

**From:** M&GBurandt [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2022 1:13 PM  
**To:** Islands2050  
**Subject:** Bylaw 183 TPS - Housing Directive - NOT Supported

Islands 2050 submission:

I do NOT support the Islands Trust New Policy Statement Directive to manage Housing in the Gulf Islands for the following reasons:

Housing is a critical issue on our islands, and indeed spans many communities across our province today. Working families cannot find accommodation. Employers cannot keep staff for lack of housing. Businesses are cutting back hours. People are being approached by Trust bylaw enforcement for living rough in trailers and other makeshift accommodation in the “woods.” Our islands depend on a healthy, diverse community of residents, and this is being severely challenged by the lack of housing.

The Islands Trust Council proposed involvement in housing issues through the draft Policy Statement.(draft bylaw 183) Despite the fact that Draft bylaw 183 has not been put to First Reading, let alone approved, Trust Council, is considering supporting a proposal for a new Housing Authority for the islands.

While the Trust can own land, it cannot operate a Housing Authority. So, who would operate such an Authority and how would it be governed? How would it “coordinate” with the Trust? How would the residents be taxed? Trust tax revenues and expenses are generally spread across all islands. The Trust proposal allows that islands can opt in to such an Authority. What about the islands that don’t wish to sign on? Is there any evidence of a crisis on ALL islands? Or is the problem on the four islands with substantial communities? Where is the data and analysis that presumably should be used to inform such evaluations? What is the benefit to residents of the Trust area that justifies the establishment of another tax burden?

An item of particular concern in the Trust’s proposal is the tenor of the document. “Single user market value homes” are called a “threat to the natural environment” and not “the best use of the remaining residential land on the islands.” Why the hostility toward single family homes? Why would the Trust make such veiled threats to anyone who owns undeveloped land on the islands? Are they planning future restrictions on single family home building? Trust Council does not have the wherewithal to produce one new unit of affordable housing but it does have the power to impede land owners from building single family units suitable for their families. More than likely we will get the latter but not the affordable housing.

Housing is a broad social and economic issue that falls much more squarely within the purview of the provincial and regional governments. There are a number of provincial and regional housing “authorities” already in existence.

BC Housing – the Crown Corporation has been assigned key housing responsibilities by the BC Government. These include: develop, manage and administer subsidized housing options, support affordable housing; administer rent supplements; collaborate with stakeholders; support outreach; emergency shelters and transitional housing for people who are homeless or at risk-of-homelessness; carry out research and education to benefit the residential construction industry,

consumers and the affordable housing sector and to regulate residential construction through its Licensing and Consumer Services.

BC Housing also has a wide range of partners including: local governments, non-profit organizations, Indigenous organizations and developers. The Community Partnership Initiatives (CPI) Program provides advice, referrals to partnership opportunities and long-term financing to help non-profit societies create self-sustaining, affordable housing developments.

Municipalities and regional districts in B.C. are required to complete housing needs reports by April 2022 and every five years thereafter. Information collection requirements help determine current and projected housing needs. Local governments are required to collect data about current and projected population, household income, significant economic sectors, and currently available and anticipated housing units. Regional districts are required to collect this information for each electoral area, which includes the electoral areas of the Trust.

Below is an image of the Trust area Regional District layout and each District's connection with Trust area islands.

For example, the Capital Regional District (CRD) - which provides services to six of the islands have, as with the other regional districts, and in conjunction with the Federal and Provincial Governments, developed their own housing authorities and strategic plans. The Capital Regional District has a Southern Gulf Islands Housing Strategy to develop a Strategy that aligns with the CRD's Regional Housing Affordability Strategy and is tailored to the context of the Southern Gulf Islands. This initially originated from the CRD Board approval of a recommendation by the Southern Gulf Islands Economic Sustainability Commission to develop a Housing Strategy for the SGI Electoral Area. The objective of the SGI Housing Strategy is to develop housing solutions that are tailored to the context of the SGI Electoral Area. A phased approach to implementation will be taken, with potential short-term solutions delivered as early as Q4 2021. The initiative will cover the contracting cost for a Housing Feasibility study and a Garden Suite Design study. The additional workload will be absorbed within the existing Regional Housing and SGI Administration staffing capacity, with support from colleagues across the organization.

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The Regional District of Nanaimo's housing framework includes a series of policies and initiatives with the goal of providing more affordable and supportive housing across the region. A key consideration of the framework is to promote a more diverse range of housing options to accommodate the current and future housing needs of our communities. The Housing Framework is based on components such as regional growth strategy, detailed housing policy direction contained in the official community plans for each municipality and electoral area in the region, and priority to provide affordable housing for residents. The NRD can have influence on the provision of affordable housing through jurisdiction over land uses by increasing housing options in mixed use centres, encourage incentives for housing provision, encourage adaptable housing design, allowing secondary suites within appropriate zones, allowing density bonuses, and identifying suitable sites to encourage affordable housing development.

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**Indigenous Housing**

Indigenous leadership has founded a First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council to create a housing authority in BC for First Nations housing. So what exactly is the Islands Trust link to reconciliation of this proposal? It says "Immediate and continued relationship building with all Nations in the Trust area must continue including the role First Nations could choose to take in

such an Islands Housing Authority.” Haven’t Indigenous groups created their own vehicle? Why do they need the Trust to duplicate their efforts? Is there data on housing issues for indigenous people on the Islands?

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And lastly, there already exists a low cost housing organization on SSI. - Salt Spring Island Community Services. Working with BC Housing, they own and developed a 24 Unit housing complex on 5 acres within the Ganges Village area:

<https://saltspringcommunityservices.ca/.../salt-spring.../>

<https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/new-affordable-housing...>

<https://www.bchousing.org/news?newsId=1479154254315>

BC Housing is already involved in Gulf Islands Housing and, along with Regional Districts, could continue their work without Trust involvement, and perhaps replicate the Salt Spring housing solution on the other islands, where necessary.

We don’t need more programs that sound good— we need sound programs.

The provincial and regional governments, Indigenous government, and a local community are all involved, concerned, and working to find solutions. Why are local trust councils not working with these groups to see what it can do, within their mandate, to facilitate more housing development where it is desperately needed?

Instead, our Trust Council look to go, hair on fire, to Cabinet declaring a crisis and asking for a new entity – an Islands Housing Authority.

It is clearly frustrating to see young families living rough or being forced to leave the islands, effectively hollowing our local economies. Clearly urgent action is needed. It is, however, entirely unclear that, on the foundation of a hostile view toward residents and single-family homes, the Trust Council should be getting actively involved on its own accord.

Encourage your Trustees to do the same while staying within their mandate and facilitating land use decisions that support affordable housing.

Manfred Burandt

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Pender Island, BC V0N2M1