

From the November 20, 2025 regular meeting of GB-LTC:

5. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING - POLICY STATEMENT BYLAW NO. 183

Chair Patrick spoke to the Islands Trust Policy Statement goals of advancing commitments to reconciliation and noted the need for all parties to speak respectfully, create a safe space allowing others to speak, ensure cultural safety, be mindful of language used, and to uphold principles of honouring dignity and respect.

5.1 Planner Presentation

The Senior Policy Advisor provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Islands Trust was created in 1974 by the Provincial Government and is made up of thirteen local trust areas and one island municipality and is governed by elected representatives who form Trust Council;
- Trust Council must adopt an Islands Trust Policy Statement;
- The current Trust Policy Statement has been in effect since 1993;
- The Trust Policy Statement sets the high-level guidance under which all Local Trust Committees develop Official Community Plans and it forms the foundation for strategic planning, regulatory bylaws, and informs inter-governmental relationships;
- The Islands Trust Policy Statement Amendment Project was undertaken in response to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate change, and housing needs;
- The draft was given first reading in July 2025 and is in the referral process;
- Public feedback and referral responses will be provided to Trust Council for consideration prior to adoption;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement includes guiding principles, directive policies, and advisory policies;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement has been referred to the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee and the Local Trust Committee wishes to hear public input to inform their referral response.

5.2 Question & Answer Period

Members of the public asked questions and the following comments were noted:

- A speaker asked how much weight the survey carried in terms of decision making as there is opportunity for duplication if one person fills out multiple surveys.
 - The Programs Coordinator noted that a professional communications firm organizes and clears data on the survey entries, the paper survey results get entered into the database and are coded for specific repeat wording, and only one response from an IP address is accepted.
- A member of the public noted item 3.3.5 *Watershed Ecosystems* speaks to groundwater recharge areas and they understand that recharge is diffused through fractures; therefore, virtually all areas of the Gulf Islands should be considered recharge areas. They stated the policy might be misconstrued as

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allowing lower preservation on areas that are considered low recharge areas and asked that the term “groundwater recharge areas” be removed.

- A speaker noted item 3.4.5 *Climate Change and Adaption* speaks to the consideration of nature-based solutions to minimize green house gas emissions and while climate change is a critical issue, humans are changing the climate and there is no nature-based solution to reduce humans green house gas emissions. The speaker indicated the Trust Policy Statement should spell out achievable measures that Local Trust Areas could put in place such as supporting public transportation and electric vehicles.
- A member of the public stated it appears that Trustees must only refer to policies outlined in the Trust Policy Statement and not consider unique island differences when making decisions regarding Official Community Plans such as polices around lot coverage allowances; therefore, the policies have the effect of fettering the Local Trust Committee’s ability to develop Official Community Plans based on island specific needs.
 - A Trustee noted the Trust Policy Statement indicates that lot coverage limits must be established but does not specify a percentage. Local Trustees would consider the document when setting lot coverage, and each community’s uniqueness is expressed through their Official Community Plan.
- A member of the public stated recharge areas is important because ground water is resupplied through forest canopies and these areas need to be protected; however, the village is no longer a well water area and higher population density produces concentrated sewage which enters the soil, well systems, and the ecosystem. They stated opposition to further development and indicated potential subdivision areas should be turned into parks and forests.
- A speaker indicated item 3.4.5 should include the prioritization of active transportation routes.
 - A Trustee clarified there is a policy on active transportation within the document.
- A member of the public spoke on behalf of Gabriola Land and Trails Trust whose members collaborated with other Conservancies and Land Trusts within the Trust Area to undertake a review of the March 2021 draft Trust Policy Statement and submitted a comprehensive review of that draft endorsing many of the policies within it. They noted the most recent draft is less effective as much of the language regarding forest stewardship, seeking to gain jurisdictional authority to prohibit clear-cutting and logging, ability to regulate tree cutting, and the designation of forest ecosystem reserves have been removed. They stated Islands Trust does not have tools at its disposal to carry out its preserve and protect mandate with respect to the environment and should acknowledge this. They further indicated that unless a commitment to a cap on human disturbance is provided, the pressures on the environment will continue.
- A speaker requested that the Glossary definition of land use density add the word “residential” before “unit” for clarity, the word “attainable” be replaced with “affordable” in item 3.4.11, and words within the document text that are located within the Glossary be italicised.

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- A member of the public spoke to the draft Trust Policy Statement in relation to their application for subdivision and the following comments were noted:
 - There are issues with water quality in the village area where more densities are being proposed compared to high water quality and permeable soil on their property where subdivision is proposed;
 - They support reconciliation and noted it is outside of the jurisdiction of Islands Trust to address First Nations issues through policy as these are Federal and Provincial responsibilities;
 - The question of how Indigenous lands relate to private property rights and title need to be resolved before buffer zones and protection of cultural heritage sites can be considered;
 - Item 3.1.3 speaks to land back through engagement with Indigenous governing bodies and this policy appears reflective of decisions the Local Trust Committee has made in regard to their Development Permit application and discussions had regarding the densities on their property. The speaker believes the Trust Policy Statement might be used to prevent someone from developing their land and direct it back to First Nations.
 - A Trustee clarified item 3.1.3, through engagement with Indigenous governing bodies, supports opportunities to direct land to said governing bodies through an amenity contribution as a donation to First Nations instead of strictly toward the community in applications seeking additional development potential in which an amenity contribution might be considered.
 - The Senior Policy Advisory noted the Local Trust Committee does not have powers of expropriation and the bylaw approval process requires sign off by the Minister of Municipal Affairs who looks to determine if Islands Trust has duly engaged with Indigenous bodies on the proposed bylaw.
- A member of the public stated support of language addressing Indigenous cultural and harvesting sites, suggested item 2.3.6 clarify what “while respecting the confidentiality interests of Indigenous knowledge holders and Indigenous governing bodies” means, requested item 3.1.3 define what amenity contributions are, noted support of items 3.4.12 and 3.4.13 related to housing diversity and clustered small dwellings, suggested item 3.5.7 related to freshwater storage be a directive policy, and requested Islands Trust look at how to balance the needs of farmers and needs of adjacent property owners within item 3.5.12.
- A speaker noted the complexity of the document and difficulty determining how it impacts residents. They stated the original “preserve and protect” mandate was very clear and question if the new policy will be harder to administer and diminish Local Trust Committee authority with regard to making island-specific decisions.
 - A Trustee clarified the Local Trust Committee remains the decision maker and the Senior Policy Advisor indicated the document is essentially a check list to be considered when Trustees are determining if a bylaw meets policy.

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A Trustee suggested that the town hall discussion on the draft Trust Policy Statement be continued at the January Local Trust Committee meeting and it was suggested that members of the public put forth recommendations as written submissions.

The meeting was recessed for a break at 12:48 p.m. and reconvened at 1:04 p.m.

5.3 Public Comments

Public Comments on the draft Trust Policy Statement are included in item 5.2.

From the December 9, 2025 regular meeting of GL-LTC:

9. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

The Chair spoke to the importance of respectful engagement, creating a culturally safe space, giving space for Indigenous voices, and maintaining meeting decorum.

9.1 Policy Statement - Local Engagement

The Senior Policy Advisor provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Trust Council must adopt an Islands Trust Policy Statement
- The current Trust Policy Statement has been in effect since 1993
- The Trust Policy Statement sets the high-level guidance under which all Local Trust Committees develop Official Community Plans and it forms the foundation for strategic planning, regulatory bylaws, and informs inter-governmental relationships
- The Islands Trust Policy Statement Amendment Project was undertaken in response to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate change, and housing needs
- Reconciliation is one of the guiding principles of the document and outlines requirement for engagement with local First Nations through the referral process on all Local Trust Committee proposed bylaws
- The draft was given first reading in July 2025 and is in the referral process
- Public feedback and referral responses will be provided to Trust Council for consideration prior to further readings of the Policy Statement bylaw
- The draft Trust Policy Statement has been referred to the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee and the Local Trust Committee wishes to hear public input to inform their referral response

Questions and comments were received from members of the public as follows:

- Further definitions on attainable housing would be beneficial
- The guiding principle provides leadership of preservation and protection and stewardship of the ecosystem
 - It is necessary to ensure public consultation will remain at the core of the work of Islands Trust
 - The main goal of the Trust Policy Statement should remain to preserve and protect the islands, including through Indigenous leadership; however, the document does not indicate a very clear overarching vision and the ecosystem and environment should be forefront
- The Local Trust Committee should refer the draft Trust Policy Statement to the Galiano Advisory Planning Commission to allow them to work on improvements regardless of how the referral might affect the timeline of finalizing the document
 - The speaker added that the document fails in terms of climate change, as there is no guiding principle on preserving and protecting the natural environment
 - Protection should not only be considered for species or environments that are unique or at risk

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- There is an affordable housing crisis and the section on housing should focus on the creation of non-market housing
 - A Trustee noted that direction was given to refer the document to the Advisory Planning Commission, and agreed that the document has not been in front of the public long enough, does not feel sufficient public or First Nations engagement has been undertaken, and disagrees with approving a document without assurance of how the policies will work with First Nations
- The Chair pointed to the Trust Council Trust Policy Statement Amendment Policy which requires the document be reviewed each term, this has not happened and the document has not been updated since 1985, and part of the reason the document is so significantly different is because the entire Policy had to be brought up to date
- Why wasn't the previous Trust Policy Statement used as basis for the new document?
 - The Chair noted that the previous Trust Council did not endorse the previous draft and made 32 recommendations for changes
- There needs to be more community input into the document and the Advisory Planning Commission and steering committees should review it
- The brevity of the draft Trust Policy Statement leaves doors open and this will create problems on different islands in the future in terms of capacity
 - The directive policies are the only policies that are given importance and the wording in those policies is vague
 - The current Trust Policy Statement contains a clear guiding principle on achieving the object through limiting growth and this has been omitted in the directive policies in the new draft
 - There is a guiding principle that says limit the scale of growth but it is not a directive policy; are Local Trust Committees committed to follow the guiding principles?
 - The Senior Policy Advisor indicated that the extent to which a Local Trust Committee is committed to applying the guiding principles cannot be measured. It is Trust Council's expectation that Local Trust Committees will align with the principles but they are not legislatively bound to do so and planners provide advice to Local Trust Committees through a checklist of whether directive policies are being met
 - A Trustee noted that Local Trust Committees will need to bring their Official Community Plans into alignment with the Trust Policy Statement and they would like to determine how the Trust Policy Statement is in alignment with each island community's autonomy to develop policy suited to their uniqueness
 - The Chair stated the Trust Policy Statement is a product of the Federation and should a Local Trust Committee come up against a directive policy that impedes what the community wants, there is an opportunity to identify it as an issue to be considered during regular Trusts Policy Statement amendment reviews
- There have been a lot of steps forward between the Penelakut Tribe and the Local Trust Committee this term, yet there remains a lot of work to be done on reconciliation

Galiano Island Local Trust Committee

- It is recommended that Knowledge Holders be part of the input received as ongoing communication is key to continued relationship building
- There is no definition of “environment” or mention of the “natural environment” which is fundamental to the Islands Trust object
- Goal 3 Preserve and Protect Healthy and Viable Ecosystems – could end up meaning not protecting ecosystems that are not healthy and the term “protecting key ecosystem types” could be construed to read not protect all ecosystems and this wording needs to be changed
- During the public engagement phase there has not been a series of meetings provided to provide opportunity for people to come together to talk and bring forward opinions
- There is need for more fulsome engagement including time for the Advisory Planning Commission to consider the document and organize community workshops
- The housing section is not specifically targeted at affordable housing and instead provides opportunity to increase in market housing
- The current Trust Policy Statement states each Local Trust Committee is to work with the island community to develop policies to suit local needs and this flexibility is needed otherwise there will be pressure for islands to disband from the Federation
 - The Chair noted that much of the language used is prescriptive in how to meet directive policies and provides Local Trust Committees flexibility and it is important to identify wording that will prevent something that is wanted or will allow something that isn’t wanted
- The lack of definition for “environment” is problematic, the term “natural environment” should be used, and priority of protection of the natural environment needs to be identified
 - Some of the guiding principles should be directive, such as, limiting the rate and scale of development
 - The directive policies should apply to all islands
 - There has been insufficient time or facilitation for people to have community groups together to talk about the draft
- Is there a process for the community to go through the document and provide recommendations?
 - The Senior Policy Advisor replied that information that is being provided by community members today is for the benefit of Trustees to help inform their response to Trust Council on the document and comments emailed to islands2050@islandstrust.bc.ca will be summarized and provided to Trust Council
 - Feedback with specific details on how wording might be changed is important for the work going forward
 - A Trustee noted they would like to first hear back from the Advisory Planning Commission and then have further community conversation

Gambier Island Local Trust Committee

From the November 25, 2025 Community Information meeting of GM-LTC:

Meeting Summary

Gambier Island Local Trust Committee

Policy Statement Amendment Project (PSAP) Community Information Meeting

Date/Time

November 25, 2025

6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Attending

Trustee Laura Patrick (Chair)

Trustee Joe Bernardo

Trustee Kate-Louise Stamford

Clare Frater (Director, Trust Area Services)

Jason Youmans (Senior Policy Advisor)

Morgana van Niekerk (Communications Specialist)

Chloe Straw (Program Coordinator)

22 members of the public

Location

Online (Zoom)

Summary of Questions/Comments (italics are used when paraphrasing/summarizing verbal comments)

Question and/or Speaker request

John "I would like the opportunity to deliver comment and questions in real time, not by typed Q&A. My questions relate to Part 3 Goals & Policies and specifically, questions relating to Goal 1: Advance Reconciliation. I am President of the Halkett Bay Homeowners Association and my questions are on behalf of all of our members/property owners and their families."

In his subsequent comment John was generally concerned about the emphasis on reconciliation in the document and whether that was happening at the expense of the rights of local land owners.

Susan "Sections 3.3.2-3.3.8 state that the directive is "restoration." Restoration to when? 50 years ago, 100 years ago, 300 years ago, 10,000 years ago? The word by itself with no definition of the desired timeframe is meaningless and cannot be the basis for a policy decision."

Ian "Nowhere in the presentation did you mention respect to tax paying property owners yet the goal stated in 1974 was to preserve/protect for residents of the trust area and province in general. You

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state the goals are reconciliation, climate change and housing. Tax paying long term residents and property owners are not being considered.”

Susan“The IT object, which is repeated several times in this document, states that a balance must be established between the needs of all stakeholders. Yet, the new directives 3.3.2- 3.3.8 explicitly state that priority must be given to one stakeholder - the environment - over all others. Where is the balance?”

Peter“I wonder if the term "Crown Land" in section 3.4.33 is appropriate terminology with respect to reconciliation when much of the land within the Islands Trust is unceded traditional territory of the First Nations? Perhaps the term "Crown" could be removed from this section?”

Anonymous“With regards to elevating reconciliation to the highest priority, does this give First Nations the position of vetoing any proposal, application, or development?”

Sharlein Smith

Expressed concern that potential participants dialing in from United States weren't able to join. Also shared concern that she felt the rights of property owners were not given sufficient weight alongside reconciliation and protection of the environment.

Michele“How will this new policy statement impact current subdivisions in progress?”

Ian“Who is the current Minister who will review and approve the proposed policy statement bylaw?”

Peter“In the glossary, under the term "Sensitive Ecosystems", the term "Riparian" omits to include the areas located adjacent to the ocean which could be referred to as the coastal riparian zone.”

Anonymous“I too feel the concerns expressed by Sharlein and John about the prioritizing reconciliation and environmental over those of landowners is unbalanced. Many properties within the local trust area are multigenerational. Families are heavily invested (on all levels) in their properties and the local trust area. We contribute significantly to the finances of our province. It is only fair that landowners be placed on an equal footing.”

Anonymous“The Gambier Island land use bylaw has a number of maps attached to it. This policy very much indicates that a lot of mapping should be done. Is there already work going on by the Trust Council staff on mapping indigenous significant areas?”

Meeting Information

This Community Information Meeting (CIM) was hosted at the request of the Gambier Island Local Trust Committee.

Activities undertaken by Islands Trust staff to promote the CIM were as follows:

- Subscribers to the Gambier/Keats mailing list received two subscriber notices about the Community Information Meeting
- The Islands2050 page had the event listing featured in the “Participate in an onisland engagement event” section
- The Gambier LTA webpage had a news post about the CIM
- The event was listed on the Islands Trust meetings and events calendar

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- A social media post was shared on Islands Trust social media channels and also shared to a Gambier Facebook group. The post was shared on a Keats Facebook group but never approved by admin
- An information postcard was sent via neighbourhood mail to households on Gambier and Keats but these did not arrive due to a mailing error (see below)
- Posters put up on Gambier Island (see below)

From the January 23, 2026 regular meeting of HO-LTC:

4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING - POLICY STATEMENT BYLAW 183

4.1 Planner Presentation

The Senior Policy Advisor provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Islands Trust was created in 1974 by the Provincial Government and is made up of thirteen local trust areas and one island municipality and is governed by elected representatives who form Trust Council;
- Trust Council must adopt an Islands Trust Policy Statement;
- The current Trust Policy Statement has been in effect since 1993;
- The Trust Policy Statement sets the high-level guidance under which all Local Trust Committees develop Official Community Plans and it forms the foundation for strategic planning, regulatory bylaws, and informs inter-governmental relationships;
- The Islands Trust Policy Statement amendment project was undertaken in response to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate change, and housing needs;
- The draft was given first reading in July 2025 and is in the referral process;
- Public feedback and referral responses will be provided to Trust Council for consideration prior to adoption;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement includes guiding principles, directive policies, and advisory policies;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement has been referred to the Hornby Island Local Trust Committee and the Local Trust Committee wishes to hear public input to inform their referral response.

4.2 Question & Answer Period

The following comments, questions, and answers were recorded:

- The suitable land analysis could help inform decisions on where housing is best suited but it is a decision support tool and does not inform the Trust Policy statement;
- Will the Trust Policy Statement recommendations impact the Official Community Plan project that is under discussion and does Islands Trust annual budget impact the local housing project?
 - When the Trust Policy Statement is adopted each Local Trust Committee would consider at what time their Official Community Plan might come into compliance with the Trust Policy Statement and the Hornby Housing Review Project would not stall in the interim.
- A Trustee asked how the Trust Policy Statement interacts with Local Trust Committee Bylaws and it was noted that following third reading a bylaw is sent to Executive Committee for approval and Executive Committee looks at the bylaw to determine if the Policy Statement Directives Checklist has been met and that proposed bylaws are consistent with the Trust Policy Statement.
- The Policy Statement will apply to any new bylaws that engage the Official Community Plan or Land Use Bylaw and if an application comes forward the

Hornby Island Local Trust Committee

Local Trust Committee needs to address the policies and ensure that there has been a demonstrated effort to meet the objectives and goals of the Trust Policy Statement.

- The policies generally allow ability for Local Trust Committees to determine bylaws that are suited for their individual Trust Areas.
- How will Islands Trust avoid issues that are under federal and provincial jurisdiction such as docks?
 - The draft Trust Policy Statement has undergone reviews by legal council related to jurisdiction and staff have a clear understanding of the jurisdictional authority of a Local Trust Committee.

4.3 Public Comments

Comments on the draft Trust Policy Statement have been included in section 4.2.

From the October 6, 2025 regular meeting of LA-LTC:

3. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING - POLICY STATEMENT BYLAW 183

3.1 Planner Presentation

The Director of Trust Area Services provided a presentation on the Policy Statement Amendment Project and highlighted the following:

- The Trust Area is located in the treaty and territorial area of over 30 First Nations;
- The *Islands Trust Act* legislates that Trust Council must adopt a Policy Statement to carry out the object of the Trust;
- The Policy Statement guides the way a Local Trust Committee develops its Official Community Plan which in turn guides land use bylaws, and it also steers the Executive Committee's review process of those bylaws;
- The updated draft Policy Statement addresses reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate change, and housing and contains guiding principles, directive policies, and advisory policies;
- The draft Policy Statement was given first reading by Trust Council and a Trust-Area wide engagement process is underway including a survey, mailer, referrals, and individual community engagement events;
- Referral feedback will inform further drafting of the document.

3.2 Question & Answer Period

- Does the draft Policy Statement address private docks and if so, are the policies directive or advisory?
 - The current draft document references docks within the following areas:
 - Recreation directive policies state communities should identify and support safe public access and routes to get to community marinas, boat launches, and docks;
 - Marine shoreline directive policies state communities should identify opportunities for sharing of coastal facilities, such as docks, wharves, floats, jetties, boathouses, boardwalks, and causeways and ask that Local Trust Committees consider the cumulative effects of docks and limit, or prohibit, new docks in areas identified as culturally significant or those that provide critical habitat for species at risk.
- Is there a provision to address or facilitate rights for environmental or natural elements?
 - There are some policies that speak to priority protection for certain types of ecosystems.
- Why is community consultation being undertaken regarding the draft Policy Statement when a referendum held during the election process is required for the Islands Trust to have the legal authority to enact 85 new policies, including those that transfer governance to other bodies?
 - The Trust Policy Statement is a Trust Council bylaw so it follows the typically adoption process where it undertakes first reading, followed by

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- community consultation, and is then redrafted and taken for second and third reading, ministerial approval and consideration of final adoption;
 - The Object of Islands Trust states Trust Council work in cooperation with other governments, agencies, and First Nations and a transference of governance is not occurring;
 - If it was determined a referendum was not problematic from a legal point of view members of the public could, through the engagement process, recommend Trust Council consider a referendum.
- The draft Policy Statement notes expressed interest of Indigenous governing bodies in working toward co-governance and references building foundations for collaborative governance and shared decision making.
 - The expressed wish of many First Nations in the Trust Area is to work towards collaborative governments, the document stands on developing a framework for moving toward working together, and the provincial government would be required to amend the *Islands Trust Act* to enable co-governance.
- The draft Policy Statement speaks to transportation vulnerabilities and the False Bay dock is deteriorating. What will Islands trust do if the dock is unusable in relation to ensuring community facilities and services?
 - The dock is a federal facility and in December the Local Trust Committee wrote to the Department of Transportation asking why no funding had been allocated for the Lasqueti dock repair and received a reply indicating the previous inspection had not identified concerns and the dock will be reevaluated in 2026.
- The draft Policy Statement states Islands Trust Council will be informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People as a framework for its approach. Why does a foreign body's declaration inform local policy and who are the Indigenous knowledge holders that will be negotiated with?
 - The Constitution enshrines the rights of Indigenous People, who have the same rights as all citizens, the United Nations Declaration made the issue global, and the BC Provincial Government has ratified the Declaration as law. The draft Policy Statement provides a commitment to ongoing efforts to co-develop planning and land use management processes within Islands Trust legislative authority together with all of the communities who are affected, including First Nations;
 - The Minister requires Islands Trust to engage with the First Nations who have an interest in a particular area in question and seeking input is done through the referral process;
 - Indigenous knowledge holders are often elders in the community who have the benefit of holding traditional knowledge and will often know specific information about historical use and cultural values of a place.
- Do the proposed policies on boat docks differ from the current ones and will they still be considered on a case-by-case basis?
 - The draft Policy Statement asks communities to address where community docks should be located, consider the locations of existing docks when looking at new docks, and limit docks in areas of cultural and environmental sensitivity.

Lasqueti Island Local Trust Committee

- What is the scope of co-governance?
 - The draft Policy Statement acknowledgement section speaks to an expressed interest in Indigenous governing bodies working toward co-governance and Trust Council is committed to advancing reconciliation and exploring how it can work more closely with First Nations governments; however, it would require legislative change or a Section 7 agreement under the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* in order to move forward in a more formal change and at this time the draft Policy Statement is simply calling for a stronger referral process.
- The current Official Community Plan was developed in 2005, the community identified importance issues in 2017, and the Official Community Plan has not been updated yet. Does the Policy Statement work have to be done before the Official Community Plan amendments?
 - The Policy Statement informs the Official Community Plan and the community can convene their own meeting to discuss the Official Community Plan and bring feedback to the Local Trust Committee.
- Is the Policy Statement above or beneath the Official Community Plan?
 - The Executive Committee looks at bylaws to determine how they meet the directives in the Policy Statement and if Local Trust Committee has a bylaw rejected by Executive Committee there can be an appeal made to Trust Council.
- Does Section 26 of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples change the *Islands Trust Act*?
 - The draft Policy Statement states that Trust Council is to be informed by the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* but it is not a directive requirement.
- How is capacity funding undertaken?
 - In previous stages of engagement grants have been provided to Indigenous governing bodies to assist them in providing input; however, further funding is not planned at this point.
- Would the local Trustees represent the community interests or those of the United Nations should the province give more authority to the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*?
 - The United Nations Declaration had no affect on the *Islands Trust Act* and until such time as the province brings forward proposals to change the Act in a way that affects decision making policies one could not say if it is a good idea or not.
- Who interprets the Trust Policy Guiding Principles and how will the Policy Statement be implemented?
 - The Guiding Principles inform decision making and are principles to keep in mind as bylaws are developed. Implementation details are being developed and will be communicated at a later time.
- Is the proposed policy that refers to supporting opportunities to direct land to Indigenous governing bodies advisory?
 - It is advisory and not a requirement.

Lasqueti Island Local Trust Committee

- The draft Policy Statement refers to supporting opportunities for cultural monitors during ground disturbing activities, what does that look like?
 - This is an advisory policy to be developed and it would be determined through the Land Use Bylaw and Official Community Plan.
- Did the Local Trust Committee support the vote to pass the draft Trust Policy Statement through first reading?
 - Trust Council voted for first reading and 4 trustees opposed and the Lasqueti Local Trust Committee voted in favour.

The meeting was recessed for a break at 12:30 p.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

3.3 Public Comments

Public comments on the draft Trust Policy Statement were incorporated in to the question-and-answer session.

From the September 29, 2025 regular meeting of MA-LTC:

4.1 Policy Statement - Local Engagement

Senior Policy Advisor Youmans reviewed the draft Policy Statement and described it as the highest-level policy document that sets a broad vision for the Trust Area as a whole.

Comments were made that the original Policy Statement is outdated and it is important to address climate change and Reconciliation in the updated draft. It was noted that the draft Policy Statement is currently in a new phase of engagement that will last for about six months, and feedback is encouraged.

The public was invited to speak, and the following questions were raised:

- Is the Policy Statement overarching with specific policies underneath it?
 - This is the overall policy statement that stands on its own
 - There is a Trust Policy Statement in place today from the early 1990s and this new draft would replace it
 - This draft articulates the Trust Policy vision
- The draft looks like an expanded mandate for the Islands Trust, specifically regarding Reconciliation and climate change
- Are you confident there is expertise and time to deal with issues that will arise under this new policy?
 - It will be a challenge
 - Every change to our Official Community Plan and bylaws are referred to First Nations and we are obligated to do so because we make land use decisions
 - We have to lobby the Province in the future to recognize that we are a very small agency
 - As a local government, we have the single largest number of First Nations that we engage with and that places a huge burden on us that the Province needs to recognize
- It seems the draft expands beyond the capabilities of a finite timeline and finances
 - The Province has given us direction that we have to do this; we cannot say we do not have the capacity or ability to follow through
 - We have to do land use planning “in cooperation with” a lot of other bodies (e.g. Capital Regional District, Improvement Districts, etc.)
- Will this lead to increased taxes?
 - Our tax goes up on an ongoing basis
 - I do not think we will have a huge increase in costs
 - We have already been doing a lot of what is included in the draft Policy Statement for a long time (e.g. duty to consult with First

Mayne Island Local Trust Committee

Nations); the work has been getting done, it has just not been supported by policy

It was noted that islanders can mail in feedback through the library as well as through the online survey that is open until February 6.

Senior Policy Advisor Youmans left the meeting at 2:04 p.m.

From the October 3, 2025 regular meeting of NP-LTC:

7.1 Policy Statement - Local Engagement

The Senior Policy Advisor provided an introduction to the Policy Statement project and highlighted the following:

- The *Islands Trust Act* states that Trust Council must, by bylaw, adopt a Trust Policy Statement that applies to the Trust Area
- The Trust Policy Statement is a high-level land use and marine area planning document that is used by Trust Council to determine whether local Official Community Plans and land use bylaws are consistent with the greater vision for the Islands Trust Area and it forms the basis of intergovernmental relationships
- The current Policy Statement was developed over 30 years ago
- The draft Policy Statement is organized around 5 goals and contains guiding principles which should inform decisions, directive policies that address matters to which local trust committees must attend in their local bylaws, and advisory policies which should be considered but are not required by Trust Council
- The purpose of the public presentation is for the Local Trust Committee to hear comments from community members to inform further edits prior to moving to second reading

The following comments, clarifications, and answers to question put forth by members of the public were noted:

- The goals within the draft are not listed in hierarchal order but do reflect the three priority areas that Trust Council has recognized
- The directive policies use “should” language instead of “must” which causes confusion
- The language of “should” versus “shall” or “must” has been an issue in the previous Trust Policy Statement and there are considerations to take regarding balance between authority of Local Trust Committees and Trust Council oversight
- The terms “ensure” and “strive to ensure” are both used as there can be other agencies or levels of government that have jurisdiction and ‘ensuring’ an outcome might not be possible
- Allowing an overarching policy to be a pragmatic document provides local issues to be addressed
- If public input is desired then simple language describing the Policy Statement is needed
- A Trustee noted hard copies of the document and survey are available at the library

A member of the public indicated that many residents wonder why two local governments are necessary and inquired if there is a possibility to organize a public meeting to provide an outline of what Islands Trust does and hold the meeting at the

North Pender Island Local Trust Committee

Community Hall on a Friday or Saturday night as a weekday meeting does not allow for working people to attend to provide input.

A Trustee noted members of the Local Trust Committee can not attend an event outside of a formal meeting to discuss policy issues and regular weekday meetings have received more turnout than meetings that have taken place on weekends or after hours, and the Senior Policy Advisor indicated that the recording from the September public town hall provides a brief overview of Islands Trust.

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

Meeting Notes

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

Policy Statement Amendment Project (PSAP) Community Information Meeting

Date/Time: December 6, 2025 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Location: Fulford Hall

Attended:

Trustee Laura Patrick

Clare Frater (Director, Trust Area Services)

Stefan Cermak (Director, Planning Services)

Jason Youmans (Senior Policy Advisor)

Joe Elliott (Senior Indigenous Relations Advisor)

Morgana van Niekerk (Communications Specialist)

Chloë Straw (Program Coordinator)

33 members of the public

Summary of Questions/Comments

General Comments on the Draft New Policy Statement

- A participant emphasized the importance of incorporating local and lived knowledge alongside technical tools such as computer modeling and projections. They noted that local insight is particularly valuable for identifying and responding to water shortages and other place-specific conditions.
- A participant felt the draft Policy Statement relies too heavily on discretionary language (e.g., “consider”) and would benefit from clearer, more directive requirements. They suggested that stronger, more precise language would improve accountability and public confidence.
- A concern was raised about coordination among different levels and bodies of government, particularly the relationship between Islands Trust, the Capital Regional District (CRD), and the Ministry of Transportation and Transit. Greater alignment and clarity of roles were encouraged.
- A participant expressed concern about the perceived lack of enforceability in the draft Policy Statement and noted challenges created by the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan (OCP) review occurring concurrently.
- A participant supported moving forward with the draft, noting that while it may not be perfect, it represents progress and should not be delayed unnecessarily.
- The draft was described by a participant as a significant improvement over the previous version, particularly in its recognition of the need for increased housing diversity.

Requests for Stronger Emphasis on Environmental Protection

- Several participants felt the policies are overly broad and do not clearly require Local Trust Committees (LTCs) to take specific actions to protect the natural environment.

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

- Concern was expressed regarding language on page 7 stating that draft bylaws “should be consistent where possible” with the Policy Statement. Commenters noted that the Trust Act requires bylaws to be consistent and suggested the language be aligned accordingly.
- Participants requested a clear definition of “environment,” specifying that it should explicitly refer to the natural environment rather than the built environment.
- Terms such as “unique amenities” were seen as too vague and open to interpretation, and commenters suggested clearer definitions.
- A participant noted that framing environmental protection as “doing its best” is insufficient and recommended language that emphasizes measurable outcomes and enforceable standards.
- Concern was raised about cumulative environmental impacts related to population growth and housing development. While recognizing the need for affordable housing, some participants cautioned against approaches that could significantly strain ecosystems or alter rural character.
- A number of commenters emphasized that the natural environment is the defining and most important unique feature of the islands.
- A participant suggested that an assessment of ecological carrying capacity should inform future planning and growth decisions.
- The 2019 draft Policy Statement was cited as having more specific language related to environmental protection.
- A participant highlighted the strong connection between environmental protection and fire safety.
- A participant recommended expanding the scope of environmental considerations to include air quality, particularly in relation to emissions from wood-burning stoves and traffic.

Comments Relating to Managing Growth

- Some participants expressed concern with the shift from “limiting” to “managing” growth, arguing that meaningful environmental protection requires clear limits. They encouraged Islands Trust to assess what build-out would look like under existing zoning and to identify sustainable population levels for each island.
- Commenters supported additional housing only if it is affordable and protected through binding, long-term agreements, including clear standards for rent levels and environmental performance.
- A participant noted that many existing homes on Salt Spring Island could potentially accommodate additional residents and questioned what barriers currently prevent this.
- A concern was raised about the quality and sustainability of materials used in public housing, with calls for more durable, ecological construction.
- A participant stressed that housing policy must be integrated with transportation planning. Issues such as traffic congestion, transit frequency, and the need for alternative mobility options (e.g., electric community vans and ride-sharing services) were highlighted.
- A concern was raised that the concept of “rural” does not appear explicitly in the guiding principles and emphasized the importance of clearly protecting rural character.
- There was concern about the absence of a requirement to establish or maintain local density limits. Participants referenced a petition supporting density limits in OCPs and

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

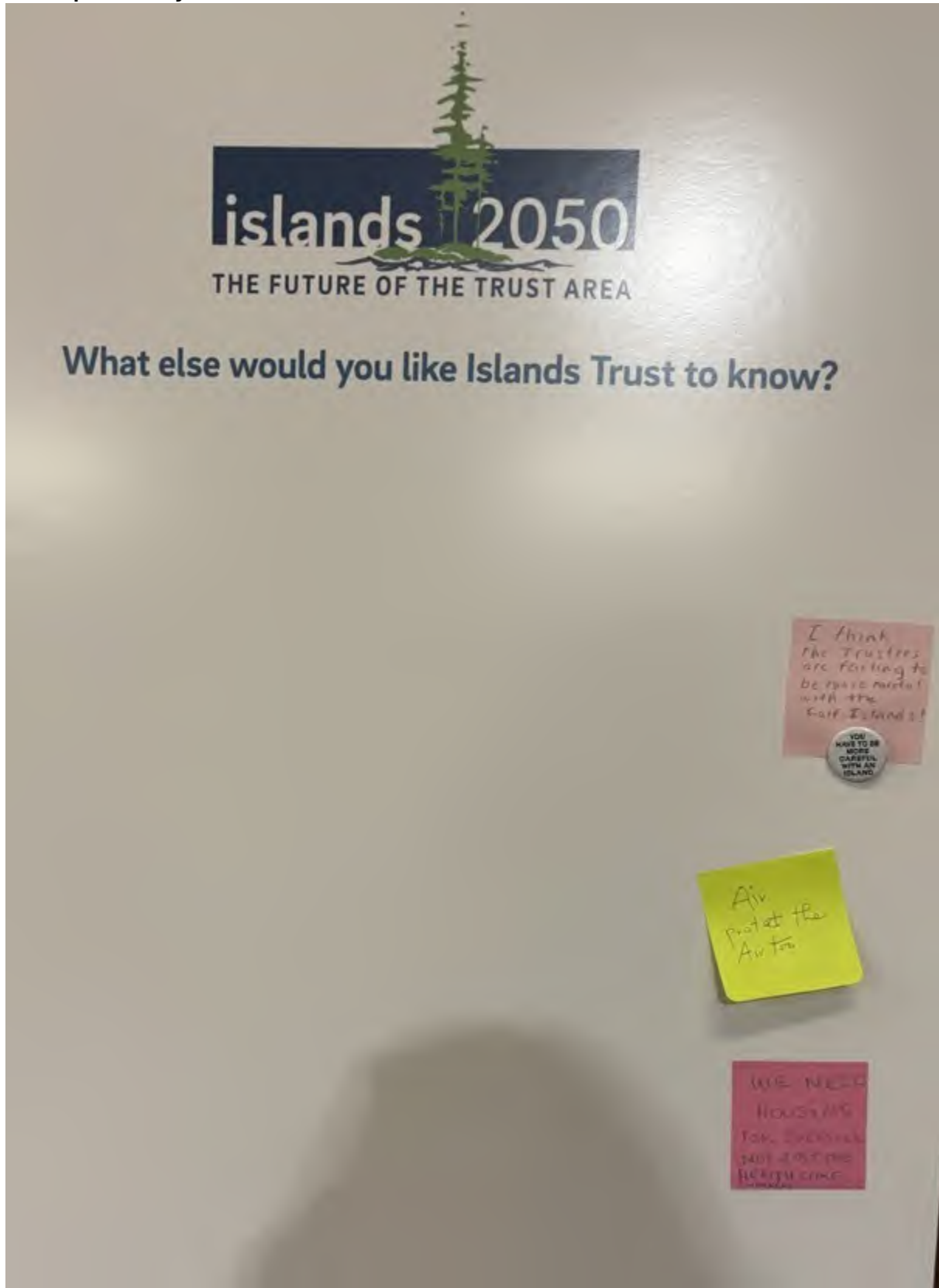
suggested that more prescriptive policy language is needed to ensure long-term consistency with the Islands Trust mandate.

- A participant was concerned that density could be redefined using floor area rather than number of dwelling units, potentially allowing increased environmental impacts, particularly in sensitive areas such as drinking water watersheds.
 - Questions were raised about whether the draft Policy Statement would enable recommendations from the Salt Spring Island Housing Strategic Action Plan, including widespread ADUs, eco-villages, flexible zoning, and conservation-based strata developments.
 - Staff clarified that the Housing Strategic Action Plan did not directly inform the draft Policy Statement, but that Trust Council has expressed a desire to increase housing options and diversity to address workforce and housing equity challenges.
 - The term “suitable locations” was described as vague and in need of clearer guidance.
 - Participants requested clearer definitions of “attainable” and “affordable” housing.
 - Commenters emphasized that addressing the housing crisis is essential, noting that inadequate housing can lead to unsafe living conditions that also negatively affect the environment.
-

Comments on Public Engagement

- A participant expressed concern that community engagement to date has not been sufficient given the long-term implications of the Policy Statement. Questions were raised about how public input was handled during island-wide webinars.
- The 2019 engagement process was cited as a positive example, noted for its broad reach and comprehensive reporting.
- Participants asked how public input would be reflected in the final Policy Statement.
 - Staff explained that public engagement on the draft has been open for six months, closing February 2, 2026, and that results will be presented to Trust Council, which will then determine next steps, including potential further engagement.
- Concern was expressed about the Salt Spring Island OCP update proceeding concurrently with, and potentially ahead of, adoption of the new Policy Statement.
- A participant questioned the number of in-camera meetings held during development of the draft.
- A participant suggested that a “track changes” version would be helpful to clearly identify revisions from previous drafts.
- A participant appreciated the town hall format and the opportunity to hear a range of community perspectives.
- A participant expressed appreciation for the incorporation of feedback from Indigenous Governing Bodies, noting in particular the removal of the word “traditional” before “agriculture” to acknowledge pre-settler farming practices.

Participant sticky note comments:





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THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST AREA

**What would you CHANGE about the
Islands Trust draft Policy Statement?**

CARRYING CAPACITY —

PLEASE DO THE SCIENTIFIC
STUDY NEEDED TO SET
REALISTIC PARAMETERS, NOT
PRESCRIPTIVE, JUST INFORMATIVE
BASELINES.

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

Meeting Notes

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

Policy Statement Amendment Project (PSAP) Community Information Meeting

Date/Time: January 13, 2026 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Harbour House

Attended:

Trustee Laura Patrick

Clare Frater (Director, Trust Area Services)

Stefan Cermak (Director, Planning Services)

Jason Youmans (Senior Policy Advisor)

Joe Elliott (Senior Indigenous Relations Advisor)

Morgana van Niekerk (Communications Specialist)

Chloë Straw (Program Coordinator)

107 members of the public

Summary of Questions & Comments

General Comments on the Draft Trust Policy Statement (TPS)

- A participant noted that the TPS reflects a thoughtful effort to balance the unique character of the islands with the need for trustees to respond to evolving mandates. The explicit recognition of Indigenous rights is particularly welcome and strongly supported.
- A participant said that, as a bylaw, the TPS would benefit from clearer, enforceable definitions rather than reliance on a glossary, which has no legal standing. Key terms such as “**affordability**” and “**environment**” should be formally defined to ensure consistent interpretation and application.
- A participant suggested that the TPS would be strengthened by explicitly acknowledging the provincial legislation that requires environmental protection. Positioning this requirement as a foundational directive—ideally at the outset of the document—would reinforce its importance.
- A participant said that the inclusion of concepts such as the precautionary principle and cumulative impact assessment is appreciated and forward-looking. However, additional clarity is needed on how these principles will be implemented through Official Community Plans (OCPs) to ensure alignment between policy levels.

Staying True to the Preserve and Protect Mandate

- A comment was made that unlike most political bodies, the Trust has a clear and distinct mandate to prioritize environmental protection over competing interests. The TPS should more explicitly affirm this responsibility and support trustees in fulfilling it, even when consensus-building pressures arise.
- A concern was raised that while reconciliation is critically important and appropriately addressed in the TPS, the document should more clearly reflect the Trust Act by identifying **preserve and protect** as the primary goal, with reconciliation articulated as a complementary and integrated priority.

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

- Guiding Principle 2.1.2 currently combines environmental protection and cultural heritage. Separating these into distinct principles could provide greater clarity and allow each to be addressed more effectively.
 - There is an opportunity to place stronger emphasis on forest degradation, water protection, and growth limits, particularly through clear directives rather than advisory language.
 - Forest fragmentation is already widespread across the islands; policies should reflect the importance of protecting remaining forested areas comprehensively, rather than focusing only on larger or intact parcels.
 - Several participants noted that the term “**environment**” should be clearly defined to include ecosystems, flora, fauna, and water systems to avoid ambiguity.
 - A comment was made that the intent of the Trust Act is to protect all islands as a whole, not only designated protected areas. This principle could be more clearly articulated throughout the TPS.
 - Consistency in enforcement language is essential. If directives are mandatory, qualifying phrases such as “where possible” should be reconsidered to maintain their effectiveness and credibility.
 - A participant said that effective application of the precautionary principle requires a solid understanding of island carrying capacity (e.g., water availability, septic capacity). Advancing this foundational research would strengthen confidence in the TPS’s implementation.
-

Housing Section

- The strong environmental protection mandate of the TPS is not consistently reflected in the housing section. Greater clarity is needed around how “**attainable**” housing is defined and how housing policies align with environmental limits.
- Several commenters noted that there is broad community support for affordable, non-market housing secured through long-term housing agreements. The TPS could more clearly indicate whether and how this feedback will influence final policy direction.
- A participant said that the housing section would benefit from explicitly addressing workforce housing, which represents one of the highest areas of need. Clearly identifying the intended beneficiaries of new housing would improve transparency and effectiveness.
- While housing agreements are mentioned, they currently appear to be required only for non-profit developments. Expanding the use of housing agreements could help ensure long-term affordability across a wider range of housing types.
- A participant observed that the TPS could better reflect the Trust’s unique legislative context, which differs from municipal planning frameworks and is not bound by short-term housing targets.
- Greater emphasis on growth management is needed. As written, some policies appear to prioritize market housing and development feasibility over environmental and community capacity.
- Clearly articulating the principle of building the **right housing in the right locations** would help align housing policies with the Trust’s mandate.
- A participant noted that if clustered housing is supported, it should be clearly tied to affordability objectives and accompanied by a clear definition of “**affordable**”

housing,” recognizing that it includes working households as well as lower-income residents.

- The precautionary principle should be applied most rigorously to housing development, given its long-term impacts on land, water, and transportation systems.
 - Housing policy should be considered alongside transportation impacts. Current traffic volumes and low transit use raise concerns about sustainability, livability, and infrastructure capacity, particularly in village centers such as Ganges.
-

Unique Amenities

- A participant stated that the concept of **“unique amenities”** would benefit from greater specificity to reduce ambiguity and potential legal challenges. Generalized language risks overlooking what truly distinguishes individual islands.
 - Reintroducing clearer descriptions—similar to those in the earlier TPS—could help ground this concept in concrete, defensible terms.
-

Engagement Process

- A participant said that the availability of evening and weekend meetings is appreciated and has improved access for working residents. Continuing and expanding these opportunities would support broader participation.
- Clarification is requested on whether there will be an in-person public hearing prior to second and third readings.
- The survey tool would benefit from clearer framing to distinguish between advisory and directive policies and to ensure respondents understand how their input will be used.
- Some participants asked for stronger and more consistent directive language—particularly around environmental protection—would improve clarity. Terms such as **“suitable”** should be clearly defined, especially in relation to clustered housing and rural neighbourhood character.
- Some participants said that given the high level of public interest and the importance of the TPS, consideration could be given to extending the timeline until after the election to allow for fuller democratic engagement.
- Concurrent review of the TPS and the SSI OCP has created confusion for some participants. Separating or more clearly distinguishing these processes could improve public understanding and engagement.
- A participant noted that given the Minister’s statements that broad stakeholder support is required for approval, allowing sufficient time for meaningful engagement may increase the likelihood of successful adoption of the TPS.

Participant sticky note comments:

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THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST AREA

Three Types of Policies in the Policy Statement

Guiding Principles	Directive Policies	Advisory Policies
<p>(Part 2 of the Policy Statement) establish general commitments of Trust Council that centre the Islands Trust Object in all daily decision-making across the Islands Trust Area by Islands Trust Council, Islands Trust Executive Committee, local trust committees and island municipalities.</p>	<p>(Part 3 of the Policy Statement) are integral to carrying out the Islands Trust Object. They are policies with which official community plans and regulatory bylaws of a local trust committee or island municipality should be consistent to avoid rejection or objection when presented by a local trust committee or island municipality for consideration or approval by Executive Committee or Trust Council. They are also policies that should be directly addressed, where possible, in all official community plans and bylaws of a local trust committee or island municipality.</p>	<p>(also in Part 3 of the Policy Statement) are policies expressing select objectives of Trust Council, that local trust committees and island municipalities are advised to consider in the development of official community plans, bylaws, and in discretionary land use decisions. Advisory policies are not intended to constitute a basis for Executive Committee or Trust Council review of local trust committee or island municipality bylaws, or for potential rejection of such bylaws.</p>

SHAU

SHAU

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THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST AREA

What else would you like Islands Trust to know?

Preserve + Protect the ENVIRONMENT IS #1 priority. Not just "consider" doing so. YES!!

Complexity of starting housing in areas with low suitability has to be considered in preservation and protection

Clear oversight and clear limits and clear "teeth" in the ~~for~~ rules — for development

PRESERVE + PROTECT "FIRST"

I would like examples of how density of development can be done well in village areas to maintain and enhance character.

and protect existing from development through it not the Islands Trust?

water!

HOUSING TRUST IS NOT THE MAINLINE OF THE TRUST AND SHOULD REMAIN

When will there be enough housing? The trust will grow - on its own but development will

Consider: clear direction needs to consider transportation and traffic impacts. 04-021 p. 70-79

But the Islands Trust is not a housing authority. It is a trust. It is not a housing authority. It is a trust. It is not a housing authority. It is a trust.



What would you CHANGE about the Islands Trust draft Policy Statement?

CARRYING CAPACITY —

PLEASE DO THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY NEEDED TO SET REALISTIC PARAMETERS, NOT PRESCRIPTIVE, JUST INFORMATIVE BASELINES.

Also carrying capacity for visitors, how many tourists can be reasonably support?

for climate change being low with think there should be specific policies around it and much stronger directive policy

[Purple sticky note]

[Purple sticky note]

Strongly support the Islands Trust's role in preserving the environment and...
2020

From the January 29, 2026 regular meeting of SA-LTC:

8. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

8.1 Policy Statement - Local Engagement

Director Clare Frater provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Trust Council must adopt an Islands Trust Policy Statement
- The current Trust Policy Statement has been in effect since 1993
- The Trust Policy Statement sets the high-level guidance under which all local trust committees develop Official Community Plans; it forms the foundation for strategic planning and regulatory bylaws, and informs inter-governmental relationships
- The Islands Trust Policy Statement Amendment Project was undertaken in response to First Nations reconciliation commitments, climate change, and housing needs
- The draft was given first reading in July 2025 and is in the referral process
- Public feedback and referral responses will be provided to Trust Council for consideration prior to adoption
- The draft Trust Policy Statement has been referred to the Saturna Island Local Trust Committee and the Local Trust Committee wishes to hear public input to inform their referral response

The following questions, answers, and comments were noted:

- The Capital Regional District Electoral Area Director for the Southern Gulf Islands expressed opposition to the draft policy statement; he criticized public engagement efforts to date and, noting an increase in directive policies and a reduction in advisory policies, he suggested the proposed draft will not be cost effective
- A member of the public expressed opposition to the current draft and noted it includes an excessive number of policies that will dictate how islanders should do business; he suggested the draft will result in little or no movement for projects, and that it should instead be simplified so that it can be clearly interpreted
- A member of the public expressed concern that the Executive Committee will have the ability to override local trust committees, and he noted a need for greater emphasis on local community
- A member of the public commented on hearing impairment challenges he faces and the difficulty he has hearing speakers at Islands Trust meetings
- A member of the public expressed appreciation for the Islands Trust's overarching regulatory abilities that have preserved and protected the islands, but expressed concern about policy directives that threaten local autonomy

Saturna Island Local Trust Committee

- A member of the public questioned the ability of the Trust Policy Statement to manage Reconciliation, and expressed a need for clarification of co-management with First Nations
- A member of the public suggested public engagement by the Islands Trust is flawed and commented that the survey does not effectively involve residents in developing the policy statement
- Other members of the public criticized the survey and suggested it does not provide for satisfactory engagement
- A Trustee compared the difference between the Islands Trust, as a corporate body that represents thirteen major local trust areas, and the Saturna Local Trust Committee that represents islanders, and encouraged members of the public to continue sharing their concerns
- Comments were made that compared the use of local and regional publications and the Islands Trust website to share information about the policy statement
- A Trustee summarized comments made so far and noted that no support has been expressed by Saturna residents for the current policy statement draft; she commented that though there is general support of the Trust, something is fundamentally wrong with the draft Trust Policy Statement and there is a need for more reflection
- A Trustee expressed support for the general effort made to update the Trust Policy Statement, but expressed caution that the provincial strategy to advance Reconciliation is currently in flux and the process should proceed no further until it has been resolved
- Director Frater encouraged members of the public to continue to share feedback and noted that specific input about policies is particularly useful

From the December 5, 2025 special meeting of SP-LTC:

4.1 Islands Trust Policy Statement Engagement

Islands Trust Senior Policy Advisor Youmans provided a presentation about the Islands Trust Policy Statement and the process that has been underway to update it since 2019. He outlined the content of the draft Policy Statement, including guiding, directive and advisory policies, and noted that climate change is addressed in various policies throughout the document.

The Chair commented on the 32 resolutions put forward by the previous Trust Council, and invited community members to provide feedback on the latest draft of the Trust Policy Statement. The following questions and comments were made:

- A question was asked about why the process has taken the time that it has to get to First Reading
 - A Trustee commented that input on the first draft seen by the public resulted in 32 resolutions given to staff just prior to the Trust Council election
 - After the election, staff worked through the 32 resolutions for an additional six months, a period that included the loss of key staff members, a hiring process and transfer of knowledge
 - Once the 32 resolutions were complete, they were sent to First Nations for input, and First Nations requested an extension into 2023; staff then needed another six months to incorporate First Nations feedback into the 32 resolutions
 - An early legal review was also conducted
 - Trust Council saw the first draft in March 2024 and struck a Committee of the Whole to provide recommendations
 - The process has been a considerable undertaking with difficult questions to answer, such as questions of jurisdictional responsibility
- Concern was expressed about the lack of context in the current Trust Policy Statement draft compared to earlier versions regarding the object of the Trust (e.g. the preamble of prior versions provide explanations of how the object of the Trust is applied)
 - A Trustee explained that staff was directed by the previous Trust Council to shorten and simplify the draft
 - A Trustee noted that there remain differing perspectives among trustees on some areas in the current draft (e.g. which policies should be directive vs. advisory vs. guiding)
 - A Trustee commented that the preamble explains statutory responsibility and could be politicized and weighted to the view of the Council of the day

South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

- A Trustee noted that our understanding of how to uphold the object of the Trust is a political evolution that is different in 2025 than it was previously (for example, in light of Reconciliation)
- Concern was expressed by several members of the public at the lack of a definition for “unique amenities”
 - A Trustee noted that discussions about the meaning of unique amenities have been inconclusive and challenging for Trust Council to achieve consensus
 - A Trustee suggested the term is purposely vague to be interpreted by the Council of the day
 - A Trustee commented that it is difficult to find a definition that encompasses all of the islands together as well as each unique island individually
- Concern was expressed about listing unique amenities before the environment in the preamble when explaining why the Islands Trust Act was established
- Comments were made that an amenity is something we can use, such as, a tennis court or shopping centre, and that with no boundaries as to what “unique amenities” mean, the phrase could mean anything; it was suggested that articulation of what unique amenities mean would be helpful
 - A Trustee noted it is not just the environment that the Islands Trust is charged with protecting, but also the communities; the environment includes communities which is part of the difficulty in creating an explicit definition
 - Islands Trust is still having the same discussions that were had in 1974 when the Islands Trust Act was established
 - The province has said it is a gift to the Islands Trust to not define what is included in unique amenities as it is up to communities to continually define
- A suggestion was made to incorporate a reference to the precautionary principle in the directive policies section; where scientific uncertainty exists about potential development, a developer should be required to demonstrate that adequate steps have been taken to ensure that certain damages will not result
- It was suggested that, as signatory to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, all Canadian laws, including land use bylaws, should ensure the precautionary principle be actively and effectively applied
 - A member of staff noted this echoes the theme of the comments shared so far to date about the level of specificity of the draft Policy Statement versus the level of openness to interpretation
 - A Trustee commented that taking guidance from the precautionary principle in all decision-making is included in the draft’s guiding principles (policy 2.1.5)

South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

- Comments were made that in making land use decisions, the highest priority should be protection and preservation of the environment, with everything else to follow; using the phrase “unique amenities” dilutes what should be the primary goal of environmental protection
 - A Trustee indicated that, as a land use body, Trustees focused on making sure the environment had priority in the draft document
 - A Trustee commented that the requirement of decision-makers is to make decisions based on evaluations of everything brought forward, and it is not always possible to say the environment takes precedence over everything
 - Islands Trust is set up as a land use governing body with a mandate to slow development (not stop development)
 - Trustees are challenged with preserving and protecting areas for the benefit of residents, as well as protections for fee simple ownership
- A question was asked about what weight will be given to survey responses regarding islander categories (part-time, full-time, non-resident property owner, etc.)
 - A member of staff indicated the information will be presented as the answers that are received, and that a depth of analysis that correlates type of resident (full-time, part-time, etc.) to responses received is not anticipated
- Concern was expressed about the lack of definition for a “suitable location for housing alternatives” as it is left open to interpretation; it was suggested that suitable locations should prioritize the environment
 - A Trustee suggested a suitable location for housing alternatives will depend on each island community, and the definition needs to be general so that each Local Trust Committee can interpret it in light of their priorities
 - A Trustee noted the Trust Policy Statement must be broad enough to represent the Islands Trust as an organization
 - A Trustee commented that “suitable land” is vague, but it must be defined in mapping
 - A member of the staff noted an analytical tool is being developed to help Trustees consider where suitable land may be, based on mapping layers of values to be protected (e.g. Garry Oak ecosystems, critical habitat for species at risk, etc.)
 - A Trustee suggested that the term “suitable land” may be offensive to First Nations
- Concern was expressed about the lack of definition for “amenity contributions”
 - A Trustee noted amenity contributions differ from unique amenities
 - A Trustee commented that proposed advisory policy 3.1.3 implies that if a developer is going to offer land as an amenity contribution,

South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

Indigenous Governing Bodies should be considered as eligible recipients

- A question was asked about why First Nations have priority to receive amenity contributions over the South Pender community
 - A Trustee noted this is an advisory policy that signals an intention to respond to Indigenous Governing Bodies
 - A member of staff noted that for the policy to be operationalized it should be embedded within a community's Official Community Plan to guide decision-making and that an amenity zoning policy should list all eligible amenities that an LTC would consider
 - A Trustee suggested the title of policy 3.1.3 "Land Back" is a political term that could instead be "Amenity Contributions Considerations"
- Comments were made that the guiding principle to acknowledge and respect indigenous rights (policy 2.1.1) does not acknowledge any progress that has been made around reconciliation. Concern was expressed about co-governance of the Islands Trust Area
 - A Trustee noted the Islands Trust has a commitment to Reconciliation and made a declaration to continue to learn and walk the path with Indigenous Governing Bodies towards better management of the Islands Trust Area
 - A Trustee commented that First Nations were not considered in 1974 when the Islands Trust Act was established, and that dispossession of land from First Nations created lasting impacts
 - A Trustee noted the acknowledgment of Indigenous rights to self-governance means the Islands Trust Council has heard the feedback from referrals to First Nations
 - A Trustee noted it is not within the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust to create a co-governing body; that would require an amendment by the Province to the Islands Trust Act or an agreement under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

The meeting was recessed at 11:57 a.m.

Trustee Falck left the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12:16 p.m. Members of the public were invited to continue the discussion, and the following comments were made:

- A suggestion was made to remove the definition of colonialism in the glossary as it is only referred to once in the document
- Support was expressed for emphasizing the precautionary principle and finding reasonable alternatives to prioritize the environment
 - A Trustee noted there are insufficient protections for forests across multiple lots, and that a development permit application for forest

South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

- protection could be applied across the entire island, but it would be difficult to enforce
 - A staff member noted that within the Capital Regional District all building permits get referred to the Islands Trust regarding zoning regulations and how they apply to a lot
- A comment was made that the draft document is missing the principle of neighbourliness
 - A staff member noted there is no mechanism for applying a policy of good neighbourliness to development; only regulations under the land use bylaw can be applied
- A member of the public asked what is the criteria that the Island's Trust Executive Committee uses to evaluate whether or not a community's bylaw is at variance with the Trust Policy Statement
 - A staff member noted it is up to the Executive Committee to determine if a proposed bylaw is consistent with the Trust Policy Statement as a whole, and that is typically done by applying what is known as the Directives Only Checklist
- A comment was made that we are not moving towards a standard to protect the Trust Area and the ecological mandate given by the province, but rather working toward an approach that allows each island to develop its own approach, depending on what the Trustees of the day decide
- Concern was expressed that a bylaw could be approved by the Executive Committee in a way that is inconsistent with an island's official community plan
 - A staff member noted it is up to local Trustees to be the arbiters of whether or not a bylaw is consistent with the Official Community Plan; Local Trust Committees are given very wide latitude to make that determination
 - A Trustee noted Trustees must do their homework to demonstrate that the Official Community Plan, land use bylaw and Trust Policy Statement have been considered in their decision-making
- A Trustee commented that if policy 3.1.1 (Engage with Indigenous Governing Bodies) was the only policy to be incorporated into the new Trust Policy Statement and everything else stayed the same, it would enshrine the engagement work that is already being done
- A member of the public commented that the latest draft of the Trust Policy Statement diminishes the importance of environmental considerations; they suggested that there are measures that can be taken (e.g. clustered housing, rainwater catchment, forest restoration) to ensure the environment has primacy over everything, and the Trust Policy Statement should strengthen that position

South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

- The Local Trust Committee is only a decider in a private property owner's decision about their land when they are going to do something that is contrary to zoning
 - Staff suggested that the most readily available mechanism available to Trustees to protect certain ecosystem values is a development permit area
- A suggestion was made for the Trust Policy Statement to include something about development permit areas as they are the most effective mechanism to protect sensitive ecosystems (e.g. recognizing that coastal zones across all islands contain some of the most sensitive ecosystems)
 - A number of directive policies that deal with shoreline protection are already in the current draft
- A suggestion was made to separate Policy 2.1.2 into two – prioritize protection of the environment, and prioritize protection of Indigenous Cultural Heritage

From the February 3, 2026 regular meeting of TH-LTC:

4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING - POLICY STATEMENT BYLAW 183

4.1 Planner Presentation

The Senior Policy Advisor provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Islands Trust was created in 1974 by the Provincial Government and is made up of thirteen local trust areas and one island municipality and is governed by elected representatives who form Trust Council;
- Trust Council must adopt an Islands Trust Policy Statement;
- The current Trust Policy Statement has been in effect since 1993;
- The Trust Policy Statement sets the high-level guidance under which all Local Trust Committees develop Official Community Plans and it forms the foundation for strategic planning, regulatory bylaws, and informs inter-governmental relationships;
- The Islands Trust Policy Statement amendment project was undertaken in response to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate change, and housing needs;
- The draft was given first reading in July 2025 and is in the referral process;
- Public feedback and referral responses will be provided to Trust Council for consideration prior to adoption;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement includes guiding principles, directive policies, and advisory policies;
- The draft Trust Policy Statement has been referred to the Thetis Island Local Trust Committee and the Local Trust Committee wishes to hear public input to inform their referral response.

4.2 Question & Answer Period

The following comments and questions from members of the public were noted:

- Three speakers spoke to the community not having had opportunity to participate in an in-person meeting to view the presentation and engage in discussion, noted the importance of community members feeling that they are part of the process in order to facilitate transparency, and that a meeting should have been organized over the six-month engagement period regardless of the previous meeting being cancelled due to strike action.
 - The Chair apologized that the November meeting had been cancelled and another one not rescheduled.
- Is there mapping associated with item 3.4.6 Hazardous Areas?
 - The Senior Policy Advisor noted there are six Regional Districts within the Trust Area which have mapping data on sea level rise and wildfire hazards while Islands Trust receives data primarily from the provincial government. All of the current data mapping information will be brought together to inform future decisions.
- The housing section refers to housing for local Indigenous communities – is this under the jurisdiction of Islands Trust?

Thetis Island Local Trust Committee

- The Senior Policy Advisor replied that through engagement, Indigenous governing bodies have expressed interest in their people being able to live on the islands and if an Indigenous governing body wished to purchase fee simple land and develop housing for First Nations peoples the Trust Policy Statement provides receptiveness to that concept; however, if the discussion is related to Reserve land it would be a federal matter.
- The definition, and use, of the word colonialism is challenging as people have come from all over the world to bring their expertise to the lands they live on and have made land purchases that were allowed through a legal process. The statement referring to colonizers stealing land and resources from Indigenous peoples feels disheartening and this does not work towards reconciliation.
 - The Chair noted the term colonialism does cause discomfort, the intent is to recognize the ongoing impact of a structure of colonialism, and there is recognition that many are working toward reconciliation.

Trustee Luckham left the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

- When Islands Trust brought the original Policy Statement to Thetis for comment the community did not support an overarching policy and expressed concern that the Policy Statement intends to require compliance of Local Trust Committees. Official Community Plans are expected to be in compliance with the policies and in some cases a policy may not fit with the community. The Policy Statement is not necessary and does nothing to advance the interests of Thetis Island residents.
 - The Senior Policy Advisor noted the requirement to have a Policy Statement is not optional and is directed by the Provincial Government; however, beyond the requirement to have a Policy Statement it then needs to be determined how, and to what extent, Trust Council wishes to direct Local Trust Committees to do certain things in its land use decisions versus broader visionary statements or advisory policies which a Local Trust Committee can take into consideration but is not required to undertake.
 - The Chair stated there is tension between those that want the policies to be more prescriptive or less.
- It is recognized that many settlers started with nothing and put a lot of work into building their lives and provided a lot of energy to help build the province and the country but there was an overriding colonial mandate that affected lives and people were pushed into channels of non-participation, and the resulting problems can not be ignored.
- It is hoped that the Thetis Island Local Trust Committee provides a referral response supporting an approach which reduces the prescriptive requirements from Trust Council to the Local Trust Committee and put forward suggestions about complexity reduction through allowing Local Trust Committees more latitude to determine whether the policies are consistent with the Official Community Plan.
- Will the Trust Policy Statement be referred to the Thetis Advisory Planning Commission?

Thetis Island Local Trust Committee

- The Senior Policy Advisor replied the required agencies in which the policy needs to be referred are Regional Districts; however, it was also referred to other government agencies, First Nations, and Local Trust Committees and the Local Trust Committee response would be based on the interests of their Local Trust Area.
- Electronic meetings are not conducive to community feedback, many are not happy with the Policy Statement, the community provided feedback during the previous engagement regarding concerns about directive policies, the document is not easily understood and does not reflect island issues, and it is far reaching and moves into aspects that are under other governmental jurisdiction. It appears experts will need to be consulted to make sense of the policies and Development Permit Areas will be pushed into all areas of the environment. The scale of reconciliation is outside of jurisdictional ability and Islands Trust should only work with the First Nations within the Trust Area.
 - The Chair noted the early 2021 version of the Trust Policy Statement did not receive first reading and Trustees have participated in 15 meetings during which the language and policies were debated however, there is recognition it can be difficult for the public to see the connection between a policy, how it affects an Official Community Plan, and what that means as a land owner.
 - The Chair provided an explanation about the difference between guiding principles, advisory principles which are optional, and directive policies.
 - The Senior Policy Advisor stated there remains opportunity to communicate and members of the public can still submit comments which will be read and considered and have discussions with local Trustees. They indicated Trust Council will begin looking at how the document will be implemented if it is advanced in its current form and the implementation would be a multi year process.

Trustee Luckham returned to the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

4.3 Public Comments

Comments are included in section 4.2.