

On Feb 2, 2026, at 5:53 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Trustees Patrick and Harris,

I just wanted to write in reference to the draft of the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

To be honest I feel a little sheepish about voicing my concerns as my wife and I just moved here 4 months ago. We have been visiting annually since we were fortunate to purchase a property 20 years ago but in truth we are new residents.

However we do have a large interest in the community going forward as we plan to live here and contribute for decades.

For the last 27 years we lived in King Township in Ontario. When we moved there in 1998 King Township was undergoing a very similar debate about housing and growth. Without going into the details one election resulted in the door being opened to development (in this case it was bringing in municipal water and sewage) and, well, King was overrun with development despite subsequent backlashes from the community. The genie could not be put back in the bottle. While we do not believe the intensity of development we experienced in King is on the cards for the Gulf Islands even a fraction of that will change these islands tremendously and, I believe, negatively. I will spare you the details but the net result of the development growth was, to us, a significant reduction in the quality of life of the existing citizens. Increased traffic, reduced access to natural areas and increased use (overuse) of shared public facilities are but a few. Salt Spring, where we live, has no idea what it is like to have a building boom. Except for a few, it is a real negative to the existing denizens. Trying to not be too hyperbolic, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I just lived through it. I just severely caution you that opening up properties to multiple family dwellings is heading down a path that will likely make life worse for existing citizens.

I think the focus should be how to help with affordable/supported housing for folks who are here now without simply incenting any increase in the overall population. That is a tough needle to thread but is really only the policy that helps the current inhabitants but maintains a way of life for the future.

We are so delighted to finally live here and a looking forward to contributing to this amazing community.

Thanks,

Keith Beckley

