



Islands Trust

# Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project Terms of Reference

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## BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a statement of objectives and policies to guide local government decisions on planning and land use within the plan's geographic area.

Taken together, the policies that comprise an OCP form the medium-term vision of a community and provide predictability for residents about the community's priorities and the type of land use change they can expect to observe around them. Section 473 of the [Local Government Act](#) describes the required content of an OCP. Section 474 of the *Act* describes optional content that local governments *may* include in their OCPs.

Salt Spring Island OCP Bylaw No. 434 was adopted in 2008 and has undergone only a handful of amendments since that time; the last being a modest change to industrial lands policy in 2020.

A land use bylaw is the set of regulations that determines how land on the islands is used today. It includes matters such as:

- Uses
- Lot sizes
- Density
- Building location
- Building height

Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw No. 355 (adopted in 1999) was never comprehensively updated to enact the policy direction expressed in the OCP.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project is to modernize the Salt Spring Island official community plan and land use bylaw to provide a framework that will guide residential growth and change on Salt Spring Island over the next decade or more. It will do so in a manner that addresses contemporary challenges while remaining consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goal of the Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project is to **increase housing options and housing equity** on the island in ways that integrate:

- The interests of First Nations with treaty and territorial interests in the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area;
- Ecosystem integrity and connectivity; and
- Climate change resiliency.

## PROCESS GOALS

The goals of the Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project process are to:

- Strengthen relationships with area First Nations through their early and ongoing engagement in the design and execution of a project process that reflects shared values;
- Ensure broad opportunities for community input through a robust public engagement process that reflects the diversity of the community;
- Ensure the Salt Spring Island OCP and LUB are consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement;
- Build on the strengths of the existing OCP by retaining those elements that continue to reflect the Island's aspirations; and

- Where appropriate, analyze and incorporate the evidence and recommendations of other governments, agencies, and non-governmental organizations and consider enacting policy and regulatory changes accordingly.

## **PROJECT SCOPE**

The scope of the Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project will be guided by focus on the above-noted goal and consistency with the [Islands Trust Policy Statement](#).

The five themes below will define the structural parameters of the project:

### **A. Engage First Nations in Process Design and Execution**

For several years, First Nations with treaty and territorial interests on Salt Spring Island have told the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SS LTC) that they want to be at the table from the earliest days of major projects. As a substantive update to the Salt Spring OCP and LUB will guide change on the Island for at least a decade, it is anticipated that area First Nations will take a significant interest in the OCP-LUB Update Project and expect a level of involvement beyond simply commenting on policies as they are developed. This will take an investment of both time and budget, but will result in a product that is responsive to the [Islands Trust Reconciliation Declaration](#).

### **B. Update, Streamline and Build On Content in the Existing OCP and LUB**

The existing OCP will be used as the point of departure for the update. While a number of community priorities have emerged that merit attention, Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area remains within the Islands Trust Area, and the OCP must be consistent with the Object of the Islands Trust. Therefore, it is anticipated that environmental protection and growth management policies in the current document will endure, albeit in a refreshed form. The Islands Trust Policy Statement is currently undergoing a major amendment, the results of which will inform the scale of change that a renewed OCP can invite. Experience has demonstrated that the current OCP is too prescriptive in areas where greater flexibility may be required to achieve community objectives.

The Land Use Bylaw will then be updated in accordance with the policy direction of the OCP.

This project will also be used to update demographic, contextual and technical information in both the OCP and LUB and to review the required content of OCPs under Section 473 of the [Local Government Act](#). Amendments will be drafted to communicate clearly and in plain language to improve accessibility of the document.

### **C. Use Existing Reports and Plans to Inform Policy and Regulation**

Over the past five years Islands Trust and a number of local agencies and advocacy groups have published reports and plans that identify recommended actions for the LTC in high priority areas and other land use topics. These reports and plans should be the first point of reference as SS LTC considers updates to, and development of new, OCP policies and LUB regulations.

Guiding documents will include, but are not limited to:

- Islands Trust Reconciliation Action Plan
- Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan
- Summary of Recommendations (SS LTC Housing Action Program Task Force)
- Homes for Islanders (Salt Spring Solutions)

- Salt Spring Island Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (Capital Regional District), Salt Spring Island Active Transportation Plan (Capital Regional District)
- Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal (Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance)

**D. Use Islands Trust Housing Project Toolkit**

This project will apply the project methodology proposed in the Islands Trust Housing Toolkit, which sets out a structured approach to LTC action on addressing housing issues. In particular, this project will use the Suitable Land Analysis that has been developed as part of the Toolkit to identify areas of the island that are more, or less, suitable for residential development. The data and mapping inputs into the Suitable Land Analysis will be customized to Salt Spring Island and developed in a transparent and engaged manner.

**E. Update Existing Development Permit Areas and Consider New Development Permit Areas**

Existing development permit areas should be revisited to ensure they are consistent with current best practices and evidence-based planning. Additional development permit areas should be considered, such as wildfire resiliency DPA and watershed protection DPA.

**F. Develop Indicators to Monitor Success**

Through this project a small suite of indicators will be developed and included in the OCP by which SS LTC and the general public can measure whether the goals of the update project are being achieved.

**PLANNING PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

The OCP/LUB Update Project is expected to take 30 months. Figure 1 provides an overview of the process, while Table 1 outlines the planning process showing key project phases, key activities and deliverables. While project activities are reasonably well defined, public engagement activities can be adapted based on the feedback of a Project Advisory Committee and other community interest holders, provided it meets overall project timelines and objectives.

**Figure 1: Planning Process Timeline**



**Table 1: Planning Process**

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	KEY DELIVERABLES
<p><b>Phase 1</b></p> <p><b>PROJECT INITIATION</b></p> <p><b>February 2024 to September 2024</b></p>	<p><i>Early First Nations Engagement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise of intention to launch OCP/LUB update project</li> <li>• Engage in discussions about co-development of project process</li> <li>• Understand capacity expectations to participate</li> </ul>	<p>Letters of Understanding with individual Nations or organizations representing multiple Nations</p>
	<p><i>Research and Analysis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Communities Assessment undertaken by consultant</li> <li>• Compile Baseline Conditions Report</li> <li>• Compile OCP policies that have not been implemented</li> </ul>	<p>Complete Communities Assessment Report</p> <p>Baseline Conditions Report</p> <p>Unimplemented Policies Report</p>
	<p><i>Community Engagement Preparation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement and Onboarding of Project Consultants</li> <li>• Develop project website and other communication materials</li> <li>• Identify key community interest holders</li> <li>• Form Project Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Confirm Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Establish Project Advisory Committee</p> <p>Establish Consultant-Led Working Groups</p>
<p><b>Phase 2:</b></p> <p><b>TARGETED COMMUNITY VISIONING</b></p> <p><b>October 2024 to December 2024</b></p>	<p><i>Ongoing First Nations Engagement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand First Nations vision and goals for Salt Spring Island</li> </ul>	<p>Phase 2 First Nations Engagement Summary</p>
	<p>Develop housing options and housing equity vision statement, identify key issues and assess priorities. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events/workshops</li> <li>• Community-led group interest holder meetings</li> <li>• Community survey</li> <li>• Interest holder interviews</li> <li>• Meetings tailored to particular demographics or specific interest areas</li> </ul>	<p>Phase 2 Engagement Summary</p> <p>Vision Statement</p> <p>Comprehensive list of planning issues and priorities</p>

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	KEY DELIVERABLES
<b>Phase 3:</b> <b>OCP DEVELOPMENT</b> January 2025 to June 2025	Develop and explore policy options related to key issues through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Advisory Committee meetings</li> <li>• Form consultant-led subject-area working groups as needed</li> </ul>	Preferred Policy Options
	Staff development of Draft OCP amendments	Draft OCP amendments
<b>Phase 4:</b> <b>DRAFT OCP REVIEW</b> and <b>INITIATE LUB UPDATE</b> July 2025 to November 2025	<i>Ongoing First Nations Engagement</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations review of Draft OCP amendments</li> </ul>	Phase 4 Engagement Summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events/open house to review Draft OCP amendments</li> <li>• Interest holder meetings</li> <li>• Survey to assess reception to the Draft OCP amendments</li> </ul>	Phase 4 Engagement Summary Final Draft OCP
	Staff development of Draft LUB amendments	Draft LUB amendments
<b>Phase 5:</b> <b>OCP ADOPTION</b> and <b>DRAFT LUB REVIEW</b> September 2025 to January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final edits to the Draft OCP</li> <li>• Public Hearing</li> <li>• Executive Committee approval</li> <li>• Ministerial approval</li> </ul>	Adopted OCP Monitoring Plan
	<i>Ongoing First Nations Engagement</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations review of Draft LUB amendments</li> </ul>	Phase 5 First Nations Engagement Summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events/open house to review Draft LUB amendments</li> <li>• Interest holder meetings</li> <li>• Survey to assess reception to the Draft LUB amendments</li> </ul>	Phase 5 Engagement Summary Final Draft LUB
<b>Phase 6:</b> <b>LUB ADOPTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final edits to the Draft LUB</li> <li>• Public Hearing</li> <li>• Executive Committee approval</li> </ul>	Adopted LUB

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	KEY DELIVERABLES
February 2026 to June 2026		

**PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS**

Project communications will be addressed in detail through a standalone project engagement strategy and plan. In general, however, project communications will include the following component parts:

- A memorable project name and tagline<sup>1</sup>
- A core visual style and suite of complementary graphics to be used for all initiatives and communication tactics throughout the project and corresponding engagement process. These graphics will be informed by the four integrated themes of the project: Housing options and housing equity; reconciliation with Indigenous People; ecosystem connectivity, and climate change resilience
- Tools and tactics to reach underrepresented segments of the population that are typically harder to reach through engagement processes
- Key messages that form the basis for communication materials, e.g., media releases, invitations, subscriber notices, posters, and enable the project team to speak with “one voice”, ensuring clear, concise, and consistent messaging across all communication. Key messages provide context, manage expectations around process and outcomes, and encourage people to become involved in the process. Key messages also communicate how participants’ input will be used. Engagement best practices suggest that participants will expect to know:
  - The project goals, boundaries or scope of the OCP-LUB update and the engagement process, i.e., what parts of the OCP-LUB are on the table vs. off the table at this time
  - how their input will be used to inform the OCP-LUB update
  - who will make the final decision, informed by community feedback, on the vision, goals, and land use concepts identified OCP-LUB
  - when and how the OCP and LUB updates will be adopted and implemented
- Accessing the following media channels as appropriate or available:
  - Social media
  - Print media
  - Print/digital promotion
    - Partnerships - Use local interest holding groups to amplify project messaging
  - Engagement Platform(s) Software

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community engagement and participation is a fundamental part of the OCP/LUB Update planning process. While SS LTC retains final authority over whether the plan is adopted, a strong level of input and ownership is important for the plan’s legitimacy. The planning process will seek to be equitable and reach a broad spectrum of the community.

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<sup>1</sup> If appropriate

Community members will be able to participate in the planning process for the Salt Spring Island OCP/LUB Update in a number of ways, including:

- Applying to join the OCP-LUB Update Project Advisory Commission
- Being recruited to a consultant-led working group
- Participating in community-led engagement activities
- Completing community surveys
- Attending open houses
- Sharing ideas and thoughts with SS LTC when the plan is presented at LTC open meetings and/or public hearings

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee has requested that staff apply the principles of [\*Beyond Inclusion – Equity in Public Engagement\*](#) to this project. Those principles are:

- 1) Invite participation within an authentic and accountable engagement process
- 2) Plan early and proactively
- 3) Establish respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples
- 4) Engage the internal diversity of a community
- 5) Work in a reciprocal relationship with communities
- 6) Tailor engagement plans to the context
- 7) Commit to ongoing learning and improvement
- 8) Advance systemic equity

A separate project engagement strategy and project engagement plan will be developed to implement the LTC's equity-focused engagement approach.

Engagement with First Nations and Indigenous island residents will be considered in a separate, but linked, First Nations engagement approach.

### **PROJECT ADVISORY COMMISSION**

A Project Advisory Planning Commission will be established as a special advisory planning commission to provide advice to the Project Team and act as a filter before project materials are provided to SS LTC for consideration.

The Project Advisory Commission will be comprised of up to 7 individuals from the community, ideally with broad geographic, social, cultural and professional representation.

Key roles of the OCP-LUB APC will be to:

- Advise on community engagement to ensure broad outreach is effectively undertaken throughout the community;
- Promote the project and public engagement opportunities within the community;
- Provide support to staff and consultants at public engagement events;
- Review background documents as directed by staff; and
- Provide feedback to staff and SS LTC on plan concepts, policy options, and the draft plan



## SUBJECT-AREA CONSULTANT-LED WORKING GROUPS

The consultant to lead engagement and policy option development on this project will establish subject-area working groups if the need for specialized expertise is identified.

The following subject-area working groups could be established:

- Housing Options and Housing Equity Working Group
- Climate Change Resiliency Working Group (with the following potential sub-groups):
  - Freshwater Sub-Group
  - Forest/Wildfire Sub-Group
  - Shoreline Sub-Group
- Short-term Rentals Working Group
- And other working groups, as needed.

Key roles of the consultant-led working groups will be:

- To review and synthesize relevant documents; and
- To provide policy advice based on document review and professional expertise

## AGENCY WORKING GROUP

A working group of staff from government agencies with jurisdiction over various Salt Spring Island services will be convened to ensure that those interests are appropriately reflected in the planning process and final documents.

## KEY COMMUNITY INTEREST HOLDERS

**Table 3: Key Community Interest Holders**

RESIDENTS	ADVOCACY GROUPS	SERVICE GROUPS	AGENCIES
Of Salt Spring Island Of British Columbia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property owners</li> <li>• Renters</li> <li>• Seniors</li> <li>• Students and youth</li> <li>• Healthcare workers</li> </ul>	Advocacy groups are organizations that use various forms of advocacy to influence public opinion and public policy  Examples on Salt Spring Island could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• SSI Community Health Society</li> </ul>	Service groups are organizations that provide tangible social or physical services to the community  Examples on Salt Spring Island could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islanders Working Against Violence</li> <li>• Salt Spring Conservancy</li> </ul>	Agencies are generally government or government-like organizations that provide physical or social services  Examples on Salt Spring Island are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Regional District (CRD)</li> <li>• North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD)</li> </ul>

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

SS LTC are the project champions. They set the project priorities, allocate resources and are the ultimate approval authority.

### **Planning Staff**

This project will be managed by the Regional Planning Manager, and coordinated by an Island Planner, with support from other planners and administrative staff as required. Staff will oversee consultants undertaking community engagement, technical studies and data acquisition and processing. Staff will lead the actual policy writing.

### **OCP-LUB Update Project Advisory Committee**

The OCP-LUB Update Project Advisory Committee will provide advice to Planning Staff and SS LTC on matters concerning the project. It will receive draft strategies from staff or consultants before implementation, and review draft summaries and reports before submission to SS LTC. The Project Advisory Committee will have the opportunity to review the draft OCP or sections thereof as they are completed and make recommendations to staff for amendment before submission to SS LTC.

### **Residents and General Public**

All individuals with an interest in the local area will be invited to participate in the planning process through providing input to identify issues and opportunities and review draft OCP concepts, plans and guidelines.

### **Interest Holder Groups**

Interest holder groups such as service and advocacy groups will contribute to the planning process in the same way as residents, but may also be the subject of focussed consultation with respect to their particular areas of interest. Interest holder groups can also help with outreach, issue identification, opportunities and actions and reviewing policy options.

### **Consultants**

Consultants may be retained to provide expertise or to undertake studies to supplement the expertise of the Project Team. Special topic areas could include community engagement, wildfire risk mitigation, watershed protection, and hazard areas.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER INITIATIVES**

The OCP/LUB Update Project will ensure that the OCP advances, or considers opportunities to advance, other Islands Trust, agency, or community initiatives. Current initiatives that will influence the content of the OCP and LUB are:

**Islands Trust Policy Statement:** The Islands Trust Policy Statement is currently undergoing a renewal process of its own. It is anticipated that by the time a renewed Salt Spring Island OCP is ready for adoption the Policy Statement project will be complete. Any OCP adopted by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee must be consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

**Islands Trust Reconciliation Action Plan:** The Islands Trust Reconciliation Action Plan describes the organization's path toward better relationships with the First Nations with treaty and territorial interests in the Islands Trust Area. The Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Process should advance that plan, particularly Actions 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4.

**Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan:** The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee recently endorsed a Watershed Protection Plan for the Island. The OCP-LUB Update Process should consider opportunities to advance the recommended actions of that plan.

**Salt Spring Island Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan:** The CRD recently completed a Wildfire Resiliency Plan for the island. This plan contains several actions that SS LTC can consider to support community wildfire resiliency. These actions could be advanced through the OCP-LUB Update Process. Alternatively, policies proposed through the OCP-LUB Update Process should not be inconsistent with the recommendations of the Resiliency Plan.

**Salt Spring Island Active Transportation Network Plan:** The CRD recently completed an Active Transportation Network Plan for the Island. The renewed OCP should facilitate or complement the actions proposed in that plan.

Current non-governmental initiatives that could influence the OCP-LUB Update Process include:

**Transition Salt Spring Climate Action Plan 2.0:** The 2020 Climate Action Plan authored by Transition Salt Spring provides a range of recommended actions that SS LTC could take to advance climate change resilience in the community. The OCP Update Process should consider opportunities to advance those recommended actions.

**Salt Spring Solutions Homes for Islanders:** This 2023 publication from Salt Spring Solutions proposes a range of initiatives that SS LTC could consider to advance housing options for middle and low-income earners on Salt Spring Island. The OCP Update Process should consider opportunities to implement the recommended actions of this report.

**BUDGET**

Item Descriptions	Total Budget Cost
Early and ongoing consultation with 13 First Nations with treaty and territorial interests on SSI	\$26,000
Consultant to conduct and facilitate a robust and inclusive public engagement program and policy options development	\$50,000
Consultants to provide technical review if required	\$10,000
Communication and educational info, printouts, mail-outs, brochures, posting of meetings and legal notifications	\$9,000
Technical support on virtual and in-person sessions, and facility rental for in-person sessions, open houses and community engagement meetings	\$3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$96,000</b>

**DELIVERABLES**

The following deliverables will be achieved through the Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update Project:

1. Updated Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan
2. Updated Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw
3. Monitoring Plan

## PROJECT CHANGE MANAGEMENT

A change management structure is proposed to ensure that the project achieves its intended objectives and outcomes on time and on budget. However, it is also understood that new information or developments often emerge in the course of public policy processes that may impact the original project plan. The Regional Planning Manager will bring forward substantial changes that would affect the project budget or timeline outlined in this Terms of Reference for LTC and approval. The evaluation will assess the following, as necessary:

- Budget and schedule impacts
- Alignment to the project objectives
- Contract implications
- Relational implications (public, inter-governmental)
- Feasibility and benefits of the change
- Complexity and/or difficulty of the change options requested
- Scale of the change solutions proposed
- Risk to the project in implementing the change
- Risk to the project in not implementing the change
- Impact on the project in implementing the change (time, resources, finance, quality)