



File No.: 6500-20  
Affordable Housing  
Regulations and Policy  
Review

DATE OF MEETING: June 24, 2019  
TO: Mayne Island Local Trust Committee  
FROM: Brad Smith, Island Planner  
Southern Team  
COPY: Robert Kojima, Regional Planning Manager  
Gary Richardson, Island Planner  
SUBJECT: Mayne Island Housing Regulations and Policy Review Project

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## RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee:**
  - a) **Endorse the attached Mayne Island Housing Regulations and Policy Review Project Charter and associated scope of work, timelines and budget**
  - b) **Direct staff to begin working on Mayne Island Housing Regulations and Policy Review Project deliverables**

## REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to introduce the Mayne Island Housing Regulations and Policy Review project charter for Local Trust Committee (LTC) for endorsement and to recommend an associated scope of work, timelines and budget.

At the May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 LTC meeting, the LTC agreed to conduct a review of current housing regulations, policies and related incentives on Mayne Island. Housing affordability continues to be a significant challenge that has social and economic impacts for the community. While the Mayne Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw are progressive in attempting to address housing affordability (with respect to secondary suites for example), there may be additional measures that could be taken to increase affordability on Mayne Island.

The objectives of the proposed project include:

- To assess the impact and effectiveness of existing housing related regulations and policies on affordability on Mayne Island;
- To gauge community interest and perspectives for considering greater flexibility and incentives within housing regulations/policies; and,
- To explore alternatives and provide options for regulatory and/or policy changes that potentially provide more flexibility and incentives for increasing housing affordability.

## BACKGROUND

Housing is one of Mayne Island LTC's Top Priorities. Significant effort has been invested by the LTC over the years on this issue. In 2010, the LTC appointed the Mayne Island Housing Options Task Force to review and make recommendations about current and future housing needs for Mayne Island. The 2011 [Mayne Island Housing Options Task Force Report](#) led to the legalization of secondary suites in 2014. The Task Force report contains several other recommendations including the need to explore options for affordable housing related incentives, changes to zoning, and ensuring the increase of diversity of housing options is an ongoing LTC priority.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) has recently completed an assessment of housing needs in the Southern Gulf Islands. The February 2018 [Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment](#) report concluded that *"all evidence clearly points to serious shortages in secure, appropriate and affordable housing for low to moderate income earners"*. Community members described the housing situation as bordering on crisis, and as having serious impacts on themselves and their families, community well-being and economic sustainability.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Policy/Regulatory**

#### ***Islands Trust Policy Statement:***

The Trust Policy Statement does not specifically include policies related to housing, but it does acknowledge the need for sustainable and healthy communities to have access to affordable housing. Policy 5.2.3 identifies the need to address the social impacts of development, which could be reasonably linked to the negative social impacts a lack of affordable housing may cause.

#### ***Official Community Plan/Land Use Bylaw:***

The Mayne Island OCP includes a community objective specific to supporting effective housing policies for affordability, long term rental opportunities and special needs (section 1.2.5). The OCP also contains objectives pertaining to economic diversity, a vital local economy, and smart growth principles. Land Use Bylaw 146 is progressive in attempting to address housing affordability with respect to legalizing secondary suites and apartments but offers limited incentives for other affordable housing options such as density clustering or siting of tiny homes.

### **Issues and Opportunities**

Issues arising from the project include the potential for housing affordability objectives to conflict with other OCP objectives with respect to preserving the local environment and other community objectives. Consideration of all impacts of proposed changes, including ecological, cultural and socio-economic implications may help to alleviate this risk. There is also the potential for community members, property-owners and other affected stakeholders not in favour of any additional changes to have concerns with re-visiting regulations and policies currently in place. Robust public and stakeholder consultation that clarifies the potential impacts of regulatory and policy changes may help to alleviate these concerns.

Opportunities arising from the project include the potential to implement a new or refined framework of housing regulations and policies that provide greater flexibility and incentives for the development and retention of affordable housing on Mayne Island. An additional opportunity may be to allow or incentivize

flexible housing in a manner that minimizes development footprints and related environmental and visual impacts. Examples of changes that may be considered include:

- Specific regulations with respect to the construction and siting of small homes
- Lot coverage and density bonus schemes to encourage the creation of rental units
- Zoning changes to reduce restrictions on secondary dwellings/cottages (could include house size limits)

### **Consultation**

Consultation will be required with the public along with stakeholders that may be impacted by proposed changes to housing related housing regulations and policies.

Public/stakeholder outreach to disseminate results of initial research findings and to gauge community opinion on potential changes to housing regulations and policies are proposed to include at least one public house/community information meeting. Outreach may also include:

- Information mail-outs
- Web-based project updates
- Web-based public survey(s)
- Stakeholder specific meetings if requested

If bylaw amendments proceed in next fiscal (i.e. 2020-21) the public and stakeholders will also be engaged during the bylaw amendment process, including holding a public hearing.

### **Statutory Requirements**

In the first stage of the project (i.e. conducting research, documenting results and undertaking community consultation) there are no statutory requirements to consider.

If at a later stage the LTC resolves to undertake bylaw amendments, statutory notification requirements of the *Local Government Act* will need to be considered including appropriate agency and First Nation referrals, public hearing requirements and bylaw adoption procedures.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee endorse the attached project charter and that project work commence by staff.

The project charter is meant to be consistent with the direction provided by the LTC at the May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 LTC meeting where it was agreed a review of housing regulations and policies would be a priority LTC project.

The 2011 Housing Options Task Force report contains several recommendations including the need to explore options for affordable housing related incentives, changes to zoning, and ensuring the increase of diversity of housing options is an ongoing LTC priority.

The CRD Housing Needs Assessment identified that affordable housing is near a crisis situation which has significant impacts on both the local economy and the social fabric of the community. Implementing more flexible and incentivized regulations and policies with respect to affordable housing could help to address these issues and provide greater stability to the community.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The LTC may consider the following alternatives to the staff recommendation:

**1. Request further information**

The LTC may request further information prior to making a decision. Staff advise that the implications of this alternative are potential delays to commencing and completing the project. If selecting this alternative, the LTC should describe the specific information needed and the rationale for this request. Recommended wording for the resolution is as follows:

*That the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee request that the staff provide further information regarding...*

**2. Request revisions to the draft project charter**

The LTC may request revisions to the draft project charter prior to making a decision. Staff advise that the implications of this alternative are potential delays to commencing and completing the project. If selecting this alternative, the LTC should describe the specific revisions needed and the rationale for this request. Recommended wording for the resolution is as follows:

*That the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee request that the staff make the following revisions to the draft Mayne Island Housing Regulations and Policy Review project charter... (list revisions)*

**3. Reconsider conducting a review of affordable housing regulations and policies**

The LTC may choose to focus on different aspects of affordable housing or other unrelated priorities. Recommended wording for the resolution is as follows:

*That the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee not pursue a review of affordable housing regulations and policies as a priority project.*

**4. Receive for information**

The LTC may receive the report for information

**NEXT STEPS**

Next steps include:

- LTC project charter endorsement (June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 LTC meeting)
- Begin conducting research on existing housing regulations/policies including build-out analysis and jurisdictional scan (e.g. review policies in other jurisdictions)
- Develop draft framework/table of contents for discussion paper
- Present findings to LTC via a staff report and discussion paper prior to commencement of public and stakeholder consultation (November 5, 2019)

Submitted By:	Brad Smith Island Planner	June 14, 2019
Concurrence:	Robert Kojima Regional Planning Manager	June 14, 2019

**ATTACHMENTS**

Project Charter