

PROPOSED

DENMAN ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE BYLAW NO. 260

A BYLAW TO AMEND DENMAN ISLAND OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW NO. 185, 2008

The Denman Island Local Trust Committee in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

1. CITATION

This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “Denman Island Official Community Plan, 2008, Amendment No. 1, 2026”.

2. SCHEDULES

Denman Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 185, 2008 is amended as shown on Schedule 1, attached to and forming part of this bylaw.

3. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of any Court of competent jurisdiction, the invalid provision must be severed from the Bylaw and the decision that such provision is invalid must not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of the Bylaw.

READ A FIRST TIME THIS	12 th	DAY OF	MAY	20 <u>26</u>
PUBLIC HEARING HELD THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20____
READ A SECOND TIME THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20____
READ A THIRD TIME THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20____
APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ISLANDS TRUST THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20____
APPROVED BY THE MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20__
ADOPTED THIS	_____	DAY OF	_____	20____

CHAIR

SECRETARY

**DENMAN ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE
BYLAW NO. 260**

SCHEDULE 1

The Denman Island Official Community Plan No. 185, 2008, is amended as follows:

1. TABLE OF CONTENTS is amended by renaming “Preamble” to “Planning Context” and by deleting “APPENDIX D DENSITY BANK”.
2. All references in Bylaw No. 185 to any specific provincial ministry are deleted and replaced with “Provincial Government”.
3. SCHEDULE A – POLICIES, CONTENTS is amended by renaming “A History of Denman Island” and replacing it with “Community Context” and renaming “Preamble” and replacing it with “Planning Context”.
4. PART A – DENMAN ISLAND: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE is renamed PART A – COMMUNITY CONTEXT
5. PART A is amended by deleting the the existing text in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

“Community Context

This Official Community Plan (Plan) applies to the Denman Island Planning Area (see map 1 and 2). The Plan supports land and water stewardship through land use planning that reflects both the Islands Trust mandate, the community’s values, and recognizes the responsibilities of Indigenous Peoples to their territories

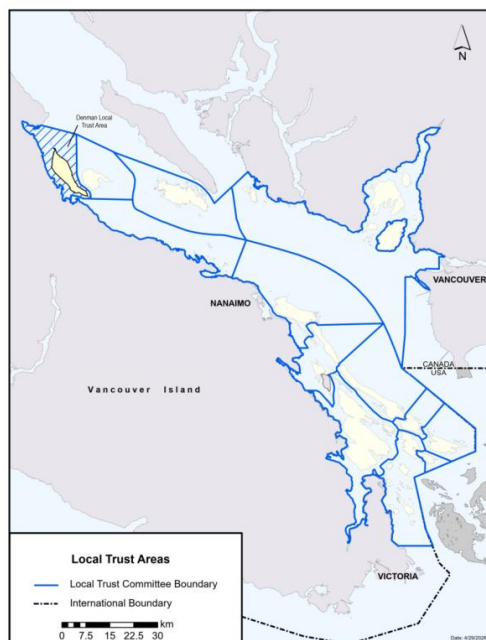
Denman Island is a rural island community situated in Baynes Sound in the Salish Sea, immediately east of Vancouver Island and north of Hornby Island. The island covers approximately 51.03 km² and is part of the Comox Valley Regional District and the Islands Trust.

Connection to the mainland and adjacent islands is provided by regular BC Ferries service from Buckley Bay on Vancouver Island and a ferry link to Hornby Island, shaping daily travel patterns, access to services, economic relationships, and emergency planning considerations.

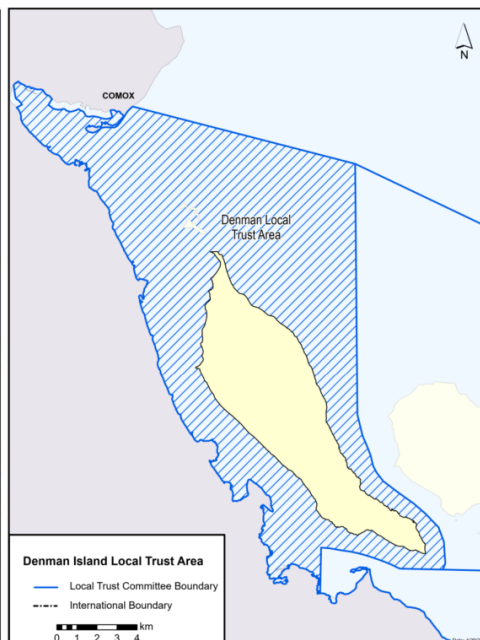
Governance on Denman Island involves multiple jurisdictions, including the Islands Trust, the Comox Valley Regional District, the Province of British Columbia, Island Health, and School District 71, each with responsibilities that influence land use

planning, infrastructure provision, environmental protection, and community well-being.

Map 1: Denman Local Trust Area



Map 2: Denman Island Planning Area



Natural History

The landscape of Denman Island is rooted in deep geological time. All exposed bedrock on the island, as well as nearby Hornby Island, is sedimentary rock formed during the Late Cretaceous period (approximately 85–68 million years ago) as part of the Nanaimo Group. These sediments were deposited atop a much older foundation of volcanic rocks, limestone, and granites that originated roughly 150–180 million years ago within a travelling microcontinent known as Wrangellia, which eventually fused with North America. Evidence of this ancient basement can be seen today on Texada Island and in the Beaufort Range on Vancouver Island. During the Late Cretaceous, sediments accumulated within the geological Georgia Basin, formed as the land to the east was compressed and thickened by tectonic forces. Pebbles and cobbles embedded within Denman’s conglomerates reflect this history, containing fragments of volcanic and limestone rocks derived from surrounding highlands.

The island’s striking shoreline exposures reveal layers of mudstone, sandstone, and conglomerate deposited in deep marine environments by underwater sediment flows and turbidity currents. Fossils preserved within these rocks demonstrate that the basin was once connected to the global ocean and supported a rich marine ecosystem. Ammonites, clams, snails, crabs, corals, and heart urchins lived along the seafloor, while sharks and large marine reptiles hunted in the waters above. Fossilized driftwood and redwood foliage indicate that forested land was nearby. Around 60 million years ago, tectonic uplift associated with the subduction of the Pacific ocean floor beneath

North America raised the rocks that now form Denman and Hornby islands. Since then, erosion by rivers, waves, and glaciers has gradually shaped the islands into their present form.

Glaciation played a defining role in the more recent landscape. During the last ice age, thick ice sheets flowed south and west from the continental mountains, reaching maximum extent about 15,000 years ago. As the ice retreated, views from places such as Komas Bluffs would have included calving ice fronts and floating icebergs. By about 10,000 years ago, the ice had disappeared, leaving behind glacial erratics—large transported boulders—and extensive deposits of sand and gravel formed by meltwater. These deposits created prominent features such as Komas Bluff, Longbeak Point, Sandy Island, and the Seal Islets.

Following glacial retreat, plants and animals gradually recolonized the island. Many species arrived by flight, swimming, rafting on debris, or crossing temporary land connections to nearby areas, resulting in a smaller but distinctive mix of flora and fauna compared to larger landmasses. Evidence of early human presence in the broader region dates back thousands of years, including archaeological discoveries at Deep Bay. On Denman itself, shell middens along the shoreline, burial cairns on northern islets, petroglyphs on Chrome Island, and earthworks within what is now Boyle Point Park indicate that the island formed part of a well-known and long-used cultural landscape for Indigenous peoples over many generations.

Indigenous History and Context

Denman Island (known as Taystay'ich or Sla-dai-aich in local Indigenous languages) is located within the traditional unceded territory of the Pentlatch people and forms part of the broader ancestral lands of the K'ómoks First Nation, the Qualicum First Nation, and the Tla'amin Nation. For thousands of years, these and other related cultural groups maintained sustainable seasonal and permanent use of Denman's land and surrounding marine waters. Archaeological evidence, including shell middens, village sites, and other cultural features, demonstrates long-standing Indigenous presence and stewardship, particularly in areas such as Henry Bay and along the island's coastline.

The Pentlatch people, whose language and cultural systems were deeply connected to these lands and waters, experienced catastrophic population decline during the 1862 smallpox epidemic. Survivors joined the K'ómoks and other First Nations in the area. While the Pentlatch language ceased to be spoken fluently by the mid-20th century, revitalization efforts are underway. Today, First Nations and Indigenous Governing Bodies continue to exercise cultural, governance, and stewardship responsibilities across its traditional territory, including Denman and Hornby Islands.

Patterns of colonial settlement, reserve allocation, subdivision, residential development, and protected area designation occurred without recognition of Indigenous title and rights. These patterns continue to shape land ownership and land use within the Local Trust Area. This Plan acknowledges this historical and ongoing context and affirms a commitment to advancing reconciliation within the Islands Trust mandate.

On March 14, 2019, Islands Trust Council unanimously adopted the Reconciliation Declaration:

“Islands Trust Council acknowledges that the lands and waters that encompass the Islands Trust Area have been home to Indigenous peoples since time immemorial and honours the rich history, stewardship, and cultural heritage that embody this place we all call home.

Islands Trust Council is committed to establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Islands Trust states a commitment to Reconciliation with the understanding that this commitment is a long-term relationship-building and healing process.

Islands Trust Council will strive to create opportunities for knowledge-sharing and understanding as people come together to preserve and protect the special nature of the islands within the Salish Sea.”

Part of the plan area’s heritage includes archaeological sites – the physical evidence of how and where people lived in the past. For 98% of the time people have lived in this area, no written records were made. Archaeological sites and oral tradition are the only vestiges of this rich history extending back many thousands of years. The Plan area contains recorded and non-recorded archaeological sites and due to their sensitive nature, the locations are not identified in this Plan. This Plan acknowledges a historical disregard for and lack of protection of collective heritage of the area for Indigenous Peoples. All archaeological sites are protected by the Provincial Government through the Heritage Conservation Act. This protection applies to all lands and means any person wishing to undertake any land-altering activities must have a provincial heritage permit to alter or develop within an archaeological site.

The Local Trust Committee understands Indigenous Nations’ fundamental values include protecting the lands, waters, and resources that have sustained the Nation since time immemorial. As stewards of the land, Indigenous Governing Bodies expect that development on the island be sustainable and aligned with Indigenous laws and knowledge systems. Particular concern has been expressed regarding access to freshwater, and ensuring that sufficient water exists not only for residents, but also for the flora and fauna that support ecological integrity and cultural continuity.

When updating this Plan in 2026, the Local Trust Committee learned through engagement with K'ómoks First Nation (KFN) that two core principles underlying KFN teachings guide the Nation's approach to cultural heritage:

- Ancestors must be cared for, including maintaining the integrity of burial places and respecting the remains and material evidence of past actions.
- Ancestors care for the living, including safeguarding the well-being of individuals and strengthening knowledge of how ancestors sustained and stewarded the lands and waters within the territory.

The Local Trust Committee also learned that KFN's fundamental values include protecting the lands, waters, and resources that have sustained Indigenous communities since time immemorial. As stewards of the land, KFN expects that development on the islands be sustainable and aligned with Indigenous laws and knowledge systems.

Updates to this Plan in 2026 have been undertaken with these principles and values in mind. Future policy development and land use planning decisions are to be approached in a manner grounded in respect for Indigenous interests. This includes the protection and stewardship of ecological systems, cultural heritage, burial places, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes, as well as consideration of First Nations interests in reconnecting with the lands and marine waters of Denman Island within land use decision-making processes.

The Local Trust Committee plays an important role in advancing this work by integrating cultural heritage protection and ecological conservation into land use planning through strengthened policies, improved site protection, and respectful, ongoing engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies.

Reconciliation as expressed in this Plan does not alter ownership of private lands or existing legal interests. It guides how land use decisions are approached within the Local Trust Area.

Settler History

The islands now known as Denman and Hornby were first recorded by Europeans in 1791 when Spanish sailors sighted them and named them the Islas de Lerena in honour of Spain's Minister of the Treasury. A year later, George Vancouver, sailing for Great Britain, did not sight the islands, and the Spanish name persisted for nearly seventy years. In 1860, British Naval surveyor George Richards mapped the islands' shorelines and renamed them Denman and Hornby after British officers. The first

European to set foot on Denman Island was likely Joseph William McKay in 1852, who briefly visited the site of the village he called Siklaults while prospecting for coal. Although Indigenous title to the land was not extinguished, European settlement in the Comox Valley began a decade later and extended to Denman Island twelve years after McKay's visit.

European settlers were primarily drawn to Denman Island in the 1860s by agricultural opportunities. Early settlers cleared land for subsistence farming, raising livestock, planting gardens, and harvesting local resources such as fish and deer to support their families. Population growth was slow, reaching roughly 100 residents—mostly Scottish and English immigrants—by the turn of the century. Logging emerged as a second major economic activity, initially serving local mills and later becoming integrated into the broader coastal forest industry, subject to the boom-and-bust cycles characteristic of the region. Farming remained a consistent contributor to the island economy, producing milk, meat, produce, and other commodities for local and regional markets. Other resource-based activities, such as sandstone quarrying, salmon canning, and shell processing, supplemented the island's economy over the decades.

Access to Denman Island improved significantly in the 20th century, with regular ferry service beginning in 1930 and a car ferry link to Hornby Island established in 1954, paving the way for new economic and social changes. Rising urban prosperity and increased automobile access in the mid-20th century led to recreational property development, prompting the provincial government to introduce a "ten-acre freeze" on subdivisions in 1969 to protect rural character and water resources. The social transformations of the 1960s and early 1970s, including the back-to-the-land movement and the arrival of American draft resisters, reshaped the island's demographics and fostered a growing environmental consciousness. These changes contributed to the establishment of the Islands Trust in 1974, reflecting a broader commitment to balancing human activity with the protection of the natural environment on Denman Island and throughout the Gulf Islands.

Today Denman Island faces challenges related to housing affordability, and social diversity. The desirability of the island for recreational and retirement properties within the context of increasing property values region wide has driven land prices to levels that are largely inaccessible for low- and moderate-income residents. Many new residents are able to live on the island while working remotely, often in jobs that do not directly provide services to the local community, which can create gaps in the workforce for essential services and local businesses. This dynamic, combined with limited rental availability and the high cost of property, has made it difficult for younger people, families, and those with modest incomes to settle on the island, raising ongoing questions about equity, community cohesion, and the long-term sustainability of Denman Island's population and economy.

Note: A more detailed account of settler history, previously contained in the 2008 OCP can be found in the Denman Islands Archives: <https://denmanmuseum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/OCP3.pdf>

Population and Demographics

Denman Island's year-round resident population was 1,391 in 2021, with a median age of approximately 60.8 years, much higher than the British Columbia provincial median of about 42.8 years, reflecting a demographically older community.

While census figures provide a snapshot of the year-round population, seasonal residents and part-time property owners contribute to a larger influx of people during peak summer months. Denman's demographic profile influences housing needs, community services, health care planning, and cultural and recreational activities, and it underscores the importance of accessible, age-friendly amenities and diverse housing options.

Housing and Services Needs

The BC Provincial Government requires all local governments in BC to consider its' most recent Housing Needs Report and housing information when amending OCPs. Based on the Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment prepared by Urbanics Consultants Ltd in 2025, the projected housing need in the next five years is 109 additional housing units and in the next twenty years is 359 additional housing units. This calculation is based on a portion of growth rate projections for the Comox Valley. Given groundwater limitations and interests in preserving and protecting the environment caution is needed when considering housing targets. Provision of non-market housing should be the focus of additional housing development on the island.

Denman Island in 2026 had approximately 74 vacant residentially zoned lots, however this does not suggest that true housing needs will be adequately addressed if these are built out. A limited rental supply, rising property costs, and a growing proportion of residents on fixed or lower incomes has contributed to housing insecurity. The portion of households that experience core housing need¹ (105 as indicated in 2021 Census), and projected population growth, combined with demographic aging, points to increasing demand for more diverse, accessible, and non-market housing options.

Essential services further shape land use planning decisions. Denman Island relies primarily on groundwater for water supply, which is sensitive to seasonal variation and drought conditions. Many residents supplement their water supply during dry periods.

¹ When a private household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and spends 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (attains all three housing indicator thresholds).

Wastewater services are provided through private septic systems and placing practical limits on development intensity and location.”

6. Section B.1 INTRODUCTION is amended by deleting the existing text in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

“B.1.1 Purpose of this Plan

This Plan works alongside the land use bylaw to shape community informed decisions about how land and marine areas are protected, restored, used and/or developed.

“Land use planning” is a commonly used legal and professional term, though it originates in colonial approaches to land control and ownership that have been harmful to Indigenous Peoples and the natural environment. The term is used in this document to describe the statutory planning framework set out in the Local Government Act and the Islands Trust Act, and Denman Island Trust Committee’s inclusion in the Islands Trust governance structure.

As such, this plan is aligned with Islands Trust object and the Islands Trust Policy Statement, is consistent with the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act*, as well as being grounded in a set of community goals and objectives.

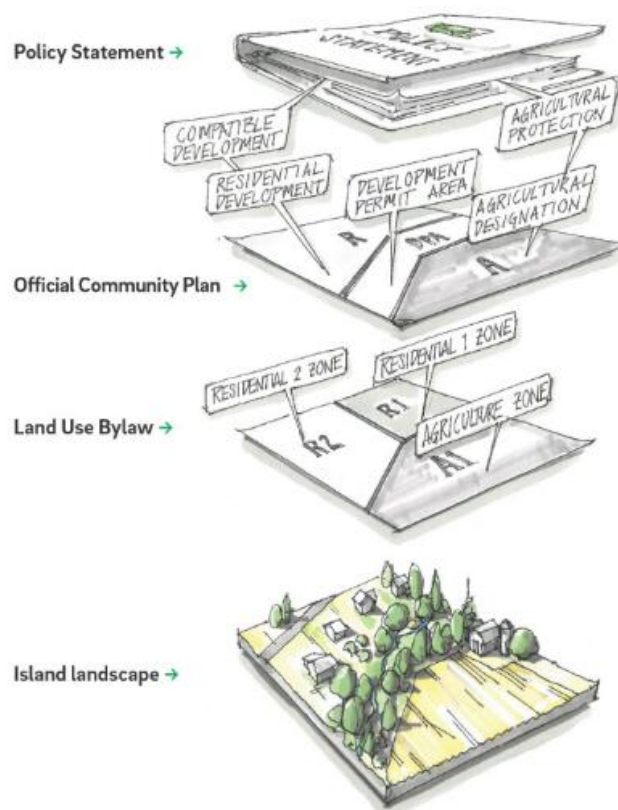
B.1.2 Local Government Act Required Content

The Local Government Act (LGA) governs the process whereby a local government can prepare and adopt an OCP. The LGA outlines policy statements and requirements that the OCP documents and maps must include, as well as policies that the Local Trust Committee may choose to include in the OCP.

Once an OCP has been adopted, all decisions related to planning, subdivision, development, and land use matters must conform to the OCP. In accordance with the LGA, the OCP should be reviewed and updated every five years, incorporating public engagement to ensure that the Plan continues to represent community objectives and addresses important and emerging issues and trends as they evolve over time.

Required content applicable to the Islands Trust Area is as follows:

- Land Use: Statements and map designations identifying the approximate location, amount, type, and density of residential development to meet anticipated housing needs over at least a 20-year period, and the approximate location, amount, and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, and public utility land uses.
- Natural Resources, Environment, and Hazard Lands: Identification of the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits suitable for future extraction where such



deposits exist, and policies and restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or is environmentally sensitive to development.

- **Infrastructure and Public Facilities:** Identification of the approximate location of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks, and disposal sites.
- **Housing:** Policies respecting non-market housing, rental housing, and special needs housing, consideration of the most recent Housing Needs Report when developing or amending the OCP.
- **Climate Change:** Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within the plan area, and policies and actions proposed to achieve those targets.
- **Provincial Policy Context:** Consideration of applicable provincial policy guidelines in the development and amendment of the Official Community Plan.

B.1.3 The Islands Trust

In 1974, the Government of British Columbia established the Islands Trust Act to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment against unrestrained growth and development. Islands Trust is a federated body responsible for the Trust Area, comprised of 13 major islands, more than 450 smaller islands, and the surrounding waters in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound. Islands Trust regulates local land use, works with other levels of government, and, through the Islands Trust Conservancy, protects places of natural or cultural significance. This unique governmental mandate is defined in Section 3 of the Islands Trust Act and is commonly referred to as the “Islands Trust Object.”

B.1.4 Islands Trust Priorities

The “Islands Trust Object” is expressed through the Islands Trust Policy Statement. When this Plan was developed (2024-2026) the themes of Environmental Protection, First Nations Reconciliation, addressing Climate Change and Housing Affordability were also key priorities across the Islands Trust and are described through three declarations of Trust Council.

Environmental Protection - The core object of the Islands Trust, established by British Columbia law, is to “*preserve and protect the Trust Area (islands and waters) and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of residents of the Trust Area and British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, First Nations, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.*” This legislated mandate recognizes the ecological sensitivity of island environments and the importance of long-term stewardship. Land use planning plays a central role in achieving this objective by guiding growth and development in ways that protect ecosystems, freshwater resources, coastal processes, biodiversity, and the natural features that support community well-being and island character.

Climate Change – In 2019 the Islands Trust declared a climate change emergency. Denman Island residents are experiencing the impacts of climate change with increased drought periods and shifts in biodiversity such as the increasing loss of Western Red Cedar

trees. Average global temperatures are now more than 1.4 °C warmer than pre-industrial levels, with the past decade being the warmest on record and recent years among the hottest ever documented; this warming is linked to rising sea levels, more intense weather events, and shifting environmental conditions. The Local Government Act requires all OCPs to contain GHG reduction targets, policies and actions.

First Nations Reconciliation – In 2019, the Islands Trust adopted the *Islands Trust Reconciliation Declaration*, affirming a commitment to advancing reconciliation within its mandate and decision-making processes. From a land use planning perspective for the purposes of this Plan, First Nations reconciliation means planning and managing land in ways that respect First Nations’ enduring relationships to the lands and waters of their territories, acknowledging the past and ongoing impacts of colonial land use systems, supporting and protecting cultural, ecological and archeological values and supporting respectful, collaborative approaches to decision-making. This includes early and meaningful engagement, recognition of Indigenous rights and interests, and the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into planning processes to help ensure that land use decisions support cultural continuity, stewardship responsibilities, and community well-being.

Housing Affordability – In 2023, the Islands Trust Council declared that a housing equity and workforce shortage crisis exists within the Islands Trust Area, identifying a severe lack of housing options that are accessible and affordable for residents and local workers. This declaration reflects long-standing concerns that the limited supply of diverse housing types, combined with rising property values and rental costs, has made it increasingly difficult for people of many income levels to live and remain in island communities. Multiple housing needs assessments have documented shortages in secure, appropriate, and affordable housing for low-to-moderate income earners, impacting community well-being and economic sustainability across the Trust Area.

B.1.5 Island’s Trust Policy Statement

This Official Community Plan has been prepared and adopted in a manner deemed to be consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement in effect at the time of adoption. Section 15 of the Islands Trust Act states that Trust Council must adopt, by bylaw, a Trust Policy Statement that applies to the Islands Trust Area as a whole. The Islands Trust Act specifies that the Policy Statement must be a general statement of the policies of Trust Council to carry out the Islands Trust Object, that it may establish different policies for different parts of the Islands Trust Area. The Policy Statement represents Trust Council’s vision for the preservation and protection of the draft Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment. Details related to the Islands Trust Policy Statement can be found here: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/>

B.1.6 The Structure of this Plan

This Plan divides the Denman Island Local Trust Area into the following eight land use designations, which are shown graphically on Schedule C. The eight land use designations are:

- Conservation/Recreation;
- Crown Lands;
- Institutional;

- Residential;
- Rural;
- Sustainable Resource;
- Village; and
- Water.

These land use designations provide a conceptual framework for future land use decisions in the Denman Island Local Trust Area. Some policies in the Plan affect all land use designations, while other policies apply to only one or several specified land use designations. The permitted uses, density, height and siting of buildings, along with other specific regulations, are contained in the Land Use Bylaw.

This Plan acknowledges the tension between the needs and aspirations of the human community and its desires to protect the natural environment of Denman Island. It represents a vision of the future and suggests ways in which government agencies can co-ordinate their responsibilities with the wishes of the Denman Island islanders.

How Was This Plan Created?

The first Official Community Plan for Denman Island was created in 1978. New versions presenting various amendments were made between then and 1997, when a major review was undertaken in 1997 involving a community-driven process. The Collective Vision Group then consulted with the community to produce a preamble containing guiding principles and objectives for the Plan. All of this work formed the basis for a first draft of the Plan, which was released in October 1999. Comments received thereafter at meetings and in writing led to a second draft. Following further revisions, the Plan was adopted in 2001.

Another review of this Official Community Plan was undertaken in 2007. The intent was to update the document, correct inaccuracies and introduce new policies on several topics of high interest in the community.

From 2022-2026, the Denman Local Trust Committee engaged in a housing review project which resulted in significant updates to the OCP including an update to the Community Context and Introduction. This was done to create consistency across the Islands Trust Area particularly with the acknowledgement of the rich history of Indigenous settlement on the Islands and stewardship responsibilities in the area.”

7. Section B.3 GUIDING OBJECTIVES is amended by deleting “Guiding Objective – Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation” and replacing it with:

“To reduce climate-related risks and strengthen the Island’s capacity to adapt to climate change by protecting critical systems, supporting resilient infrastructure, and integrating climate considerations into all land use and development decisions.”
8. Section C.1 LANDS AND FOREST, paragraphs 1 to 6, are amended by deleting them in their entirety and replacing them with the following:

Denman Island supports a rich diversity of terrestrial and marine ecosystems that contribute significantly to the ecological integrity of the region and the well-being of the community. The island contains two lakes, numerous wetlands and creeks, patches of mature and regenerating forest, as well as sand dune and coastal bluff ecosystems. These environments provide habitat for a wide range of species, including critical habitat identified for four endangered species and one threatened species, among them two bat species and three insect species. A conservation breeding program is currently in place for the Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly due to its sensitivity to habitat change.

A number of ecosystems at risk occur on Denman Island, including Coastal Douglas-fir, Grand Fir, Red Alder, and Western Red Cedar forest ecosystems and their associated plant communities. The island's generally flat topography, with gently rolling hills rising to approximately 124 metres above sea level and only about eight percent of land having slopes greater than 20 percent, has influenced historic settlement patterns while also contributing to the distribution of sensitive ecosystems. The Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) for East Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands identifies multiple categories of sensitive ecosystems across the island, many of which are vulnerable to disturbance and fragmentation.

Denman Island's extensive coastline includes several areas recognized as vital habitat for rare plant species and nesting seabirds, including areas north of Komas Bluff, at Denman Point, Whalebone Point, Repulse Point, Chrome Island, and along the south and southwestern shoreline. Beaches suitable for spawning Pacific sand lance and surf smelt are present along the coast, along with extensive eelgrass beds that provide essential marine habitat. Marine waters surrounding the island support fish species such as herring, coho salmon, and bluntnose sixgill shark.

Forested ecosystems across the island vary in age and condition. Older forest stands are particularly important because they provide habitat for species that require mature forest conditions, including birds of prey and specialized plant and animal communities. Larger stands of older forest occur within Boyle Point Park, while smaller patches are distributed throughout the island. Areas of regenerating forest resulting from past harvesting activities also provide important habitat and contribute to long-term ecosystem recovery.

Terrestrial herbaceous ecosystems, including rare coastal grasslands and moss-covered rocky outcrops, occur at Longbeak Point, on Seal Islets and Sandy Islets, and along coastal bluffs, particularly on the southeast coast. These ecosystems support a number of uncommon species and are highly sensitive to disturbance.

Riparian ecosystems surrounding lakes, wetlands, and watercourses provide essential ecological functions, including wildlife habitat, hydrological regulation, and water quality protection. Two of the largest riparian areas occur adjacent to Valens Creek and Beadnell Creek. Seasonally flooded ecosystems are also present in several locations and provide important habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Overall, Denman Island’s ecosystems support a significant number of species identified on federal and provincial lists as endangered, threatened, or at risk. The protection, restoration, and stewardship of these ecosystems are important considerations for land use planning, development decisions, and community sustainability.

9. Section C.2 – FRESHWATER, Freshwater – Policies, Policy 9 is amended by adding the words “*and require freshwater cisterns*” after the words “*encourage rainwater collection*”.
10. Section C.2 – FRESHWATER, Freshwater – Policies is amended by adding a new Policy 10 as follows: Groundwater-fed swimming pools should be discouraged to protect the groundwater resources. Zoning regulations should prohibit the construction of swimming pools supplied from groundwater.
11. Section C.2 – FRESHWATER, Advocacy Policies, Advocacy Policy 1 is amended by deleting the words “*Water Management Branch of the Ministry of Environment*” and replacing them with “*Provincial Government*”.
12. Section C.2 – FRESHWATER, Advocacy Policies, Advocacy Policy 3 is amended by deleting the words “*Ministry of Environment and Fisheries and Oceans Canada are*” and replacing them with “*Federal Government is*”.
13. Section C.3 – THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, - Policies is amended by adding a new Policy after Policy 13 as follows, and renumbering subsequent policies accordingly:

The Local Trust Committee may support issuance of a Development Variance Permit to reduce the required 30 m setback from the natural boundary of the sea where the applicant demonstrates that:

- The required setback would unreasonably constrain a permitted use of the lot, given its size, shape, and topography;
- There are no alternative building sites on the lot that would meet the required setback; and
- The proposed siting and design minimize impacts to the foreshore and coastal marine environment.

Approval is not implied and will depend on the specific circumstances of each application and consistency with broader environmental protection objectives in the Denman Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw.

14. Section C.4 – CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION, is amended by deleting full section and replacing it with:

“British Columbia has established legislated greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets under the Climate Change Accountability Act, including a 40% reduction below 2007 levels by 2030, 60% by 2040, and net-zero emissions by 2050. Through the Local Government Act, local governments are required to include GHG reduction targets, policies, and actions in OCPs. While many sources of emission, such as energy supply standards, building codes, and vehicle regulations, are set by senior levels of government, land use planning plays an important role in shaping long-term emissions outcomes.

Climate change is influencing local conditions, with rising temperatures, increasing rainfall variability, and more frequent extreme weather events expected to affect freshwater recharge, coastal processes, ecosystems, and community infrastructure over time. In the Plan Area, the most effective tools available to the Denman LTC for reducing GHG emissions are those related to how land is used and protected. This includes guiding where and how development occurs, supporting compact and complete settlement patterns, protecting forests, wetlands, and other natural areas that store carbon, and encouraging walking, cycling, and shared transportation where feasible.

Through land use policies, this Plan establishes a local framework for climate action that reflects Denman Island's rural character, environmental values, and the Islands Trust mandate to preserve and protect the Island for present and future generations.

Land use planning plays a key role in reducing GHG emissions and building resilience. The following are a set of climate action objectives and target policies to guide land use planning decisions

Guiding Objective

To reduce climate-related risks and strengthen the Island's capacity to adapt to climate change by protecting critical systems, supporting resilient infrastructure, and integrating climate considerations into all land use and development decisions.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation - Objectives

Objective 1: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing development close to amenities and protecting/restoring natural systems and carbon sequestering opportunities.

Objective 2: Direct development away from areas vulnerable to natural hazards and climate-related risks, including wildfire, flooding, and saltwater intrusion.

Objective 3: Ensure housing and development locations consider freshwater availability, climate hazards, and land use practices that enhance community resilience.

Objective 4: Protect and manage forests, wetlands, and other natural features that contribute to climate mitigation, adaptation, and ecological and community resilience.

Objective 5: Support transportation systems that reduce reliance on private automobiles while maintaining Denman's rural island character.

Climate Mitigation Target Policies (Reducing GHG Emissions):

POLICY 1: Increase protection of forests, wetlands, soils, and other ecosystems that store carbon.

POLICY 2: Encourage trail development.

POLICY 3: Increase locally grown food by protecting farmland and supporting local food distribution.

Climate Adaptation Target Policies (Increasing Climate Resilience):

POLICY 5: Increase protection of natural areas that reduce climate-related risks such as wildfire, flooding, and erosion.

POLICY 6: Increase the number of rainwater catchment systems on the Island.

POLICY 7: Increase protection of watersheds, aquifers, and riparian zones to ensure long-term water supply and quality.

POLICY 8: Increase the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives related to ecosystem health.

POLICY 9: Increase community understanding of climate change by including climate change considerations in all land use decision making.”

15. PART D – THE SOCIAL FABRIC, Table of Contents is amended by inserting a new section titled “*D.5 Subdivision of Land*” and renumbering subsequent sections accordingly.

16. Section D.3 WATER MANAGEMENT, Water Management – Policies is amended by adding the following new policies as the next sequential numbers:

Policy 8 – Land use regulations must require all new residential, commercial, and institutional development incorporates cisterns for freshwater storage, sized to support water needs during prolonged drought conditions.

Policy 9 – Freshwater cisterns must not be included in the calculation of lot coverage.

17. Section D.5 – SUBDIVISION OF LAND is added as follows:

Subdivision is the legal process of dividing a parcel of land into two or more lots. It is one of the most negatively impactful mechanisms for increasing housing density and shaping settlement patterns. On Denman Island, subdivision potential has historically been allocated without fully accounting for environmental features and functions, groundwater constraints, cultural heritage, or long-term community values.

The creation of new lots on Denman Island has generally not resulted in affordable or diverse housing. Instead, subdivision has increased land values, encouraged speculation, fragmented larger parcels, and undermined ecological protection and cultural heritage. Development of subdivided lands may also strain groundwater resources and alter Denman Island’s rural character. For this reason, subdivision was amended during the 2022-2026 Denman Housing Review Project to focus on community benefits.

Policy 1 Adopt or amend Land Use Bylaw regulations to restrict or where possible prohibit subdivisions except in accordance with the policies in this

Plan.

Policy 2 Subdivision regulations may support lot consolidation or boundary adjustments with no increase in number of lots.

Policy 3 Subdivision may be supported where it is limited to the following purposes, subject to compliance with the Land Use Bylaw:

- a) Boundary adjustment;
- b) Lot consolidation;
- c) Parkland, conservation, or community use dedication;
- d) Heritage conservation purposes, including Indigenous cultural or historical heritage protection;
- e) Utility, infrastructure, or service parcels; and/or
- f) Non-market housing parcels.

Policy 4 Subdivision for uses not identified in Policy 3 is generally not supported. Where such applications are considered, they should demonstrate clear community benefits. Such benefits include:

- the provision of land for preservation of natural environments and ecologically sensitive areas;
- the provision of land to preserve groundwater regions;
- the provision of land to protect archeological sites and other cultural heritage interests;
- the transfer of land to a First Nation or Indigenous governing body, where feasible and mutually agreed, for housing, cultural, conservation, or community purposes;
- the provision of land for community park or public open space;
- the provision of land for community sewage treatment facilities or community water systems;
- the provision of community wells for domestic water supply;
- the provision of fire protection infrastructure, including storage reservoirs;
- the provision of easements or rights of way for utilities or publicly accessible trails;
- the provision of community facility;
- the provision of land for community facility or use;
- the provision of community facility or service in a commercial building;

- the provision of non-market housing; and/or
- the provision of any other amenity which is similar in nature to the foregoing and/or is consistent with the objectives and policies of the OCP.

Policy 5 Land transferred to support the uses in Policy 3 and 4 must be secured through a covenant, restrictive covenant, housing agreement, or other legal instrument registered on title to the parent lot prior to final subdivision approval. These instruments must ensure that, upon subdivision, the resulting lot is restricted to the intended uses.

Policy 6 The minimum lot size for subdivision should be 64 hectares.

Policy 7 Minimum lot size requirements do not apply to uses identified in Policies 3 and 4, except in the case of boundary adjustments and subdivisions intended for residential use.

Policy 8 The minimum lot size for residential use created through subdivision should not be less than 1 hectare.

Policy 9 In evaluating a subdivision, consideration shall be given to the appropriateness of any proposed amenity, regardless of whether a zoning amendment is required, and to the impacts of the proposed use on the subject lot and surrounding lots.

Policy 10 Where land is proposed to be rezoned to allow subdivision for additional private lots or where land is being subdivided for community use involving the construction of buildings and/or infrastructure and/or the use of groundwater the applicant must demonstrate land suitability, including but not limited to:

- a) potable water availability;
- b) wastewater disposal capability;
- c) impacts to sensitive ecosystems;
- d) impacts to species at risk;
- e) impacts to critical habitat;
- f) impacts to groundwater recharge;
- g) hazard lands and geotechnical suitability
- h) visual impacts
- i) proposed new property lines, buildings and structures setback a minimum of 200m from the natural boundary of the seas and recorded archeological sites

Policy 11 Where subdivision supports additional residential density, trail dedications, parkland, or public open space should be designed to connect to

existing networks.

Policy 12 In areas where individual septic systems are adversely affecting the environment or the quality of water, subdivision regulations should require a sewer system for new development.

Policy 13 All subdivisions intended to support housing must ensure an adequate water supply, supported by a climate-informed water management plan that demonstrates long-term aquifer sustainability under projected climate change conditions.

18. Section D.5 – THE VILLAGE, The Village – Policies is amended by deleting the subsection titled SUBDIVISION, including Policy 4 and Policy 5 and renumber remaining policies accordingly.
19. Section D.5 – THE VILLAGE, The Village – Policies, subsection USE AND DENSITY is amended by deleting Policy 6 and renumber remaining policies accordingly.
20. Section D.5 – THE VILLAGE, The Village – Policies, subsection USE AND DENSITY, Policy 9 is amended by deleting the words “and such a dwelling could be permitted in the same building as the commercial operation” and replacing them with “as accessory to the commercial use”.
21. Section D.7 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL SITES is amended by, in the first paragraph, deleting the words “There are a number of sites on Denman Island worthy of protection and preservation because of their spiritual importance to First Nations people, their historical value to more recent settlers or, in the case of the natural features, some important aesthetic quality. Middens, long abandoned First Nation habitations and petroglyphs remind us of a pre-European presence here.” And replacing them with “Denman Island is rich with both Indigenous cultural history and settler history, both of which need to be protected and preserved. Archaeological evidence, including shell middens and petroglyphs, indicates extensive Indigenous village sites and long-standing use of the land.”
22. Section D.7 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL SITES, Guiding Objective is amended by deleting the word “aboriginal” and replacing it with “Indigenous and settler”.
23. Section D.7 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL SITES, Archaeological, Historic and Natural Heritage Sites – Policies, Policy 2 is amended by adding the word “cultural” after the word “identified”.
24. Section D.7 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL SITES, Archaeological, Historic and Natural Heritage Sites – Policies, Policy 5 is amended by adding the words “and other cultural” after the word “archaeological”.
25. Section D.7 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL, HISTORIC AND NATURAL SITES, Archaeological, Historic and Natural Heritage Sites – Policies is amended by adding the following new policies as the next sequential numbers:

Policy 7 The Local Trust Committee should protect archeological sites and culturally significant areas through Heritage Conservation Areas, covenants, and other regulatory tools

Policy 8 Cultural artifacts and remains found on lot must be reported to the K'omoks First Nation and the Provincial Government.

26. Section E.1 - HOUSING is amended by, in the second paragraph, deleting the following:
- “Limits on these forms of housing are designed to address the possible negative impact of locally increased density. Initiatives to provide opportunities for non-market housing of various kinds are ongoing.”
27. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Guiding Objective is amended by deleting it in its entirety and replacing it with the following:
- “To support a diversity of dwelling types and tenures while protecting the natural environment, rural character, community resilience and respecting First Nations’ interests.”
28. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing Objectives is amended by deleting Objectives 1 to 4 and replacing them with the following:
- Objective 1 To ensure that housing options support and preserve community diversity, including a range of ages, incomes, and vocations, in support of an inclusive, resilient island community.
- Objective 2 To ensure that housing options are carefully aligned with groundwater availability and sewage disposal capacity, protect groundwater quality and maintain the island’s rural character and environmental integrity.
- Objective 3 To respect First Nations interests including limiting the impact of residential development to sites of Indigenous cultural significance.
- Objective 4 To encourage and support the development of non-market housing and opportunities for seniors to age in place.
29. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Subdivision is amended by deleting Policies 1 to 8 in their entirety.
30. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policy 9 in its entirety.
31. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policy 10 and replacing it with the following:
- “In the Residential designation, zoning regulations should ensure that development maintains a low-density character. One additional dwelling unit may be permitted by zoning regulations on larger lots where adequate fresh water supply and wastewater treatment are available.”
32. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policy 11 and replacing it with the following:
- “In the Rural designation, zoning regulations should ensure that development maintains a low-density, rural character. Additional dwelling units, such as secondary suites or detached secondary dwellings, may be permitted by zoning regulations only on sufficiently large lots where adequate fresh water supply and

wastewater treatment are available.

33. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policy 12 in its entirety.
34. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policies 14 to 16 in their entirety.
35. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Use and Density is amended by deleting Policies 19 and 20 in their entirety.
36. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Zoning Amendments is amended by deleting Policy 28 in its entirety.
37. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Zoning Amendments is amended by deleting Policy 29 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

The Local Trust Committee should consider zoning amendment applications for multi-unit, non-market housing (attached or detached) provided:

- that the proposal is not located in a connectivity area identified on Schedule D;
- that the proposal is small-scale and rural in character, with building form, density and site layout compatible with the surrounding pattern development;
- that the siting and height of the proposal is sensitive to the surrounding land uses and does not impact negatively on adjacent properties;
- that the proposal proves an adequate supply of potable water and an adequate sewage disposal system in accordance with applicable regulations;
- that the applicants enter into a housing agreement to secure non-market housing with the Local Trust Committee;
- that any environmentally sensitive areas on the lot are identified and the applicant registers a conservation covenant to protect such areas;
-
- that the proposed development will not place undue strain on existing public services and infrastructure; and
- that residential rental tenure zoning is considered to ensure long-term affordability is maintained in perpetuity.

38. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Zoning Amendments is amended by deleting Policy 30 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

Consideration may be given to applications in any Land Use Designation in which residential uses are a permitted principal use to rezone land for clustered, small-unit housing where:

- a) units consist of small dwellings such as tiny homes on wheels or manufactured homes;
- b) units are constructed to the BC Building Code, or CSA standards for manufactured homes, or equivalent;

- c) units are anchored to the ground, connected to a source of potable water and connected to an approved wastewater system;
 - d) the overall scale, density and site layout of the development are small-scale and compatible with the surrounding pattern of development;
 - e) the total floor area of units shall not exceed any maximum dwelling floor area for that zone;
 - f) the development is designed as a clustered form to minimize site disturbance and maintain open space;
 - g) communal facilities may be provided, such as shared laundry or a common building; and
 - h) the development would not be located in areas containing sensitive ecosystems or of cultural or archaeological significance.
39. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Zoning Amendments is amended by deleting Policy 31 in its entirety.
40. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing – Policies, subsection Zoning Amendments is amended by adding the following policy, and renumbering subsequent policies accordingly:
- Multi-unit housing either attached or detached can include:
- shared laundry and other buildings
41. Section E.1 – HOUSING, Housing - Advocacy Policies, Advocacy Policy 2 is deleted in its entirety.
42. Section E.2 – ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, Economic Activities – Policies, subsection Home Occupations is amended by deleting it in its entirety and replacing it with the following:
- “Home-based guest accommodation where permitted as a home occupation should be limited to rooms within a principal dwelling, where the owner or manager of the business is living on the property fulltime.”
43. Section E.2 – ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, Economic Activities – Policies, subsection Home Occupations is amended by adding the following policy after Policy 11, and renumbering subsequent policies accordingly:
- “Home-based assisted living is permitted as a home occupation.”
44. Section E.4 – AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES, Agriculture and Resource Policies is amended by deleting Policy 12 in its entirety and renumbering subsequent policies accordingly.
45. Section E.4 – AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES, Agriculture and Resource Policies, Policy 13 is amended by adding:
- “protects the land for conservation purposes,” after the words “non-farm use or exclusion”; and
 - “including non-market, rental and special needs housing secured with a housing agreement” after the words “essential community service”.

46. Section E.4 – AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES, Agriculture and Resource Policies, Policy 14 is amended by adding a third bullet as follows: “provides land for the purposes of building non market housing secured with a housing agreement”.
47. Section E.4 – AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES, Resource - Advocacy Policies is amended by deleting the section heading and replacing it with “Agriculture and Resource - Advocacy Policies”.
48. SCHEDULE B - PERMITS AND PLAN ADMINISTRATION, CONTENTS is amended by deleting “Appendix D Density Banking”.
49. SCHEDULE B – APPENDICES, CONTENTS is amended by deleting “Appendix D Density Banking”.
50. APPENDIX D DENSITY BANKING is deleted in its entirety.
51. Schedule “C” – Land Use Designations is amended as per Schedule 2, attached to and forming part of this Bylaw.

DENMAN ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

BYLAW NO. 260

Schedule 2

