



News Release

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Islands Trust to improve development application process

Lək̓ʷəŋən, METULIYE/Victoria, B.C. – Islands Trust has been awarded a \$367,795 grant from the Province of B.C for a Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program.

Through the proposed two-year Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program, Islands Trust will hire a consultant to review its development application processing approach and identify opportunities to prioritise applications that improve equity and access to affordable housing. The Trust plans to replace the in-house property information system with a new system that provides more reporting options on applications and includes an online application portal for the public to make and track their applications.

“We are thrilled to receive grant funding from the Province of BC for our Development Application Service Delivery and Technology Improvement Program. This program will lead to a smoother, more efficient, and more transparent land use application process,” said Peter Luckham, Chair of Islands Trust Council. “I am also hopeful we will identify ways to support and fast track planning for affordable housing.”

In 2018, Islands Trust undertook an internal review of application processing and planning service delivery. The results of the review led Islands Trust to reorganize staff in the planning department so that some members of the planning team are focused on proactive long-range planning while others are focused on applications and to create a new position to manage responses to referrals from other agencies.

In addition, Islands Trust initiated an internal process to review application processing, which is still underway. Through the internal review Islands Trust also identified that it needed to improve electronic systems used for recording, tracking and managing applications, and to get an independent review of current application processing practices to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, transparency and processing times and systems.

The provincial Local Government Development Approvals Program, funded by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and administered by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, is providing grants to forty-two local governments throughout British Columbia and Islands Trust to create more efficient development approvals processes. The provincial Local Government Development Approvals Program supports the implementation of established best practices and testing of innovative approaches to improve development approvals processes while meeting local government planning and policy objectives.

In the last five years Islands Trust has processed a total of 2296 applications and referrals that included 63 rezoning applications; 94 subdivision applications; 217 development variance permits, 161 development permits; 116 temporary use permits; 32 agricultural land reserve applications; 1583 building permit referrals for the regional districts; and 29

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

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

other applications and referrals. The volume is increasing, with applications to Islands Trust in the first three months of 2021 being 84 per cent higher than the five year average.

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About Islands Trust

Islands Trust is a special-purpose government representing 26,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust Area is located within Coast Salish territory and is the homeland to over 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples who have called this place home since time immemorial. Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the Islands Trust Area's unique environment and amenities through conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation, education, advocacy, and cooperation with First Nations and other agencies. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5,200 square kilometres.

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