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Subject:Housing as a public health priority

Date:Mon, 5 Oct 2020 10:01:07 -0700

From:Rob James [REDACTED]

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

Organization: [REDACTED]

To:pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca, pgrove@islandstrust.bc.ca,
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Dear Trustees,

You have the opportunity to consider the report of the Housing Working Group. The proposal lays out a two-phase process for addressing the lack of affordable housing on the island. Phase 1 of the proposed project is to develop a list of prioritized actions to retain and enhance the human and environmental ecosystems. Phase 2 imagines housing as a social justice, economic and environment issue and proposes a permanent, resourced community advisory body to develop a framework for action that considers and optimizes human and ecosystem needs through integrated planning, policy development and recommendations for urgent implementation by relevant agencies and organizations.

The urgency of this initiative cannot be understated. The current policy environment implicitly accepts as just and appropriate that families living in unheated cabins, lacking heat, light and sanitation. The current policy environment accepts as appropriate the families should live in cars, vans and other tents. The current situation, implicitly endorsed by current Island Trust and CRD policies guarantees a state of housing precarity, and accepts a *two solitudes* approach to our island life.

The proposal before you images a way out of the current quagmire and toward a solution that is just, healthy and sustainable. I urge you to seize this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Robert C James

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[REDACTED]