

Salt Spring Island OCP-LUB Update

Community Engagement and Communications Strategy

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND¹

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SS LTC) is updating its official community plan (OCP) and land use bylaw (LUB) to address the community's changing housing needs. The goal of the 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
- Climate change resiliency

This project will engage the general public and other interest holders to influence residential land use change on the island in the decade(s) to come in a manner consistent with the project goals and Islands Trust Policy Statement. Engagement will be scaled in accordance with the limited scope of the proposed OCP and LUB update.

Purpose

The purpose of this community engagement strategy is to provide a high-level description of who will be engaged in this project, when, and in what ways. A more detailed community engagement plan, including timelines, will be developed and deployed following a competitive process to hire a consultant to design and support community engagement initiatives.

When well executed, community engagement benefits all parties involved. The community gains an understanding of the project and the knowledge that their educated opinions will be incorporated into the outcomes, and the local government gains greater insight into the community's priorities and aspirations.

The SS LTC strives to connect with the community in creative, meaningful, and useful ways and to accurately reflect the feedback of residents in policy design and decision making. This document intends to act as a dynamic and flexible outline for gathering input from Salt Spring Island residents and other interest holders to update the island's OCP and LUB.

Commitment to the Community

SS LTC has resolved to strive for 'equity in participation' for all its public engagement processes.

¹ See the Project Terms of Reference for additional background information.

Goals and Principles

SS LTC and the project team will adhere to the following principles of public engagement as described in [Beyond Inclusion: Equity in Public Engagement](#):

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 reciprocal relationship with communities
6. Tailor engagement plans to the context
7. Commit to ongoing learning and improvement
8. Advance systemic equity

Indigenous Reconciliation

In 2019 Islands Trust Council passed a [Reconciliation Declaration](#) that commits the organization to “establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.” Additionally, the organization seeks to incorporate the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) into its work. Because of the unique relationship between Islands Trust and the First Nations with treaty and territorial interests in the Islands Trust Area, as well as Indigenous residents of the island, their involvement in this project will be addressed in a separate engagement strategy document.

Project Phasing

The OCP-LUB Update Project will take place in six (6) phases. The most involved community engagement will occur mainly in Phase 2, Phase 4 and Phase 5, and the legislated public hearing in Phase 6. Phases 1, 3, and 6 will include ongoing public communications and transparent processes.

Figure 1: Planning Process Timeline



2. APPROACH, METHODS AND TOOLS

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

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 Advisory Planning 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 hearing

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) provides a commonly applied spectrum of participation categories in public processes as follows:

Table 1: IAP2 Engagement Levels

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Table 2 below shows the IAP2 level(s) of engagement that staff anticipate at each stage of the OCP Update Project:

Table 2: Anticipated IAP2 Engagement Levels

PHASE	LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	ENGAGEMENT TOOLS	PRIMARY ENGAGEMENT GOALS
All Phases	Consult Involve	Project Advisory Committee and Subject-Area consultant-led working group meetings	To provide the SS LTC with confidence both process and plan have gone through a community filter To obtain advice, creative ideas and feedback throughout the project.

PHASE	LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	ENGAGEMENT TOOLS	PRIMARY ENGAGEMENT GOALS
			To provide confidence to the SS LTC on technical matters
Phase 1: Project Initiation	Inform Consult	Project updates; Interest holder interviews; Pop-up info events; Data collection from agencies and NGOs	To build information base and begin to raise awareness of the project
Phase 2: Targeted Community Visioning	Inform Consult Involve Collaborate	Workshops; community surveys; interest holder meetings; community-led engagement	To raise awareness of the OCP Update process, understand community vision, issues and aspirations, engage the community on ideas for the future
Phase 3: OCP Development	Inform Consult Involve	Project Advisory Committee meetings, Consultant-led Working Group meetings	Work with appointed community members to develop and refine ideas and generate solutions
Phase 4: Draft OCP Review & Initiate LUB Update	Inform Consult	Open houses; community surveys; media; social media	To receive feedback from the public on the draft OCP
	Inform	Website update; social media and media update	To advise that staff are commencing Draft LUB update based on new OCP policies
Phase 5: OCP Adoption & Draft LUB Review	Inform	Public hearing; media, social media	To inform the public of the final Draft OCP and opportunities to make submissions to the SS LTC
	Inform Consult	Open houses; community surveys; media; social media	To receive feedback from the public on the draft LUB
Phase 6: LUB Adoption	Inform	Public hearing; media; social media	To inform the public of the final Draft LUB and opportunities to make submissions to the SS LTC

Achieving Equity in Engagement

The SS LTC will seek to achieve equity in its project engagement by:

- Seeking out traditionally under-represented groups to participate in engagement activities by attending their events or scheduling opportunities specifically for them

- Scheduling engagement opportunities at times and locations that allow for a diversity of islanders to attend/participate
- Providing engagement activities across a range of media: in-person, online, hard-copy, etc.
- Providing assistance to participants with communication or mobility differences to ensure their perspectives are captured

3. OUTCOMES AND PRODUCTS

The purpose of this initiative is to generate legislative updates to the Salt Spring Island OCP and LUB to meet the project goals in a manner consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement.

It is anticipated that a professional planning consultant will support engagement initiatives by designing processes, supporting activities and analyzing results. Public submissions made during the project engagement will be published to the project website, subject to privacy restrictions.

An exception to this may be engagement with First Nations, where confidential or sensitive information may not be posted publicly.

The major engagement product to be delivered will be a report to the LTC from the project planning consultant on the results of Phase 2 – Targeted Community Visioning – which is the phase with the most expansive engagement opportunities. This report will summarize the results of the engagement process and set the parameters of the types of residential land use objectives and policies that the community wishes to see on Salt Spring Island. The aggregation and analysis of feedback received following public review of the draft OCP and LUB amendments will also be important products to emerge from the engagement process.

At other phases of the project staff will provide regular reports to SS LTC about the outcomes of the various engagement activities of those phases.

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Table 3 below shows the engagement tools and techniques proposed for each phase of the project. These tools and techniques will be further refined by a project consultant.

Table 3: Communications and Engagement Schedule

PROJECT PHASE	ENGAGEMENT TOOL/TECHNIQUE	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
	Project website	Planning Staff/IT Communications	Populate project webpage as important project information becomes available. This will be the main source for news and information about the project

PROJECT PHASE	ENGAGEMENT TOOL/TECHNIQUE	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
All Phases	Project Advisory Planning Commission (APC)	Project APC members/Planning staff	Timely advice to SS LTC at key project intervals
	Agency Working Group	Agency staff/Planning staff	Technical information to inform policy development
	Subject-area consultant-led Working Group meetings	Planning Consultant/Ad-hoc working group members	Technical information to inform policy development
	Subscriber notifications	IT Communications/ Planning staff	E-mail notifications to subscribers to convey important project information and engagement opportunities at key intervals
	Print and digital media	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Convey important project information and engagement opportunities at key intervals
	Posters	Planning staff/IT Communications	Posters in high-traffic locations advising of important project information and engagement opportunities at key intervals
	Social media	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Facebook and Instagram posts advising of important project information and engagement opportunities at key intervals
Phase 1: Project Initiation February 2024 to September 2024	Project branding	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Project logo, colour scheme and tagline
	Project website	Planning Staff/IT Communications	Dedicated project webpage
	Educational videos	IT Communications/ Planning Staff	Videos that describe “What is an OCP?”, “What will the process look like?”
	Interest holder interviews	Planning staff	Understanding of project needs of decision-makers at key Island agencies and institutions
	Data collection from agencies and NGOs	Planning staff/Agency working group	Database of useful information

PROJECT PHASE	ENGAGEMENT TOOL/TECHNIQUE	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
	Kick-off meeting	SS LTC/Planning staff	Meeting at which project plan is shared and community questions answered
Phase 2: Targeted Community Visioning October 2024 to December 2024	Workshops	Planning consultant/Planning staff	
	Community-led engagement	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Feedback from self-organized groups about issues related to project goals
	Surveys	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Feedback from individual community members about issues related to project goals
	Interest Holder Meetings	Planning staff/SS LTC	Greater awareness among interest holding groups of opportunities to participate in project process
	Interactive Activities (Walking Tours/Photo Competition, etc)	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Community knowledge and enthusiasm about OCP-LUB Update Project and project themes
	Pop-Up Event(s)	Planning staff/ Planning consultant	Attendance at high-traffic locations to build awareness of the OCP-LUB Update Project and solicit feedback
	Educational videos	IT Communications/ Planning Staff	Videos that describe outcomes of visioning process and next steps
Phase 3: OCP Development January 2025 to June 2025	Project APC meetings	Project APC/Planning staff	Timely review and advice to SS LTC at key project intervals
	Consultant-led subject-area working groups	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Technical information to inform policy development
	Agency Working Group	Agency staff/Planning staff	Technical information to inform policy development
Phase 4: Draft OCP Review &	Open houses	Planning staff	Summary of attendance and engagement responses from open house activities
	Surveys	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Summary of survey responses
	Subscriber notifications, Website, Social media and print and digital media updates	Planning staff/IT Communications	To advise that staff are commencing Draft LUB

PROJECT PHASE	ENGAGEMENT TOOL/TECHNIQUE	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLES
Initiate LUB Update	Consultant-led subject-area working groups	Planning consultant/Planning staff	Technical information to inform regulation development
	Agency Working Group	Agency staff/Planning staff	Technical information to inform regulation development
	Project APC meetings	Project APC/Planning staff	Timely review and advice to SS LTC at key project intervals
Phase 5: OCP Adoption & Draft LUB Review	Public hearing	SS LTC/Planning staff	To inform the public of the final Draft OCP and opportunities to make comment
	Subscriber notifications, Website, Social media and print and digital media updates	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Updates to inform the public of the final Draft OCP and opportunities to make comment
	Open houses	Planning staff	Summary of attendance and engagement responses from LUB open house activities
	Surveys	Planning staff	Summary of survey responses
	Subscriber notifications, Website, Social media and print and digital media updates	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Updates to inform the public of the Draft LUB and opportunities to make comment
Phase 6: LUB Adoption	Public hearing	SS LTC/Planning staff	To inform the public of the final Draft LUB and opportunities to make comment
	Subscriber notifications, Website, Social media and print and digital media updates	IT Communications/ Planning staff	Print and digital advertising to inform the public of the final Draft LUB and opportunities to make comment and subsequently of bylaw adoption

5. WHO WILL BE ENGAGED?

Table 5 below shows a prospective list of individuals and groups to be engaged through the OCP-LUB Update Project and the highest IAP2 level at which they can anticipate engagement.² This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

² First Nations and local Indigenous people will be engaged under a separate strategy to be developed with the assistance of an Indigenous engagement professional.

Table 4: Key Community Interest Holders

RESIDENTS	ADVOCACY GROUPS	SERVICE GROUPS	AGENCIES
Highest IAP2 Level that may be achieved: Consult	Highest IAP2 Level that may be achieved: Consult	Highest IAP2 Level that may be achieved: Involve	Highest IAP2 Level that may be achieved: Collaborate
Of Salt Spring Island Of British Columbia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners • Renters • Seniors • Students and youth • Retail and service industry workers 	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"> • Chamber of Commerce • SSI Community Health Society 	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"> • Islanders Working Against Violence • Salt Spring Conservancy 	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"> • Capital Regional District (CRD) • North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) • Other improvement districts • Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) • Ministry of Municipal Affairs • School District 64 • Island Health • Agricultural Land Commission • BC Ferries

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities concerning community engagement for the OCP-LUB Update Project are anticipated to be as follows:

Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

SS LTC are the project champions. Trustees should:

- Champion public participation and project process
- Promote opportunities for the community to engage and encourage all interest holders to participate

- Provide staff with information about what they are hearing about the engagement process and recommend improvements, with special attention to improving accessibility for equity-seeking groups
- Act as neutral participants in public engagements with goal to hear views and facilitate constructive dialogue
- Be open-minded to the results of the engagement process

Islands Trust Staff

Islands Trust staff implement the engagement strategy and plans endorsed by SS LTC. Planning staff should:

- Ensure that engagement meets engagement goals and principles;
- Ensure that engagement occurs generally in accordance with project timelines;
- Manage planning consultants designing and supporting community engagement on behalf of SS LTC
- Coordinate the logistics of community engagement
- Incorporate community engagement outcomes in policy development
- Advise SS LTC of challenges with the engagement process and recommend improvements

Planning Consultant

Planning staff implement the engagement strategy and plans endorsed by SS LTC. The planning consultant should:

- Develop engagement plan that meets engagement goals and principles
- Support the delivery of community engagement activities
- Prepare analysis and recommendations based on engagement results
- Prepare reports on engagement activities and results

OCP-LUB Update Project Advisory Commission

The project APC provides document review and advice to SS LTC based on referral by SS LTC or the Project Coordinator. The project APC should:

- Champion and promote public participation in the OCP-LUB Update project process
- Review consultant-led community engagement plan and provide advice to enhance community engagement process
- Promote opportunities for the community to engage in the process and encourage their community contacts to do so
- Provide support, where requested by the Project Coordinator at public engagement events
- Work to facilitate constructive public input when attending public engagement events, with special attention to improving accessibility for equity-seeking groups

Consultant-led subject-area working groups

Planning consultants may, on an ad-hoc basis, convene subject-area working groups to provide advice on specific technical issues. The consultant-led working group(s) should:

- Provide advice to the planning consultant who will in turn use it to inform policy development

Agency Working Group

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

- Provide technical advice to the project coordinator
- Provide information to other staff or elected officials from their agency

Agency Officials

Elected officials from other agencies on Salt Spring Island will have an important role ensuring the renewed OCP and LUB reflect their agencies interests and align with their own agency's plans. These elected officials should:

- Promote opportunities for the community to engage in the process and encourage their community contacts to do so
- Attend public engagement events
- Consider draft OCP and draft at LUB at open meetings upon referral

Residents and General Public

All individuals with an interest in the local area will be invited to participate in the planning process. Residents should:

- Provide 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 should:

- As a group, participate in community-led engagement
- Use networks to promote engagement opportunities
- If requested, provide assistance with outreach, issue identification, opportunities and actions and reviewing policy options.

7. KEY MESSAGES

These are the most important points to convey to the public through this engagement process.

We are updating some parts of the Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw

- The current Salt Spring Island OCP remains a good representation of the community's values and the Islands Trust object
- We are primarily targeting the areas that impact residential land uses (housing) and the areas that residential land uses have a direct impact on
- We are not re-writing the whole document

What is an official community plan OCP and how is it used?

- The Official Community Plan is a guide to how we will use our land and resources and how the community will evolve over the following decades
- The OCP sets the parameters for the types of regulations that the land use bylaw should contain
- The OCP should guide the decisions of the SS LTC and inform the decisions of other agencies
- The OCP reflects resident aspirations and what we care about as a community, as well as the object of the Islands Trust

What is a land use bylaw and how is it used?

- A land use bylaw is the set of regulations that sets out limits and permissions of how each parcel of land on the island is allowed to be used. In a municipality, it is often called a zoning bylaw
- The land use bylaw should reflect the objectives and policies of the OCP

An OCP update requires our community to be forward-thinking about how residential land use on Salt Spring Island will look and feel over the coming decade

- When discussing OCP priorities, it is important to be ambitious, creative, and innovative within the limits of the Islands Trust object and Policy Statement

Your voice matters!

- It is important that feedback received represents a range of perspectives, as land use changes that emerge from the OCP and LUB can have wide-ranging impacts on the community. Therefore, a range of opinions and priorities are valid and should be heard – especially those from historically underrepresented groups
- The LTC wants an OCP that better represents the true demographic make-up of the island

8. BUDGET

SS LTC has budgeted \$96,000 to undertake the OCP-LUB Update Project in fiscal 2024/25.

Of this, approximately \$50,000 is anticipated to be available to hire a planning consultant to lead community engagement initiatives while approximately \$26,000 will be set aside to engage First Nations. The remainder will be used for project logistics, communications, technical review and incidentals.