupancy	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	2018	No
Salt Spring	Yes	Yes	400 zoned full-time occupancy/ rest seasonal	Yes	No	Yes (RVs for up to two years if valid building permit for SFD)	Yes	Yes	Yes	2020	2020 -current Housing Action Program
N. Pender	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	2020	2008 (not active)
S. Pender	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes (RV until a SFD is built)	Yes	No	No	2020	No
Saturna	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (RVs and Yurts)	Yes	No	No	2020	No
Mayne	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (RVs)	Yes	No	No	2020	No
Galiano	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2020	No
Gambier	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	2020	No
Bowen	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2020	Yes

¹ Zoning that permits additional dwelling units provided a maximum total floor area is not exceeded.

² Tiny homes on wheels, yurts, recreational vehicles

Baseline Report – Affordable Housing in the Trust Area

BASELINE INVENTORY (March 2023)

AFFORDABLE/COMMUNITY/SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECTS IN THE ISLANDS TRUST AREA

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
HORNBY ISLAND							
Beulah Creek Village	Near Central Road	2/3 or more ownership units; up to 1/3 may be rental	Targeting 26 units	????	Hornby Island Housing Society (HIHS)	The Beulah Creek project was enabled through an amenity zoning provision in 2009; the actual zoning regulations for the Islanders Secure Land Association (now HIHS) land were incorporated into the new Hornby Island Land Use Bylaw adopted in February 2016. Project has received pre-development funding from BC Housing to engage architects and civil engineers.	??????
Elder Village	Central Road, near Co-Op corner	Non-profit senior’s rental	11	Built	Hornby Island Housing Society (HIHS)	The zoning for the Elder Village was established by Bylaw 70 adopted in 1992. The zoning requires seniors housing and allows five units per hectare and a maximum of 20 units per parcel.	No
DENMAN ISLAND							
Denman Green	1151 Northwest Road	Non-profit rental	20	Built	Denman Housing Association	Bylaws 241 (OCP), 242 (LUB) and 243 (Housing Agreement) adopted in early 2023. Applicant is in process of applying for BC Housing funding to construct 20 units, 5 reserved for seniors affordable rental in partnership with DCLTAs failed Pepper Lane Project.	Yes (pending title registration March 2023)
Pepper Lane Seniors Affordable Housing Project	Pepper Land	Non-Profit Seniors Rental	????	Unbuilt	Denman Community Land Trust Association	This project has been cancelled. Land owner did not wish to proceed after zoning was approved.	Yes, but not in effect – has not been registered on title
The Ridge???	????	????	????	????	Denman Community Land Trust Association	????	????
Triple Rock (CoHo Landing)	5210 Denman Road	Co-operative land ownership	15	Built	Triple Rock Land Cooperative	The Triple Rock Land Cooperative is on a large lot (approx 90 acres). There is a covenant and a housing agreement registered on the land. Co-Op is contemplating a rezoning to expand to 20 units.	Yes Bylaw No. 183
GABRIOLA ISLAND							
Gabriola Garden Homes	500 Argyle Lane	Market-rate housing (strata ownership)	24	Built	Gabriola Garden Homes Strata Council	This development was initiated by the non-profit Gabriola Garden Homes Society but was subsequently strata-titled with all units sold to individual purchasers. The units are geared to seniors, age 60 and above.	No

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
Gabriola Retirement Village	745 Church St	Market-rate housing (ownership and rental units)	16	Built	Meadow Wood Village Developments	This development consisting of small, single detached homes was constructed in 1989 and later strata-titled. While some units were sold to individual purchasers, the developer retained ownership of some units, which continue to be occupied as rental housing.	No
Paisley Place	Paisley Place, near village core	Non-profit rental	24	Built	Gabriola Housing Society	Development proposed to consist of 24 units for low-to-moderate income earners in eight triplex buildings. OCP, LUB and housing agreement bylaws were adopted in 2022.	Yes
SALT SPRING ISLAND							
Bittancourt Manor	Bittancourt Rd	Non-profit rooming house	4	Built	Victoria Human Exchange	Recently upgraded basement and have had “tiny homes” on property.	No
Bracket Springs	Rainbow Rd	Small detached dwelling units	10	Unbuilt	SSI Land Bank Society	Rezoned in 2010 to allow affordable rental housing. Housing Agreement is in place. Some units were relocated onto the site but never occupied. Housing agreement administered by Capital Regional District. The Housing Agreement also requires an annual statutory declaration from the owner(s) to the LTC swearing that the housing agreement is being followed. Eventual new owners/operators will likely need to renegotiate the housing agreement.	Yes
Braehaven	Blain Rd	Non-profit seniors’ rental with assistance	30	Built	Greenwoods Elder Care Society	OCP policies support clustering of health care facilities and seniors’ housing in this area. Higher density residential zone here also permits hospitals and health care facilities. SSILTC varied height restrictions to permit construction.	???
Brinkworthy Place	Brinkworthy Road	Market-rate seniors-oriented manufactured home park	138	Built	5 Star Communities Ltd.	Market affordable housing project that has been in place for several decades, providing an affordable housing alternative for seniors. A specific provision in the <i>Local Government Act</i> permits local governments to regulate the construction and layout of manufactured home parks and to require facilities. The Islands Trust Act – s. 29(1)(a) – gives this authority.	No
The Cedars	Fulford Ganges Road	Non-profit rental	7 units plus 3 bedrooms	Built	Salt Spring Island Abbeyfield Housing Society and Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV)	Affordable housing for seniors and transitional housing for women. The governments of Canada and B.C. provided a combined investment of \$280,000 through the Federal-Provincial Housing initiative, under the Canada-B.C. Investment in Affordable Housing 2011-2014 Agreement. In addition, the Government of B.C. arranged financing of \$382,830 and Salt Spring Island Abbeyfield Housing Society and Island Women Against Violence Society provided cash equity of \$309,500 which includes private donations. The Capital Regional District provided \$165,000 through their Housing Trust Fund. Salt Spring Lion’s Club provided a	No

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
						forgivable loan of \$150,000 and Salt Spring Island Foundation provided a \$40,000 grant, in addition to \$18,100 provided through in-kind contributions.	
Croftonbrook (Phase 1)	Corbett Rd	Non-profit seniors' rental	20	Built	Islanders Working Against Violence	Housing has been in place for 25 years. 4.85 acre, 20-unit seniors housing project under operating agreement with BC Housing. Zoning permits 37 units/ha. Agreement with BC Housing provides operating subsidy to allow rents at 30% of income, but the agreement is nearing the end of its term and subsidy will end.	Yes
Croftonbrook (Phase 2)	Corbett Rd	Non-profit rental	34	Built	Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV)	Rezoning to enable Croftonbrook Phases 2 and 3 was completed in 2018. Housing agreement reflects new BC Housing funding formulas that require some market or near-market units in order to offset the heavily subsidized units.	Yes
Croftonbrook (Phase 3)	Corbett Rd	Non-profit rental	20	Built	Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV)	Rezoning to enable Croftonbrook Phases 2 and 3 was completed in 2018. Housing agreement reflects new BC Housing funding formulas that require some market or near-market units in order to offset the heavily subsidized units.	Yes
Dean Road House	Dean Rd	Non-profit rooming house	11	Built	SSI Land Bank Society	OCP policies amended in 1998 to recognize rooming (boarding) houses in residential zones. Zoning regulations amended in 2001 to clarify that rooming houses were permitted in residential areas.	No
Dragonfly Commons	221 Drake Road	Below-market ownership	30	Unbuilt	Dragonfly Commons Housing Society	2017 rezoning application stalled owing to the North Salt Spring Waterworks District moratorium on new connections. Developers are seeking alternative water system arrangements, such as a groundwater system managed by NSSWD or CRD. Zoning bylaws received second reading in 2021 with direction for applicants to provide water management plan and housing agreement.	Yes
Drake Road Affordable Housing	161 Drake Road	Supportive Housing and Emergency Shelter	28	Unbuilt	BC Housing (on CRD-owned land)	BC Housing planning to exercise statutory immunity to develop this housing on land not currently zoned for the purpose. Original rezoning application for 80 units of housing stalled out in 2015 when the North Salt Spring Waterworks District introduced its moratorium on additional system connections.	No
Ganges Lake Properties	104 Horel Road	Market-Rate manufactured home park	25	Built	Ganges Lake Properties Ltd.	Market-rate manufactured home project that has been in place for several decades.	No
Grandma's House	Fulford-Ganges Rd	Non-profit rooming house	4	Built	Victoria Human Exchange/SSI Land	Shared home for men who have been or are at risk of homelessness.	No

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
					Bank Society		
Greenwoods	Blain Rd	Non-profit seniors rental with long-term care	50	Built	Greenwoods Elder Care Society	OCP policies support clustering of health care facilities and seniors' housing in this area. Higher density residential zone here also permits hospitals and health care facilities. Greenwoods is looking to expand and working with Braehaven; a water moratorium in the North Salt Spring Waterworks District is limiting new connections to the community water system.	No
Hereford Family Apartment	Hereford Avenue	Non-profit family rental	1	Built	Salt Spring Island Community Services	One three-bedroom family apartment	No
Heritage Place	Crofton Road	Seniors rental and assisted living	36	Built	Private Owner	45 independent and assisted-living units across five west-coast style buildings with central common area in each. Owner considering next phase to meet zoned maximum.	Yes
In from the Cold Shelter	268 Fulford-Ganges Road	Emergency Shelter	n/a	Built	Salt Spring Island Community Services	General commercial zone that permits churches.	No
Kings Lane Temporary Supportive Housing	154 Kings Lane	Temporary Supportive Housing	???	Built	BC Housing/ Umbrella Society	Atco-trailer style modular housing planned for temporary operation until completion of affordable housing at 161 Drake Road	No
Lautman House	Lautman Rd	Non-profit rooming house	6	Built	Salt Spring Island Community Services	Seven bedroom rooming-style residence for low income individuals. Shared kitchen and living spaces with private bed and bathrooms.	No
Meadowbrook	121 Atkins Rd	Non-profit seniors' rental with supports	38	Built	Gulf islands Seniors Residence Association (GISRA)	Seniors' society originally proposed this project for land outside the Village Containment Boundary (VCB) and in the ALR. SSILTC turned down that application, leading to a new application within VCB and consistent with OCP. OCP policies for no net increase in water demand led to water saving design aspects. The housing agreement is self-administered by the owner. Owners must provide LTC with a record of rental charges for each month of occupancy of a Dwelling Unit, as well as sufficient additional information to demonstrate compliance, provided that the Trust Committee must not make such a request more frequently than once in any year.	Yes

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
Meadowlane	154 Kings Lane	Non-profit seniors' rental	50	Unbuilt	Gulf islands Seniors Residence Association (GISRA)	Rezoning and development permits for this multi-unit projects were completed in 2020. Monthly unit rents are projected to be between \$3,700 and \$5,500 per month. Construction has not started.	Yes
Murakami Gardens	167 Rainbow Rd	Non-profit rental, self-contained units	27	Built	Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society (SSSGICSS)	Rezoned in 2006. Zoning proposal was consistent with OCP policies that supported affordable housing within walking distance of village services, schools and transit route. Site-specific multi-family affordable housing zone created, permitting 27 units. SSILTC relaxed off-road parking requirements. Housing agreement ensures "eligible persons" occupy units and rent remains "affordable." Self-administered by owner, Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society (SSSGICSS). The Housing Agreement also requires an annual statutory declaration from the owner(s) to the LTC swearing that the housing agreement is being followed.	Yes
Norton Road	176 Norton Road	Affordable Ownership	26	Unbuilt	Private Owners	Rezoned to permit 26 lot housing development for moderate income earners. Allows single-family detached and duplex housing. Affordable Ownership housing with 5 rental units. Housing Agreement registered to ensure moderate affordability objectives. Housing agreement operated by Capital Region Housing Corporation. Housing agreement requires resale of units remain affordable and to be occupied by eligible persons.	Yes
Pioneer Village	Lower Ganges Rd	Non-profit seniors' rental with assistance	22	Built	Salt Spring Island Lions Club	Housing has been in place for several decades. Zoning permits 37 units/ha. Housing agreement is self-administered -Owners must provide to the Trust Committee a record of rental charges for each month of occupancy of a Dwelling Unit, as well as sufficient additional information to demonstrate compliance with Agreement, provided that the Trust Committee must not make such a request more frequently than once in any year	Yes
Salt Spring Commons	176 Bishops Walk Road	Non-Profit Rental	24	Built	Salt Spring Island Community Services	SSILTC secured 2.5 ha of land for affordable housing through amenity zoning and transfer of development potential. Plans still in development by Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society (SSSGICSS). Zoned for the use since 1996 but construction only began in 2020. Residents started moving in in 2022. It is comprised of two and three bedroom units across five(?) buildings.	Yes

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
Salt Spring Island Transition House	Location not shown	Non-profit shelter for women	Unknown	Built	Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV)	Located in a zone that permits general residential use.	No
Seabreeze Inn	Bittancourt Road	Workforce Rental Housing	29 rooms to be renovated to 17 hospital workforce housing units.	Built	BC Housing/Lady Minto Hospital Foundation	Longstanding motel converted to emergency housing for homeless residents during Covid-19 crisis. Recently purchased by Lady Minto Hospital Foundation with the intent of renovating the building to serve as hospital employee housing. Current residents are expected to move into BC Housing-run units at Drake Road when completed, and in the meantime move to temporary modular housing at Kings Lane.	No
NORTH PENDER ISLAND							
Plum Tree Court	North Pender Is.	Rental	6		Pender Islands Seniors Housing Society (PISHS)	Six subsidized seniors housing units; has been in operation for over two decades; zoning allows 12 units be built. Plum Tree Court has a 35 year Operating Agreement with BC Housing that will expire in 2023. BC Housing provides funding for the mortgage, capital work and subsidizes the operating budget under a federal/provincial agreement that is being phased out. The Operating Agreement will not be renewed.	No
SATURNA ISLAND							
Carefree Court	Saturna Island	Seniors affordable rental	8	4	Saturna Senior Citizens Building Society	The land was owned until recently by BC Housing, but they transferred title sometime in the last couple of years to the society. BC Housing still has a relationship with the society and how the units are managed – operating agreement? The property is zoned for four additional units, although it is located in the ALR	?????????
GALIANO ISLAND							
Community Forest	Galiano Island	Affordable Rental	Unbuilt (up to) 12		Gulf Islands Galisle Affordable Housing Society (GIGARHS)	Plan is to construct 12 units across two buildings. Rezoning was completed in 2022. Province has issued a water license. Subdivision approval still pending for 2 ha portion in Community Forest earmarked for development. Applicant is currently seeking funding for construction.	Yes

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
Galiano Island Housing Society	Page Drive	Seniors rental housing	16		Galiano Island Housing Society	Owned by CMHC and the Galiano Island Housing Society, provides units for seniors	No
Galiano Green	Galiano Island	Affordable Rental Housing	20	Unbuilt	Galiano Affordable Living Initiative (GALI)	Plan is to construct 20 units across four buildings. Rezoning was completed in 2022. Province has issued a water license. Applicant is currently seeking funding for construction.	Yes
BOWEN ISLAND							
Arbutus Ridge	King Edward Bay	Special Needs Rental Housing	???	Unbuilt	Private Owner	Product of rezoning to expand permitted residential use.	Yes
Area 1, Lot 2	Bowen Island	Market-rate rental with affordable rental	23 market-rate 4 affordable	???	Bowen Island Municipality	Product of a rezoning application for purpose-built rental of municipal land.	Yes
Belterra CoHousing	Bowen Island	Co- Housing; mixed-income ownership	30 units total; 4 units affordable home ownership	???	Belterra CoHousing	This project involved rezoning to higher density; approach was consistent with the Bowen Island Municipality's Affordable Housing Policy. Zoning allows for 30 housing units (up from 1 unit), which includes 4 units that are available for affordable home ownership.	Yes
Bowen Court Seniors Housing Co-Op	Miller Road	Co-Operative Ownership	18	Built	Bowen Court Seniors Housing Co-Operative	Built and occupied over 20 years ago.	No
Bowen Investments Ltd.	Bowen Island	Mixed-income ownership	12 units; 2 units affordable housing	???	Bowen Investments Ltd	Rezoning allows a maximum of 12 dwelling units. A Housing Agreement registered on title requires that 2 units be affordable housing. Rent must be 10% below market rent, and only to a 'qualified tenant.' Agreement requires that Bowen Investments undertake the management of the units, and provide to Bowen Housing Island Municipality (BIM) a copy of the executed Tenancy Agreement. BIM may assume the management of the unit, should Bowen Investment go bankrupt.	Yes
Bowen Island Pub	Bowen Island Trunk Road	Staff Housing (Rental)	4	Built	Private Owner	Rezoning to permit staff housing.	???

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
Distillery	441 Bowen Island Trunk Road	Below-market rent	2	Unbuilt	Private owner	Product of amenity zoning to expand restaurant/distillery. Requires both units be rented at a rate 10 percent below market.	Yes
Grafton Lake Development	Bowen Island	Below-Market Ownership and Rental	35	Unbuilt	Private Owner	Product of amenity rezoning to all increased residential development. 10 units proposed for below-market ownership, 25 for affordable rental.	Yes
Ruddy Potato	511 Sunset Road	Below-market rent	1	???	Private owner	Product of an amenity zoning to expand commercial kitchen. Requires unit to be rented at a rate 10 percent below market.	Yes
Snug Cove Community Rental Housing	Miller Road	Non-Profit Market-Rate Rental ???	25	Unbuilt	Bowen Island Resilient Community Housing (BIRCH)	Rezoning of municipal land. Low-cost lease from municipality to housing society.	????
Snug Cove House	Miller Road	Seniors Supportive Rental Housing	24	Unbuilt	Snug Cove House Society	Rezoned to permit this residential use	????
Union Steamship Marina	431 Bowen Island Trunk Road	Staff Housing (Rental)	16	4	Union Steamship Marina/ Doc's Pub	Product of rezoning application to allow staff housing for marina/restaurant operator. Planned to be floating homes in marina. Existing units are in two floating duplexes. FLNRORD has moratorium on approvals for additional float homes.	Yes
LASQUETI ISLAND							
Elder Duplex and Greene Cottage	China Cloud Bay Road	Low-Income Seniors Rental????	Targeting 6 units		Judith Fischer Centre Society	Three units completed, on land zoned for a total of six. Construction entirely funded through local donations organized by the Last Resort Society.	No
MAYNE ISLAND							
Naylor Road commercial vacation and workers housing	412 Naylor Road	Commercial vacation rental and worker housing	Up to 30 vacation units and 10 residential units		Private Owners	LTC is unaware of the owners current intentions. Property has shared ownership.	No
Salish Grove	375 Village Bay Road	Rental with mixed rates of affordability	Unbuilt (up to) 10 units mixed		Mayne Island Housing Society	Awaiting Minister Approval for supportive OCP designation and undergoing subdivision as of April 2023	Yes

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	TYPE	# OF UNITS	BUILT / UNBUILT	OPERATOR	BACKGROUND	HOUSING AGREEMENT
			types and rates				
Seniors Housing	360 Georgina Point Road	Seniors housing	Unbuilt (up to) 8 duplexes , 2 dwelling per unit		Anglican Church	This is a site-specific zone.	maybe

DRAFT

Roles and Responsibilities



To:	Regional Planning Committee	For the Meeting of:	April 27, 2023
From:	Director, Planning Services	Date Prepared:	February 27, 2023
SUBJECT:	Agricultural Land Commission Exclusion Policies and Fees		

PURPOSE

On September 15, 2020, the Islands Trust Council requested staff to “work with the Regional Planning Committee to review policies and fees related to the Agricultural Land Commission Exclusion Regulation which comes into effect October 1, 2020.”

BACKGROUND

Agricultural Land Commission

As of September 30, 2020, private landowners are no longer able to make an application for Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) exclusion, as a result of amendments made to the Agricultural Land Commission Act in an effort to protect the size, integrity and continuity of the land base of the ALR. Henceforward, only a local government, including Local Trust Committees, (or First Nation or prescribed bodies, such as BC Hydro, Regional Health Board, Educational Body, or Improvement District) may submit an exclusion application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

Given that it is now a Local Trust Committee (LTC) that would apply for any ALC exclusions within its jurisdiction (except for those from prescribed bodies), Local Trust Committees should include new policies in their respective Official Community Plan Bylaws (OCP) that provide specific direction on how they wish to address ALR exclusions moving forward.

ALR Exclusion Application Process

Exclusion applications to the ALC must follow the following steps:

1. Fill out application,
2. Post a sign on the affected parcel(s),
3. Post notice of a Public Hearing,
4. Notify adjacent or affected local or First Nation governments,
5. Pass a resolution to forward the application to the ALC,
6. Submit the \$750 application fee,
7. ALC Holds an Exclusion Meeting,
8. ALC makes a decision.

ALC exclusion applications must demonstrate to the ALC how the purposes of the Commission will be supported if the application is approved. The purposes of the ALC are to preserve agricultural land, encourage farming on agricultural land in collaboration with other communities of interest, and to encourage (LTCs) to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws, and policies. As per the Agricultural Land Commission Act, the ALC

must give priority to protecting and enhancing the size, integrity and continuity of the land base of the agricultural land reserve and the use of the agricultural land reserve for farm use.

LTC Considerations of an Exclusion Application

An LTC should consider the following, at minimum, before submitting an ALR exclusion application:

- Consider relevant coordination agreements (ex: ALC, First Nations, Regional Districts, etc.),
- Exclusions must not be contrary to Official Community Plan (ex: Land Use Designation),
- Proposed use must not be contrary to Land Use Bylaw (ex: Agricultural zone),
- LTC bylaws must not be contrary to or at variance with Islands Trust Policy Statement,
- Consider relevant area farm plans or similar.

Agreements with the ALC

The [Protocol Agreement](#) between the islands Trust and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) states that: “The Agricultural Land Reserve forms part of the unique amenities of the Trust area.”

The Protocol Agreement is complimented by a [Letter of Understanding](#) between the ALC and the Islands Trust Council which commits to a consultative process on issues of interest and encourages coordination of policies and programs to facilitate achievement of mutual goals and objectives.

Also noted in the agreements is that the ALC has a similar mandate to the Islands Trust in that its purpose is to protect the scarce supply of agricultural land that is important to the current and future needs of British Columbia.

Islands Trust Policy Statement

Part four of the Islands Trust Policy Statement discusses Trust Council’s vision for the future of the Trust Area in terms of goal and policies on stewardship of resources. Section 4.1 provides specific policies for stewardship of agricultural lands. Policies encourage agricultural practices that are compatible with maintenance of the integrity of trust area ecosystems (see attachment). Bylaw amendments must not be at variance with or contrary to the Policy Statement.

DISCUSSION

Given that it is now a Local Trust Committee (LTC) that would apply for any ALC exclusions within its jurisdiction (except for those from prescribed bodies), Local Trust Committees should include new policies in their respective Official Community Plan Bylaws (OCP) that provide specific direction on how they wish to address ALR exclusions moving forward.

If an LTC does wish to consider ALR exclusions, staff would recommend that the first step be to discuss relevant issues with First Nations, ALC staff, Regional Districts, and agricultural groups – especially authors of area farm plans. Staff would further recommend to LTCs that if the application is for a parcel of private property, that the landowner submit a rezoning application first as a means of transparency to the community, that costs associated with an exclusion application be borne by the landowner via a cost recovery agreement, and that an ALC exclusion application and approval occur as a condition before achieving third or final reading of a bylaw amendment.

Prepared By: Stefan Cermak, Planning Services Director

Attachment: Policy Statement Extracts

Table 1 Agricultural Land Reserve Policies Extracted from Islands Trust Policy Statement

Section	Policy type	Subsection and Text
3.3 Freshwater and Wetland Ecosystems and Riparian Zones	Commitments of Trust Council	3.3.1 Trust Council holds that the natural wetlands of the Trust Area, including those in the Agricultural Land Reserve that have not been altered in the past for agriculture, should not be drained, filled or degraded.
4.1 Agricultural Land	Commitments of Trust Council	4.1.1 Trust Council recognizes that agriculture is a traditional and valuable activity in the Trust Area. 4.1.2 Trust Council shall consult with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the British Columbia Land Reserve Commission to request that agriculture policies applied to the Trust Area are appropriate to the nature of agriculture within the Trust Area, including, but not limited to, the smaller island scale of agricultural activities. 4.1.3 It is Trust Council's policy to encourage agricultural management practices that are compatible with sustaining wildlife habitat.
	Directive Policies	4.1.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the identification and preservation of agricultural land for current and future use. 4.1.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the preservation, protection and encouragement of farming, the sustainability of farming, and the relationship of farming to other land uses. 4.1.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the use of adjacent properties to minimize any adverse affects on agricultural land. 4.1.7 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the design of road systems and servicing corridors to avoid agricultural lands unless the need for roads outweighs agricultural considerations, in which case appropriate mitigation measures shall be required to derive a net benefit to agriculture. 4.1.8 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address land uses and activities that support the economic viability of farms without compromising the agriculture capability of agricultural land. 4.1.9 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, address the use of Crown lands for agricultural leases.

Section	Policy type	Subsection and Text
	Recommendations	4.1.10 Trust Council encourages the Ministry of Transportation to ensure that, where a road must sever agricultural land to provide access to lands beyond, the road is built to the minimum standard necessary to service that land. 4.1.11 Trust Council encourages the British Columbia Land Reserve Commission to approve applications from property owners for inclusion of their land with potential for agriculture in the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve. 4.1.12 Trust Council encourages the Provincial government and the British Columbia Assessment Authority to: • retain a separate farm class to provide significant property tax incentives; • ensure that the threshold for farm income necessary for farm class status is appropriate to agriculture within the Trust Area; and • acknowledge that the total land area subject to the farm class may include land left uncultivated.

BRIEFING

To: Regional Planning Committee **For the Meeting of:** April 27, 2023

From: Robert Kojima,
Regional Planning Manager **Date Prepared:** April 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Governance Review – Annex 1 Recommendations Summary

PURPOSE: To provide Regional Planning Committee with a summary of the recommendations of the 2022 Governance Review specific to Planning Services.

BACKGROUND: The Governance Review was completed in early 2022. While the focus of the review was on overall governance of the Islands Trust, the scope also included Local Planning Services and a number of planning related recommendations were included in an appendix to the report (Annex 1). There has been no specific direction from Trust Council to consider or undertake implementation of the Annex 1 recommendations, however RPC's terms of reference include providing policy guidance for staff and LTCs, and advising on the provision and allocation of resources to deliver planning services. Consequently, staff have reviewed the recommendations in Annex 1 and provide updates and comments on the status of the various recommendations in the attached table.

The 2018 Review of Local Planning Services resulted in significant changes to the organization of Planning Services, as a result many of the items in Annex 1 are already on-going or in some cases implemented. The unimplemented items tend to be longer term actions, such as reducing the number of bylaws, reviewing all OCPs/LUBs, and relocating offices. As there is no direction from Trust Council to implement the recommendations of Annex 1, staff are providing this for RPC's information.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Summary Table of Annex 1 Recommendations
2. Annex 1 extract

FOLLOW-UP: None

Prepared By: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager

Reviewed By/Date: Stefan Cermak, Director Planning Services / April 13, 2023

Summary of Annex 1 Recommendations

	Recommendation	Status	Comments
	Bylaws		
1.	1. Reduce the number of OCPs to 14 – one for each of the 13 LTAs, plus one for Bowen Island Municipality.	Not implemented	Rescinding existing Associated Islands OCPs/LUBs would be major projects; and politically challenging as many smaller islands are invested in their bylaws; but some benefit from modernizing bylaws. The recommended approach is to consider amalgamation of bylaws by opportunity where Associated Islands' bylaws are either identified for review or as part of major OCP review of the primary OCP. The focus should be on updating outdated OCPs for larger islands.
2.	2. Use the same format and content for all OCPs, recognizing that some may be much longer and more detailed than others, depending on the LTA. It is noted that an OCP template is being prepared by LPS that should resolve this issue.	On-going	Regional Planning Team has developed a draft model OCP format. There has long been a model LUB that is used for new LUB projects and which is also being reviewed and updated by Regional Planning Team
3.	3. Start at least two OCP reviews each year until they are all updated. Bowen Island Municipality can begin its review independent of the OCP review process for the LTAs since it will be using its own staff resources rather than those of LPS.	On-going	The Gabriola OCP and LUB are proposed for a full review starting in April '23. Other full reviews to follow.
4.	4. Give priority to those LTAs experiencing the most growth and change.	On-going	An assessment of growth and other development issues has been included as a criteria for RPC prioritization of Major Projects. Implementation will be dependant on Council and committees prioritizing projects for those LTAs.
5.	5. Complete each OCP review within a maximum of two years of being started. Some can likely be completed within a shorter timeframe.	On-going	The draft model timeline for Major Projects being developed by the RPT proposes a 2 year timeline for major projects, along with a 'year 0' for issue identification, project initiation, scoping and development and approval of a business case. Full implementation will be dependant on the willingness of LTCs to complete reviews within the timeline.
6.	6. Target five years for the completion of the entire process, especially given that two OCPs are relatively recent (Ballenas-Winchelsea Islands and Hornby Island) and do not need a comprehensive review and two others (Lasqueti Island and Gambier Island) are in the midst of comprehensive reviews. If that overtaxes LPS staff resources, outside planning assistance can be sought, which is common for OCP reviews, especially the public engagement component since that can be particularly time-consuming.	Not Implemented	Five years is unrealistic to update all OCPs, however not all OCPs need a complete review. RPC and LTCs could identify several OCPs for priority, with others to follow upon completion of the Islands Trust Policy Statement review.
7.	7. Apply the same public engagement processes for each LTA as part of the OCP updates, with clearly defined steps, engagement methods, expected outcomes, timelines, etc	On-going	The Regional Planning Team has developed a model project timeline, identifying key milestones for a typical Major Project. Further specific work is on developing a detailed, standard engagement process is on-going.
	Land Use Bylaws		
8.	1. Reduce the number of LUBs / zoning bylaws to, if possible, match the recommended number of OCPs.	Not implemented	See one above.

	Recommendation	Status	Comments
9.	2. Use the same general format and content for all the LUBs.	Implemented	A model LUB is used for new LUBs. RPT will continue to work on reviewing, updating and expanding the model LUB as new LUBs are completed.
10.	3. Create more consistency among the LUBs for topics such as definitions and general regulations.	Implemented	Common definitions are included in the model LUB. General Regulations format is in the model LUB.
11.	4. There are two options for updating the LUBs: ▪ Undertake concurrently with the OCP updates. ▪ Undertake immediately after the OCP updates	On-going	Where feasible, OCPs and LUBs may be reviewed concurrently. Where OCPs are completed, LUBs should be updated as soon as possible following completion of OCP.
	Model Bylaws		
12.	1. Determine why the LTCs are not adopting the model bylaws. Either the bylaws are relevant and there is no compelling reason why they should not be adopted by most LTCs or they are largely irrelevant and should not have been prepared to begin with.	On-going	Use of model planning bylaws should be limited and only undertaken by RPT where there are more than one LTC identifying a topic as a priority. Preference is to undertake pilot projects, coordinate projects, or develop expertise within the RPT, rather than develop model bylaws. However, model bylaws are well suited for administrative bylaws.
13.	2. Explore ways to encourage all LTCs to adopt the same fees. Trust Council has some control over the matter. For example, if an LTA is collecting lower fees, the amount of LPS staff time allocated to the LTA could be reduced.	On-going	All but two LTCs have adopted the recently updated model fees bylaw.
	Compliance and Enforcement		
14.	1. Consistently apply bylaw enforcement in all the LTAs, both by Islands Trust Compliance and Enforcement and the regional districts.	On-going	Review of bylaw enforcement practices being considered by Trust Council, with Ombudspersons office to provide an initial review
15.	2. Review Compliance and Enforcement staff resources to determine if more are required as part of consistently applied bylaw enforcement and/or if some reorganization is needed.	On-going	Review of bylaw enforcement practices being considered by Trust Council
16.	3. Improve communication and cooperation between Islands Trust Compliance and Enforcement and some of the regional districts.	On-going	Review of bylaw enforcement practices being considered by Trust Council
17.	4. Create more public awareness of the respective roles of Islands Trust and the regional districts in dealing with bylaw issues.	On-going	Review of bylaw enforcement practices being considered by Trust Council
18.	5. Increase the follow-up by staff on permits issued to ensure compliance	Implemented	Planning staff currently monitor TUP and DP where there are specific conditions.
	Planning Projects		
19.	1. Local planning projects should be considered, along with all other Islands Trust initiatives requiring the allocation of financial and human resources, in the context of an annual multi-year strategic and financial plan. The number of projects approved should correspond to the resources available to implement them.	On-going	The number of Major LTC projects should be limited to those that can be resourced by the Regional Planning Team. Over the longer term RPC should re-consider on-going Major Projects for LTCs that are not adhering to project timelines.
20.	2. Establish criteria to guide selection of the projects to be undertaken, including an evaluation process that determines priorities on the basis of need and regional equity.	On-going	Evaluation criteria has been drafted by the RPT and presented to RPC, the criteria will be provided to RPC to assess future proposed Major LTC projects. The evaluation criteria should be reviewed and adjusted over time.
	Development Applications		

	Recommendation	Status	Comments
21.	1. Delegate the issuance of most, if not all, development permits to staff	On-going	Two LTCs have adopted delegation bylaws (GL and SS), both have high volumes of DP. The two to three other high volume LTCs should be encouraged to adopt delegation bylaws.
22.	2. Determine what constitutes minor DVPs and prepare a model bylaw that can be adopted by each LTA.	On-going	Staff will be reporting on options for delegation of minor DVPs
23.	3. Review the current development application fees and how they are applied to ensure appropriate cost recovery.	Implemented	Fees have been reviewed by RPC, most LTCs have adopted a new fee bylaw.
	Organization		
24.	1. Move the Northern team office to Nanaimo, but retain an office on Gabriola Island open regular hours and staffed on a rotating basis by one planner.	Not Implemented	May be considered upon expiry of current lease
25.	2. Reduce the siloing by having regular meetings between the planning teams to share information and ideas. This can be more easily accomplished now that many meetings have moved to video conference platforms.	On-going	Cross-office planning teams have been implemented: - Regional Planning Team: 3 planners have been assigned, one based in each office, meet regularly and are supported by one RPM - Current Planning team: 4 planners based in the 3 regional offices have been assigned to the current planning team, supported by an RPM and meet regularly
	Staff Resources		
26.	1. Reduce the amount of planning staff time spent at meetings by allowing them to attend more meetings via video conferencing, even when there is a return to more face-to-face meetings.	Implemented	Assigned Island Planner still attends regular LTC meetings, other planners join by zoom for specific items. Potential for Island Planners to attend some meetings remotely with addition of meeting administrator position
27.	2. Planners should not be participating in meetings as de facto corporate officers. Their role should be focused on planning matters.	Not Implemented	Remains an issue
28.	3. Move the Northern offices to Nanaimo, but retain an office on Gabriola Island open regular hours and staffed on a rotating basis by one planner	Not Implemented	See above
29.	4. Review the current training and orientation program for new planning hires. The input of the planners hired in the past several years, as well as the staff involved in the exit interviews, should be sought as part of this process.	On-going	Orientation for new planner hires is being expanded. Specific training and mentoring is being provided to the Current Planning Team, who are typically less experienced planners.
	Planning Reports		
30.	1. Standardize the format and style of the planning reports	On-going	There is currently a single staff report template. Current Planning Team will be considering developing specific, shorter templates for various application types.
31.	2. Planning reports should generally be shorter. An executive summary should be included for any report longer than six pages that gives the decision makers the critical information. That means telling them what they need to know in making a decision, not simply summarizing topic headings. The reports can also put more of the details, where they are needed, into attachments rather than the main body, where they clog the flow of important information.	On-going	Current Planning Team will be considering developing specific, shorter templates for various application types. Expanded use of checklist attachments.

Annex 1

Islands Trust Governance and Management Review Local Planning Services

Local Planning Services (LPS) is the biggest activity of Islands Trust, consuming the greatest amount of resources, accounting for \$6.7 million (74%) of the \$9.1 million budget for 2021-22.

The way in which land use planning and regulation is undertaken by Islands Trust is unique in the province, driven by a combination of legislation in the *Local Government Act*, *Community Charter* and *Islands Trust Act*. It is a more complex and cumbersome process than that found in a municipality or regional district because there are 13 Local Trust Areas (LTAs)³ that each manage land use and have their own bylaws for doing so (see attached map). That includes Official Community Plans (OCPs), Land Use Bylaws (LUBs)⁴, compliance and enforcement bylaws, and an array of other bylaws (e.g., subdivision, regulation of soil removal and deposit, housing agreements, authorization of permits).

Adding to this complexity, Bowen Island, while part of Islands Trust, is not in an LTA, although it is surrounded by the Gambier Island LTA. Bowen Island is a municipal government and therefore has its own set of bylaws. So, there are essentially 14 separate land use planning authorities in Islands Trust, with LPS delivering services to each of the 13 LTAs and Bowen Island municipality managing its own land use planning and regulations.

For the Ballenas-Winchelsea LTA, the Islands Trust Executive Committee, acting as a Local Trust Committee (LTC), makes decisions on all planning initiatives.

The common planning touchstone spanning the entire Islands Trust area is the Trust Policy Statement, which is in the process of being substantially updated after more than 25 years. For many other municipalities and regional districts in BC, it is regional growth strategies (currently 10 adopted strategies in the province) that serve this purpose.

Without significant changes to the *Islands Trust Act*, which is largely outside the scope of this review, Islands Trust land use planning will continue to be a very different process than for other local governments. The focus here is therefore on recommendations to improve the delivery of planning services within the existing legislated framework.

It must also be noted that this review of LPS must be considered within the context of the broader governance and management review. It is understood that issues identified and recommendations made in respect of governance must be addressed before most land use planning recommendations can be fully assessed and their implementation properly

³ Ballenas-Winchelsea (aka Executive Committee), Denman, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Hornby, Lasqueti, Mayne, North Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, South Pender and Thetis.

⁴ LUBs are more commonly referred to as zoning bylaws. The terms are used interchangeably here.

directed by Trust Council. Also, the LPS review is not an efficiency review, although that is an important topic that will be partly addressed this year through a separate process.

Islands Trust was recently awarded a \$367,795 grant from the provincial government for a *Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program*. The budget includes \$50,000 to retain a consultant to review current processes at Islands Trust, make recommendations to improve efficiency, and streamline processing times.

This LPS review covers five topics: bylaws, planning projects, development applications, organization and staff resources, and other considerations.

For each topic, recommendations are provided for consideration. Implementation of most recommendations should wait until a new Policy Statement is adopted, a new Strategic Plan is in place, and Trust Council has addressed higher-level governance issues.

A. BYLAWS

Islands Trust has a total of 149 bylaws, many of which are tied to land use planning, such as OCPs, LUBs and compliance and enforcement.

1. Official Community Plans

There are 21 OCPs covering the Islands Trust, including five LTAs with more than one OCP. They have different formats and subject areas and some do not meet the requirements for an OCP under current provincial legislation.

Most of the OCPs focus on land use policy, which is the intent of an OCP, but a few delve into land use regulations better suited to LUBs (e.g., Gabriola Island).

With the exception of the Ballenas-Winchelsea Islands OCP (adopted in 2013) and the Hornby Island OCP (adopted in 2014), the OCPs have not been comprehensively reviewed for years, with only piecemeal amendments since adoption, largely at the discretion of the LTCs (or municipal Council in the case of Bowen Island).

Examples of outdated OCPs include:

- Bowen Island OCP - adopted in 2011.
- Galiano Island OCP - adopted in 1995 and last comprehensively reviewed in 2011.
- Salt Spring Island OCP - adopted in 2008.
- North Pender Island OCP - adopted in 2007.
- Gabriola Island OCP - adopted in 1997.
- And, at the extreme, Piers Island OCP - adopted in 1981, with no amendments since then.⁵

⁵ A process was started in 2015/16 to update the Piers Island OCP to include climate change considerations, but it was not completed. It is a moot point since even if the proposed amendments had been adopted, the Piers Island OCP would still not meet the content requirements of an OCP under current legislation. In any event, it should be an area plan as part of a larger OCP (Salt Spring Island), as should a number of the other smaller islands that currently have their own OCPs.

Two comprehensive OCP reviews are currently underway:

- The Lasqueti Island OCP review, which was started in mid-2018 and is estimated to be completed in the latter part of 2022 (four years).
- The Gambier Island OCP review, which was identified by the LTC as a top priority in 2015, put on hold in 2018 and recommenced in late 2021, with estimated completion in 2023 (two years).

Because a number of the OCPs are outdated, they do not fully reflect current and anticipated future conditions on the islands and the land use planning implications.

Two examples that show the age and incompleteness of some of the information (emphasis added) that is being relied upon as underpinnings to land use policies are:

- The **Salt Spring Island OCP**, which states, *“There are approximately 5,800 residential lots on Salt Spring Island (2007). While approximately 1,300 of these are vacant, local zoning allows for the construction of a single family dwelling on each of them. Of the existing residential parcels, many are large enough that they can be further subdivided under the existing local subdivision bylaw. A few are zoned for multi-family use. All told, the number of dwelling units (not including seasonal cottages and suites) that could be built on Salt Spring Island under current residential zoning is estimated to be about 8,150. The eventual population of Salt Spring Island that might result from the zoning now in place is estimated to be a little over 17,000.”* (page 23)
- The **Gabriola Island OCP**, which states, *“Based on the 2011 records of the B.C. Assessment Authority there were a total of 3,280 parcels on Gabriola of which 20% (or 668 parcels) were undeveloped. Of these undeveloped parcels, the majority are in the residential land use designations of this Plan. In other words, not counting new lots from potentially subdividable residentially zoned land, there are in excess of 566 existing parcels available for residential purposes on Gabriola.*

The 2006 Census estimates the population of Gabriola to be 4,050. Based on historic growth trends, the Planning Area’s population could increase to about 4,720 by the year 2016. Based on an average household size of 2.4 persons, the anticipated population increase of 390 persons over the next five years can be accommodated on 566 parcels. Therefore there is no requirement to designate additional lands as residential, as the current availability of vacant residential parcels combined with the future potential to create new parcels through the subdivision of existing residentially zoned land should be more than adequate to satisfy the Island’s housing requirements for fifteen to twenty years.

In addition, while issues related to the carrying capacity of Gabriola’s land base to accommodate more development have not been substantiated, there are known problems with inadequate soil percolation for septic disposal and groundwater

supply because of the complex nature of groundwater flow through fractures in the bedrock.” (page 13)

Comprehensive analysis using current data is needed on the ability of the islands to manage existing development and natural areas and to accommodate more growth (where there is the potential to do so) in light of the effects of climate change (e.g., increasing water shortages, rising sea levels, greater wildfire risks, the impact on species and ecosystems), more stringent environmental protection regulations and standards, the increasing costs of delivering public services and other considerations. This pressing need was acknowledged by Trust Council in 2019 when it adopted a Climate Emergency Declaration.

Despite the absence of a regional growth strategy, each of the LTAs is part of a larger system and land use planning decisions in any one LTA can have implications that extend far beyond its boundaries. The need for an integrated planning approach is expressed in a number of ways in the current Policy Statement. For example:

“The Trust Area is a unique and special place -- a scenic archipelago of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands.” (page i)

“The Islands Trust today faces a major challenge. While populations, numbers of visitors and the demand for intensified use and residential development of the Trust Area can be expected to continue to grow, capacities of the Area’s resources and systems are limited. Potential for conflict exists: conflict between short and long-term interests and between unlimited use of the Trust Area and ongoing stewardship. To keep everything in the Trust Area exactly as it is today is impossible. Changes will occur. If the Area’s environment and unique character are to be preserved and protected, priorities must be defined and management strategies established.” (page iii)

“The primary responsibility of the Islands Trust Council is to provide leadership for the preservation, protection and stewardship of the amenities, environment and resources of the Trust Area.

When making decisions and exercising judgment, Trust Council will place priority on preserving and protecting the integrity of the environment and amenities in the Trust Area.

Trust Council believes that to achieve the Islands Trust object, the rate and scale of growth and development in the Trust Area must be carefully managed and may require limitation.” (page 6)

This need for integration and keeping the bigger planning picture in mind will be important as the OCPs are updated. The proposed new Policy Statement carries forward and builds on many of the key themes in the existing Policy Statement, as well as adding new ones.

Consideration should be given on holding off on the comprehensive OCP updates until the new Policy Statement is adopted by Trust Council.

It is recognized that updating some of the OCPs will be a challenging process. Islands Trust residents have diverse and passionately held views on many land use topics, including whether more growth is desirable. For some, the Islands Trust preserve and protect mandate should be interpreted as meaning very limited new development (which on some islands is already the case anyway). However, there are also 26,000 full-time residents on the islands and increasing housing, social, economic and other challenges, many of which are inter-twined, just as they are in other communities. Some residents feel that part of the solution requires more development (e.g., increased housing supply, more local job creation, more local services).

Reconciling these differences will take time for some LTAs as their OCPs are updated, but it should not drag out for years. OCP review processes typically get bogged down when:

- There is not a clear understanding by the public (and sometimes the decision makers) about the purpose of an OCP, leading to an expectation by some that it should cover topics that do not belong in an OCP but rather in other regulatory bylaws or policy documents.
- The public engagement is not properly structured and managed. Every member of the public needs the opportunity to fully express their views, but that should not lead to unduly long timelines to gather and consider the input.
- There are insufficient resources applied (often limited staff time) to complete the work.
- Decision makers are reluctant to make decisions when there are strongly held differences of opinion among the public on land use issues that cannot be fully reconciled.

Recommendations:

1. Reduce the number of OCPs to 14 - one for each of the 13 LTAs, plus one for Bowen Island Municipality.
2. Use the same format and content for all OCPs, recognizing that some may be much longer and more detailed than others, depending on the LTA. It is noted that an OCP template is being prepared by LPS that should resolve this issue.
3. Start at least two OCP reviews each year until they are all updated. Bowen Island Municipality can begin its review independent of the OCP review process for the LTAs since it will be using its own staff resources rather than those of LPS.
4. Give priority to those LTAs experiencing the most growth and change.
5. Complete each OCP review within a maximum of two years of being started. Some can likely be completed within a shorter timeframe.

6. Target five years for the completion of the entire process, especially given that two OCPS are relatively recent (Ballenas-Winchelsea Islands and Hornby Island) and do not need a comprehensive review and two others (Lasqueti Island and Gambier Island) are in the midst of comprehensive reviews. If that overtaxes LPS staff resources, outside planning assistance can be sought, which is common for OCP reviews, especially the public engagement component since that can be particularly time-consuming.
7. Apply the same public engagement processes for each LTA as part of the OCP updates, with clearly defined steps, engagement methods, expected outcomes, timelines, etc.

2. Land Use Bylaws

There are 21 LUBs and two zoning bylaws, including five LTAs with more than one LUB. Zoning bylaws are typically implementation tools of OCPs.

With the exception of Ballenas-Winchelsea Islands and Hornby Island, the LUBs are largely outdated. As one LPS staff member put it, many of the LUBs are “historical artifacts” of bylaws inherited decades ago from the regional districts.

As with the OCPs, there have been only piecemeal amendments since adoption, largely at the discretion of the LTCs.

The LUBs vary for topics such as definitions and general regulations (e.g., building heights, siting and setbacks). There may be good reasons for this in some cases, but not all.

Because they have not been modernized to any degree, there is inconsistent interpretation of elements of the LUBs, depending on the LTA.

This is not an issue unique to Islands Trust – many local governments in BC have not comprehensively reviewed their zoning bylaws in years because it can be a time-consuming process. Nonetheless, it is an important part of good land use planning.

Recommendations:

1. Reduce the number of LUBs / zoning bylaws to, if possible, match the recommended number of OCPs.
2. Use the same general format and content for all the LUBs.
3. Create more consistency among the LUBs for topics such as definitions and general regulations.
4. There are two options for updating the LUBs:
 - Undertake concurrently with the OCP updates.
 - Undertake immediately after the OCP updates.

Selecting the first option would allow the public to see how proposed OCP land use policies would be translated into land use regulations. It would also shorten the length of time of the updating process.

If the second option is selected, the LUB update should be completed within a year of the OCP update.

3. Model Bylaws

Staff time is being spent researching and preparing model bylaws on a variety of land use planning topics. Examples include a Development Permit Area (DPA) Bylaw, a Bonus Density for Affordable Housing Bylaw and a Floor Area Ratio Bylaw.

Model bylaws prepared to date have typically been implemented by only a very few LTCs. There is no requirement that LTCs adopt model bylaws, including the recently approved model Fees Bylaw. In the case of bylaw fees, applicants in some LTAs pay less than in others, despite the amount of staff time and other resources required to process applications generally being the same regardless of location. While this is inequitable, the decision to adopt the model bylaw rectifying the situation is left to each LTC.

Recommendations:

1. Determine why the LTCs are not adopting the model bylaws. Either the bylaws are relevant and there is no compelling reason why they should not be adopted by most LTCs or they are largely irrelevant and should not have been prepared to begin with.
2. Explore ways to encourage all LTCs to adopt the same fees. Trust Council has some control over the matter. For example, if an LTA is collecting lower fees, the amount of LPS staff time allocated to the LTA could be reduced.

4. Compliance and Enforcement

The Bylaw Enforcement Notification Bylaws and Bylaw Infractions Investigations Bylaws are based on the LUBs. There are differences in these bylaws, depending on the LTA. If the number of LUBs is reduced, these two types of bylaws will also be reduced in number.

There is inconsistent enforcement of the LUBs, depending on the LTA, with some LTCs and residents wanting more enforcement and others wanting less, either in general or for specific issues (e.g., short-term vacation rentals).

There is also a misunderstanding by some residents and business owners as to the areas of responsibility of Islands Trust Compliance and Enforcement, which is only land use matters. As a result, Compliance and Enforcement frequently receives enquires and complaints on bylaw issues that are handled by the regional districts. Conversely, the regional districts receive bylaw enquiries and complaints on land use issues.

There are some inconsistencies in enforcement among the regional districts given the time and cost incurred by regional district bylaws staff in investigating complaints on the islands, especially where it involves longer travel times.

Staff estimate that there is only follow-up by staff on roughly half at most of the various permits issued to ensure compliance because of the time and cost involved. This is low compared to some other local governments, although most do not follow-up on every permit to ensure compliance for the same reason as Islands Trust, namely limited resources.

The limited follow-up on permits may explain some of the complaints received by Islands Trust about non-compliance.

Recommendations:

1. Consistently apply bylaw enforcement in all the LTAs, both by Islands Trust Compliance and Enforcement and the regional districts.
2. Review Compliance and Enforcement staff resources to determine if more are required as part of consistently applied bylaw enforcement and/or if some reorganization is needed.
3. Improve communication and cooperation between Islands Trust Compliance and Enforcement and some of the regional districts.
4. Create more public awareness of the respective roles of Islands Trust and the regional districts in dealing with bylaw issues.
5. Increase the follow-up by staff on permits issued to ensure compliance.

B. PLANNING PROJECTS

As of late 2021, there were an estimated 70 planning projects underway, some of which were started several years ago and have made little progress since then because of limited staff time and other resources to complete them. The majority of projects are initiated by the individual LTCs, with a few initiated by the Regional Planning Committee.

At any given time, the LTAs may each have one to three projects underway, with more waiting to be started. While separate projects, some are on the same topics for several of the LTAs (e.g., groundwater sustainability), while others are on topics specific to one LTA (e.g., housing policy – tiny homes for Mayne Island LTA).

Despite the large number of projects, planning staff estimate that they are only able to devote about 20% of their time to them since many of the projects have to be a lower priority relative to the more immediate demands of development applications and public enquiries (50%) and involvement in public meetings (30%). Compared to other local governments, allocating only 20% of planning resources to projects (also referred to as long-range planning or community planning) is low.

There is no assignment of budget to each of the projects in terms of the cost of staff time and other resources, although some have budgets for consulting assistance. Also, there are no standard evaluation criteria to determine priorities, benefits and other considerations in selecting the projects to be undertaken.

It is appreciated that not all projects need to have Islands Trust-wide benefit to be important, but there needs to be a better understanding of what some of these projects will consume in the way of staff time and other resources before direction is given to LPS to undertake them.

If less staff time is spent in *attending public meetings* and managing development applications as a result of the outcomes of the *Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program*, more staff time can be devoted to planning projects. That means projects can be completed quicker and more of the projects waiting in queue can be initiated.

Recommendations

1. Local planning projects should be considered, along with all other Islands Trust initiatives requiring the allocation of financial and human resources, in the context of an annual multi-year strategic and financial plan. The number of projects approved should correspond to the resources available to implement them.
2. Establish criteria to guide selection of the projects to be undertaken, including an evaluation process that determines priorities on the basis of need and regional equity.

C. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

LPS estimates that 50% of planning staff time is spent on development applications and referrals and enquiries from the public. In 2021, applications and referrals were as follows:

Application Type	Nor	Salt Spring	Southern	Total
Agricultural Land Commission	1	6	3	10
Board of Variance	0	0	6	6
Building Permit, Siting & Use Permit, Crown Land & Other Referrals	142	188	144	474
Development Permit	11	14	17	42
Development Variance Permit	19	24	25	68
Heritage Alteration Permit	0	0	0	0
Rezoning	2	3	3	8
Strata Conversion	0	0	0	0
Soil Removal & Deposit Permit	0	1	0	1
Subdivision	9	7	3	19
Temporary Use Permit	2	1	15	18
Other	0	0	3	3
Total	186	244	219	649

The total number of applications in 2021 was up from previous years: 559 in 2020, 425 in 2019 and 481 in 2018. LPS anticipates the number of applications to continue to increase annually.

A significant number of the applications processed are referrals from other agencies, notably building permit referrals from the regional districts.

What the statistics do not show is the complexity of some of the applications. For example, a development permit application could be for exterior modifications to an existing building or it could be for a whole new development.

LPS estimates the typical times between filing an application and approval to be as follows for those that require LTC approval:

- Rezoning: The average is 20 months where the LTC approves a bylaw and five months where the LTC decides to proceed no further with the bylaw.
- Development Permit: Eight to 10 weeks to process, but development permits currently require LTC approval to issue and therefore can take up to four months or more until issued.
- Development Variance Permit: Two months to process but can take longer... four months or more to issue depending on the LTC meeting schedule. Many DVPs are a result of bylaw enforcement and some of those take longer to resolve.
- Temporary Use Permit: Six to eight weeks to process.

These times may be extended where LTCs do not meet at least monthly or because of the limitation of the LTC to handle more than three to four applications per meeting.

LPS estimates the typical times between filing an application and approval to be as follows for those that do not require LTC approval:

- Siting and Use Permit: Two weeks.
- Building Permit Referral: Four to eight days.

These types of applications/referrals are generally processed by a Planning Technician.

The Islands Trust development applications review and approvals process is similar to that of other local governments in BC in some respects, but not others. The key differences are:

- Building inspection services are conducted by the regional districts⁶, although LPS staff review the applications to ensure conformity with the LUBs and other pertinent bylaws. Islands Trust does not receive a portion of the building permit application fees for performing this service.

⁶ Not all the LTAs have building inspection services. Lasqueti LTA does not require any form of building permit while landowners in the Denman and Hornby LTAs must have a valid Siting and Use Permit from Islands Trust prior to beginning construction.

- An OCP bylaw, or an amendment to an OCP bylaw, must be referred to the Minister of Municipal Affairs for approval after third reading.⁷ LPS staff estimate that, on average, it takes a bylaw about six months to be approved by the Minister. While they are almost always approved without comment, there is no sense by LPS staff of why it takes this long, nor what the Ministry does internally with the bylaws once they are received.
- Bylaws must also be referred to the Islands Trust Executive Committee for approval after third reading.
- Development permits cannot be delegated to staff for issuance. However, recent provincial legislation allows LTCs, by bylaw, to delegate the issuance of development permits to staff, with allowance for the reconsideration of staff decisions by the LTC if warranted. This is a change that Islands Trust has sought for several years since it is a power already granted to other local governments.
- Islands Trust is exempt from Regional Growth Strategy legislation and this is not a consideration in preparing or amending OCP and zoning bylaws.

One of the recent amendments to the *Local Government Act* is that minor development variance permits (DVPs) can, by bylaw, be delegated to staff for approval and issuance. Up until now, DVPs could not be delegated to staff by local governments anywhere in the province.

The minor DVPs that can be delegated to staff include:

- Zoning bylaws respecting siting, size and dimensions of buildings, structures and permitted uses.
- Off-street parking and loading space requirements.
- Regulation of signs.
- Screening and landscaping to mask or separate uses or to preserve, protect, restore and enhance the natural environment.

This is a potentially important change for Islands Trust, which handles a significant number of DVP applications annually (68 in 2021). Delegation to staff of minor DVPs will shorten the turn-around time for many DVP applications and also reduce LTC agendas, allowing the Trustees to focus on more important matters.

The legislation, however, requires that a bylaw be adopted that delegates the authority to staff and that the bylaw includes:

- Criteria for determining whether a proposed variance is minor.
- Guidelines the delegate (staff) must consider in deciding whether to issue a DVP.
- Any terms and conditions the local government considers appropriate.

This bylaw will need to be adopted separately for each LTA.

⁷ There is no requirement for a zoning bylaw to be approved by the Minister, except where there is no OCP in force or where the OCP in force was adopted prior to March 31, 1990.

As noted earlier, the average amount of time required to process an application can vary widely, depending on the type of application, its complexity and other factors, such as:

- Applications with incomplete and incorrect information, including mapping and technical reports (e.g., engineering, environmental, agricultural, building architecture, landscape architecture, archaeological). This is a common issue for most local governments since many applicants are not familiar with development review and approvals processes. LPS staff note that a significant amount of staff time is spent helping inexperienced applicants both before and after applications are received.
- The amount of deliberation by the LTA Trustees on OCP amendment and rezoning bylaws, with some applications appearing on agendas several times before a decision is made on whether or not to give readings and advance the application.
- The amount of time taken by the Minister to sign off on an OCP bylaw or amendment bylaw after third reading.
- The timing of getting a bylaw onto an Executive Committee agenda for approval before adoption and then back onto a LTC agenda for final reading.
- The amount of time taken by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to approve subdivision applications.
- The amount and type of engagement required with persons, organizations and authorities that Islands Trust considers will be affected by an application. This is increasing, especially with First Nations, and is occupying more of staff's time.

The consultants have heard anecdotal stories of applications being held up for what is perceived to be too long and unexpected added information requirements sought by LPS or other agencies that appear unjustified, creating more delay and cost for the applicants. This may be the case for some applications, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is a chronic issue. The same criticism is leveled at almost all local governments across the province by applicants frustrated, sometimes with good reason, in their efforts to gain approvals.

A significant issue that needs to be further explored is the amount of development application revenue received by Islands Trust relative to the amount of LPS resources put into processing applications. For the 2021/22 fiscal year, it is roughly estimated that about \$100,000 in application fees will be collected.

If planning staff are spending upwards of 50% of their time on development applications and public enquiries (not all of which are related to development applications), this suggests a large gap between what is being paid for this service and what it costs to deliver the service.

Development application fees, while in theory intended to cover a significant share of the cost of processing applications, rarely do in any local government in the province. Nonetheless, the gap here appears large and is being off-set by property tax revenue.

This is partly due to Islands Trust not receiving any revenue, nor the ability to do so under current legislation, for the hundreds of referrals that it handles each year from other agencies, notably building permit referrals from the regional districts.⁸

It is also noted that most of the development application fees are fixed and not scaled. For example, the Salt Spring Island LTA currently charges \$4,400 for a rezoning application, regardless of the nature of the rezoning. Most local governments have base fees upon which there are added fees based on the number of residential units, land area, amount of floor space, type of use or similar metrics. So, complex applications pay more since they require more staff time to process.

Trust Council approved an Application Processing Services Policy on June 9, 2021 that:

- Identifies the services provided by Islands Trust and the different levels of costs associated with these services.
- Provides direction for the preparation of Fees Bylaws and Schedules by LTCs.
- Provides the principles by which cost recovery for extraordinary services beyond the standard fee can be negotiated and agreed to by an applicant and the LTC.
- Is intended to recover from applicants 100 per cent of the average cost of processing development applications, while permitting consideration of lower cost recovery for environmental protection and community benefit.

However, it is understood that for many of the applications that end up taking more time than initially anticipated (e.g., added public engagement at the direction of the LTC), the extra costs are not being charged to the applicants.

This issue should be examined as part of the *Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program* to see not only how time and cost savings can be achieved but also if fees are set appropriately.

Recommendations

1. Delegate the issuance of most, if not all, development permits to staff.
2. Determine what constitutes minor DVPs and prepare a model bylaw that can be adopted by each LTA.
3. Review the current development application fees and how they are applied to ensure appropriate cost recovery.

⁸ Islands Trust Financial Planning Committee received a report from LPS at its January 19, 2022 meeting recommending that staff report back on options to recover costs related to building permit referrals.

D. ORGANIZATION AND STAFF RESOURCES

1. Organization

LPS is divided into three planning teams / offices: Salt Spring, Northern and Southern (see attached map), plus Compliance and Enforcement.

There is also the recently established Regional Planning Team that serves all of Islands Trust (excluding Bowen Island).

The majority of LPS staff are located at the Islands Trust office in Victoria, where most other Islands Trust staff are also located. There is an office on Salt Spring Island to help serve that planning area and an office on Gabriola Island to help serve the Northern area.

Two issues have been identified with the current organizational structure:

- The three planning teams are siloed, with limited communication and sharing of information between them, leading to some duplication of effort and also inconsistencies in the approach to dealing with some planning matters.
- Much of the planning staff turnover in recent years has been in the Northern office, which staff believe is partly due to it being located on Gabriola Island instead of in Nanaimo, where most of the team lives.

Recommendations

1. Move the Northern team office to Nanaimo, but retain an office on Gabriola Island open regular hours and staffed on a rotating basis by one planner. Notably this was also one of the recommendations of Stantec in its 2007 report⁹:

“The northern office should be relocated from Gabriola Island to Nanaimo and converted from a ‘full service’ office to more of a ‘store front’ or satellite office with a smaller staff complement, focusing primarily on the development application side. This will provide somewhat easier access to staff for residents of the northern islands, but it is primarily intended to be able to recruit and retain staff. (page 3)

2. Reduce the siloing by having regular meetings between the planning teams to share information and ideas. This can be more easily accomplished now that many meetings have moved to video conference platforms.

2. Staff Resources

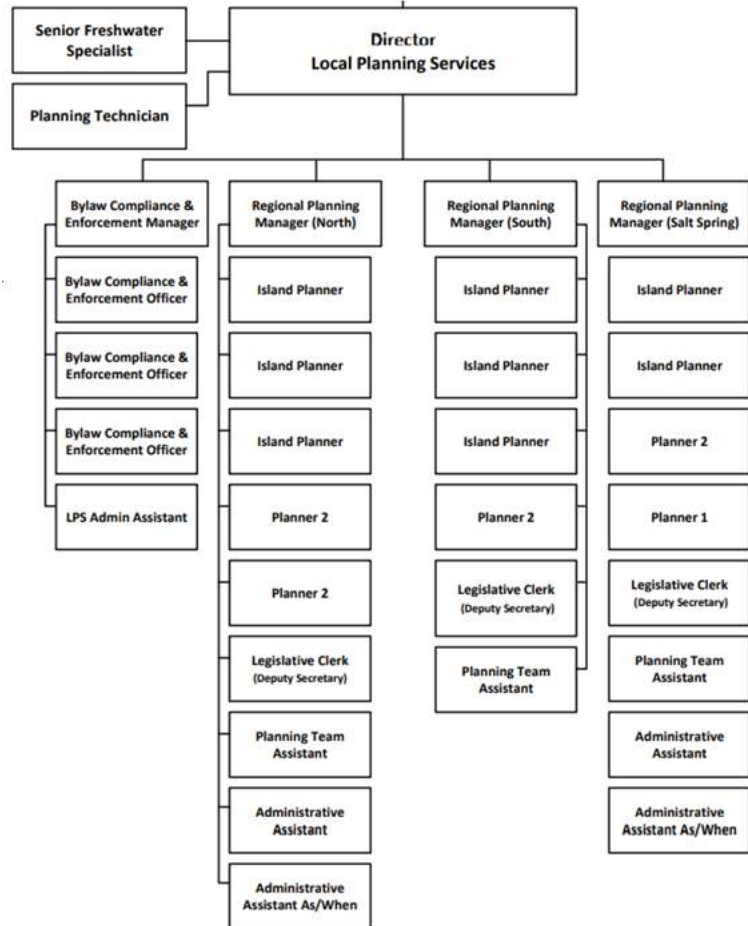
As shown in the organization chart below, there are 34 LPS staff positions. Seventeen are professional planning positions, including Planner 1s (1), Planner 2s (4), Island Planners (8), Regional Planning Managers (3) and the Director (1). Three of the planners are assigned to the Regional Planning Team.

⁹ Stantec Consulting Ltd., *Islands Trust Local Planning Services Review*, March 23, 2007.

The planners are in generalist positions. While they all have education and experience in a wide range of planning subjects, none are specialist planner positions (e.g., housing, social, environmental). Outside assistance is sought on occasion for some of these services.

While not a planner, there is one specialist position in LPS - the Senior Freshwater Specialist who reports directly to the Director.

Local Planning Services Organization



Questions have been raised about the number of professional planning staff (17) relative to the population (~26,000 full-time residents), a per capita ratio of 1:1,500 that almost certainly exceeds that of any other municipality or regional district in the province. Even if the estimated 10,000 part-time residents were added in, it would still be significant (1:2,100).

This was noted in the 2007 review of LPS by Stantec, which stated:

“The organization has nine planners (Planner II’s, Island Planners, Regional Planning Managers, and the Director) for 23,000 people which, per capita, is higher than other planning agencies that we are aware of. We also note the uniqueness of the Islands Trust circumstances in terms of geography, but this is not much different than some of the larger regional districts.” (page 4)

However, this is not a relevant comparison given that Islands Trust is comprised of 13 LTAs that each have separate land use planning bylaws and processes served by LPS. This is unlike any other local government in the province in terms of the demands on staff time.

To help put the issue into context, the planners attended an estimated 172 public meetings in 2021, as follows:

- LTC Regular Meetings: 90
- LTC Special Meetings: 19
- Executive Committee Meetings: 19
- Community Information Meetings: 13
- Islands Trust Council Meetings (4 times per year x 3 days per meeting): 12
- Regular Planning Committee Meetings: 9
- Agricultural Advisory Committee Meetings - Salt Spring: 5
- Public Hearings: 3
- Advisory Committee Meetings - Salt Spring: 2

For some of these meetings, more than one planner was in attendance, depending on the agenda.

LPS staff at the LTC meetings often act as *de facto* corporate officers on topics well outside of planning since they are often the only staff person in attendance to support the Trustees. This is not a normal practice in local government.

Staff estimate that, in a typical year, about 30% of planning staff time is spent on the public meetings (preparation for, attendance at, travel to and from). That is far more than for any other local government, where there are fewer public meetings in which planning staff have to be involved (e.g., regional district boards typically meet once or twice a month and municipal councils typically meet between two and four times a month).

The past two years have not been typical in that most meetings were held via video conferencing, which reduced the amount of staff time involved with meetings since there was less travel.

There have been questions raised about whether some of the planning staff are suited to working in a rural/non-urban planning environment as opposed to an urban planning environment. In the opinion of the consultants, there is no reason for this to be a concern.

All professional planners have education in both urban and rural planning and many have experience working in both environments.

Professional planners are in high demand in the province, with heavy competition amongst public and private sector employers in attracting and retaining planners, especially on the development planning side and in middle and senior management positions. This is particularly a challenge for some of the smaller communities around the province and many planning departments have vacancies that they are having difficulty filling. Placing more stringent requirements on new planning hires at Islands Trust is not advised.

However, more training and orientation for new planning hires could be of benefit given the complexity of the Islands Trust planning process, which no planner would have experienced anywhere else in local government, be it rural or urban.

Recommendations

1. Reduce the amount of planning staff time spent at meetings by allowing them to attend more meetings via video conferencing, even when there is a return to more face-to-face meetings.
2. Planners should not be participating in meetings as *de facto* corporate officers. Their role should be focused on planning matters.
3. Move the Northern offices to Nanaimo, but retain an office on Gabriola Island open regular hours and staffed on a rotating basis by one planner. Notably, this was also one of the recommendations of the 2007 Stantec report:

“The northern office should be relocated from Gabriola Island to Nanaimo and converted from a ‘full service’ office to more of a ‘store front’ or satellite office with a smaller staff complement, focusing primarily on the development application side. This will provide somewhat easier access to staff for residents of the northern islands, but it is primarily intended to be able to recruit and retain staff.” (page 3)

4. Review the current training and orientation program for new planning hires. The input of the planners hired in the past several years, as well as the staff involved in the exit interviews, should be sought as part of this process.

E. OTHER OBSERVATIONS

1. Planning Reports

LPS staff are producing hundreds of reports each year for the Planning Committees, the Task Forces, the Boards of Variance, the LTCs, Council and the Executive Committee, which is very time consuming.

Some of the reports are inconsistent in format and style, depending on the author and the subject matter.

Too much staff time is being spent writing planning reports that are not being read, or at best are being lightly skimmed, because they are too long and have too much detail for decision makers to fully absorb in agendas that can run into hundreds of pages. This was an observation made by a number of the Trustees.

Recommendations

1. Standardize the format and style of the planning reports.
2. Planning reports should generally be shorter. An executive summary should be included for any report longer than six pages that gives the decision makers the critical information. That means telling them what they need to know in making a decision, not simply summarizing topic headings. The reports can also put more of the details, where they are needed, into attachments rather than the main body, where they clog the flow of important information.

2. Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program

One of the activities that Islands Trust will be undertaking as part of this recently funded project is:

“Hire a consultant to review the development application processing approach currently used at Islands Trust and make recommendations on changes that could be made to improve efficiency. This will be focused on the steps used, the reporting, and the detail in the reporting to the elected officials for each type of major application - rezoning, development variance permit, development permits and temporary use permits. Part of this will be to look at means to “fast-track” or “prioritise” those applications that improve equity and access to affordable housing.” (page 4 of application)

Some points for consideration in this upcoming review have already been covered in this report. Others that should be considered in the review are:

- The relationship with other agencies that have a role in the applications approval process. For example, there should include a better understanding why it takes the Ministry an average of six months to approve an OCP bylaw or amendment bylaw after third reading and determine if there are ways to shorten that time. If

applications are going to be fast-tracked, a strong working relationship will be required among all agencies involved in the process, including a clear understanding of needs, objectives, processes and priorities.

- It is not just the amount of time that an application takes to move through the process, but where it is in the process. One local government is working on an operational dashboard for applications that will include the time that the application is with it being reviewed, the time that the application is back with the applicant for further work, and the time that the application is with referral groups (e.g., other government agencies). They refer to it as a “chess clock”.
- This same local government does post-mortems of completed major applications to see if there are things that could have been done better.
- The application fees, which do not appear to be coming close to covering the cost of processing some applications, should be reviewed.
- Greater use can be made of outside consultants in helping fast-track applications if there is not sufficient LPS staff capacity. A number of local governments take this approach by selecting and retaining consultants (i.e., the local government is the client, not the applicant) and re-billing the applicant for the consultants’ fees and expenses. Applicants are sometimes prepared to do this where there is an offsetting benefit in time savings and therefore project financing costs. For the local government, this also frees up staff resources to deal with other applications.
- There may be a role for the application of Comprehensive Development (CD) zones, which are essentially custom zones, for some proposed developments that do not conform to existing zones (e.g., they exceed the maximum permitted density), but are desirable. This could be particularly useful as Islands Trust explores opportunities to create innovative affordable housing projects. CD zones are commonly used by local governments.
- Policies such as the Best Management Practices for Delivery of Local Planning Services to Local Trust Communities (approved in 2006 and last updated in 2013) and the Application Processing Services Policy (approved in 2021) will likely need to be updated based on the findings of the review.

3. Benchmarking

There was a desire by Islands Trust to have benchmarking undertaken as part of this relatively high-level review of LPS. However, it became clear as the review progressed that this would not be a particularly productive or informative exercise given the way in which Islands Trust is structured and governed under the *Islands Trust Act*, which is unlike any other local government in the province when it comes to land use planning. There are planning lessons that can be learned from other local governments, but they do not lend themselves to a benchmarking exercise.

Map of LTA Boundaries and LPS Office Service Areas



Active Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

1. *Protect quality and quantity of fresh water resources of the Trust Area*

Responsible

Dates

Strategic Plan item #2.4: FWSS-completed; Implementation plans being developed.

Rec'd: 12-Feb-2020

Target: 31-Mar-2023

Strategic Plan item #2.5 - Groundwater Mapping & water budgets - Contract work received March 2023.

2. *Strengthen housing affordability throughout the Islands Trust Area*

Responsible

Dates

Strategic Plan item #4.4 iv- Model Density Bylaw. Repurposed to be a Planner forum March 1, 2023 to update baseline report with housing strategies and tools; Working Group formed to review forum results and plan trustee education session

Rec'd: 12-Feb-2020

Target: 31-Mar-2023

3. *Strengthen relations with First Nations*

Responsible

Dates

Strategic Plan item #4.8: Heritage Conservation Overlay Mapping. Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 not started due to loss of key staff, loss of key consultants, and feedback from various First Nations.

Rec'd: 12-Feb-2020

4. *Preserve, protect and advocate for forest and terrestrial ecosystems*

Responsible

Dates

Strategic Plan item #1.1: Model CDF Protection DPA. SS LTC developed communications materials but changed tact to Wildfire DP (which could protect some CDF).

Rec'd: 12-Feb-2020

Target: 29-Mar-2024

Active Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

5. *Manage Trust Council Strategic Plan Action Items*

Responsible

Dates

Specific activities that are to be pursued over the next 3-6 months to complete an element of a priority are highlighted as per Islands Trust Council Policy 6.7.1. Top Priority broken out into list of relevant strategic plan actions items. 1.2 (CDF), 2.2 (eelgrass) 2.3 (shoreline), 2.4(freshwater), 2.5. (aquifers), 4.4.iii (FAR), 4.4 .v(strata), and 4.8 (heritage).

Rec'd: 29-Jul-2020

Target: 19-Dec-2022

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

1. *Shoreline Marine Planning*

Responsible

Date Received

Trust Council - 2015-2018 Strategic Plan Item

09-Nov-2017

Conduct a working group session to brainstorm possible directions.

2. *Preserve, protect and advocate for forest and terrestrial ecosystems*

Responsible

Date Received

1. Map contiguous tracts of the Coastal Douglas-fir zone (CDF) and associated ecosystems to aid in protection of that zone and its associated ecosystems (Completed March 31, 2020) (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 1.1).

12-Feb-2020

2. Create a model development permit area for Local Trust Committee-Bowen Island Official Community Plans bylaws to protect Coastal Douglas-fir zones throughout the Trust Area (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 1.2).

3. *Preserve and protect marine ecosystems*

Responsible

Date Received

1. Map the extent of eelgrass and kelp beds throughout the Trust Area (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 2.2). Phase 1 (GIS and aerial data review) done. Phase 2 - groundtruthing - feasible next step.

12-Feb-2020

2. Undertake a review of Local Trust Committee- Bowen Islands Municipality foreshore policies and regulatory bylaws and develop model policy and regulatory bylaws for the protection of the foreshore and nearshore (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 2.3). Received Consultants Report.

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

4. *Protect quality and quantity of fresh water resources of the Trust Area*

Responsible

Date Received

1. Map and develop water budgets for groundwater aquifers in the Trust Area (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 2.5)
2. Develop a model land use regulation regarding freshwater sustainability including groundwater, rainwater catchment and greywater recycling (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 2.6).
3. -Develop an Islands Trust Freshwater Sustainability Strategy policy document and recommendations for implementation of the Freshwater Sustainability Strategy

12-Feb-2020

5. *Strengthen housing affordability throughout the Islands Trust Area*

Responsible

Date Received

Implement the high priority actions outlined in the Affordable Housing in the Trust Area: Strategic Actions for Islands Trust previously referred by Trust Council:

1. Develop model bylaws that use floor area ratio as a density metric for consideration of implementation in local trust area land use bylaws (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 4.4 iii). Received Consultants Report.
2. Develop model density bonus bylaws for consideration of implementation in local trust area land use bylaws (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 4.4 iv).
3. Develop model bylaws to address the use of building stratas as a tool for affordable housing (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 4.4 v).

12-Feb-2020

6. *Mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts*

Responsible

Date Received

Future Projects Report

Regional Planning Committee

1. Amend Official Community Plans and land use bylaws to foster climate change resilience, including measures to protect Coastal Douglas fir, foreshore and nearshore environments and groundwater. (2018-2022 Strategic Plan item 3.2).

12-Feb-2020

7. *Update the model strategy for antennae systems*

Responsible

Date Received

09-Feb-2022