



## Policy Statement Amendment Project – What We Heard in Phase 3

What we heard in Phase 3 of public engagement and what we have done in response in the draft new Policy Statement (July 9, 2025)

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The purpose of this What We Heard document is to assist in capturing how public input from Phase 3 of public engagement has been addressed in the revised draft Policy Statement. It identifies the key themes from Phase 3 (as identified in [ISL's Engagement Summary Report](#)) and provides an outline of what has been done in response in the revised draft dated July 9, 2025.

To date, the Policy Statement Amendment Project has had three phases of public<sup>1</sup> engagement, which have included both online and in-person activities.

- Phase 1 (2019) - to gather community values, concerns related to climate change, and opportunities to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area
- Phase 2 (2021) - to gather input on draft policy directions related to climate change and affordable housing
- Phase 3 (2022) - to gather input on the first draft of the new Policy Statement

In June and September 2022, after receiving engagement feedback from Indigenous Governing Bodies, referral agencies, and the public during Phase 3, the outgoing 2018-2022 Trust Council passed 32 resolutions requesting staff to amend the Policy Statement Bylaw No. 183, for review by the new 2022-2026 Trust Council and its committees. Through 2023 and early 2024, staff revised the draft as directed, while engaging with Indigenous Governing Bodies and some provincial agencies. Trust Council and its committees then worked on further refining the draft, taking into account the input received to date.

Topic	What We Heard in Phase 3 Engagement	How the Comments Have Been Addressed
General	A need for a balance between environmental protection and sustaining residents' valued communities and way of life.	The revised draft addresses both environmental protection and the fostering of sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities.
	Commit to making decisions based on objective, scientific data.	Trust Council has determined that its decisions should be guided by a range of inputs, including scientific data, as stated in the following draft guiding principle:  <b><i>2.1.7 Foster Informed and Balanced Decision Making</i></b>

<sup>1</sup> Public input is one of many streams of input informing the Policy Statement Amendment Project, along with input from interested and affected parties, First Nations and Indigenous community members, referral agencies, Trust Council and its committees, and staff.

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		<i>To be informed by a broad range of sources in its decision-making processes, including Indigenous Knowledge, institutional knowledge, local community knowledge, and science.</i>
	General appreciation for addressing climate change.	<p>The following draft directive policies relate to addressing climate change:</p> <p><b>3.4.5 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</b>  <i>Implement planning and land use management strategies, and consider nature-based solutions, to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to climate change-related vulnerabilities.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.6 Hazardous Areas</b>  <i>Identify areas at elevated risk of natural and climate change-related hazards and restrict development within these areas including, but not limited to, areas subject to flooding, sea-level rise, erosion, slope instability and wildfire.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.20 Setbacks from the Sea</b>  <i>Incorporate current and anticipated impacts of sea level rise and storm surge, and determine appropriate shoreline buffers and setbacks from the sea, taking into account best practices recommended by the federal and provincial governments.</i></p> <p>The following advisory policies also relate to this issue:</p> <p><b>3.4.19 Natural Building Materials and Techniques</b>  <i>Encourage construction of buildings and structures using local natural building materials and techniques, and minimize barriers to their use.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.23 Transportation Network Vulnerabilities</b>  <i>Cooperate with relevant agencies to identify parts of the local transportation network at risk of damage or deterioration and participate in planning to address mitigation or infrastructure relocation where necessary.</i></p> <p>While the policies above explicitly reference climate change, the document's focus on maintaining functioning natural landscapes and systems are, in many ways, policies about climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p>
	General agreement that development should be carefully managed to protect from further	The revised draft has many policies relevant to this feedback, including ones directing the management of the rate and scale of growth, such as the following draft directive policies:

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	impacts.	<p><b>3.4.1 Sustainable Development</b>  <i>Consider site capabilities, environmental and protected areas, and existing development patterns when determining the land use designation and appropriate locations and intensities of various uses of the land.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.2 Growth Management</b>  <i>Manage community growth and its associated impacts by directing residential, commercial and industrial development to suitable locations to prevent sprawl, minimize fragmentation of forest lands, and avoid adverse impacts to Indigenous cultural heritage, harvesting and hunting areas.</i></p>
	Participants voiced concerns about the precautionary principle, noting that it is open to broad interpretation, could be contradictory to scientific evidence, and could be manipulated based on emotions and personal bias. Some see the precautionary principle as a means to stop potential progress.	<p>The revised draft Policy Statement contains the following guiding principle about the Precautionary Principle:</p> <p><b>2.1.5 Take Guidance from the Precautionary Principle</b>  <i>To be guided by the precautionary principle in all decision making to safeguard the environment and cultural heritage where there may be uncertainty over the threats of serious or irreversible damage from development.</i></p> <p>In addition, the following glossary definition has been added to ensure there is a common understanding of the precautionary principle:</p> <p><i>"Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration, known as the precautionary principle, states: "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation." Four central components of the precautionary principle include: taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty; shifting the burden of proof to the proponents of an activity; exploring a wide range of alternatives to possibly harmful actions; and increasing public participation in decision making."</i></p>

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<b>Advocacy</b>	<p>There was mixed support or lack of support for advocacy in a variety of areas (e.g. removal of abandoned and derelict vessels, oil spill prevention and response, and new tree-cutting authority for local trust committees).</p>	<p>Advocacy policies that guide Trust Council in its work to make recommendations or requests to other levels of government have been removed from the revised draft Policy Statement (including a request for authority to regulate tree-cutting). This does not prevent Trust Council from advocating on topics it feels are important.</p> <p>A draft Trust Council cooperation principle is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>2.3.4 Work Towards Strategic Inter-Agency Coordination</b>  <i>To work towards establishing effective inter-agency coordination mechanisms with different levels of government, academic institutions and organizations who have important roles to play in supporting the Islands Trust Object.</i></p> <p>The revised draft Policy Statement contains “Advisory Policies”, in which Trust Council highlights issues that it would like local trust committees and island municipalities to consider or act on when opportunities arise, but which it cannot/does not wish to compel via a directive policy.</p>

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<b>Ecosystem preservation and protection</b>	<p>There was general support for the following concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring the effects of climate change and other influences on the ecosystem</li> <li>• using nature-based solutions</li> <li>• limiting development in areas where there is inadequate freshwater</li> <li>• valuing agriculture and forestry through small-scale harvesting practices</li> <li>• banning industrial-scale clear-cutting and logging of old growth trees</li> <li>• keeping marine dependent land uses away from eel grass and kelp forests</li> <li>• advocating to other levels of government to prohibit ocean dumping and commercial freighter anchorage sites</li> </ul>	<p>The revised draft contains policies that are relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.4.5 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</b>  <i>Implement planning and land use management strategies, and consider nature-based solutions, to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to climate change-related vulnerabilities.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.1 Freshwater Sustainability</b>  <i>Ensure that neither the density, nor intensity of land use is increased in watersheds where the quality or quantity of the supply of freshwater is likely to be inadequate or unsustainable.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.8 Forest Lands for Sustainable Management</b>  <i>Maintain large land holdings and parcel sizes to support sustainable forest management practices that are compatible with preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.15 Sustainable Agriculture</b>  <i>Preserve, protect, and encourage sustainable farming and the sustainability of farming.</i></p> <p><b>3.3.6 Marine Shorelines and Nearshore Areas</b>  <i>Identify and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, clam beds, estuaries, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands.</i></p> <p>The following guiding principles are also relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>2.3.4 Work Towards Strategic Inter-Agency Coordination</b>  <i>To work towards establishing effective inter-agency coordination mechanisms with different levels of government, academic institutions and organizations who have important roles to play in supporting the Islands Trust Object.</i></p> <p><b>2.3.6 Provide Public Education Opportunities</b>  <i>To provide education opportunities to residents, communities, local organizations, and visitors, highlighting tangible ways they can contribute to preserving and protecting the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment, while respecting the confidentiality interests of Indigenous Knowledge holders and Indigenous Governing Bodies.</i></p>

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Freshwater stewardship	Many participants indicated they feel that water is finite and want to protect it.	The following directive policies within the revised draft are relevant to this feedback:
	There was strong support for Islands Trust to advocate for rainwater as a supplemental water source; and as a primary source.	<b>3.5.1 Freshwater Sustainability</b> <i>Ensure that neither the density, nor intensity of land use is increased in watersheds where the quality or quantity of the supply of freshwater is likely to be inadequate or unsustainable.</i>
	Participants shared an overall support for restricting development in areas where freshwater is limited, while others did not want it to be an excuse to limit development.	<b>3.5.2 Freshwater Demand and Supply Projections</b> <i>Ensure that existing, anticipated, and seasonal water demand and water availability are considered.</i>  <b>3.5.3 Freshwater Self-Sufficiency</b> <i>Ensure that islands are self-sufficient in their supply of freshwater.</i>  <b>3.5.4 Saltwater Intrusion</b> <i>Identify areas at elevated risk of saltwater intrusion and restrict development serviced by groundwater within these areas.</i>
	Participants strongly disagreed with the proposed prohibition of desalination.	The previously proposed directive policy on desalination was removed.
Coastal and marine stewardship	Overall support from participants that Islands Trust prioritize the protection of the coastal and marine environment.	The following directive policy within the revised draft is relevant to this feedback:  <b>3.3.6 Marine Shorelines and Nearshore Areas</b> <i>Identify and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, clam beds, estuaries, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands.</i>
	Participants were evenly divided between those that support and do not support prohibiting hard seawalls. Participants also noted the need for flexibility to decide what is best in each case.	The previously proposed policy prohibiting seawalls and directing inclusion of policies that foster soft shoreline protection has been redrafted:  <b>3.5.21 Soft Shoreline Protections</b> <i>Prioritize and foster soft shoreline approaches, such as those identified by the "Green Shores" program, to set requirements for shoreline preservation and to mitigate erosion of shoreline and foreshore cultural heritage sites.</i>
	Participants strongly opposed prohibiting private docks. Some suggested that a blanket policy was	The previously proposed policy prohibiting new private docks except where properties are boat-access only has been redrafted:

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	not appropriate and that the need for a dock should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.	<b>3.5.25 Marine Docks</b> <i>Consider the cumulative effects of docks, and limit or prohibit new private docks in areas identified as culturally significant by Indigenous Governing Bodies and Indigenous Knowledge Holders, in areas that provide critical habitat for species at risk, and in areas of recreational significance.</i>
	Participants noted concern over degradation of the foreshore and stated they would like to protect it against continued erosion while others are concerned for eelgrass meadows and kelp forests and want to protect them against harm from dumping and anchoring.	<p>The revised draft includes revised directive policies relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.3.6 Marine Shorelines and Nearshore Areas</b>  <i>Identify and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, clam beds, estuaries, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.18 Soil and Fill from Middens and Foreshore Areas of Cultural Significance</b>  <i>Prohibit alteration, removal or excavation of soil or fill from all identified archaeological sites, including middens or foreshore areas identified as culturally significant areas.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.21 Soft Shoreline Protections</b>  <i>Prioritize and foster soft shoreline approaches, such as those identified by the “Green Shores” program, to set requirements for shoreline preservation and to mitigate erosion of shoreline and foreshore cultural heritage sites.</i></p> <p>The revised draft includes new directive policies relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.5.22 Vessel Moorage</b>  <i>Prohibit the moorage of vessels in sensitive marine areas, including, but not limited to, eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, estuaries and mud flats.</i></p> <p><b>5.5.26 Marine Structures</b>  <i>Limit or prohibit the construction of installation of breakwaters, groynes, rock weirs and jetties in marine areas that are not zoned for group wharfage, marine commercial or industrial use, or ferry terminals.</i></p>
	Participants supported shoreline setbacks and keeping marine dependent land uses away from these sensitive areas.	<p>The revised draft includes revised directive policies relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.5.19 Aquaculture Tenures</b></p>

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		<p><i>Direct commercial aquaculture tenures to appropriate locations that will not adversely impact areas identified as culturally significant by Indigenous Governing Bodies, that provide critical habitat for species at risk, are of recreational significance or established or designated upland land uses, anchorages or moorages.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.20 Setbacks from the Sea</b>  <i>Incorporate current and anticipated impacts of sea level rise and storm surge, and determine appropriate shoreline buffers and setbacks from the sea, taking into account best practices recommended by federal and provincial governments.</i></p>
Forest Stewardship	Participants strongly disagreed that Islands Trust should advocate to the Provincial government to regulate general tree cutting or forest management by individual property owners.	As noted above, advocacy policies have been removed from the Policy Statement draft (including advocacy for authority to regulate tree-cutting).
	There was strong support advocacy for the prohibition of clear-cutting and logging of old-growth. Some participants commented that management of forestry is needed on public lands and others shared that removing trees promotes healthy forests.	<p>As noted above, advocacy policies have been removed from the revised draft (including advocacy for legislation to prohibit clear-cutting and logging of old-growth in the Trust Area);</p> <p>The revised draft includes revised directive policies relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.3.3 Forest Ecosystems</b>  <i>Identify forest ecosystems and prioritize the preservation, protection, and restoration of unfragmented forests, with a particular focus on the maintenance and restoration of their ecological integrity.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.8 Forest Lands for Sustainable Management</b>  <i>Maintain large land holdings and parcel sizes to support sustainable forest management practices that are compatible with preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.</i></p>
	Some participants also noted that the Policy Statement should further address measures needed to mitigate risk from forest fires.	<p>The revised draft includes two directive policies relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.4.6 Hazardous Areas</b>  <i>Identify areas at elevated risk of natural and climate change-related hazards and restrict development within these areas including, but not limited to, areas subject to flooding, sea-level rise, erosion, slope instability, and wildfire.</i></p> <p><b>3.5.10 Forest Lands and Wildfire Risk Management</b>  <i>Identify land use strategies that mitigate wildfire risk and that are appropriate to the unique</i></p>



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		<i>biogeoclimatic zones and settlement patterns of each local planning area.</i>
	Participants also commented that education and tree planting programs are needed for the sustainability of the forests.	<p>A draft cooperation principle within the revised draft is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>2.3.6 Provide Public Education Opportunities</b>  <i>To provide education opportunities to residents, communities, local organizations, and visitors, highlighting tangible ways they can contribute to preserving and protecting the region's unique amenities and environment, while respecting the confidentiality interests of Indigenous Knowledge Holders and Indigenous Governing Bodies.</i></p>
<b>Agricultural stewardship</b>	There was concern that agriculture had been removed as a "valued activity" in the draft Policy Statement.	<p>The revised draft includes acknowledgement of the value of sustainable agriculture by including an advisory policy to preserve, protect, and encourage it:</p> <p><b>3.5.15 Sustainable Agriculture</b>  <i>Preserve, protect, and encourage sustainable farming and sustainability of farming.</i></p>
	Many participants indicated they support sustainable and regenerative farming practices, and that education is needed to support this.	<p>Islands Trust is limited in its ability to regulate <i>how</i> farming is done, particularly on land that is in the Agricultural Land Reserve. It can, however, protect agricultural land, as in the following draft revised directive policy:</p> <p><b>3.5.11 Protection of Agricultural Lands</b>  <i>Identify and protect agricultural lands for current and future use consistent with the Agricultural Land Commission Act and its regulations for agricultural land within the Agricultural Land Reserve while considering downstream impacts, wildlife habitat, and adjacent properties.</i></p>
	There was concern over the use of the term "small-scale" with respect to agriculture.	In the revised draft, the term "small-scale" is no longer used.
	Seventy-two (72%) of online survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that agricultural impacts (use of chemicals and impacts on the environment) should be considered when preserving areas for agriculture.	<p>The revised draft emphasizes the protection of agricultural lands and the need to consider downstream impacts in a draft directive policy:</p> <p><b>3.5.11 Protection of Agricultural Lands</b>  <i>Identify and protect agricultural lands for current and future use consistent with the Agricultural Land Commission Act and its regulations for agricultural land within the Agricultural Land Reserve while considering downstream impacts, wildlife habitat, and adjacent properties.</i></p>
	Participants also noted they are worried about food shortages in the future and would like to protect farming to ensure access to food in the future.	The revised draft contains the following draft advisory policy:

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		<b>3.5.16 Food Security and Food Sovereignty</b> <i>Support initiatives that advance food security and Indigenous food sovereignty.</i>
	There were some participants across all engagement activities said they would like to both protect and encourage farming, noting its local economic benefit and its contribution to food security and self-sustainability of the islands.	<p>The revised draft includes a draft directive policy that would require efforts to address the economic viability of farms in a manner consistent with the preserve and protect mandate:</p> <b>3.5.14 Economic Viability of Farms</b> <i>Consider land uses and activities that support the economic viability of farms without compromising the agricultural capability of agricultural land or adversely impacting the area's unique amenities and environment.</i>
<b>Sustainable and resilient communities / housing</b>	Throughout all engagement activities, most participants agreed there is a housing shortage in the Islands Trust Area, and that this is one of their greatest concerns and priorities.	<p>The revised draft contains a suite of revised and new draft directive policies regarding housing:</p> <b>3.4.11 Suitable Locations for Additional Housing</b> <i>Identify suitable locations that could support increased density for the development of safe, secure, diverse, and attainable housing.</i>  <b>3.4.12 Housing Diversity</b> <i>Support a range of housing types and tenures to help meet the identified housing needs of the island community and local Indigenous communities.</i>  <b>3.4.13 Clustered Small Dwelling Units</b> <i>Support alternatives to conventional single-detached dwellings by establishing policies to permit clusters of small dwelling units in suitable areas.</i>  <b>3.4.14 Floor Area and Lot Coverage Limits</b> <i>Set floor area and lot coverage limits for residential development to minimize negative environmental impacts, including on land used for agricultural purposes.</i>  <b>3.4.15 Affordable and Special Needs Housing</b> <i>Prioritize the processing of rezoning applications from non-profit housing providers and public agencies, and the processing of housing agreement bylaws for affordable and special needs housing.</i>  <b>3.4.16 Short-Term Rentals</b> <i>Identify and assess the impacts of short-term rental of dwellings on the availability of safe,</i>

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		<p><i>secure and affordable housing and, where necessary, regulate and limit the number of short-term rentals accordingly.</i></p> <p>The revised draft also contains two draft advisory policies related to housing:</p> <p><b>3.4.17 Housing for Indigenous People</b>  <i>Through engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies, support housing opportunities for Indigenous people in the Islands Trust Area.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.18 Multi-Unit Residential</b>  <i>Implement land use regulations for affordable and special needs housing and other multi-unit residential development that allow for a range of potential configurations on the site to accommodate changing construction conditions, with form and character controlled through development permit areas.</i></p> <p>Many other draft directive and advisory policies in the revised draft are also relevant to housing as they identify ecosystems/ecosystem features, heritage sites, harvesting areas, and other areas to be prioritized for protection, or for which potential adverse impacts are to be minimized.</p>
	Participants stated there is a need for affordable housing for many sectors of the population including seniors and youth, and that there is a lack of affordable rental housing for those who work on the islands, particularly in the tourism or service sectors. Some participants shared they would like to remain on the islands as they age but are concerned about the lack of appropriate housing available to them.	<p>The revised draft continues to have draft policies relevant to this feedback, including the following draft directive policies that would support increased housing diversity and affordability:</p> <p><b>3.4.11 Suitable Locations for Additional Housing</b>  <i>Identify suitable locations that could support increased density for the development of safe, secure, diverse, and attainable housing.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.12 Housing Diversity</b>  <i>Support a range of housing types and tenures to help meet the identified housing needs of the island community and local Indigenous communities.</i></p>
	A slight majority of survey respondents (55%) agreed that the Policy Statement should include an Islands Trust commitment to strategic, multijurisdictional, equitable and integrated	<p>The revised draft has many revised and new policies relevant to this feedback, including the following draft directive policies directing the management of the rate and scale of growth:</p> <p><b>3.4.1 Sustainable Development</b></p>

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	approaches to diverse housing needs, and that local official community plans should carefully manage the rate and scale of growth and development in the area.	<i>Consider site capabilities, environmental and protected areas, and existing development patterns when determining the land use designation and appropriate locations and intensities of various uses of the land.</i>
	Participants supported the proposed policy that new development should be small-scale, low-impact and energy efficient, tying into earlier feedback that rainwater could be used as a primary source of water for new developments.	<p><b>3.4.2 Growth Management</b>  <i>Manage community growth and its associated impacts by directing residential, commercial and industrial development into suitable locations to prevent sprawl, minimize fragmentation of forest lands, and avoid adverse impacts to Indigenous cultural heritage, harvesting and hunting areas.</i></p> <p><b>3.4.3 Impacts of Development</b>  <i>Consider the aesthetic, environmental, and social impacts of development.</i></p> <p><i>The revised draft also includes the following advisory policy:</i></p> <p><b>3.5.7 Freshwater Storage</b>  <i>Encourage freshwater storage in groundwater regions where the quality or quantity of groundwater is likely to be inadequate or unsustainable.</i></p>
	While there was some concern expressed about size of homes, a slight majority of respondents (51%) did not support directives to local trust committees and island municipalities on limits of floor area and lot coverages.	<p>The revised draft has a revised directive policy requiring determination of floor area and lot coverage limits but does not prescribe what the limits should be:</p> <p><b>3.4.14 Floor Area and Lot Coverage Limits</b>  Determine appropriate floor area and lot coverage limits for residential development to minimize negative environmental impacts, including on land used for agricultural purposes.</p>
	Participants generally supported short-term rentals (e.g., for the economy and seasonal workers) but are in agreement with ensuring regulations be put in place (e.g., to prevent impacting availability of long-term rentals).	<p>The revised draft continues to have a draft directive policy about short-term rentals that is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.4.16 Short-Term Rentals</b>  <i>Identify and assess the impacts of short-term rental of dwellings on the availability of safe, secure, and affordable housing and, where necessary, regulate and limit the number of short-term rentals accordingly.</i></p>
	A majority of survey respondents (58%) supported Islands Trust advocating for appropriately-situated transportation networks	Advocacy to other agencies has been removed from the revised draft (including advocacy to provincial government agencies to work together with local communities through public consultation processes to evaluate and modify road construction, road system proposals, and

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	<p>for electric vehicles and electric bikes. Some participants did offer a contrary perspective, raising concern about the long-term environmental impact of the disposal of batteries, the large amount of energy that goes into building vehicles, and lack of connectivity or capacity of the electrical grid in some areas.</p>	<p>active transportation networks).</p> <p>The revised draft has a revised draft directive policy about public and active transportation networks that encourage zero emission transportation that is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.4.20 Public and Active Transportation Networks</b>  <i>Identify and establish appropriately-situated, safe, comfortable, and equitable transportation networks that reduce dependency on private automobile use, encourage zero emission modes of transportation, and support increased use of trail systems, public transportation, and active transportation.</i></p> <p>The revised draft also has a new directive policy about road systems that is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>3.4.22 Road Systems</b>  <i>Ensure that road location, design, construction, and road systems are compatible with preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.</i></p>
	<p>When asked about advocating to BC Ferries for the electrification of their fleet, feedback was more mixed, with some participants indicating this is outside the Islands Trust mandate and is an issue better left to other levels of government.</p> <p>Others indicated that better ferry service is needed and would like to see Islands Trust work with BC Ferries to ensure safe and efficient travel.</p>	<p>Advocacy to other agencies has been removed from the revised draft (including advocacy to provincial government agencies in support of the electrification of ferries in the Trust Area).</p>
<b>Engagement process</b>	<p>A common theme across all engagement activities and in response to the online survey questions was a frustration with the engagement process and structure of the survey. Many participants felt the survey was designed to elicit desired responses and that there were too many concepts contained in the survey questions, making it difficult to answer.</p> <p>Participants expressed the questions were</p>	<p>Staff have noted this feedback and will use it in future public engagement process design, including design of a survey planned for distribution following first reading of a Policy Statement bylaw:</p> <p>The Policy Statement Amendment Project's Communications and Engagement Plan calls for the following elements after first reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Trust Area-wide mailout with information about the Islands Trust, the draft Policy Statement, and how they can provide feedback</li> <li>• A survey, available online and hard-copy</li> </ul>

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	<p>confusing and many were frustrated with having character limits on their survey responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An online information session</li> <li>• Local events/opportunities to provide feedback locally as requested by each local trust committee/island municipality</li> </ul>
	<p>Participants shared they would have liked a more thorough and transparent process, and more time to understand the draft Policy Statement document and proposed changes. Participants identified barriers that may have affected participation including residents not receiving mail outs, not having computer access, and apprehension about attending in-person engagement activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Many participants also commented there should have been more transparent engagement with First Nations and some expressed a concern with the approach taken by Islands Trust to hold separate engagement processes. These participants noted they would have liked to have had the opportunity to learn and share their perspectives with each other, and by holding separate activities, there is a lack of transparency in the process.</p>	
<b>General policy structure</b>	<p>Need for simpler structure and language in the Policy Statement. Comments on the Policy Statement were that it was vague, confusing, and technical, and that the document contains too many overlapping themes, a lot of repetition, and did not express the concepts well.</p>	<p>The revised draft has been drafted in a manner that is relevant to address this feedback.</p>
	<p>There was strong support for a Glossary of Key Terms to be added to the draft new Policy Statement.</p>	<p>The revised draft contains a new Glossary of Terms section.</p>
<b>Governance</b>	<p>Many participants shared concerns that Islands Trust is expanding its mandate to include climate change, affordable housing, forestry, agriculture, community, and Reconciliation. Many considered</p>	<p>Trust Council reviewed this feedback before directing changes to the draft document. Staff have continued to ensure that draft policies set out in the document address matters within Islands Trust jurisdiction. Advocacy policies about topics outside the Islands Trust jurisdiction have been removed.</p>

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	<p>these policy mandates to overlap with existing regulations by other levels of government and questioned whether Islands Trust staff has the expertise or capacity to implement the scope of these policy changes.</p> <p>Many responses from participants indicated that they would like less involvement from Islands Trust in local decision-making, that Islands Trust is becoming too large, or that it shouldn't exist at all. Some expressed concern that the draft new Policy Statement is an effort of Islands Trust to gain more control and centralize decision-making and governance in the Islands Trust Area.</p> <p>With respect to governance, some participants shared that Islands Trust should include First Nations representatives on Trust Council, and others recognized First Nations' right to self-govern.</p> <p>Some participants were concerned about Islands Trust's financial accountability in terms of policy changes that they perceived would broaden the Islands Trust mandate and thereby increase budgetary needs and impact taxes.</p> <p>Some participants asked that Islands Trust review their governance model before moving forward with updates to the Policy Statement.</p>	<p>The Islands Trust Council has struck a Governance Committee to review governance matters. (see <a href="#">Governance Committee webpage</a> for more information)</p> <p>In October 2024, Islands Trust Council <a href="#">re-requested</a> a Provincial review of the Islands Trust. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing <a href="#">responded</a> in April 2025 that he is not in a position to consider a review of the Islands Trust Act prior to the next general local elections.</p>
<b>Reconciliation</b>	<p>While most agree with and support Reconciliation work and are happy to see inclusion of Reconciliation policies in the draft Policy Statement, many participants noted this is a complex topic and that it has overlapping responsibility with other levels of government.</p> <p>Some shared that Islands Trust doesn't have the expertise, funding or jurisdiction to address this, and that many actions are already being taken by senior governments.</p>	<p>Reconciliation work is ongoing at Islands Trust. Efforts to build relationships are underway at staff-to-staff and leadership-to-leadership levels. These efforts are uneven across the Trust Area and Islands Trust recognizes that it has much to improve on, and is taking actions to improve.</p> <p>The revised draft includes a new Indigenous Inherent Rights Acknowledgment section that is relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>1.3 – Indigenous Inherent Rights Acknowledgment</b>  <i>Islands Trust Council respectfully acknowledges Indigenous inherent rights as protected</i></p>



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	<p>Participants shared a sentiment that relationships with local bands are better built at the local level.</p> <p>Participants discussed the need for more information about Reconciliation and how it will affect decision-making.</p> <p>There was a recognized need across all engagement activities for more broad and genuine engagement with First Nations on the Policy Statement, and a concern about how engagement has been handled by Islands Trust to date.</p> <p>Many participants would like to see a definition of terms such as "Indigenous ways of knowing" and want to better understand how this will be used in decision-making.</p>	<p><i>under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Islands Trust Council respectfully acknowledges Indigenous rights to self-governance and the expressed interest of Indigenous Governing Bodies in working toward co-governance of the Islands Trust Area. Islands Trust Council is committed to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Governing Bodies through ongoing discussion and recognition of these rights.</i></p> <p><i>Given the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and the evolving legislative landscape in British Columbia, the Policy Statement serves as a starting point for improved cooperation with Indigenous Governing Bodies. Islands Trust Council commits to an ongoing effort to co-develop planning and land use management processes with Indigenous Governing Bodies within the Islands Trust Area and acknowledges that this document does not serve as an endpoint. Islands Trust Council will be informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for its approach to reconciliation.</i></p> <p>In addition, the revised draft of the Policy Statement contains several principles relevant to this feedback:</p> <p><b>2.1.1. Acknowledge and Respect Indigenous Rights</b>  <i>To grow understanding of the history and legacy of colonialism in the Islands Trust Area, to acknowledge and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to work together with Indigenous Governing Bodies and Indigenous Knowledge Holders to preserve and protect culturally significant areas, sites, and species.</i></p> <p><b>2.1.2 Prioritize Environmental and Indigenous Cultural Heritage Protection</b>  <i>To place priority on preserving, protecting and restoring the environment, and preserving, protecting, and supporting restoration of Indigenous cultural heritage in all decision making.</i></p> <p><b>2.2.1 Guidance from <a href="#">Truth and Reconciliation Commission</a></b>  <i>Be informed by the 10 principles established by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).</i></p> <p><b>2.2.2 Guidance from <a href="#">United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</a></b>  <i>Be informed by the articles established in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).</i></p>



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		<p><b>2.2.3 Guidance from <a href="#">Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice</a></b>  <i>Be informed by the principles for change used by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.</i></p> <p><b>2.2.4 Guidance from Indigenous Governing Bodies</b>  <i>Be informed by guidance from Indigenous Governing Bodies and Indigenous Knowledge Holders.</i></p> <p><b>2.3.3 Work Towards Collaborative Governance with Indigenous Governing Bodies</b>  <i>To work towards building strong relationships and foundations for collaborative governance with Indigenous Governing Bodies, including through the development of shared decision-making agreements under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.</i></p> <p>See also Goals 1 and 2 in the draft new Policy Statement for directive and advisory policies related to reconciliation and engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies.</p> <p>The term “Indigenous ways of knowing” has been removed from the revised draft definition of “Indigenous Knowledge” is included in the new Glossary of Terms section.</p> <p>For more information generally, Islands Trust's <a href="#">webpage about Reconciliation</a> and <a href="#">Trust Council's Policy on First Nations Engagement Principles</a></p>