



Islands Trust

Islands Trust Council DRAFT Bylaw No. 183
ISLANDS TRUST POLICY STATEMENT BYLAW, 2021

ISLANDS TRUST
POLICY STATEMENT

Updated – July 15, 2021

(Engagement Draft - Clean Version)

References highlighted in (blue parentheses) at the end of each policy refer to the corresponding policy in the [2003 consolidated version of the Policy Statement](#) or indicate (new) policies.

A colour-coded version of this draft (highlighting amendments) is available on the Islands 2050 webpage at: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/>.

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGMENT (new)

Islands Trust Council acknowledges that the Islands Trust Area is located within the treaty and territorial lands and waters of the BOKÉĆEN, K'ómoks, Ləkʷəŋən, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Qualicum, Quw'utsun Tribes, scəwáθən məsteyəxʷ, Scia'new, sə́ílwətaʔt, SEMYOME, shishálh, Skwxwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Spune'luxutth, SʔÁUTW, Stz'uminus, ʔaʔəmen, toq qaymıxʷ, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, WJOŁEŁP, WSIKEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhkwu/ʔop qaymıxʷ, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (collectively referred to hereinafter as 'First Nations').

Islands Trust Council acknowledges that the lands and waters encompassing the Trust Area are subject to the treaty and territorial rights of First Nations. The Trust Area has been home to Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial and their relationship to these lands and waters continues to this day. Islands Trust Council honours the rich history and cultural heritage within the region and has stated its commitment to reconciliation and meaningful engagement with First Nations in the Trust Area.

1.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ISLANDS TRUST

To understand the Islands Trust governance model, it is helpful to understand its origins. In the 1960s, as the urban centres of Vancouver, Nanaimo, and Victoria were experiencing rapid population growth, the Gulf Islands in British Columbia began facing unprecedented pressure for residential development. Gulf Island residents, whose islands were under the jurisdiction of regional districts at the time, began expressing widespread concern that the area's highly-valued and fragile environment could be irreversibly damaged by unrestrained development. In 1969, the provincial government responded by instituting a temporary 10-acre minimum lot size freeze on the subdivision of land until island communities could adopt plans and regulations to control growth.

In 1972, an all-party provincial Select Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs was established to investigate the unique problems facing the Trust Area. In its 1973 report¹ to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, the Committee concluded that development pressures arising from the area's proximity to major urban centres were damaging the very features that made the region so attractive to residents and visitors. The Committee recommended the formation of an 'Islands Trust' to assume the primary responsibility for coordinated governance of the region.

In response to the Committee's recommendations, the Government of British Columbia enacted the ***Islands Trust Act***² in 1974. The Act established Islands Trust as a trust with a conservation-oriented responsibility to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area for the benefit of residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia more broadly.

In the years following the establishment of Islands Trust, pressure for development of the Trust Area islands continued. Between 1974 and 1987, the Area's resident population increased by sixty per cent, far exceeding the growth rate of adjacent areas. Several amendments were made to the *Islands Trust Act* during this period, giving Islands Trust community planning and land use authority comparable to that of a regional district under the *Local Government Act*. From 1974 to 1977, local trust committees vetted regional district bylaws for compliance with the Islands Trust Object. In 1977, in response to concerns about administrative inefficiencies, the *Islands Trust Act* was amended to transfer land use regulation from regional districts to local trust committees. Aware of the urgent need for plans to guide decisions on growth management and land use, Trust Area communities developed official community plans. Nonetheless, pressure for residential development continued, as did public concern for the future of the Trust Area.

In 1987, the provincial government initiated a second review related to the Islands Trust Area, this time focusing on public opinion of Islands Trust and its role. The results showed overwhelming public support for both Islands Trust and the Islands Trust Object, and suggested ways in which the Trust and its legislation could be strengthened. In response, an amended *Islands Trust Act* was put into effect in 1990, reaffirming the Province's commitment to careful planning and development in the Trust Area. In the amended Act, Islands Trust retained its original authority and its dual responsibility to residents of both the Trust Area and British Columbians more broadly. The new legislation also amended the structure of Islands Trust and greatly broadened its functions and responsibilities. One of the most notable changes was the assignment of a regional-level planning function to Islands Trust Council.

¹ British Columbia, [Official Report of Debates of the Legislative Assembly \(Hansard\)](#), 30th Parl, 3rd Sess, p 255 (25 September 1973).

² British Columbia, [Islands Trust Act](#), RSBC 1996, c 239.

1.3 PRESENT CONTEXT

Many of the challenges that the Islands Trust Area was facing in 1974 remain pressing today, and are further complicated by new social, economic, and environmental dynamics.

In 2019, Trust Council adopted a Reconciliation Declaration acknowledging that First Nations have resided in the lands and waters that encompass the Trust Area since time immemorial and honouring the rich history and cultural heritage of this special region. Trust Council acknowledges that it has a duty to seek meaningful engagement with First Nations in the Trust Area and strives to be guided by the specific reconciliation principles and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice, that fall within Trust Council's jurisdiction.

Trust Council also adopted a Climate Emergency Declaration in 2019, committing to urgent and equitable climate action across the region. The health and integrity of ecosystems, communities, and the built environment are increasingly compromised by the adverse impacts of climate change such as rising sea levels, ocean acidification, storm surge flooding, windstorms, droughts, wildfires, and invasive species. Biodiversity - the diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems - is declining at an alarming rate, leading to species extinctions locally and across the globe. In order to effectively preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area in this context, it will be critical to identify, monitor, mitigate, and adapt to the ripple effects of climate change on both ecosystems and communities. In this context, Trust Council will benefit from being guided by the best available science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. In the face of uncertainties around the rate and scale of climate impacts, it will also be important to foster more precautionary and adaptive approaches to decision-making, safeguarding future generations as best as possible.

Research by the Islands Trust Conservancy on the conversion of natural areas for human use highlights that some islands in the Trust Area are reaching or surpassing accepted thresholds for ecosystem health³. A widely accepted threshold for the region is approximately 30-40% of converted area for any given habitat. As land conversion begins to go above this threshold, the number of species in a given habitat can be expected to decline far more rapidly. A 2021 report on *The State of the Salish Sea*⁴ describes the Salish Sea bioregion as being under relentless pressure from an accelerating convergence of global and local environmental stressors and the cumulative impacts of 150 years of development. It chronicles how ecosystem decline has outpaced protection and restoration efforts, and how population growth and urbanization have led to detrimental changes to the landscape and seascape, including habitat fragmentation, shoreline armouring, conversion of vegetated areas to impervious surfaces, and profound changes in watershed and wetland hydrology. The report calls for strategic, multijurisdictional policy approaches, informed by multiple ways of knowing and grounded in an understanding of the complex relationships between people and place:

"...Now is the time to shift thought and policy paradigms from treating the environment as a resource to instead build systems of relationships and responsiveness that are based in science and incorporate the interconnected system of humans and environments."

³ Islands Trust (2019). [State of the Islands Indicator Project: Final Report](#)

⁴ Sobocinski, K.L. (2021). [State of the Salish Sea](#). G. Broadhurst and N.J.K. Baloy (Contributing Eds.). Salish Sea Institute, Western Washington University.

Many islands in the Trust Area are also facing a lack of safe, secure, and affordable housing that is threatening the long-term sustainability and resilience of Trust Area communities. The gap between those who can, and those who cannot, afford a home is growing rapidly amidst a backdrop of skyrocketing real estate values, loss of rental stock, prevalence of not-permitted, unsafe, and unhealthy housing with no permanency or security for families, and growing rates of homelessness. Without affordable, safe, secure, and diverse housing options, seniors are finding it difficult to age in place and an increasing percentage of island workers must commute from off-island locations. First Nations community members continue to be alienated from their homelands and opportunities to live on the islands due to the forced removal and genocide they experienced and continue to experience to this day. As Trust Council endeavours to support community needs for affordable housing within the confines of its jurisdictional mandate, it acknowledges the need for place-based, multigenerational, and integrated solutions to sustainability that address equity, diversity, and inclusion in meaningful ways, while respecting the natural limitations and adaptive capacities of island ecosystems.

In this complex policy landscape, the Policy Statement plays a vital role in articulating Trust Council's strategic policy priorities, principles, and approaches, centred firmly in the Islands Trust Object to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area, not only for this generation, but also for many generations to come, including First Nations who wish to come home or have access to traditional uses.

1.4 THE ISLANDS TRUST OBJECT AND ITS MEANING

The *Islands Trust Act* sets out the special-purpose mandate for Islands Trust, referenced in the legislation as its “object”:

“The object of the Trust is to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.” (*Islands Trust Act*)

The following sections provide a fuller explanation of key phrases in the Islands Trust Object.

“... to preserve and protect the Trust Area...”

The Islands Trust Area is a scenic archipelago of 13 major islands, over 450 smaller islands and islets, and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea. The area of jurisdiction is established by Schedule A of the *Islands Trust Act*. The region is home to more than 26,000 residents and is the homeland of more than 28,000 Coast Salish Peoples.

The mandate to ‘preserve and protect’ aims to ensure the continued existence, either at current or enhanced levels, of the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area. This involves first identifying the unique amenities and environment in each local planning area and then instituting measures for their preservation and protection. Appropriate developments can thus be guided to areas which are most suitable, with minimal impact to the unique amenities and environment of the area. Official community plan and bylaw provisions such as setbacks and parcel size can be used as site specific protection measures where development is permitted.

“...and its unique amenities and environment...”

The Trust Area is valued and unique, not because of any one quality or feature, but rather because of its particular combination of characteristics and location.

Located within the Coastal Douglas-fir and Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zones, the Trust Area is home to an exceptionally high biodiversity of rare and culturally significant species, including over 100 federally-listed and over 300 provincially-listed species at risk. These ecosystems are classified as ‘sensitive’ because of their rarity and vulnerability to disturbances such as human impacts and climate change. The Trust Area also plays an important role in provincial and national efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by capturing and storing carbon in natural areas such as forests, soils, mycelium networks, wetlands, and eelgrass meadows.

Islands are places of last refuge and first (local) extinction. Existing at the interface of land and sea, they provide transition habitats that support high terrestrial and marine biodiversity. At the same time, islands need extra care due to a number of unique vulnerabilities they hold as small, closed systems, surrounded by water. Unlike larger islands or the mainland, islands in the Trust Area have significant water supply constraints, due to small watersheds, shallow soils, a heavy reliance on groundwater, and a high vulnerability to the impacts of a changing climate, such as drought and saltwater intrusion. Species habitat and migration corridors on these islands are also constrained by the natural boundaries of shorelines and are impacted by the proportion and configuration of land converted for human use. In addition, coastal and marine ecosystems, resident communities, and First Nations’ archaeological sites and shoreline harvesting are all highly vulnerable to the climate change impacts associated with sea level rise and ocean acidification.

The Trust Area is also valued and unique because it is located within the treaty and territorial lands and waters of the Coast Salish Peoples. First Nations have called these lands and waters home since time immemorial and their relationship with this place continues to this day as stewards and caretakers for seven generations to come. First Nations in the Trust Area have creation stories that describe the spiritual and geophysical formation of the islands in the Salish Sea. Their history, stewardship, and knowledge of the region is reflected through oral history, language, place names, cultivated features of the landscape, Indigenous law, and protocols. Indigenous descriptions of the interrelationships between the landscape and all beings provide important context to the understanding of this special place. In this context, Indigenous cultural heritage is recognized as a unique amenity in the Trust Area and includes, but is not limited to: cultural and spiritual sites; ancestral loved ones' burial cairns and resting places; artifacts; petroglyphs; pictographs; place names; culturally significant species; medicinal plants; and traditional harvesting areas.

Trust Area islands are also home to vibrant communities that aspire to live sustainably and in respectful relationship with these lands and waters. Trust Council understands its preserve and protect mandate is strengthened by healthy and inclusive communities that are dependent on sustainable, energy efficient, and appropriately located housing, transportation, and infrastructure. Trust Area communities strongly value the rich natural beauty and biodiversity of the islands, the silence, quietude and tranquility of rural island landscapes and dark night skies, and the abundant opportunities for nature connection that the islands afford. These opportunities are not only to be enjoyed by residents, but also by British Columbians and visitors to the region, who all play important roles in helping to preserve and protect the Trust Area. Effective stewardship of the Trust Area relies on a collective community commitment to foster lower ecological footprints by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, striving to find new paths to conserve finite natural resources, and seeking nature-based solutions to climate change.

“...for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally ...”

Islands Trust is responsible to the present and future resident communities of the Trust Area and British Columbia, as well as to First Nations who have resided in the area since time immemorial. Resident communities include a diverse mix of year-round residents, part-time residents, absentee land owners, and First Nations who were forcibly removed from their homelands through colonization. The benefits to British Columbians include the preservation and protection of one of the most ecologically sensitive and biodiverse regions in the country, the safeguarding of natural carbon sinks to sequester greenhouse gas emissions, and opportunities for nature connection in close proximity to major urban centres.

“... in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the Government of British Columbia ...”

First Nations, and a number of municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations, and provincial agencies have responsibilities and interests related to the preservation and protection of the Trust Area. Trust Council recognizes that it does not have the jurisdictional powers to fulfill its mandate independently and must obtain the assistance of other jurisdictions. To achieve its object, Islands Trust must be an educator, coordinator, collaborator, and initiator, guiding individuals, communities, organizations, and other government agencies to uphold and support the Islands Trust Object. While Trust Council can provide the necessary leadership, responsibility for the preservation and protection of the Trust Area rests with many, including Trust Area residents, communities, other government agencies, organizations, and the Province. Trust Council further recognizes that meaningful engagement and cooperation with First Nations is critical to the preservation and protection of the region, to Trust Council's reconciliation commitments, and to the implementation of the provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

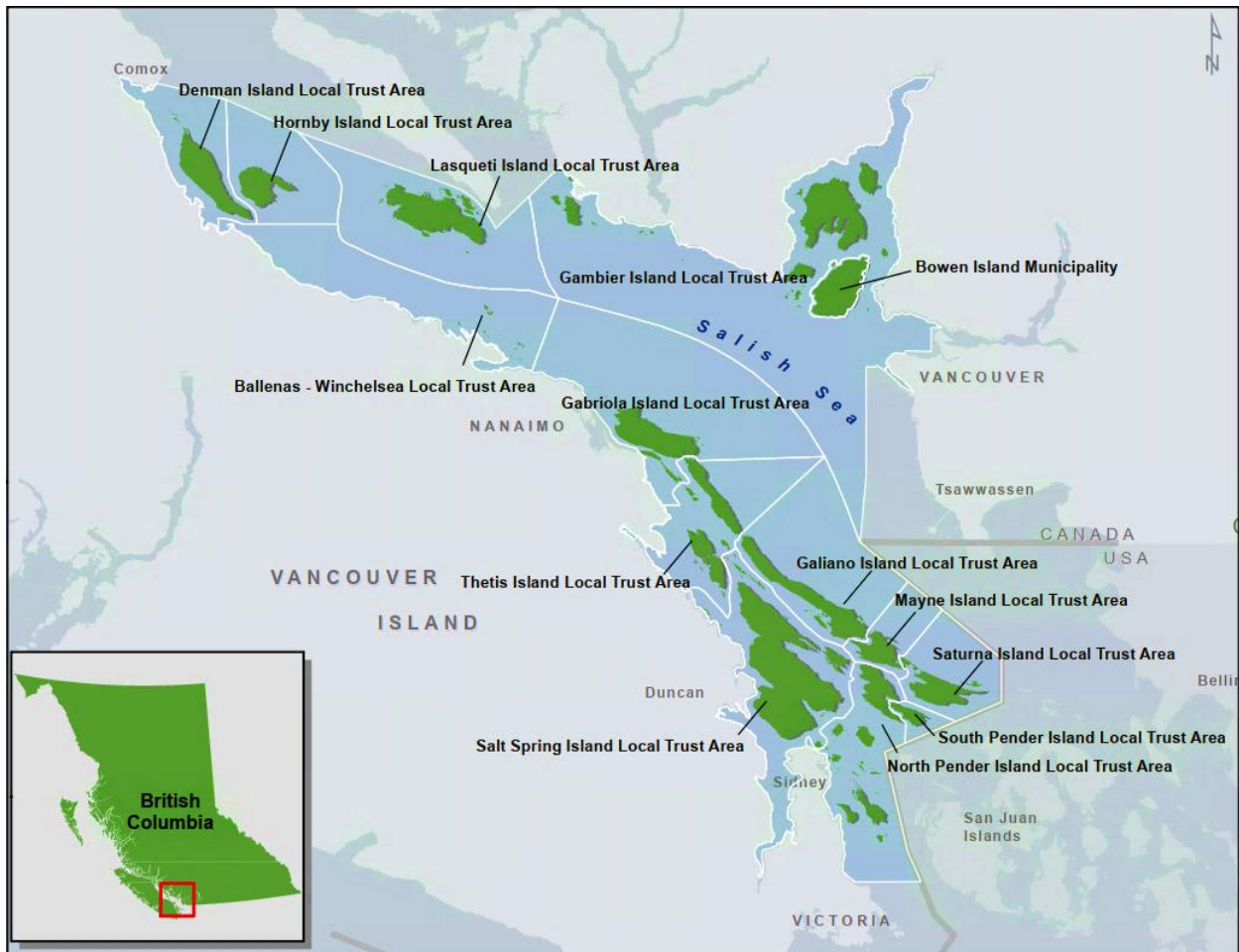
1.5 LOCATION OF THE ISLANDS TRUST AREA

The Islands Trust Area is an archipelago of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea, situated between the mainland of British Columbia and southern Vancouver Island. The specific boundaries of the Trust Area are noted in Schedule A of the *Islands Trust Act*.

The 13 major islands include:

- Bowen Island
- Denman Island
- Gabriola Island
- Galiano Island
- Gambier Island
- Hornby Island
- Lasqueti Island
- Mayne Island
- North Pender Island
- Salt Spring Island
- Saturna Island
- South Pender Island
- Thetis Island

(new map)



PART 2: PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ISLANDS TRUST POLICY STATEMENT

Section 15 of the *Islands Trust Act* stipulates that Trust Council must, by bylaw, adopt a Trust Policy Statement that applies to the Trust Area. The purpose of the Policy Statement is to establish a general statement of policies of Trust Council to carry out the Islands Trust Object to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area.

The Policy Statement aims to establish a vision for the future of the Trust Area that reflects the values and interests of the environment, residents, First Nations, and British Columbians, for this generation and for generations to come. It provides a framework for Trust Council to assume a leadership role in ‘place protection planning’ in the Trust Area, which entails preserving and protecting the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area through a combination of:

- conservation-oriented land use planning and regulation;
- engagement with First Nations;
- inter-agency coordination and advocacy;
- public / community engagement; and
- stewardship education.

As the Trust’s overarching policy document, the Policy Statement guides the formulation of Trust-wide strategic plans, official community plans and regulatory bylaws, protocol agreements and other cooperative arrangements with First Nations, inter-agency coordination and advocacy, thematic action plans and strategies, as well as public engagement and education initiatives.

The Policy Statement bylaw becomes effective upon the date of adoption. It is not retroactive and has no effect on any local trust committee or municipal bylaw in effect before its adoption.

2.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Islands Trust Council cannot effectively implement the Policy Statement without the support of First Nations and a wide range of partners. The original 1974 vision was that the Trust would be a “fully representative co-coordinating body”, whose task it was to bring together each group, agency, or government partner to act in the best interests of the islands and residents, with due regard for the broader and Province-wide interest. Assistance, cooperation, and collaboration are required from local trust committees, island municipalities, the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, First Nations and their associations and organizations, the provincial government, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, communities, property owners, residents and visitors. In the spirit of the *Islands Trust Act*, it is expected that all corporate entities of the Trust will coordinate and advocate to other agencies on matters involving potential conflict between the legislated Islands Trust Object and the legislated mandates of other agencies.

Role of the Minister of Municipal Affairs

The Minister of Municipal Affairs of the Government of British Columbia (or the designated provincial minister responsible for municipal affairs) approves the Policy Statement bylaw and provides an avenue of appeal for municipalities if neither the Executive Committee nor Trust Council approves a bylaw that has been submitted to them. The Minister and Ministry staff can also facilitate communication between the Islands Trust and other government agencies on policy matters.

Role of Islands Trust Council

The *Islands Trust Act* assigns to Islands Trust Council the responsibility for development, adoption, amendment, and implementation of the Policy Statement. Recognizing the varying roles and responsibilities of other parties to help fulfill the Islands Trust Object, Trust Council has included three types of policies in the Policy Statement:

a) **Commitments of Trust Council**

These policies reflect Trust Council’s high-level regional commitments, positions, priorities, and approaches related to the Islands Trust Object and its implementation. They help clarify Trust Council’s regional governance approach and offer interpretive context to guide decision-making.

b) **Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities**

These policies direct local trust committees and island municipalities to include certain types of policies and approaches in their official community plans and bylaws, unless explicit reasons are given to justify not doing so. Directive policies generally commence with the phrase “Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws...” These policies generally strive for a harmonized regional approach while also leaving flexibility for more detailed, locally-appropriate implementation tools and strategies.

c) **Coordination Policies for Trust Council**

These policies reflect Trust Council’s role in coordinating, advocating, and engaging with a host of other parties (including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents and visitors) regarding decisions or actions they can undertake in support of the Policy Statement and the Islands Trust Object. In some cases, these can form the basis of protocol agreements between the Trust and other agencies. Sections 8 and 9 of the *Islands Trust Act* stipulate that Trust Council may enter into coordination agreements and make recommendations to other parties for the purpose of carrying out the Islands Trust Object. Section 8 also stipulates that Trust Council may make recommendations to the Lieutenant Governor in Council respecting the determination, implementation, and carrying out of policies for the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.

Trust Council may review the Policy Statement annually to prioritize actions, assess progress, and consider possible amendments. Trust Council also serves as an avenue of appeal for local trust committees and island municipalities if a bylaw submitted to the Executive Committee is not approved.

Role of Executive Committee

Part 3 of the *Islands Trust Act* stipulates that the Executive Committee of Trust Council is required to review all bylaws of local trust committees and those bylaws of island municipalities that deal with the adoption of an official community plan. Such bylaws have no effect unless approved by Executive Committee, and the Committee cannot approve such a bylaw if it is “contrary to or at variance with” the Policy Statement. If there is no official community plan in place for an island municipality, Executive Committee is required to review all bylaws of the municipality and no bylaw that is contrary to the Policy Statement can be approved. Executive Committee also monitors the progress of Trust Council in achieving the goals defined in the Policy Statement, and makes recommendations to Trust Council in this regard.

Role of Local Trust Committees

As set out in the *Islands Trust Act*, bylaws of local trust committees cannot be “contrary to or at variance with” the Policy Statement. The Policy Statement contains policies that direct local trust committees to address certain matters in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, but generally does not stipulate the specific policies, planning tools, or regulations to be used because the social and environmental characteristics of islands vary. Official community plans must contain policies relating to

Trust Council's directives or must explicitly state the reasons and justifications for not doing so. Each local trust committee works with its island community to develop policies and regulations to fulfill the Islands Trust Object and Policy Statement in ways that are suitable to local needs and conditions.

Role of Island Municipalities

Municipalities in the Trust Area, like local trust committees, are directed to address certain matters in their official community plans. Where a particular policy requires an island municipality to address a particular matter, the official community plan must contain policies that implement Trust Council's directive or must explicitly state the reasons and justifications for not doing so.

Role of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board

The *Islands Trust Act* assigns the Islands Trust Object to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, as well as to Trust Council, local trust committees and island municipalities. Although the Islands Trust Conservancy Board does not take direction from Trust Council, it plays an essential role in helping to support the Policy Statement objectives and the fulfillment of place protection planning in the Trust Area through science-based conservation planning, engagement with First Nations, identification and protection of core conservation areas, as well as education and communication initiatives. To support the Islands Trust Object, the Islands Trust Conservancy Board also plays a key role in accepting voluntary donations of property and covenants and purchasing lands. Close collaboration and policy alignment between Islands Trust and Islands Trust Conservancy is critical to carrying out the Islands Trust Object.

Role of First Nations

First Nations play an integral role in governance and cooperative decision-making in the Trust Area. Trust Council acknowledges the treaty and territorial rights and title of First Nations in the Trust Area and is committed to aligning Islands Trust policies and processes with the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. Trust Council is further committed to ensuring that it seeks meaningful engagement with First Nations now and into the future. Cooperative mechanisms such as protocol agreements and mutually supportive strategies and action plans provide frameworks for effective communication, information sharing, and cooperative decision-making.

Role of Other Government and Non-Governmental Organizations

Other government agencies and non-governmental organizations play an important role in contributing to the preservation and protection of the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area through cooperative actions based on the Policy Statement and the Islands Trust Object. Cooperative mechanisms such as protocol agreements and mutually supportive strategies and action plans support the sustainability of the Trust Area and fulfillment of the Islands Trust Object.

Role of Property Owners, Residents, Visitors and Communities

The assistance and cooperation of property owners, residents, visitors, and communities is vital to the preservation and protection of the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area and to the implementation of the Policy Statement in each local planning area. Individuals have many opportunities to participate in local planning decisions and to work with other members of their communities to support the Islands Trust Object. The Trust can also equip communities and individuals with education and tools to help support the preserve and protect mandate and specific policies contained in the Policy Statement.

2.3 IMPLEMENTATION AND AMENDMENT POLICIES

Trust Council's Policies 1.2.1 (Policy Statement Amendment Policy) and 1.3.1 (Policy Statement Implementation Policy) guide the implementation and amendments of the Policy Statement. These are separate policies approved by Trust Council and do not require a legislative approval process.

The Policy Statement bylaw may be amended by Trust Council with the approval of the minister responsible for municipal affairs. Regardless of the source, all proposals for amendments to the Policy Statement are compiled by Executive Committee and brought forward for the consideration of Trust Council. Trust Council may, from time to time, initiate a review of the entire Policy Statement.

Trust Council's Policy Statement Implementation Policy establishes policies and procedures for statutory bylaw referrals and other implementation strategies and decision support tools that assist Executive Committee, local trust committees, island municipalities, Islands Trust planning staff, and other relevant parties to ensure that bylaws are consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

PART 3: REGIONAL GOVERNANCE (new)

GOAL: To establish regional governance approaches that uphold the Islands Trust Object

CONTEXT:

The Governance Challenge: The Islands Trust Area today faces converging challenges and compounding vulnerabilities. Trust Council must contend with intense development pressures, increasing climate change impacts, one of the highest densities of species at risk in Canada, freshwater scarcity, changing demographics, and a widespread lack of affordable housing. 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 Trust Area's natural systems remain limited and are increasingly compromised by climate change and the cumulative effects of human activity. Potential for conflict exists: conflict between the unending pressures for development and intensified use, and the duty to preserve and protect the unique amenities and environment of this special place. To keep everything in the Trust Area exactly as it is today would be impossible. Changes will occur. Nonetheless, if the Trust Area's unique amenities and environment are to be preserved and protected for current and future generations, priorities must be defined and management strategies established.

Establishing Priorities and Limitations: Advancing the Islands Trust Object is the preeminent duty of Trust Council, its committees, and all locally elected trustees in the Trust Area. This unique statutory mandate prioritizes the preservation and protection of the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area. Acknowledging the need to shift towards less human-centric and less settler-centric planning paradigms, Trust Council commits to place priority on preserving and protecting the integrity of the environment and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. This entails, first and foremost, the identification and safeguarding of protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage. To these ends, Trust Council should be guided by detailed, area-based understandings of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment, that are informed by multiple ways of knowing, including the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. Furthermore, the uncertainties around the rate and scale of climate change are mandating more precautionary approaches to stewardship of the Trust Area. The **Precautionary Principle** states that the lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental damage to habitats or species when there is a threat of serious or irreversible environmental degradation. Having established these clear understandings, priorities, and approaches, community needs can then be addressed sustainably, equitably, and within the natural limitations of these special islands, for the benefit of current and future generations.

Regional and Localized Approaches: Underpinning the Islands Trust regional governance approach is a strong acknowledgment that a degree of local autonomy supports effective governance in the Trust Area. Each island within the Trust Area has unique characteristics and has developed in its own unique way over the years. While the preeminent duty of all locally elected officials is to uphold the Islands Trust Object and regional mandate in all aspects of local planning and decision-making, they are to do so in a way that is sensitive and suitable to local circumstances, and guided by open, consultative public participation.

3.1 Regional Governance Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 3.1.1 The primary responsibility of Trust Council is to provide leadership for the preservation and protection of the unique amenities and environment of the Trust Area. [\(Guiding Principle #1\)](#)
- 3.1.2 Trust Council commits to place priority on preserving and protecting the integrity of the environment and Indigenous cultural heritage in all decision-making. [\(Guiding Principle #2\)](#)
- 3.1.3 It is Trust Council's policy that, to achieve the Islands Trust Object, the rate and scale of growth and development in the Trust Area must be carefully managed and requires limitation. [\(Guiding Principle #4\)](#)
- 3.1.4 It is Trust Council's policy that decision-making should be guided by the Precautionary Principle, and the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. [\(Guiding Principle #3\)](#)
- 3.1.5 Trust Council commits to seek close collaboration and policy alignment with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, acknowledging the interconnected roles each entity plays in regional conservation planning and in carrying out the Islands Trust Object. [\(new\)](#)
- 3.1.6 Trust Council commits to seek meaningful engagement with First Nations in the Trust Area, recognizing First Nations' treaty and territorial lands and waters, and will be guided by the specific reconciliation principles and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice, that fall within Trust Council's jurisdiction. [\(new\)](#)
- 3.1.7 Trust Council commits to take a leadership role in coordinating with, and advocating to, other government agencies and non-governmental organizations, and making recommendations to the provincial government, for the purpose of carrying out the Islands Trust Object. [\(new\)](#)
- 3.1.8 Trust Council commits to seek open, consultative public participation, acknowledging its importance to effective decision-making in the Trust Area. [\(Guiding Principle #5\)](#)
- 3.1.9 It is Trust Council's policy that island communities within the Trust Area are themselves best able to determine the most effective local government structure to support their local autonomy and specific community needs within the Islands Trust Object. [\(5.8.3\)](#)
- 3.1.10 It is Trust Council's policy that island municipalities shall, in all of their actions, have regard for the Islands Trust Policy Statement and the Islands Trust Object. [\(5.8.4\)](#)
- 3.1.11 Trust Council commits to implement a plan for the advancement of the Policy Statement as part of its annual budget process, and to direct Executive Committee to report on progress achieved in fulfilling the goals defined in the Policy Statement. [\(Guiding Principle #6\)](#)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 3.1.12 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, place priority on the integrity of the environment and Indigenous cultural heritage in all decision-making and limit the rate and scale of growth and development in their planning area. (new, based on Guiding Principles #1 and #4)
- 3.1.13 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, ground decision-making in the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new, based on Guiding Principle #3)
- 3.1.14 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in the development and implementation of official community plans and regulatory bylaws, provide opportunities for public engagement and collaboration. (5.8.2)
- 3.1.15 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, seek meaningful engagement with First Nations and strive to align decision-making with the principles of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* that fall within their jurisdiction. (new)

PART 4: ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

GOAL: To Preserve, Protect, Restore, and Sustainably Steward Trust Area Ecosystems

CONTEXT:

Environmental Integrity: The Islands Trust Area contains the most biodiverse and endangered ecosystems in British Columbia and a number of species that are of high cultural significance to First Nations. These ecosystems are treasured for their intrinsic value and also for the many supports they provide to human well-being. An **ecosystem** is understood as a dynamic system of living species interacting with their non-living environment. Some ecosystems rely on a delicate mix of species and conditions that are easily affected by human activities and environmental disturbances. These ecosystems are termed 'sensitive' and are prevalent in the Trust Area. An ecosystem has '**environmental integrity**' when its dominant characteristics, natural composition, structure, function, and processes occur within their natural ranges of variation and can withstand and recover from most disruptions imposed by human activity or environmental dynamics such as climate change. In the Trust Area, the establishment of networks of protected areas and unfragmented forest reserves that are large enough to contain and sustain native Trust Area species is essential to environmental integrity.

Restoration: In the face of the global climate and biodiversity crises, it has never been more critical to preserve and protect ecosystems in the Trust Area. In addition, there is now an imperative to restore these fragile ecosystems and assist in their recovery due to the cumulative impacts of development and human use of natural areas, as well as the impacts of a changing climate. **Ecosystem restoration** is the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed. Restoration can happen in many ways, such as active reforestation or wetland remediation, or by simply removing pressures so that nature can recover and adapt on its own.

Adaptive Management: The specific impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises and their policy implications may be difficult to predict in exact detail, timing, and scope. Adaptive management approaches offer pathways to minimize uncertainty and maximize policy effectiveness. These are structured, iterative processes of decision-making intended to reduce uncertainty over time through periodic monitoring and evaluation, and evidence-based policy adjustments.

Nature-Based Solutions: In seeking integrated solutions that address the impacts of climate change on both ecosystems and communities, nature-based solutions offer opportunities for multiple co-benefits. Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

Sustainable Stewardship: As humans modify the Trust Area, ecosystems are subject to various pressures. With sustainable, regenerative use, ecosystems will be more healthy and resilient and better able to support human well-being in a variety of ways. **Sustainability**, in this context, is defined as the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. **Stewardship**, in this context, refers to the responsible use and protection of natural systems, through conservation and sustainable use.

4.1 Environmental Integrity Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.1.1 It is Trust Council's policy that proactive land use planning is essential to the preservation and protection of Trust Area ecosystems. (3.1.1 first bullet)
- 4.1.2 It is Trust Council's policy that protection must be given to the natural processes, habitats, and species of the Trust Area, including those of old forests, Coastal Douglas-fir forests, Coastal Western Hemlock forests, Garry Oak/Arbutus forests, wetlands, open coastal grasslands, the vegetation of dry rocky areas, lakes, streams, estuaries, tidal flats, salt water marshes, drift sectors, lagoons, kelp forests, eelgrass meadows, and spawning areas. (3.1.1 second bullet)
- 4.1.3 Trust Council commits to establish and sustain a network of protected areas throughout the Trust Area, in collaboration with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, acknowledging that unfragmented connectivity is necessary to preserve ecosystems in sufficient size and distribution to sustain their environmental integrity. (3.1.2)
- 4.1.4 Trust Council shall strive to account for the cumulative effects of existing and proposed development to avoid detrimental effects on watersheds, groundwater supplies, and Trust Area species and their habitats, informed by the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (3.1.1 third bullet)
- 4.1.5 Trust Council shall strive to identify and monitor the impacts of climate change on ecosystems through climate vulnerability assessments and shall utilize adaptive management processes and nature-based solutions that are informed by the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.1.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify, establish, and maintain a network of protected areas of sufficient size and distribution to preserve the environmental integrity of ecosystems in their planning area. (3.1.4)
- 4.1.7 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, and in collaboration with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, identify, preserve, protect, and support the restoration of the following elements in their planning area, utilizing the best available quantitative and qualitative data, inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and community input: (3.1.3)
- sensitive ecosystems (cliff, freshwater, herbaceous, old and mature forest, riparian, wetland, and woodland ecosystems)
 - contiguous, unfragmented forests and associated ecosystems
 - freshwater networks and groundwater recharge areas
 - eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, and forage fish spawning areas
 - species and ecosystems at risk
 - Indigenous cultivation and harvesting areas such as clam gardens, camas meadows, and other areas as identified by First Nations

- 4.1.8 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, regulate land use and development to reduce emissions to air, land, and water. (3.1.5)
- 4.1.9 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify means to reduce climate vulnerability and support climate adaptation measures for ecosystems within their planning area. (new)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 4.1.10 Trust Council shall, in collaboration with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, seek the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing regarding ecosystem preservation, protection, restoration, and sustainable stewardship in the Trust Area through respectful, culturally-sensitive and collaborative approaches with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, the Province, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and communities. (new)
- 4.1.11 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, other government agencies to foster actions, programs, and incentives that: (3.1.9)
- place priority on the integrity of the environment in the Trust Area
 - protect the diversity of native species and habitats in the Trust Area; and
 - prevent pollution of the air, land, freshwater networks, and marine waters of the Trust Area
- 4.1.12 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, other government agencies to:
- regulate and monitor the harvesting of fish, wildlife, and vegetation in the Trust Area so as to protect terrestrial and aquatic species populations and habitats (4.3.1)
 - consult with First Nations, local trust committees, island municipalities, and Trust Area communities prior to decisions regarding regulation of hunting or harvesting of wildlife or vegetation in the Trust Area (4.3.1)
 - consult with First Nations to preserve First Nations' traditional harvesting areas; and (new)
 - to protect, for public use, areas supporting naturally occurring shellfish populations and other marine life, and to establish public shellfish reserves in the Trust Area. (4.3.2)
- 4.1.13 Trust Council shall advocate to the provincial government to enforce standards for the control of emissions polluting the air, lands, and waters of the Trust Area. (3.1.10)
- 4.1.14 Trust Council shall, in cooperation with First Nations and the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, advocate to other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, Crown corporations, municipalities, regional districts, non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors to protect natural areas in the Trust Area through education, stewardship tools, acquisitions, conservation covenants and careful management. (3.1.11)

4.2 Freshwater Stewardship Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.2.1 Trust Council commits to take a precautionary approach to the sustainable stewardship of watershed ecosystems, freshwater networks, and groundwater recharge areas in the Trust Area, in cooperation with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, and the public, and on the basis of the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)
- 4.2.2 It is Trust Council's policy that: (3.3.1)
- the watershed ecosystems, freshwater networks, and groundwater recharge areas of the Trust Area should be identified, protected, and where possible, restored or rehabilitated; and
 - the 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.
- 4.2.3 It is Trust Council's policy that freshwater use in the Trust Area should not impede the inherent rights of First Nations to access freshwater streams for cultural and spiritual purposes.
- 4.2.4 It is Trust Council's policy that islands in the Trust Area should be self-sufficient in their supply of freshwater.⁵ (4.4.1)
- 4.2.5 It is Trust Council's policy that new desalination plants should not be permitted in the Trust Area due to their high energy demands and adverse impacts to coastal and marine ecosystems. (new)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.2.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify means to prevent further loss or degradation of watershed ecosystems, freshwater networks, groundwater recharge areas, and freshwater aquatic species in their planning area. (3.3.2)
- 4.2.7 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, ensure: (4.4.2)
- that neither the density nor intensity of land use is increased in groundwater regions⁶ where the quality or quantity of the supply of freshwater is likely to be inadequate or unsustainable;
 - that existing, anticipated, and seasonal water demand and supply projections are considered and allowed for;
- and shall strive to ensure: (4.4.2, 4.4.1)
- that freshwater quality is maintained; and
 - that islands are self-sufficient in their supply of freshwater⁵.
- 4.2.8 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, strive to ensure that freshwater use is not to the detriment of in-stream uses such as: fish and fish habitat uses; Indigenous cultural and spiritual use; aesthetic and recreational uses; and, the maintenance of water quality in lakes, streams, and wetlands. (4.4.3)
- 4.2.9 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prohibit new desalination plants in the Trust Area. (new)

⁵ ...with the sole exception of Piers Island which is supplied by the Capital Regional District water system.

⁶ Groundwater regions are delineated water management areas that provide a useful basis for assessing area-specific water quality and quantity characteristics for planning purposes.

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 4.2.10 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government, regional districts, improvement districts, and other agencies to enact legislation protecting freshwater sustainability, watershed ecosystems, freshwater networks, groundwater recharge areas, and freshwater aquatic species at risk in the Trust Area, in accordance with the Islands Trust Object. (4.4.6)
- 4.2.11 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government to implement property tax incentives for the retention of groundwater and watershed recharge areas and freshwater wetlands in the Trust Area. (4.4.5)
- 4.2.12 Trust Council shall encourage, educate, and advocate to government agencies and non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors to adopt water conservation practices in the Trust Area, including through the use of innovative technologies such as rainwater harvesting, above-ground water cisterns, alternative sewage disposal systems, reuse of water, the treatment and use of grey water, and the use of water saving devices. (4.4.4, 4.4.7)
- 4.2.13 Trust Council shall, in collaboration with Islands Trust Conservancy, encourage government agencies, non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors to protect watershed ecosystems through voluntary donations, acquisitions, conservation covenants, and careful management. (3.3.3)

4.3 Forest Stewardship Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.3.1 Trust Council commits to take a precautionary approach to the stewardship of forest ecosystems in the Trust Area, in cooperation with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, and the public, and on the basis of the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)
- 4.3.2 It is Trust Council's policy that:
- forest ecosystems in the Trust Area should be protected; (3.2.1)
 - the remaining stands of relatively undisturbed Coastal Douglas-fir and Coastal Western Hemlock zones, and their associated ecosystems, should be preserved and protected; (3.2.1)
 - forest cover is a representative characteristic of the Trust Area and should be maintained; and (4.2.4)
 - the aesthetic value of forest land should be protected. (4.2.5)
- 4.3.3 It is Trust Council's policy that forest harvesting in the Trust Area should be limited, small-scale, sustainable, regenerative, supportive of climate action, respectful of Indigenous harvesting areas, and protective of the environmental integrity of the Trust Area. (new, replacing 4.2.1 - 4.2.2)
- 4.3.4 It is Trust Council's policy that management plans related to sustainable forest harvesting in the Trust Area should include appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to uphold the long-term environmental integrity of forest ecosystems, and should preserve and protect the inherent rights of First Nations to harvest forest resources for cultural purposes. (4.2.3 + new)
- 4.3.5 It is Trust Council's policy that the clear-cutting of forests and logging of old-growth trees is inappropriate anywhere in the Trust Area, acknowledging the multiple adverse impacts these activities incur on the fragile ecosystems, environmental integrity, and carbon capture and storage potential of the Trust Area. (new)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.3.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prioritize the environmental integrity of the Trust Area by protecting unfragmented forest ecosystems, on a scale of forest stands and landscapes, from the potentially adverse impacts of growth, development and land use. (3.2.2, 4.2.6)
- 4.3.7 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, retain large land holdings and parcel sizes to enable sustainable forest harvesting practices and direct the location of roads and utility corridors to minimize the fragmentation of forests. (4.2.7)
- 4.3.8 Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities shall, in their Official Community Plans and regulatory bylaws, designate protected forest ecosystem reserves where the preservation of native biodiversity and corridors is especially critical and where there should be no extraction. (4.2.8)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 4.3.9 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government to grant Islands Trust the necessary jurisdictional authority to preserve and protect forest ecosystems, including:
- legislation to prohibit clear-cutting and logging of old-growth in the Trust Area; and
 - authority to regulate tree cutting in the Trust Area. [\(new\)](#)
- 4.3.10 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government to adopt legislation establishing sustainable forest harvesting practices that protect environmental integrity on a scale of forest stands and landscapes by preserving, protection, and restoring: [\(4.2.11\)](#)
- the diversity of forest structure and composition;
 - the physical, chemical, and biotic diversity of soils;
 - natural aquatic and wetland ecosystems;
 - the full range of natural habitats in the forest landscape, including old-growth; and
 - connectivity of forest habitats sufficient for different life stages and dispersal needs of native species.
- 4.3.11 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government to:
- implement engagement mechanisms that ensure the full and meaningful participation of First Nations and Trust Area communities in decisions concerning the use of forest lands; [\(4.2.9\)](#)
 - provide education and extension programs to promote sustainable forest harvesting and the protection of forest ecosystems; [\(4.2.10\)](#)
 - adopt statutes and guidelines to reduce invasive non-native species in forest ecosystems; [\(4.2.12\)](#)
 - designate forest ecosystem reserves where no extraction shall take place in order to promote the preservation of native biodiversity; [\(4.2.13\)](#)
 - require that applicants identify the protective actions needed to maintain sustainable forest land use and environmental integrity, prior to approval of tree cutting plans; and [\(4.2.14\)](#)
 - implement property tax incentives for the practice of sustainable forest harvesting. [\(4.2.15\)](#)
- 4.3.12 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the Province, when developing specific forest tenures, to assign to Trust Council or to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, the holding of areas not to be harvested. [\(4.2.16\)](#)
- 4.3.13 Trust Council shall, in collaboration with the Islands Trust Conservancy Board, encourage government agencies, non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors to protect forest ecosystems through voluntary donations, acquisitions, conservation covenants, and careful management. [\(3.2.3\)](#)

4.4. Agricultural Land Stewardship Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.4.1 Trust Council commits to take a precautionary approach to the stewardship of agricultural lands in the Trust Area, in cooperation with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, and the public, and on the basis of the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)
- 4.4.2 It is Trust Council's policy that agricultural activity in the Trust Area should be small-scale, sustainable, regenerative, supportive of local climate action and food security, respectful of Indigenous harvesting areas, and protective of the environmental integrity of the Trust Area. (new, 4.1.2, 4.1.3)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.4.3 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify and preserve appropriate areas for agricultural land to support small-scale, sustainable, regenerative agriculture, while carefully considering downstream impacts, wildlife habitat, and adjacent properties. (4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.6)
- 4.4.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, direct the location and construction of roads and utility corridors to minimize fragmentation of agricultural lands. (4.1.7 simplified)
- 4.4.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, encourage sustainable farming and consider land uses and activities that support the economic viability of farms without compromising the agricultural capability of agricultural land. (4.1.5, 4.1.8)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 4.4.6 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, the provincial government 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; (4.1.10)
 - that farming in the Agricultural Land Reserve in the Trust Area does not adversely impact Indigenous food security and traditional harvesting practices, cultural heritage, or the environmental integrity of protected area networks in the Trust Area; (new)
 - that legislation, guidelines, and incentives are established to support local farmers in adopting the highest standards of environmental protection of ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and native species diversity, in accordance with the Islands Trust Object; (new)
 - that support is given to small-scale sustainable farmers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions emanating from agriculture and adapt to climate variability in the Trust Area; (new)
 - that a separate farm class to provide property tax incentives be retained; (4.1.12)
 - that the threshold for farm income necessary for farm class status is appropriate to the small scale of sustainable agriculture within the Trust Area; and (4.1.12)
 - that the total land area subject to the farm class may include land that is left uncultivated to protect environmental integrity. (4.1.12)

4.5 Soil and Mineral Stewardship Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.5.1 It is Trust Council's policy that the preservation and protection of healthy and productive soils is integral to the environmental integrity, food security, and carbon capture and storage capacity of the Trust Area. [\(new\)](#)
- 4.5.2 It is Trust Council's policy that there should be no extraction of peat, metals, minerals, or petroleum resources in the Trust Area. [\(4.6.1\)](#)
- 4.5.3 It is Trust Council's policy that there should be no extraction of aggregate from the foreshore or the sea floor of the Trust Area. [\(4.6.2\)](#)
- 4.5.4 It is Trust Council's policy that there should be no removal or excavation of soil or fill from middens or foreshore areas that have been identified as culturally significant areas. [\(new\)](#)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.5.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their regulatory bylaws related to soil removal and deposit, include policies that foster the preservation, protection, and restoration of productive soils in the Trust Area. [\(4.6.3\)](#)
- 4.5.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prohibit the removal or excavation of soil or fill from middens or foreshore areas that have been identified as culturally significant areas. [\(new\)](#)

4.6 Coastal and Marine Stewardship Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 4.6.1 Trust Council commits to take a precautionary approach to the stewardship of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Trust Area, in cooperation with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, and the public, and on the basis of the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)
- 4.6.2 It is Trust Council's policy that coastal and marine food harvesting and aquaculture in the Trust Area should be small-scale, sustainable, regenerative, supportive of local climate action and food security, respectful of Indigenous harvesting areas, and protective of the environmental integrity of the Trust Area. (new/4.5.1)
- 4.6.3 It is Trust Council's policy that development, activity, buildings, or structures should not result in a loss of marine or coastal habitat, restrict public access to, from or along the marine shoreline, or interfere with natural coastal processes. (4.5.3, 4.5.4)
- 4.6.4 It is Trust Council's policy that development should be directed to sites away from: (4.5.5)
- areas of environmental sensitivity, including eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands;
 - areas of naturally occurring stocks of clams or oysters; and
 - First Nations' traditional harvesting areas, middens, and other archaeologically significant resources.
- 4.6.5 It is Trust Council's policy that aquaculture should be directed to sites away from: (4.5.6)
- areas of recreational significance;
 - areas where an aquaculture operation would conflict with established or designated upland land uses; and
 - areas where an aquaculture operation would conflict with marine or freshwater protection
 - areas where an aquaculture operation would conflict with established or designated anchorage or moorage.
- 4.6.6 It is Trust Council's policy that aquaculture related development, activity, buildings, or structures should not result in site alteration including, but not limited to, substrate modification or the use of metal pipes or plates. (4.5.7)
- 4.6.7 It is Trust Council's policy that the following restrictions are necessary in order to preserve and protect the sensitive coastal and marine waters of the Trust Area:
- finfish farms should not be permitted; (4.5.2)
 - artificial reefs should not be developed, except where they provide significant environmental benefit;⁷ (3.4.3)
 - ocean dumping should not be permitted; (new)
 - seawalls and other hard shoreline armouring should not be developed; (new)
 - moorage and anchorage sites in eelgrass meadows should not be permitted; (new)
 - new private docks should be limited to boat access only properties; (new)
 - freighter anchorage sites in the Trust Area should be eliminated; and (new)
 - oil tankers should not be permitted to transit through Trust Area waters. (new)

⁷ Interpretive Note: Small scale habitat enhancement structures known as 'reef balls', which are placed in marine areas with the approval of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, are not considered to be artificial reefs for the purposes of this policy.

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 4.6.8 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify appropriate locations for marine dependent land uses and means to prevent further loss or degradation of coastal and marine ecosystems in their planning area. (3.4.4, 4.5.8)
- 4.6.9 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, include policies that preserve, protect, and support the restoration of eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, and coastal wetlands, acknowledging their multifaceted roles in supporting carbon capture and storage, soft shoreline protection, and the provision of habitats and spawning areas for coastal and marine aquatic species. (new)
- 4.6.10 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, direct the location of buildings and structures such that they do not: (4.5.5, 4.5.10)
- adversely impact sensitive coastal and marine ecosystems, naturally occurring stocks of shellfish, eelgrass meadows, kelp forests, forage fish spawning areas, tidal salt marshes, mud flats, coastal wetlands, middens, or archaeological sites;
 - interfere with natural coastal processes;
 - restrict First Nations' access to traditional coastal and marine harvesting sites;
 - restrict public access to, from, or along the marine shoreline
- 4.6.11 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, direct the location and operation of commercial aquaculture tenures away from:
- areas of cultural, spiritual, archaeological, or recreational significance;
 - areas where an aquaculture operation would conflict with established or designated upland land uses, anchorages or moorages. (new, based on 4.5.6)
- 4.6.12 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, direct the location, size, and nature of marinas such that they do not compromise the environmental integrity of the coastal and marine environment, Indigenous cultural heritage, or community character in their planning area. (4.5.9)
- 4.6.13 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify opportunities for the sharing of facilities such as docks, wharves, floats, jetties, boathouses, boardwalks, and causeways. (4.5.11)
- 4.6.14 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prohibit new private docks except where properties are boat-access only. (new)
- 4.6.15 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, consider the current and anticipated impacts of sea level rise and determine shoreline buffers and setbacks accordingly. (new)
- 4.6.16 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prohibit the use of seawalls and other hard shoreline armouring in the Trust Area and include policies that foster soft shoreline protection. (new)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

4.6.17 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, federal and provincial government agencies to:

- establish a network of protected coastal and marine areas and implement statutes and guidelines for sustainable coastal zone management (3.4.2)
- adopt legislation establishing sustainable aquaculture practices that protect environmental integrity and First Nations rights to traditional shellfish harvesting in the Salish Sea; (new)
- develop existing and new programs such as “harvest refugia”, which protect and enhance the populations of native marine species of the Trust Area; (3.4.6)
- research the impacts of the introduction of new marine species into the coastal and marine waters of the Trust Area before such species are introduced; (3.4.7)
- prohibit finfish farms in the marine waters of the Trust Area; (4.5.2)
- prohibit the development of artificial reefs in the Trust Area except where they provide significant environmental benefit. (3.4.3)

4.6.18 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, federal and provincial government agencies to:

- develop legislation to regulate sewage discharge from shoreline areas and boats; and (3.4.8)
- support the removal of abandoned and derelict vessels, plastics, ghost fishing gear, and other marine debris from the coastal and marine waters of the Trust Area; (new)
- eliminate and prohibit the use of commercial freighter anchorage sites in the Trust Area, acknowledging the multiple adverse impacts this practice incurs on the sensitive coastal and marine ecosystems, environmental integrity, and carbon capture and storage potential in the Trust Area; and (new)
- prohibit oil tankers from transiting through the coastal and marine waters of the Trust Area. (new)
- develop effective oil spill prevention, preparedness, and geographic response plans for the Trust Area, acknowledging the unique risks and vulnerabilities of the Salish Sea. (new)

PART 5: HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION (new)

GOAL: To Preserve and Protect Natural, Cultural, and Community Heritage in the Trust Area

CONTEXT:

The Islands Trust Area is a place of exceptional cultural heritage and has been home to the BOKÉĆEN, K'ómoks, Lək'wəŋən, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Qualicum, Quw'utsun Tribes, scəwáθən məsteyəx^w, Scia'new, səliłwətaŋt, SEMYOME, shíshálh, SƷwƷwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Spune'luxutth, SƷÁUTƱ, Stz'uminus, ƭaŋəmen, toq qaymıx^w, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, ƱJOŁEŁP, ƱSIƷEM, Xeláłtxw, Xwémalhkwu/ŋop qaymıx^w, and x^wməθk^wəŋəm Peoples since time immemorial. The relationship of First Nations to these lands, waters, and place is intrinsically linked to the preservation and protection of the Trust Area.

Heritage Preservation: Trust Council recognizes heritage as a 'unique amenity' of the Trust Area that is to be preserved and protected under the Islands Trust Object. In this context, heritage includes places, objects, knowledge, artistic expressions, or events that are of historical, cultural, aesthetic, educational, or scientific significance. In the Trust Area, heritage preservation includes the Indigenous cultural heritage of First Nations who have called these lands and waters home since time immemorial, in addition to the extraordinary natural landscapes and community heritage buildings on each island.

Indigenous Cultural Heritage: Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area includes, but is not limited to, areas utilized and occupied by Indigenous Peoples such as village sites, cultural and spiritual areas, known and unknown archaeological areas, objects and artifacts, culturally modified trees, cultivation areas, harvesting areas on land and marine foreshores, fish weirs and clam gardens, medicinal plants and culturally significant species and landmarks. Indigenous cultural heritage also includes ancestral loved ones' resting places, trees used for burial boxes, cairns, caves used for cultural purposes, petroglyphs and pictographs, and place names. First Nations have an inherent right to identify their own cultural heritage, interpret its meaning, and safeguard its value. This inherent right exists outside of the colonial frameworks that have traditionally regulated and defined heritage.

Community Heritage:

Community heritage in the Trust Area can include buildings, settlement areas, places, objects, artistic expressions, or events identified by the community as having heritage character or heritage value to the community, to be protected for future generations.

Natural Heritage:

Natural heritage in the Trust Area is understood to include natural features, geological and physiographical formations, and delineated natural areas which are of outstanding universal value from an aesthetic, conservation, or scientific perspective.

5.1 Heritage Preservation and Protection Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 5.1.1 It is Trust Council's policy that the preservation, protection, and restoration of natural, cultural, and community heritage in the Trust Area is essential to the Islands Trust Object and must be guided by meaningful, respectful, and culturally sensitive engagement with First Nations. (5.6.1)
- 5.1.2 It is Trust Council's policy that local and regional planning decisions should not incur adverse impacts to the natural heritage, Indigenous cultural heritage, or community heritage in the Trust Area. (new)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 5.1.3 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify, preserve, protect, and support the restoration of natural heritage sites in their planning area. (new)
- 5.1.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify, preserve, protect, and support the restoration of Indigenous cultural heritage in their planning area in cooperation with First Nations and other government agencies. (5.6.3)
- 5.1.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their Official Community Plans and regulatory bylaws, identify, preserve, protect, and support the restoration of local community heritage in their planning area. (5.6.2)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 5.1.6 Trust Council shall engage with First Nations, First Nation organizations and societies, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and Trust Area communities to seek the best available archaeological inventory data, Indigenous Knowledge, and cultural knowledge regarding natural heritage, Indigenous cultural heritage, and local community heritage in the Trust Area. (new)
- 5.1.7 Trust Council shall engage with, and advocate to, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, property owners, residents, and visitors with educational materials and tools to help preserve and protect natural heritage, Indigenous cultural heritage, and local community heritage in the Trust Area. (new)
- 5.1.8 Trust Council shall encourage other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, property owners and residents to protect natural, cultural, and community heritage in the Trust Area through tax incentive programs, voluntary donations, acquisitions, conservation covenants and careful management. (new)

PART 6: SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

GOAL: To Foster Sustainable and Resilient Communities in the Trust Area

CONTEXT:

Sustainability and Resilience: Sustainable and resilient communities can be understood to be communities that are able to meet their own needs and adapt to new environmental, social, and economic pressures without compromising the integrity of the environment or the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Resilience, in this context, refers to the capacity of communities to continue to function in the face of external stressors such as climate change, while also learning to adapt, reorganize and evolve into new modes of sustainability. With responsible stewardship and sustainable, regenerative use, ecosystems will be better able to support Trust Area communities in a myriad of ways, including through the provision of clean drinking water, natural processes of carbon capture and storage, nature-based mitigation of climate impacts to the built environment, the safeguarding of local and Indigenous food security and harvesting, as well as the many health benefits of nature connection.

Rural Island Planning: Islands within the Trust Area are rural and contrast markedly with surrounding urban areas, as do their respective resident communities. Traditional land use planning approaches are often ill-suited or insufficient in addressing the unique strengths, vulnerabilities, and water supply constraints of island ecosystems, or the higher standards of preservation and protection mandated by the Islands Trust Object. In the face of accelerating climate and biodiversity crises, business as usual is no longer viable. Trust Area communities play a critical role in the stewardship of the islands and must collectively and equitably work towards place-based, multigenerational, and integrated solutions to sustainability. This involves collective commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, foster new low-carbon ways of living, reduce individual and community ecological footprints, and support those most vulnerable to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Trust Council also recognizes that new development models must be established to transition to more compact, energy efficient, and appropriately situated development that is carefully planned and managed to safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage, now and into the future.

Affordable Housing: The Trust Area is facing an acute shortage of diverse and affordable housing options needed to support the long-term sustainability and resilience of Trust Area communities. The Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation considers housing to be 'affordable' when it costs less than 30% of before-tax household income. Housing is not affordable when it costs so much that individuals and families have trouble paying for other necessities such as food, health and transportation. For renters, shelter costs include rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. For owners, shelter costs include mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services. In the Trust Area, factors such as rising real estate prices and building costs, an increase in short-term rentals paired with a growing lack of long-term rentals, changing demographics, and increasing numbers of people wanting to move to the islands, are all significantly affecting the availability, affordability, and suitability of housing options across the Trust Area. An increasing percentage of island workers are thus forced to commute from off-island locations. Seniors are finding it challenging to age in place. Socio-economic disparities are widening. In this context, Trust Council acknowledges the need for multijurisdictional and integrated approaches to address these community housing needs in a manner that is appropriate to the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.

6.1 Rural Island Planning Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 6.1.1 It is Trust Council’s policy that the rural characteristics of islands in the Trust Area, including the scenic value of rural landscapes, opportunities for nature connection, and low levels of noise and light pollution, are unique amenities that are to be preserved and protected in accordance with the Islands Trust Object. (5.1.1-5.1.3)
- 6.1.2 It is Trust Council’s policy that all development in the Trust Area, of any scale or for any purpose, should be compact, energy-efficient, sustainable, and appropriately situated in order to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (new)
- 6.1.3 It is Trust Council’s policy that growth, development, and economic opportunities in the Trust Area should be small scale, sustainable, climate resilient, compatible with community character, and in alignment with the Islands Trust Object. (5.2.1, 5.7.1)
- 6.1.4 Trust Council shall strive to identify, monitor, and address the impacts of climate change on Trust Area communities through climate vulnerability assessments, adaptive management approaches, and nature-based solutions that are informed by the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing. (new)
- 6.1.5 It is Trust Council’s policy that recreational activities, trails, and active transportation networks in the Trust Area should be small scale, appropriately located, and sustainable, and should safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (5.5.1)
- 6.1.6 It is Trust Council’s policy that destination gaming facilities such as casinos and commercial bingo halls are not appropriate to, and should not be located in, the Trust Area. (5.5.2)
- 6.1.7 It is Trust Council’s policy that there should be public access, on each major island in the Trust Area, to beaches and areas of recreational significance, while not compromising Indigenous cultural heritage or First Nations access to coastal and marine harvesting areas, or the environmental integrity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. (5.5.5)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 6.1.8 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, ensure that growth and development, of any scale or for any purpose, is compact, energy-efficient, sustainable, and appropriately situated in order to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (new)
- 6.1.9 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prioritize the protection of tree cover, scenic areas and distinctive features contributing to the overall visual quality and scenic value of the Trust Area. (5.1.3, 5.2.2)
- 6.1.10 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, include policies related to the aesthetic, environmental, and social impacts of development. (5.2.3)

- 6.1.11 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, ensure that land use is compatible with preservation and protection of the environment, natural amenities, resources, and community character. (5.2.4)
- 6.1.12 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, establish appropriate density limits for efficient and sustainable use of the land base that help to safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (5.2.5)
- 6.1.13 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify areas hazardous to development, including areas subject to flooding, erosion or slope instability, and strategies to direct development away from such hazards. (5.2.6)
- 6.1.14 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify appropriate locations, types, and safe public access to:
- recreational facilities;
 - bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian trail systems; and
 - community marinas, boat launches, docks, and anchorages that are small scale, sustainable, and that do not compromise the integrity of protected areas, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, Indigenous cultural heritage, or Indigenous access to coastal and marine harvesting areas. (5.5.4-5.5.7)
- 6.1.15 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, prohibit destination gaming facilities such as casinos and commercial bingo halls. (5.5.3)
- 6.1.16 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, include policies addressing economic opportunities that are compatible with sustainability and protection of community character. (5.7.2)
- 6.1.17 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, include policies addressing their community's long-term needs for educational, institutional, community, and health-related facilities and services, as well as cultural and recreational facilities and services. (5.8.6)
- 6.1.18 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify means to reduce the climate vulnerability of communities, including nature-based solutions and actions that prioritize:
- protection of the carbon capture and storage capacity of natural areas;
 - low-carbon housing, buildings, transportation, and agriculture;
 - preservation, protection, and restoration of biodiversity;
 - freshwater sustainability;
 - soft shoreline and foreshore protections; and
 - wildfire risk mitigation (new)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 6.1.19 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, regional districts, improvement districts, and provincial and federal government agencies to adapt their policies and support systems to safeguard the rural island character, sustainability, and resilience of Trust Area communities, in accordance with the Islands Trust Object. [\(new\)](#)
- 6.1.20 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, communities, property owners, residents, and visitors to help develop and adopt climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, action plans, and measures that are appropriate to the unique strengths and vulnerabilities of rural islands in the Trust Area. [\(new\)](#)
- 6.1.21 Trust Council shall advocate to provincial government agencies to work with local communities through public consultation processes to evaluate and modify road construction and road system proposals to encompass the environmental, economic, and social values of the community. [\(5.3.9\)](#)
- 6.1.22 Trust Council shall advocate to property owners, residents, and visitors to reduce the burning of wood and fossil fuels by adopting sustainable alternative technologies. [\(5.1.4\)](#)
- 6.1.23 Trust Council shall advocate to government agencies, non-governmental agencies, property owners, residents, and visitors to use renewable sources of energy within the Trust Area. [\(5.8.8\)](#)

6.2 Housing Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 6.2.1 It is Trust Council's policy that all housing in the Trust Area should be compact, energy-efficient, sustainable, and appropriately situated in order to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and safeguard protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area.
- 6.2.2 It is Trust Council's policy that community sustainability and resilience are supported by the availability of diverse and affordable housing that cater to a range of age groups and income levels. (5.8.6)
- 6.2.3 Trust Council commits to foster a strategic, multijurisdictional, equitable, and integrated approach to addressing the diverse housing needs of Trust Area communities, in cooperation with First Nations, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, other government agencies, and the public, and on the basis of the best available area-based mapping, science, social science, local knowledge, and Indigenous ways of knowing.

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 6.2.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, strive to address housing needs in their planning area by identifying appropriate locations where density increases could support safe, secure, and affordable housing, while safeguarding protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage. (new)
- 6.2.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify and assess the impacts of short-term rentals of dwellings on the availability of safe, secure, and affordable housing in their planning area and, where necessary, regulate and limit the number of short-term rentals accordingly. (new)
- 6.2.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify appropriate floor area and lot coverage limits for residential development in their planning area, in order to effectively minimize greenhouse gas emissions, cumulative effects, biodiversity loss, climate vulnerability, and destruction of Indigenous cultural heritage. (new)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 6.2.7 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and Trust Area communities, to foster safe, secure, and affordable housing in the Trust Area, in alignment within the Islands Trust Object, and respectful of the integrity of the environment and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (new)
- 6.2.8 Trust Council shall advocate to other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and property owners to foster safe, secure, and affordable housing for Indigenous Peoples in the Trust Area, in alignment with the Islands Trust Object and respectful of protected area networks, freshwater sustainability, a healthy marine environment, and Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (new)

6.3 Transportation Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 6.3.1 It is Trust Council's policy that community sustainability and resilience are supported by appropriately situated public and active transportation networks that serve to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support electric vehicles and electric bicycles, and promote health and well-being. (new)
- 6.3.2 It is Trust Council's policy that no island in the Trust Area should be connected to Vancouver Island, the mainland or another island by a bridge or tunnel⁸. (5.3.2)
- 6.3.3 It is Trust Council's policy that local trust committees and island municipalities should be consulted and involved in decision-making related to the provision of transportation and ferry services, utilities, or facilities that may affect the sustainability and resilience of communities in their planning areas. (5.3.1)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 6.3.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, foster the establishment of appropriately situated public and active transportation networks, including but not limited to bicycle paths and other local and inter-community transportation systems that reduce dependency on private automobile use and support a transition to electric vehicle and electric bicycles. (5.3.7)
- 6.3.5 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, strive to ensure that road location, design, construction, and systems do not adversely impact the integrity of protected area networks, contiguous forests, watershed ecosystems, freshwater networks, groundwater recharge areas, agricultural lands, coastal and marine areas, or Indigenous cultural heritage in the Trust Area. (5.3.5)
- 6.3.6 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, develop a classification system of rural roadways, including scenic or heritage road designations, in recognition of the Islands Trust Object. (5.3.4)
- 6.3.7 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify appropriate areas for the landing of emergency helicopters. (5.3.6)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 6.3.8 Trust Council shall advocate to provincial and federal agencies to ensure safe shipment of materials that are hazardous to the environment. (5.3.8)
- 6.3.9 Trust Council shall advocate to provincial government agencies to work together with local communities through public consultation processes to evaluate and modify road construction, road system proposals, and active transportation networks to address the environmental, economic, and social values of communities in the Trust Area. (5.3.9)
- 6.3.10 Trust Council shall advocate to provincial government agencies in support of the electrification of ferries in the Trust Area. (new)

⁸ ...with the sole exception of the existing bridge between North and South Pender Islands

6.4 Waste Disposal Policies

Commitments of Trust Council

- 6.4.1 It is Trust Council's policy that it is acceptable for waste originating in the Trust Area to be safely disposed of within the Trust Area. (5.4.1)
- 6.4.2 It is Trust Council's policy that:
- neither hazardous nor industrial waste should be disposed of in the Trust Area;
 - local recycling operations should be established; and
 - local programs for chipping of wood waste and disposal of hazardous wastes should be established. (5.4.2)
- 6.4.3 It is Trust Council's policy that there should be minimal burning of solid waste in the Trust Area. (5.4.3)

Directive Policies for Local Trust Committees and Island Municipalities

- 6.4.4 Local trust committees and island municipalities shall, in their official community plans and regulatory bylaws, identify acceptable locations for the disposal of solid waste. (5.4.4)

Coordination Policies for Trust Council

- 6.4.5 Trust Council shall coordinate with, and advocate to, government agencies, corporations, property owners, and residents to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by reducing waste, and to use innovative technologies and safe alternatives for disposal of sewage effluent. (5.4.5)