



# Salt Spring Island

## Project Advisory Planning Commission

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### AGENDA

Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2025  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Location: Salt Spring Island United Church - Upper Hall, 111 Hereford Ave

- 1. AGENDA** 5 minutes
  - 1.1 Approval of Agenda
- 2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** 5 minutes

*Please propose amendments to the draft minutes as worded resolutions in writing to be presented at the meeting*

  - 2.1 Draft Minutes of the September 18, 2025 Meeting – *For Adoption* Page 2
- 3. BUSINESS ITEMS**
  - 3.1 Review presentation, Kevin Brooks – McElhanney Page 8
    - Purpose of OCP
    - Project Scope
    - Process Update
    - Review Findings
    - Next Steps/Schedule
  - 3.2 General Discussion
- 4. OTHER BUSINESS**
- 5. ADJOURNMENT**

#### Attachments

- Technical Review Report
- Gap Analysis



**Salt Spring Island  
Project Advisory Planning Commission  
Minutes of a Regular Meeting**

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**Date of Meeting:** Thursday, September 18, 2025

**Location:** United Church, Upper Hall Meeting Room  
111 Hereford Avenue, Salt Spring Island

**Members Present:** Eric March, Chair  
Tim Hiltz, Commissioner  
Robert Steinbach, Commissioner  
Riley Donovan, Commissioner  
Maxine Leichter, Commissioner  
John Cade, Commissioner

**Regrets:** Anne Gunn, Commissioner

**Staff Present:** Chris Hutton, Regional Planning Manager  
Kalyaan Selvakumar, Planning Team Assistant  
Carly Bilney, Recorder (electronic)

**Others Present:** Sandra Borton, McElhanney Consultant Engagement Lead

**1. AGENDA**

Chair March called the meeting to order at 1:12 p.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

**1.1 Approval of Agenda**

A request was made to add discussion about the role of the Advisory Planning Commission ("the Commission") if it is not covered in the verbal update Item 3.1 Terms of Reference.

**By general consent** the agenda was adopted as amended.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**2.1 Draft Minutes of the August 07, 2025 Meeting – For Adoption**

Concern was expressed about the point listed under Item 3.1.1 that says: "Discussion by commissioners continued related to ... addressing the technical issues of the current OCP is not

identified in the plan presented.” Comments were made that this does not make sense without background information to provide context. A suggestion was made to amend the point.

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

that the Advisory Planning Commission amend the Minutes of the August 07, 2025 meeting by removing: “that addressing the technical issues of the current OCP is not identified in the plan presented” and replacing it with “that addressing background issues to inform discussion of the current OCP is not identified in the plan.”

**DEFEATED**

**Eric March, Robert Steinbach, John Cade and Tim Hiltz Opposed**

Caution was expressed for potentially misinterpreting the original sentiment of what was said. A suggestion was made to remove the comment.

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

that the Advisory Planning Commission amends the Minutes of the August 07, 2025 meeting by removing: “that addressing the technical issues of the current OCP is not identified in the plan presented.”

**CARRIED**

**By general consent** the Advisory Planning Commission agreed to amend the Minutes of the August 07, 2025 meeting to correct the spelling of Robert Steinbach’s surname.

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

that the Advisory Planning Commission accept the minutes as amended.

**CARRIED**

### **3. BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **3.1 Housekeeping:**

- **Terms of Reference Review and Engagement - Verbal Update, Chris Hutton**

Planner Hutton provided a verbal update and made the following comments:

- This is a special Advisory Planning Commission created to bring together a group of people that would be deeply engaged in a particular project
- The project involves modernizing the Salt Spring Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw to provide a framework for residential growth over the next decade
- The goals of the project are outlined in the terms of reference
- The Local Trust Committee will make referrals to the Advisory Planning Commission to provide general guidance
- The Commission will assist the Local Trust Committee in the implementation and engagement of a communication strategy
- There has not been enough time to engage with key interest groups in the community and the Commission can help identify who should be involved
- One thing that was missed in launching the survey was notifying the Commission that it was going out

- About five weeks remain in the process and we are now participating in active engagement
- The Commission has an advisory role and is to make consensus-based recommendations to the Local Trust Committee that should be in the form of a resolution

RPM Hutton reviewed the Code of Conduct that applies to the Advisory Planning Commission as a committee within the mandated organization of the Islands Trust.

### **3.2 Update from Sept. 11 LTC meeting:**

- **Items Presented**
- **Budget - Verbal Update, Chris Hutton**

Discussion ensued and concern was expressed about the engagement process, specifically about how the survey should not have been sent to community members before Commissioners had the opportunity to provide feedback on the questions. The following comments were made:

- Frustration was expressed at receiving notices about events the same week that the event takes place; notice should be given at least a week in advance if people are to participate
- Commissioners can help the consultants use the right terms on outreach materials (e.g. Salt Spring does not have a “recreation centre”)
- Commissioners should be used to ensure communications materials are meaningful to people
- Concern was expressed about whether what happens at Advisory Planning Commission meetings carries weight in the overall project discussion or if it is just for optics to demonstrate to the community that a Commission has been appointed
- The wording of survey questions and the context provided can influence responses
- The survey included bias that leads to certain outcomes because the options provided were limited
- Even with budget and timeline constraints, it is incumbent upon Commissioners to give the Local Trust Committee everything it needs to be useful with its time
- The survey was premature; it can be done again and done right
- It is essential that the process is done right

Staff expressed a desire to gather input on how to engage with the community, and commented that the timeline and budget for the project does not allow for an in-depth review of survey questions. It was noted that the Official Community Plan designates Ganges, Fulford and Channel Ridge as village centres. Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- The Commission was struck in April and there was ample time to vet the survey before it launched, and to do so in a manner that respected the budget
- Perhaps the inclusion in the Official Community Plan of Channel Ridge as a village centre is something that should be looked at
- Perhaps Fulford is not a good place for development given water issues
- If additional funding and time is needed to redo a proper survey, it would be worth looking into

Staff commented that the project is not a re-write of the Official Community Plan (not blue-sky engagement), and changes need to develop policy around what is practical and achievable. Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- We need to work collectively to address common concerns on Salt Spring
- The Integrated Housing Strategy – that involves the Capital Regional District, Salt Spring Island Foundation, and the Islands Trust – has been underway for some time to identify housing opportunities. Staff advised that the CRD's Affordable Housing Strategy engaged with Salt Spring Staff and the project has been discussed with Trustees.

Discussion continued about how to move forward. A suggestion was made to request a new survey that fixes technical issues that arose with the existing survey and uses questions that have been vetted by Commissioners. Comments were made that the additional expense and time needed to produce another survey are necessary to elicit meaningful community response.

It was moved and seconded, that the Advisory Planning Commission recommends that the Local Trust Committee direct staff and consultants to produce a new survey that is subject to vetting by Commission members before it is distributed. Discussion on the motion was held and the following comments were made:

- Hesitation was expressed for including the phrase "before it is distributed" in the motion
- If it is not feasible to redo the survey, the overall engagement is discredited
- A potential consequence of compromising the current survey could be a significant expansion of the budget or cancellation of the project
- The request to the Local Trust Committee for additional funds could be turned down
- The survey is already compromised and that is why a new survey is necessary
- It is the job of the Advisory Planning Commission to provide meaningful input and Trustees do not have to follow the Commission's recommendations

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

that the Advisory Planning Commission recommends that the Local Trust Committee direct staff and consultants to produce a new survey that is subject to vetting by Advisory Planning Commission members before it is distributed.

**CARRIED**

**John Cade, Riley Donovan and Maxine Leichter in favour**

**Eric March and Robert Steinbach opposed**

**Tim Hiltz abstained**

Discussion continued about how the development of the bylaw as part of the project includes various opportunities for public engagement. Comments were made that there is opportunity to get the process right.

### **3.3 Phase 2 Initiation - Community Visioning**

- **Input on Next Phase Values Workshop, McElhanney**

Sandra Borton, McElhanney Consultant Engagement Lead, outlined the community visioning portion of the meeting and described the process of engagement between the consultants and the Advisory Planning Commission.

A break was held between 2:44-2:50 p.m.

Ms. Borton introduced herself and commented that she is there to support Commissioners in reaching consensus-based recommendations to the Local Trust Committee. She invited Commissioners to introduce themselves and share what they love most about Salt Spring (responses included: the small-town character, farm stands, nature, the sense of community, the ability to access services and live in nature, and hearing about why people come to Salt Spring, etc.) and what they hope to get out of the Commission:

- More of a sense of engagement with the Official Community Plan from working folks
- More emphasis on making sure people on the island that earn a wage can find a comfortable way to live on the island
- To see the community's concerns conveyed without a vision being imposed on them
- A sense that we are able to build on some of the foundational values that exist on Salt Spring around community
- To find ways to work together to develop communities that address the broad cross section of people who live on the island (seniors, working folks, etc.)
- To use creativity to find solutions to housing challenges
- To address housing needs to maintain the community
- To see jobs and futures for the children at Gulf Islands Secondary School

The consultant commented on the common ground shared by Commissioners. She then asked Commissioners to score their personal levels of familiarity and knowledge of provincial regulations related to official community plans, the Trust Policy Statement, the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan, and the process in which they are currently engaged.

In response to a question from Ms. Borton about which tools would serve them best, Commissioners expressed preference for concise information on printed paper.

Next, Commissioners were asked to join pairs and predict the values they anticipated community members would voice on specific topics. After the exercise, the consultant noted that the common value that arose in each group is a desire for a secure future.

A Commissioner commented that over the past 50 years the values of Salt Spring islanders have shifted dramatically.

#### **4. OTHER BUSINESS - None**

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

**By general consent** the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

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Eric March, Chair

**CERTIFIED CORRECT:**

DRAFT





# **SALT SPRING ISLAND**

## **OCP UPDATE**

**NOVEMBER 25, 2025**



# Outline

**Purpose of an OCP**

**OCP update process Scope**

**Process Update**

**Background Review Findings**

**Next Steps**





# Purpose of an OCP

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is **not a regulatory** document. The document provides a framework for **decision making** by the Local Government. An OCP serves as a foundational policy document used by local governments to guide future decisions and development. Its core purpose and roles in **decision-making** include:

1. Articulating a Long-Term Vision
2. Providing a Policy Framework for Consistency
3. Protecting Public Health, Safety & General Welfare
4. Encouraging Sustainability and Resilience
5. Enabling Informed, Transparent Decision-Making

In local government **decision-making**, the OCP becomes the reference point for:

- Zoning changes and land subdivisions
- Infrastructure and capital program investments
- Community development initiatives
- Environmental protection measures
- Housing affordability strategies

By anchoring policy in a community developed vision, the OCP promotes proactive, coordinated, and transparent governance.

1. Housing needs assessments updates
2. Climate action and GHG profiles updates
3. Environmental relevance and updates
4. Infrastructure considerations



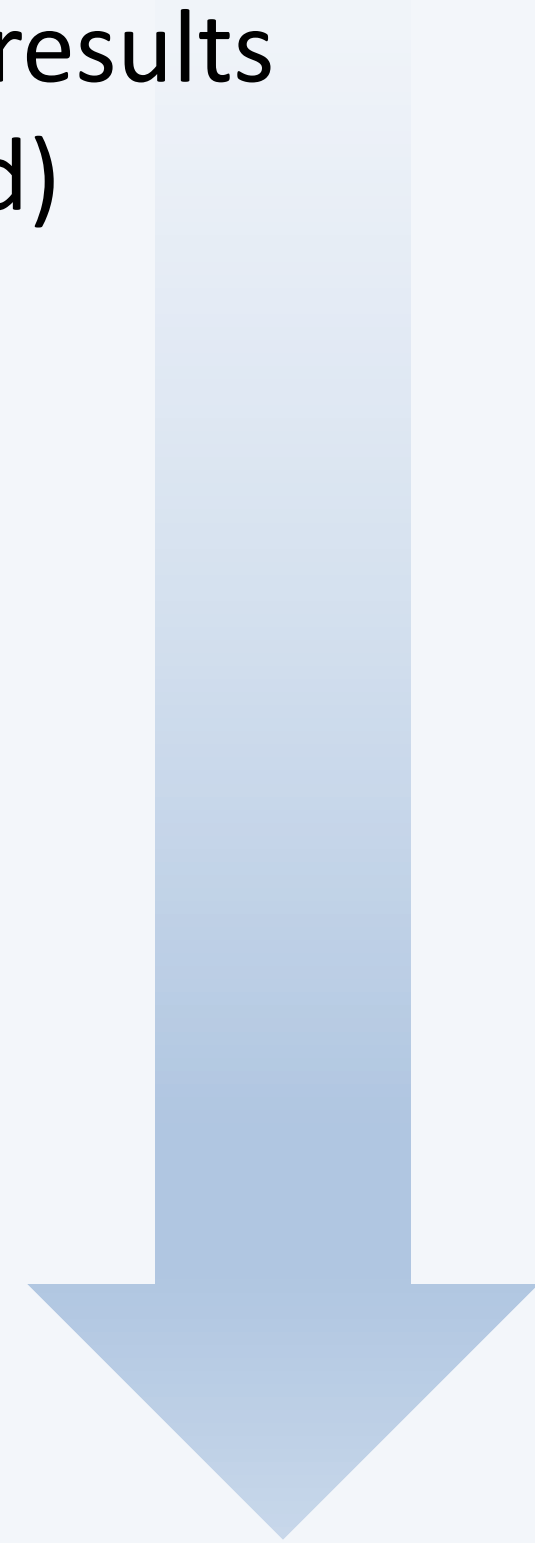


# Process Update

- Initial engagement – complete and currently processing results (additional supplementary phase 1 engagement approved)
- Background Review/ Gap Analysis – Complete (Today)
  - GIS and Mapping
- OCP Policy Tracking Matrix (On-going)
  - Policy review / revision
  - Document restructuring



- Initial engagement – complete and currently processing results (additional supplementary phase 1 engagement approved)
- **Background Review/ Gap Analysis – Complete (Today)**
  - **GIS and Mapping**
- OCP Policy Tracking Matrix (On-going)
  - Policy review / revision
  - Document restructuring



# Purpose of Background Review

## **1.Establish Context and Baseline**

It helps understand the existing policy framework, historical decisions, and guiding principles that shape current practices. This ensures new policies build on a solid foundation rather than duplicating or contradicting prior work.

## **2.Identify Strengths and Gaps**

By analyzing previous reports, plans, and assessments, you can highlight what is working well and pinpoint areas where policies are outdated, unclear, or missing. This is essential for creating targeted improvements rather than broad, unfocused changes.

## **3.Ensure Alignment with Current Needs and Regulations**

Background review checks whether existing policies align with updated legislation, community priorities, and emerging issues such as housing needs, climate resilience, or infrastructure capacity. This prevents compliance risks and ensures relevance.

## **4.Support Evidence-Based Decision Making**

Reviewing technical studies, spatial data, and prior analyses provides factual grounding for recommendations. It ensures that proposed policies are informed by reliable data rather than assumptions.

## **5.Promote Consistency and Integration**

Many policy documents overlap or use different terminology. A review helps consolidate and harmonize language, objectives, and strategies across sections, making the final policy clearer and easier to navigate.



## What we need from PAPC Today?

- Are the findings relevant?
- Are the recommendations outlined consistent with your understanding?
- Do the recommendations address the four scope areas of the project?





REVIEW OF TECHNICAL  
REPORTS



OCP REVIEW (GAP ANALYSIS)



GIS SPATIAL REVIEW





Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan

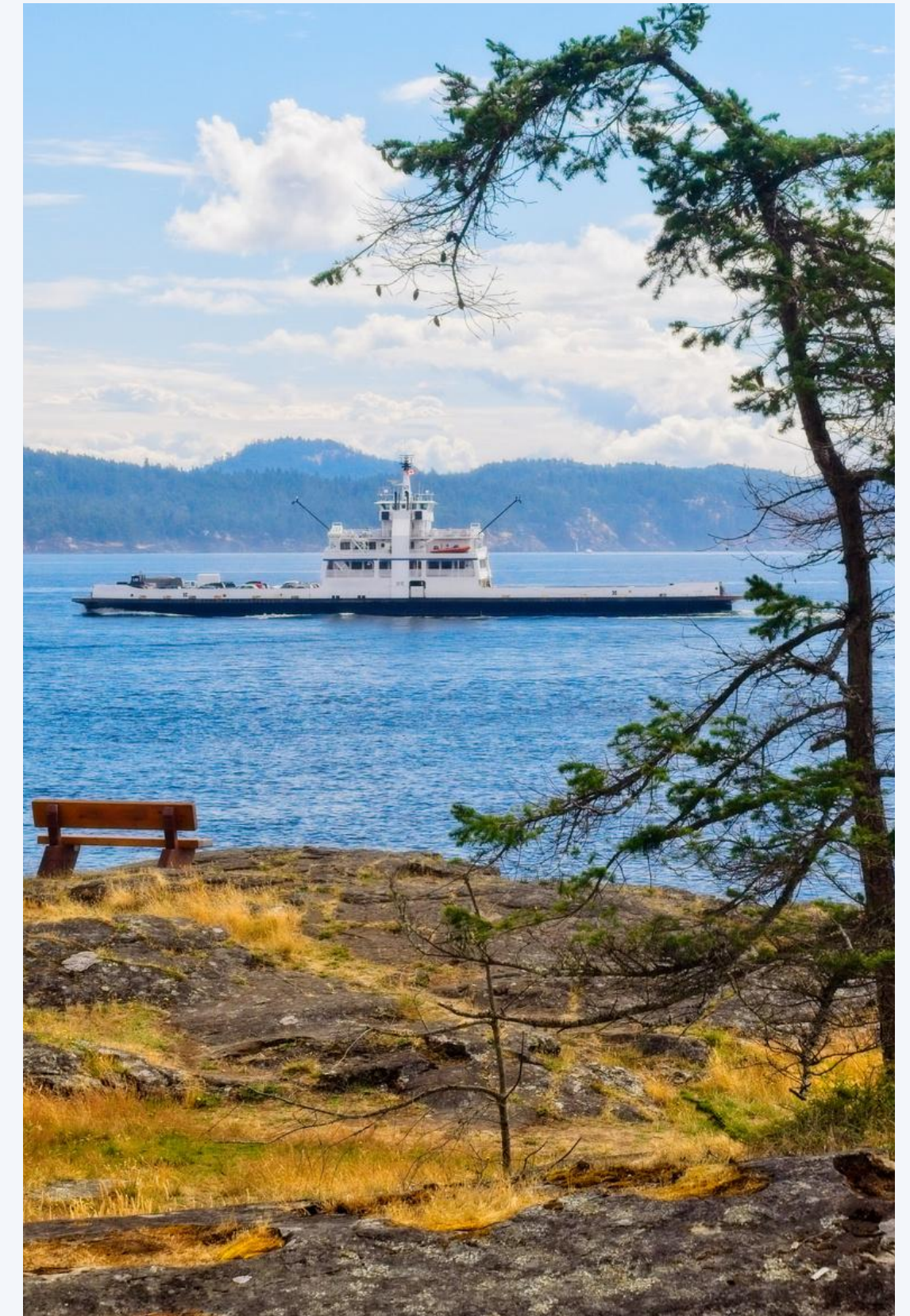
Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal 2020 - 2030

Island Trust Housing Needs Assessment

Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for Salt Spring Island

Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit

Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0







Require	Require water assessments for new development and consider a groundwater-focused DPA
Establish	Establish a no-net-loss policy for all ALR and productive non-ALR land
Treat	Treat key food and farm infrastructure (ex. The Root, seed banks, processing, storage, composting, etc.) as essential community services
Encourage	Encourage agri-tourism and collaboration with Indigenous food knowledge to strengthen local food resilience







Focus	Focus housing in serviced areas (especially Ganges Village) to limit sprawl and protect ecosystems
Support	Support diverse options like suites, ADUs, and small-scale multi-unit homes with clear criteria
Refine	Refine policies for density bonuses, strata ADUs, rental tenure, and removal of owner-occupancy rules
Coordinate	Coordinate with CRD and the Province to support underhoused residents and seasonal/agricultural workers
Guide	Guide development away from sensitive ecosystems and groundwater recharge areas, including seniors and multi-family housing





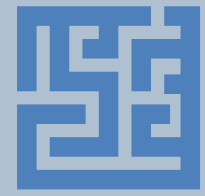
- Land use section of OCP should be written with climate resilience as an organizing principle



- **Park Proximity Map** - Most parcels on the island are within 1000-metres of a park. Notable gaps include parcels along Beddis Road and in Fernwood
- **Parcel Density Map** - Highlights where development is already concentrated, helping identify areas more suitable for infill or servicing upgrades
- **Bus Route Map** - Shows 200-metre buffer. Parcels within buffer can be highlighted as suitable for higher density or infill development due to good transit access



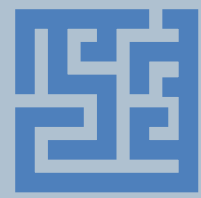




### **Highlights opportunities and strengths of existing OCP with recommendations for update**

#### Key Opportunities for Improvement:

- Create dedicated sections for environment, housing and climate
- Align policy with updated legislation and local housing needs
- Use clear, consistent language
- Ensure objectives are supported by actionable policies
- Refresh and consolidate content



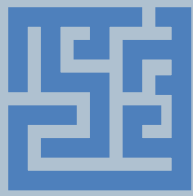
Repetition in policy language

Volume of policies difficult to navigate

Occasional vague language

Consolidate overlapping policies into dedicated section, while maintaining comprehensive coverage

Strengthen policy language and replace ambiguous terms



Affordable housing not treated as a central planning priority

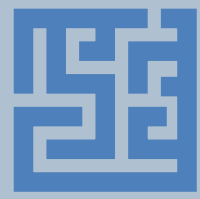
Not in alignment with provincial housing legislation and requirements

Housing policies in land use section

Create dedicated housing section that consolidates all related objectives and policies

Reference Housing Needs Report and 5- and 20-year projections

Streamline land use section to focus on location, form and scale of residential development



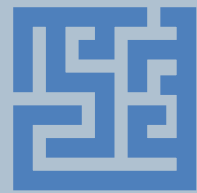
Lack of updated GHG  
emission targets and policies

Some policies out of date  
with current regulations

Implement current targets for  
reduction of GHG emissions

Avoid referencing external  
documents that could change  
over time

Encourage development of low  
carbon and energy efficient  
building through incentives



Currently divided into two volumes, which can be cumbersome

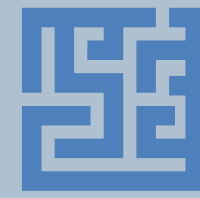
Complex numbering format

Lack of visual aids

Consolidate into single document with all definitions together

Simplify numbering system and add headers that are more clear

Supplement document with visual aids to help reader navigate content



Some policies use  
vague language

Some objectives lack  
supportive policies

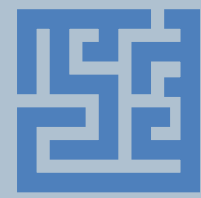
Opportunity to streamline  
and condense concurrent  
policy themes

Use directive words like *shall*,  
*should*, and *may*

Ensure that policy direction  
supports new guiding  
principles and objectives of  
each section

Create key policy areas within  
the document to streamline  
while making it easier to find  
policies





Some policies may not  
be as relevant to SSI  
today

Multiple aquatic/marine related  
land use designations

Potentially outdated  
infrastructure specifics

Keep aspects of existing policy  
framework while modernizing  
to retain those relevant to SSI

Potential opportunity to  
consolidate land use  
designations

Ensure infrastructure capacity  
and details are updated and  
relevant as necessary

# Next Steps

Task	Proposed Timeline	PAPC meeting Schedule
Supplementary Phase 1 Engagement Plan	Jan 2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Project needs</li><li>PAPC needs</li><li>Key project feedback process</li></ul>		January 22 <sup>nd</sup> (Workshop)
Educational/Engagement Materials	January 2026	
Continued First Nations Outreach	On-going	
Draft Vision and Guiding Principles	January 2026	
Engagement Plan Review		January 29 <sup>th</sup>
Supplementary Phase 1 Engagement	Feb – March 2026	
Refine Land Use Designations	February 2026	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>OCP Status Update</li><li>Key Questions Review</li><li>LUB Findings</li></ul>		March 2 <sup>nd</sup>
1 <sup>st</sup> preliminary Draft OCP	Feb - March 2026	
Supplementary Engagement Findings		April 23rd



# Thank you!

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## Any questions?





# **Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan**

## **Technical Review Summary Report**



**December 2025**

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# INTRODUCTION

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area is undertaking an update to the Salt Spring Island (SSI) Official Community Plan (OCP). The OCP update is focused on the areas of environmental protection, housing development, and climate change resilience.

## Purpose of Official Community Plan

An OCP provides a framework for decision-making by the local government and is not a regulatory document. Instead it serves as a foundational policy document used to guide future decisions and development. Further information on what exactly an OCP is used for is found below:

### IT DOES:

- Outline the community's desired vision
- Include objectives and policies to achieve vision
- Include a framework that officials use to justify land-use decisions
- Enable developers and residents to plan with clarity and confidence
- Align with other municipal bylaws and zoning amendments
- Protect the community by guiding land use away from hazards such as flood zones and steep slopes

### IT DOES NOT:

- Get approved without being vetted by the community
- Contain objectives and policies contrary to community vision
- Override provincial requirements for housing needs
- Rezone land or stop future rezoning applications from being submitted
- Remove or alter the island's population goals
- Remove existing protections that have been established through regulatory documents



The Technical Review Summary Report provides an assessment of the key technical and policy documents that relate to settlement patterns on SSI. To address and plan for housing affordability, environmental protection, and climate change resilience on SSI, an update to the OCP is required.

McElhanney has been retained to provide consulting services to support SSI in completing a comprehensive review and update of the OCP. The technical review summary report is identified in Phase 1 of the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Amendment Project work plan. This task entails providing an assessment of the current OCP and supporting documents, identifying strengths to build upon and areas requiring updates to address contemporary housing challenges and regulatory requirements.

## **List of Documents Reviewed**

The Technical Review includes the following documents:

- Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan
- Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment
- Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for Salt Spring Island
- Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit
- Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal 2020-2030
- Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0 (CAP 2.0)

Each of the sections in this report contains a summary of the documents above, along with a table of key policy recommendations relevant to the OCP and LUB review. Strategies are split into three key categories: environmental protection and water preservation, climate action, and housing and development.

# DOCUMENT REVIEW

## ***Environmental Protection and Water Preservation***

### Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan (March 2023)

This multi-agency watershed protection plan covers 2023-2032 and was jointly developed and endorsed by the Capital Regional District, Islands Trust, and North Salt Spring Waterworks District. The plan represents a unified approach to watershed stewardship in a complex jurisdictional environment where responsibility is shared among federal, provincial, Indigenous, and local governments, water service providers, and community organizations. Building on previous strategies from the past two decades, including Islands Trust's Freshwater Sustainability Strategy (2021) and North Salt Spring Waterworks District's Strategic Plan (2021), this plan consolidates collaborative action toward watershed protection.

The plan addresses critical water availability challenges and development pressures through 19 actions organized into five categories: Watershed Ecosystem Science, Groundwater Science, Community Water Use Efficiency and Stewardship, Watersheds and Drinking Water Protection Planning, and Watershed Protection Governance and Coordination. The plan emphasizes the need for improved data collection, integrated monitoring programs, enhanced coordination between agencies, and incorporation of water availability information into land use planning decisions. A key governance reform includes completing a review of coordination arrangements to optimize administrative structures.

Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
<b>Integrate water availability and vulnerability information into land use policies and regulations</b> (Action 13)	<p>The Local Trust Committee should use new water availability data to inform OCP policies and land use bylaws, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updating OCP policies based on water availability assessments</li> <li>○ Considering zoning changes that support density in areas with sufficient water availability and lower risk</li> <li>○ Ensuring density increases are guided by groundwater and surface water budget outcomes</li> <li>○ Protecting groundwater aquifer recharge zones through development permit areas</li> </ul>
<b>Establish groundwater regions as a focus for land use planning</b> (Action 14)	Use the 17 identified groundwater sub-regions as primary geographic management units for freshwater allocation and land use planning purposes
<b>Develop proof-of-water requirements for development applications</b> (Action 15)	Incorporate Salt Spring-specific proof-of-water requirements into land use bylaws for subdivision and rezoning applications, accounting for climate change projections and considering the role of rainwater harvesting, non-potable sources, and cistern storage

<b>Update watershed and riparian mapping</b> (Action 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review application of existing riparian areas mapping for Development Permit Area 7</li> <li>○ Update/expand mapping for Development Permit Area 4 (Lakes, Streams, Wetlands)</li> <li>○ Create watershed resiliency maps for climate change adaptation</li> <li>○ Harmonize watershed mapping across partner agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Climate change integration</b>	Water availability assessments and planning tools must account for "most recent climate change projections" and emerging information about changing hydrological conditions
<b>Watershed resilience mapping</b>	Complete mapping including wildfire risk and extent of contiguous forest to understand landscape adaptation to climate change
<b>Link development decisions to water capacity</b>	The plan explicitly states that "decisions to increase development density [should be] guided by the outcomes of the groundwater and surface water availability assessments"
<b>Consider density bonusing</b>	The plan notes that density bonusing could "encourage lot clustering focused on preserving important aspects of the watershed"
<b>Require water storage in new development</b>	Investigate requiring "freshwater storage cisterns in new development and redevelopment"
<b>Investigate source substitution</b>	Explore "the potential role of source substitution for non-potable purposes including rainwater, greywater, and recycled water"

## Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal 2020-2030 (March 2020)

The Area Farm Plan Renewal, prepared by Upland Agricultural Consulting, is a community-driven strategic framework advancing agriculture and local food production through 2030, integrating climate emergency response with agricultural viability and environmental stewardship. Developed through extensive engagement (two town halls with 90 and 75 participants, steering committee, three working groups), the plan builds on 2008 AFP successes while addressing persistent challenges.

### Critical Context:

- Local production <10% of island food supply despite significant land base
- 2,943 ha in ALR + 3,000+ ha with agricultural zoning
- 1,197 ha ALR land potentially available; 135 ha inactive farmland (easiest expansion opportunity)
- 196 farms (2016), median income \$9,554, average farmer age 58.3 years
- Water availability already limiting and worsening with climate change
- 40% of SSI GHG emissions from imported food - local production is critical climate action
- Acute farmworker housing shortage constraining expansion

The plan positions agriculture as central to multiple OCP priorities: environmental protection (regenerative practices), climate action (carbon sequestration, reduced food miles), water preservation (best management practices), and economic sustainability (viable farm businesses). It frankly acknowledges implementation challenges: volunteer limitations, funding difficulties, and infrastructure gaps—providing valuable lessons for OCP implementation.

The AFP organizes recommendations around three goals directly aligned with OCP priorities:



Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
<b>Build Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure funding for AFP implementation coordinator and grant-writer</li> <li>• Engage paid administrative support and project coordinators</li> <li>• Establish stable funding for essential work (addresses decade of volunteer limitations)</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthen Food System Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support operationalization of community food hub (The Root) with commercial kitchen, storage, distribution, seed bank, demonstration gardens, and education programs</li> <li>• Ensure sustainable operations within the abattoir; explore collective livestock marketing, value-added processing, increased retail opportunities</li> <li>• Implement market development program with crop planning, aggregation, GAP certification incentives, online platform, diversified sales channels</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce Input Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish composting facility to reduce input costs, build soil organic matter, sequester carbon, increase water holding capacity. Currently organic materials shipped off-island at high cost; finished compost trucked on-island</li> <li>• Coordinate bulk purchasing/storage of inputs to reduce costs and transportation GHG</li> </ul>

<b>Facilitate Land Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Farmland Trust land matching program to connect inactive farmland with new farmers</li> <li>• Includes landowner outreach, tenure agreements, management services</li> <li>• Consider agricultural potential of publicly-owned land</li> </ul>
<b>Build Resiliency in Local Food and Agriculture System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote redundancy in critical inputs (backup power, multiple water sources)</li> <li>• Promote diversity in crops, livestock, farm ecosystems</li> <li>• Increase human capacity through knowledge sharing and skill building</li> <li>• Encourage increased food production at all levels (home gardens to commercial farms)</li> <li>• Showcase resilient systems on demonstration sites and farm tours</li> </ul>
<b>Increase Supply of Locally Adapted, Good Quality Seed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Salt Spring Seed Sanctuary and local seed growers to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Preserve and adapt heritage seed for region</li> <li>○ Bulk up supply of locally grown seed for commercial production</li> <li>○ Conduct trials for ongoing improvement and selection for region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p><b>Improve Integrated Water Management on Farms</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile and disseminate best practices for water conservation to producers</li> <li>• Promote practices through peer-to-peer learning, demonstration sites, farm tours</li> <li>• Coordinate bulk-buying of water management equipment</li> <li>• Create opportunities for farms to share water storage reservoirs (with legal agreements)</li> <li>• Demonstrate feasibility of conservation methods on farm trial sites</li> <li>• Work with water organizations on SSI to promote conservation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build Soils and Improve Soil Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish composting facility</li> <li>• Investigate new technologies/methods for composting different waste streams</li> <li>• Work with CRD to purchase chipping equipment for wood waste mulch/composting (alternative to burning)</li> <li>• Promote best practices to build soil organic matter and prevent nutrient loss</li> </ul>



<p><b>Widely Adopt Regenerative Agriculture Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate best practices for regenerative agriculture to producers</li> <li>• Learn from and work with Indigenous communities to revitalize traditional food production, harvesting, foraging</li> <li>• Promote increased production on already-cleared land rather than clearing new areas</li> <li>• Encourage additional tree planting in farm landscapes</li> <li>• Encourage use of local compost sources for soil health</li> <li>• Explore potential for biochar on SSI and its role for carbon sequestration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote and Showcase Resilient, Regenerative and Indigenous Agricultural Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather data on regenerative practices already used on SSI and more widely</li> <li>• Establish demonstration sites and farm trials (on individual farms and/or demonstration farm)</li> <li>• Provide incentives for farmers to conduct on-farm trials (cost-sharing, funding, workshop/tour fees)</li> <li>• Host workshops and farmer-to-farmer field tours</li> <li>• Seek funding for Indigenous food projects and work with Indigenous communities to support revitalization of traditional food production, harvesting, foraging</li> </ul>

<p><b>Increase Habitat for Pollinators Across the Island</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on local pollinators and plants enhancing habitat</li> <li>• Summarize and share research on preventing pollinator decline (pesticide use, EMF effects, habitat loss)</li> <li>• Monitor and review research on pollinator decline &amp; EMF technology linkages; advocate accordingly</li> <li>• Consider Bee BC partnership program for funding opportunities</li> <li>• Consider requirements for sustaining both native bee and honey bee populations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support Ongoing Program Development and Activities at The Root</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build partnerships between The Root, producers, food retail businesses, restaurants, schools, other organizations</li> <li>• Provide resources to continue program development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expand Agriculture and Food Knowledge Among SSI Residents and Visitors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue promoting local food and agriculture at community events</li> <li>• Create online platform for sharing information about agriculture and food on SSI</li> <li>• Host skill-building workshops and learning activities for community development</li> <li>• Build on current school gardens and create further educational programming</li> <li>• Further develop agri-tourism strategy to supplement farm income (adhering to ALC rules)</li> <li>• Identify ways to engage residents and visitors through events, tools, resources (e.g., "eat local" resources)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Broaden Role of Agricultural Advisory Planning Commission (AAPC)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand AAPC role with LTC and Islands Trust to provide consistent agricultural representation to local government</li> <li>• Use AAPC meetings as venue to receive and discuss public input on urgent agricultural matters</li> <li>• Enable AAPC review of issues including farmworker housing, commercial cannabis production, composting regulations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work with Local Government to Ensure Policies and Regulations Support Agricultural Production and Protect Farmland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place agriculture/local food production as top priority in Islands Trust strategic plans</li> <li>• Include "no net loss" of agricultural land provisions in OCP and LUB (both ALR and productive land outside ALR); ensure no removal of prime agricultural land</li> <li>• Align wording and provisions in LUB and OCP relating to agriculture</li> <li>• Ensure local government decisions don't create barriers to Class A agricultural compost production aligning with provincial regulations</li> <li>• Request tax-based support of agricultural infrastructure on SSI, similar to other community infrastructure</li> <li>• Carry out advocacy at provincial and local levels for policies supporting small to medium scale agriculture</li> </ul>

**Increase Availability of Farm Worker Housing**

- Include farmworkers as subset in CRD/Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment reports for SSI
- Conduct survey of farmers and farmworkers to determine housing needs; develop and implement remedial plan
- Investigate Temporary Use Permits for farmworker housing outside ALR
- Make standard provisions for farmworker housing within OCP/LUB regardless of zoning
- Encourage ALC to review SSI farmworker housing provisions in ALR and provide feedback
- Provide OCP/LUB consistency so farmworker housing and farm business provisions apply to all zones where agriculture permitted
- Require annual Statutory Declaration and/or other mechanisms (Housing Agreement, Covenant) to ensure year-round and seasonal farmworker housing used only for farmworkers
- Explore 'eco village' designation on "home plate" portion of property with farm business to enable co-owning families to live and work on property outside ALR
- Reduce environmental impact through design: require rainwater catchment, encourage composting toilets and greywater systems



## ***Housing***

### Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment (April 2025)

The Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment provides a comprehensive, provincially-mandated analysis of housing needs across the Islands Trust Areas (excluding Bowen Island), prepared by Urbanics Consultants Ltd. This report uses the methodology provided by the Province of British Columbia in summer 2024 to assess current housing deficits and project future needs through 2041. The assessment represents a significant update to housing data and projections for the region.

For Salt Spring Island specifically, the assessment projects a need for 821 housing units over the next 5 years and 2,525 units over the next 20 years (2021-2041). These projections are primarily driven by anticipated growth based on provincial demographic projections for fertility, mortality, migration patterns, and household formation. The housing need calculations incorporate multiple factors including addressing current homelessness, households experiencing extreme core housing need (extreme unaffordability), projected changes, achieving healthy rental vacancy rates, and a provincial "demand factor" buffer for municipalities.

The report acknowledges that these regional projections may not fully capture the unique characteristics of individual islands, and provides an alternative, more fine-grained demographic analysis in Section 4. Across all study areas, the total projected need is 6,361 units between 2021 and 2041, with Salt Spring Island representing approximately 40% of this total need, reflecting its position as the largest and most populous island in the Trust Area.

Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
<b>Housing &amp; Development</b>	
<b>Increase housing supply and diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the significant projected housing need of 2,525 units over 20 years through diversified housing types</li> <li>• Focus on creating housing options that serve current deficits in homelessness and extreme core housing need -</li> <li>• Prioritize housing development near transportation infrastructure supporting walking, bicycling, public transit, and alternative modes of transportation</li> </ul>
<b>Establish affordable and rental housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address extreme core housing need (ECHN) affecting households experiencing severe unaffordability</li> <li>• Increase rental housing stock to achieve healthier vacancy rates</li> <li>• Develop targeted approaches for key sectors including seniors, renters, families, and those with special needs</li> </ul>
<b>Develop and implementation plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build upon findings from previous housing needs assessments with concrete implementation strategies</li> <li>• Integrate housing planning with transportation infrastructure to reduce vehicle dependency</li> <li>• Ensure housing solutions align with the Islands Trust mandate to preserve and protect the unique environment</li> </ul>

## Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for Salt Spring Island (2023)

"Homes for Islanders," prepared by Salt Spring Solutions Society, represents a community-driven, integrated approach to Salt Spring Island's housing crisis that explicitly connects housing solutions with environmental protection, climate action, and water preservation. Unlike previous siloed planning efforts, this framework synthesizes recommendations across multiple local government organizations (Islands Trust, Capital Regional District, and North Salt Spring Waterworks District) to create a coherent implementation strategy.

The report identifies a critical pattern: decades of housing studies and recommendations have failed to be implemented due to lack of coordination, inadequate resources, and insufficient public engagement. The authors emphasize that unregulated housing development is causing severe environmental impacts including deforestation, soil erosion, loss of green space and wildlife corridors, stressed freshwater resources, and increased greenhouse gas emissions, while simultaneously failing to address the housing needs of working-class and vulnerable residents.

The framework proposes five interconnected strategies that balance environmental protection with housing equity. A central theme is that compact, clustered development in appropriate locations can simultaneously protect rural areas and nature spaces while providing more affordable housing options. The report strongly advocates for coordinating housing policy with water supply management, recognizing that the current water moratorium in Ganges Village is a critical barrier to creating needed housing, particularly non-market and community housing.

Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
<b>Housing and Development</b>	
<b>Coordinated and Properly Resourced Local Approach to Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and resource a dedicated local housing entity (CRD-led)</li> <li>• Expand the CRD's Rural Housing Program for Southern Gulf Islands to include Salt Spring Island</li> <li>• Develop an implementation-focused Salt Spring Island housing strategy</li> <li>• Hire or identify an experienced housing planner to coordinate work across CRD, Islands Trust, and other partners</li> </ul>
<b>Effective Public Education, Engagement, and Dialogue on Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate elected officials and staff on public education and engagement best practices</li> <li>• Develop and resource a Public Education and Engagement Policy across Islands Trust, CRD, and NSSWD</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Public understanding of the connections between compact development, environmental protection, and housing affordability is essential for implementing protective policies.</p>



**Preservation of Rural Areas and Nature Space through Clustered Housing**

- Create public education programs about the benefits of compact development
- Update OCP and Land Use Bylaw to enable and incentivize compact, clustered development
- Increase contiguous land protection in rural areas and cap detached housing size
- Establish coordinated approach for covenants ensuring housing affordability and land protection
- Create agency capacity to negotiate and administer housing agreements
- Update priorities for acquiring new local and regional parks aligned with conservation community opportunities
- Allocate Regional Housing Trust Fund resources to support rural-scale, covenant-restricted affordable housing
- Make water supply research and mapping publicly available with clear direction on where density can be accommodated
- Proactively share research on actual domestic water use and system leaks
- Advocate to Province to lower proof-of-water requirements to reflect actual usage
- Create capacity for homeplate zoning and conservation community implementation

*Environmental/Climate Connection:*  
 This strategy directly addresses the OCP review's focus on environmental protection by preserving contiguous natural areas, protecting wildlife corridors, reducing habitat fragmentation, and concentrating development to minimize ecological footprint. Clustered housing reduces infrastructure needs, vehicle trips, and

	greenhouse gas emissions while protecting rural character.
<b>Readying Ganges Village for More Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively and respectfully engage with local First Nations</li> <li>• Actively pursue alternatives to water moratorium for community housing in Ganges Village and for non-market housing and ADUs district-wide</li> <li>• Allocate resources for leak monitoring, resolution, and reporting to reduce system leaks</li> <li>• Hold joint public meeting on 2020 Water Service Optimization Study findings</li> <li>• Coordinate to revise proof-of-water requirements based on actual use and prioritize water for compact and non-market housing</li> <li>• Create regional interagency strategy for sustained advocacy on alternative water supply and conservation practices</li> <li>• Prioritize remaining sewer capacity for non-market housing, ADUs, and multi-unit housing in Ganges Village</li> <li>• Expand wastewater treatment plant capacity and develop greywater repurposing infrastructure</li> <li>• Map and plan for projected sea level rise in Ganges Village</li> <li>• Coordinate planning and prioritize infrastructure for residential development in areas outside sea-level rise zones</li> <li>• Catalogue all ALR properties in Ganges Village and engage Agricultural Land Commission about potential removals</li> <li>• Establish comprehensive interagency planning process for Ganges Village</li> </ul>

<p><b>Accessory Dwellings for Housing, in the Right Places</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update OCP and Land Use Bylaw to enable ADUs (secondary suites, garden cottages, carriage houses) in appropriate locations aligned with water availability</li> <li>• Establish clear regulations distinguishing long-term ADUs from short-term vacation rentals</li> <li>• Implement business licensing system for short-term rentals following best practices</li> <li>• Resource internal capacity for managing private housing agreements with affordability controls</li> <li>• Identify funding for capital grants and incentives for ADU development under housing agreements</li> <li>• Provide recommendations for optimal ADU locations based on water supply information</li> <li>• Revise policies to define ADUs as intensification of existing service rather than new hook-up</li> <li>• Remove barriers to legalizing existing ADUs within NSSWD service area</li> <li>• Explore innovative water conservation policies, alternative non-potable water sources, and restrictions on domestic water use</li> </ul>
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## Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit (January 2024)

The Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit, prepared by Islands Trust Regional Planning Committee, is a comprehensive, practical implementation guide designed to accelerate housing-related land use planning projects across the Islands Trust Area. Unlike the previous two documents that focus on needs assessment and strategic frameworks, this toolkit provides trustees, planning staff, and community groups with concrete procedural tools, templates, and technical guidance for executing housing initiatives within the authority of Local Trust Committees (LTCs) under Sections 29 and 31 of the Islands Trust Act.

The toolkit is explicitly structured as a living document with three types of tools: Process tools (project timelines and workflows), Template tools (standardized formats for planning documents), and Background tools (reference materials including an annotated bibliography of three decades of Islands Trust housing reports). This comprehensive resource consolidates information that would otherwise be scattered across multiple documents, enabling projects to "advance rapidly and along a predictable trajectory."

A critical strength of this toolkit is its grounding in Islands Trust's actual regulatory authorities and limitations. The document is realistic about what LTCs can and cannot accomplish through land use regulation alone, while providing a full menu of options within their jurisdiction. The toolkit emphasizes that housing projects should be undertaken with "a clear view to any other land use planning work underway, to maximize efficiency and consistency" - particularly relevant for Salt Spring's OCP review, which must integrate housing with environmental protection, climate action, and water preservation goals.

The toolkit's annotated bibliography synthesizes lessons from over 30 housing reports dating back decades, revealing a pattern of unrealized recommendations due to coordination failures, resource constraints, and implementation gaps—precisely the issues identified in "Homes for Islanders." The baseline report component documents existing housing policy and regulation across all islands, enabling comparative analysis and identification of best practices.

The toolkit is organized around specific housing forms and regulatory mechanisms rather than overarching strategies. The following recommendations are organized by category:



Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
<b>Housing and Development – (Form and Use Options)</b>	
<b>Secondary Suite Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit secondary suites (self-contained units within the same building as the principal residence) in some or all residential zones</li> <li>• Ensure OCP policies support secondary suite zoning and address specific community concerns</li> <li>• Remove owner-occupancy restrictions that impede rental opportunities</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Secondary suites maximize use of existing building footprints and infrastructure without additional land clearing or sprawl.</p> <p><i>Water Preservation Connection:</i> Accommodates additional housing with minimal increase in water demand by utilizing existing service connections efficiently.</p>

<p><b>Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Development (Cottages/Garden Suites)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit detached accessory dwelling units separate from but accessory to principal residences</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient buildable area through appropriate setback and lot coverage regulations</li> <li>• Consider strata subdivision of ADUs to enable entry-level homeownership</li> <li>• Provide recommendations for optimal ADU locations based on water supply availability</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> ADUs provide housing with minimal additional environmental impact by utilizing existing property infrastructure and avoiding greenfield development.</p> <p><i>Water Preservation Connection:</i> Strategic placement based on water availability; treat as service intensification rather than new connections; explore alternative water sources and conservation measures.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Dwelling Unit (AltDU) Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider permitting tiny homes on wheels, yurts, recreational vehicles, and other non-Building Code compliant structures as principal or accessory dwellings</li> <li>• Note: Regional districts with building permit authority may not support this approach</li> <li>• Use OCP policies to guide rezoning or Temporary Use Permit applications for AltDUs</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Smaller dwelling forms have reduced environmental footprints, though permanence and servicing considerations require careful planning.</p>

<p><b>Single-Family Dwelling Variation Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit duplexes, rooming houses, boarding houses, and flex housing (adaptable to changing household needs)</li> <li>• Update OCP policies to support these housing forms in appropriate zones</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Provides housing diversity and density without multi-story construction, maintaining neighborhood character while reducing per-unit land consumption.</p>
<p><b>Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (Market) Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and rowhouses on single residential lots</li> <li>• Amend lot coverage, setback, and height limits to create sufficient buildable area</li> <li>• Establish OCP criteria for identifying suitable locations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Efficient land use that concentrates housing while maintaining human scale; reduces infrastructure requirements per dwelling unit.</p>

<p><b>Multi-Family Dwelling Unit (Market and Affordable) Development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit larger multi-family developments (apartments, condominiums) in appropriate locations</li> <li>• For affordable housing, require development by government/non-profit organizations with rent/purchase/resale price controls through housing agreements</li> <li>• Ensure OCP policies are supportive and establish clear criteria for suitable locations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Highest density residential form enables preservation of rural lands; most efficient infrastructure and services delivery; supports transit and active transportation.</p>
<p><b>Unit-Based Zoning (Rather Than Housing Type)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zone for maximum number of dwelling units rather than specifying types</li> <li>• Allow property owners to determine appropriate housing mix within total unit cap</li> <li>• Manage intensity through lot coverage, impervious surface, and total floor area maximums</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Flexibility enables optimal site design that responds to specific environmental features while achieving housing targets.</p>

<p><b>Conversion and Adaptive Reuse</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit principal residential use of under-used commercial or other-zoned properties</li> <li>• Allow conversion of commercial accommodation to residential use (coordinate with short-term rental regulation)</li> <li>• Consider Temporary Use Permits for appropriate situations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Adaptive reuse of existing structures avoids new construction impacts while utilizing existing infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Housing and Development – (Density Options)</b></p>	
<p><b>Multi-Family Density Bonus</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish base permitted density with provisions for additional density in exchange for affordable housing creation</li> <li>• Require clear OCP policies establishing criteria for suitable locations and affordability expectations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Incentivizes affordable housing while concentrating density in appropriate locations; bonus density should be contingent on environmental performance standards.</p>
<p><b>Subdivision Density Bonus</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow additional lot density in exchange for provision of lots for affordable housing</li> <li>• Establish clear OCP guidance on market/non-market mix and affordability expectations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Can enable conservation subdivisions that protect sensitive areas while meeting housing needs.</p>



<p><b>Conservation Density Bonus/Homeplate Zoning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow flexibility in dwelling numbers and types within maximum homeplate or total floor area (e.g., 500m<sup>2</sup>) in exchange for conservation covenants</li> <li>• Likely implemented through rezoning applications with negotiated covenant terms</li> <li>• Ensure OCP contains guiding policies for navigating such applications</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> <b>Directly advances environmental protection goals</b> by permanently protecting large portions of properties through conservation covenants while enabling appropriate housing development. This is a key mechanism for achieving both housing and conservation objectives simultaneously.</p> <p><i>Water Preservation Connection:</i> Clustered development within homeplates enables shared water systems and conservation measures.</p>
<p><b>Ecovillage Zoning</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow subdividable properties to be developed as strata with flexible dwelling types and sizes</li> <li>• Place large portions in conservation covenants while incorporating ecological building principles</li> <li>• Maintain full protection of sensitive ecosystems through Development Permit Areas</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> <b>Primary mechanism for conservation communities</b> that protect rural character, wildlife corridors, and ecosystems while providing housing. Aligns directly with "Homes for Islanders" Strategy 3.</p>

<b>Eco-Density Bonus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional dwelling units for exceeding ecological standards (solar panels, rainwater harvesting, ecological materials, greywater recycling, net-zero energy, solar hot water)</li> <li>• Reduce operating costs and ecological impacts of dwellings</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Directly incentivizes climate action through building performance; reduces energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p><i>Water Preservation Connection:</i> Encourages rainwater harvesting and greywater systems that reduce demand on potable water supplies.</p>
<b>Increase Overall Density</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If build-out analysis shows current zoning insufficient for projected needs, consider upzoning suitable areas</li> <li>• Ensure alignment with OCP land use designations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Strategic density increases in appropriate locations prevent sprawl in sensitive areas.</p>
<b>Housing and Development – (Size, Siting, and Miscellaneous)</b>	
<b>Mixed-Use Zoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permit residential use above ground-floor commercial uses</li> <li>• Consider raising height/storey limits for two storeys of residential above commercial in specific locations</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i> Maximizes land use efficiency in village cores; supports walkability and reduces vehicle trips.</p>

<b>Floor Area/Footprint Limits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit size of permitted dwellings to discourage oversized single-family homes and inappropriate commercial accommodation</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i>  <b>Critical tool for resource conservation</b> and limiting environmental impact per dwelling unit; addresses "mega-home" development pattern identified in "Homes for Islanders."</p>
<b>Reduced Setbacks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and reduce lot line setbacks where multiple units are permitted</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient buildable area without requiring variance permits</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i>  Enables compact development while protecting more of each property in natural state.</p>
<b>Reduced Automobile Parking Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce parking requirements particularly in village areas near jobs and services</li> <li>• Focus reductions on small lots with secondary suites, ADUs, or small-scale multi-unit housing</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental/Climate Connection:</i>  Reduces impervious surfaces and allows land to be used for housing rather than car storage; supports shift to active transportation modes.</p> <p><i>Climate Action Connection:</i> Reduces vehicle dependency and associated greenhouse gas emissions; supports pedestrian-oriented village development.</p>
<b>Housing and Development – (Tenure Options)</b>	

<b>Residential Rental Tenure Zoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise Local Government Act Section 481.1 authority to require all or some multi-family housing be rental tenure</li> <li>• Include OCP policies acknowledging this LTC power</li> </ul> <p><i>Affordable Housing Connection:</i> Addresses rental housing shortage identified in Housing Needs Assessment; prevents conversion of rental stock to strata.</p>
<b>Strata Subdivision of ADUs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow ADUs to become separate real estate entities through building strata subdivision</li> <li>• Develop OCP policies to guide decision-making when applications received</li> </ul> <p><i>Affordable Housing Connection:</i> Creates entry-level homeownership opportunities; increases housing diversity.</p>
<b>Remove Owner-Occupancy Restrictions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate requirements that property owners live on-site when secondary suites, ADUs, or small-scale multi-unit housing permitted</li> <li>• Review OCP policies to ensure they don't encourage such restrictions</li> </ul> <p><i>Affordable Housing Connection:</i> Maximizes rental housing opportunities; removes artificial constraints on housing supply.</p>
<b>Housing and Development – (Workforce Housing)</b>	

<b>Require Workforce Housing with New Commercial/Industrial/Institutional Zoning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require provision of workforce housing units as condition of new commercial development</li> <li>• Ensure all commercial zones permit on-site workforce housing</li> <li>• Identify and zone locations for off-site workforce housing</li> </ul> <p><i>Economic Sustainability Connection:</i> Addresses critical workforce housing shortage that undermines island economy and service provision.</p>
<b>Seasonal Workers Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zone land to permit seasonal worker housing or establish guiding policies for rezoning/TUP applications</li> <li>• Address unique needs of agricultural, tourism, and seasonal industries</li> </ul>
<b>Housing and Development – (Seniors Housing)</b>	
<b>Multi-Family Seniors Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zone to permit larger developments exclusively for elderly residents</li> <li>• Establish OCP policies defining conditions for such development</li> </ul>
<b>Accommodate Aging in Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement sufficiently flexible residential zoning (secondary suites, ADUs, AltDUs, flex housing) to enable elderly residents to remain on properties longer</li> </ul> <p><i>Social Equity Connection:</i> Addresses demographic reality of aging island demographics while enabling intergenerational housing through ADUs.</p>
<b>Housing and Development – (Agriculture/Farmland)</b>	



<b>Consistency with Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ALR land zoning permits residential use consistent with current ALC regulations</li> <li>• Monitor ALC regulation changes and update zoning accordingly</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental Protection Connection:</i> Protects agricultural land resource while enabling appropriate farm-related housing.</p>
<b>Additional Density for Non-ALR Farmland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For large working farms, consider additional dwelling units for farmworker use</li> <li>• Allow additional units in exchange for restrictions on future subdivision</li> <li>• Establish minimum lot sizes and other criteria in OCP</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental Protection Connection:</i> Supports agricultural viability without fragmenting farmland.</p>
<b>Consider ALR Exclusions for Residential Purposes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If ALR land determined suitable for additional residential development, identify in OCP as candidate for future exclusion application by LTC</li> </ul> <p><i>Note:</i> This is a significant policy decision requiring careful analysis of agricultural capability, community needs, and environmental impacts. For Ganges Village, this aligns with "Homes for Islanders" Strategy 4 recommendations.</p>
<b>Housing and Development – (Density Transfer Mechanisms)</b>	

<p><b>Transfer of Development Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish OCP policies to guide transfer of latent residential development potential away from sensitive ecosystems, groundwater recharge areas, car-dependent areas</li> <li>• Direct development toward more suitable locations</li> <li>• Ensure policies are clear and accessible to landowners</li> </ul> <p><i>Environmental Protection Connection:</i> Key mechanism for protecting critical environmental areas while enabling housing development in appropriate locations; enables market-based conservation.</p> <p><i>Water Preservation Connection:</i> Directs development away from groundwater recharge areas and toward locations with adequate water supply.</p>
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## GIS and Mapping

McElhanney prepared 4 maps to contextualize housing issues and considerations for the OCP update, provided in Appendix A. The table below provides descriptions of these maps and summarizes their implications.

Mapping Implications Relevant to OCP Review	
Map Description	Implications
<b>Park Proximity Map</b> – Shows the location of all parks on the island with 500 and 1000-metre buffers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most parcels on the island are within 1000-metres of a park. Notable gaps include parcels along Beddis Road and in Fernwood.</li><li>• Development in areas without close proximity to park access may need to provide enhanced on-site or shared outdoor amenity space to compensate.</li><li>• Parcels may require future trail, sidewalk, or greenway connections to link residents to existing parks.</li><li>• Redevelopment or subdivision in these areas should consider parkland dedication, cash-in-lieu, or identification of future park sites to close access gaps.</li></ul>
<b>Development Permit Area Map</b> – Shows the location of the 7 DPAs along with high soil erosion hazard areas, slope stability hazard areas, and heritage conservation areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Areas with combined hazards can signal potential long-term infrastructure challenges</li></ul>
<b>Land Use Designation Map</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarifies whether existing development is aligned with intended long-term land use vision</li><li>• Shows where growth is expected to concentrate</li><li>• Flags locations where incompatible uses may be adjacent</li></ul>

<p><b>Parcel Density Map</b> – Shows parcel density (sparse to dense gradient) along with 250-, 500- and 1000-metre Village boundary buffers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlights where development is already concentrated, helping identify areas more suitable for infill or servicing upgrades</li> <li>• Low-density areas may indicate high per-unit servicing costs</li> <li>• Helps identify where new policies for housing diversification or DPA refinements should be focused based on existing density patterns</li> <li>• Can be used to show overlaps with park proximity and transit service, indicating areas that may be underserved</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bus Route Map</b> – Shows bus routes along with a 200-metre buffer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parcels within buffer can be highlighted as suitable for higher density or infill development due to good transit access</li> <li>• Areas outside of buffer may be flagged for improved pedestrian connections and future transit expansion or alternative mobility options</li> <li>• Areas with limited access to transit should be considered for policy development aimed at reducing mobility barriers for seniors and youth</li> </ul>

## ***Climate Resilience***

### Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0 (CAP 2.0) (February 2021)

The Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0, prepared by Transition Salt Spring Society, is a comprehensive community-led climate emergency response providing 250 recommended actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 50% by 2030 and adapt island ecosystems and infrastructure to accelerating climate impacts. Building on CAP 1.0 (2011), this plan represents over a year of intensive work by volunteers, experts, and broad community engagement, developed concurrently with the Area Farm Plan and explicitly integrated with it.

#### Critical Context:

- 21-37% of global GHG emissions come from the food system (land-clearing, production, transport, processing)
- 40% of SSI's GHG emissions from imported food - making local food production a primary climate action strategy
- Climate impacts already occurring: hotter/drier summers, warmer/wetter winters, increased extreme weather
- 2026 modeled drought: 18 days over 30°C, three months without rain
- Salt Spring must both reduce emissions AND adapt to unavoidable changes already underway

The plan emphasizes that climate action creates co-benefits: meaningful livelihoods, increased food security, economic vitality, avoided damage costs, and preserved tourism/natural amenities. It requires significant investments but positions these as economic opportunities rather than burdens.

#### Three Critical Prerequisites for Success:

1. Foster systemic change: Break down organizational silos; coordinate across CRD, Islands Trust, water districts, fire rescue, non-profits
2. Build better policy frameworks: Update OCP and Land Use Bylaw for climate resilience; raise carbon price to \$200/tonne
3. Provide adequate funding: Carbon tax revenues, grants, community bonds, institutional restructuring to reflect emergency gravity



Key Topic Summary Relevant to OCP Review	
Topic	Summary
Climate Action – (Land Use and Settlement Patterns)	
Build in a manner that promotes efficiency and sustainable growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Densification within walking distance of transit routes</li> <li>• Transit-supportive subdivision regulations</li> <li>• Land use planning integrated with transportation planning</li> <li>• Village-centered growth to reduce vehicle dependency</li> <li>• Protection of agricultural lands and forests</li> <li>• Sea level rise planning for coastal areas</li> <li>• Fire risk reduction through settlement pattern decisions</li> </ul> <p><b>OCP Integration: Land use chapter should be rewritten with climate resilience as organizing principle. Consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village-centered density</li> <li>• Active transportation connectivity</li> <li>• Transit-oriented development principles</li> <li>• Agricultural land protection as climate strategy</li> <li>• Forest protection for carbon storage and fire management</li> <li>• Water availability mapping guiding development decisions</li> <li>• Sea level rise adaptation in coastal planning</li> </ul>

# OCP POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Theme	Document	Policy Recommendation
Environmental Protection & Water Sustainability	Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Plan (March 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add to land use and settlement section:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When considering any new development, an assessment of water quality and quantity should be provided that illustrates the feasibility of the proposal.</li> <li>○ LTC should consider the development of development permit area for the confirmation of ground water availability. This DP should utilize the mapping from the xxxx as the basis for the DP areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Salt Spring Island Area Farm Plan Renewal 2020-2030 (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize food infrastructure as an essential community service.</li> <li>• Support composting as an environmental and agricultural priority. Enable appropriate zoning for agricultural facilities.</li> <li>• Support land matching as a strategy for activating farmland without new clearing.</li> <li>• Recognize food system resilience as a climate adaptation strategy and support policies enabling diverse agricultural activities,</li> </ul>

		<p>backup systems, and local production at multiple scales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support seed saving as an agricultural activity and recognize seed banks/sanctuaries as valuable agricultural infrastructure.</li> <li>• Prioritize composting infrastructure and policies that support soil building practices. Address barriers to agricultural composting operations.</li> <li>• Support agricultural demonstration sites and education programming as a community benefit. Recognize value of Indigenous food knowledge and support appropriate collaboration.</li> <li>• Recognize The Root and similar facilities as community food infrastructure deserving support similar to other community facilities.</li> <li>• Support agri-tourism as an economic development strategy and ensure regulations enable appropriate on-farm activities (farm tours, education, events) within ALC guidelines.</li> <li>• Establish an explicit policy that there shall be no net loss of agricultural land (ALR and productive non-ALR) and no removal of prime agricultural land. This provides clear</li> </ul>
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		<p>direction for all land use decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize agricultural infrastructure (processing, storage, composting, water management) as an essential community service deserving public investment consideration.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing &amp; Development</b>	Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment (2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support diverse options within areas that have adequate servicing</li> <li>Work with CRD and the province to establish opportunities for the underhoused and unhoused</li> </ul>
	Homes for Islanders: An Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for Salt Spring Island (2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordination ensures housing development aligns with environmental protection goals and avoids piecemeal development that fragments ecosystems.</li> <li>Prioritize housing in areas with existing servicing. Concentrating housing in Ganges Village reduces sprawl, protects rural areas, enables active transportation, and facilitates water/sewer infrastructure efficiency. Sea level rise planning directly addresses climate adaptation.</li> </ul>
	Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit (2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support secondary suite and ADU development, which</li> </ul>

		<p>maximize use of existing building footprint and infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish criteria for identifying suitable locations for small-scale multi-unit housing development and multi-family dwelling units</li> <li>• Develop guiding policies for navigating density bonuses and strata subdivisions of ADUs</li> <li>• Include policies acknowledging LTC power of requiring rental tenure in multi-family housing</li> <li>• Review OCP policies to remove restriction of requiring property owners to live on-site</li> <li>• Recognize through policy unique needs of agriculture, tourism and seasonal industries</li> <li>• Establish policies defining conditions for multi-family seniors housing development</li> <li>• Establish policies to guide transfer of latent residential development away from sensitive ecosystems and groundwater recharge areas</li> </ul>
<b>Climate Action</b>	Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0 (CAP 2.0) (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use section of OCP should be written with climate resilience as an organizing principle</li> </ul>



# **Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan**

## **Gap Analysis**



**December 2025**

# INTRODUCTION

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Area is undertaking an update to the Salt Spring Island (SSI) Official Community Plan (OCP). To address and plan for housing affordability, environmental protection, and climate change resilience on SSI, an update is required. This memo provides an assessment of the OCP gap analysis and legislative review to confirm the alignment of the OCP with the Islands Trust Act and the Local Government Act (LGA). The current OCP was adopted in 2008 with updates in 2020.

## Purpose of Official Community Plan

An OCP provides a framework for decision-making by the local government and is not a regulatory document. Instead it serves as a foundational policy document used to guide future decisions and development. Further information on what exactly an OCP is used for is found below:

### IT DOES:

- Outline the community's desired vision
- Include objectives and policies to achieve vision
- Include a framework that officials use to justify land-use decisions
- Enable developers and residents to plan with clarity and confidence
- Align with other municipal bylaws and zoning amendments
- Protect the community by guiding land use away from hazards such as flood zones and steep slopes

### IT DOES NOT:

- Get approved without being vetted by the community
- Contain objectives and policies contrary to community vision
- Override provincial requirements for housing needs
- Rezone land or stop future rezoning applications from being submitted
- Remove or alter the island's population goals
- Remove existing protections that have been established through regulatory document

The Gap Analysis Report provides an assessment of gaps within the current OCP as well as a legislative review to confirm the alignment of the OCP with the Islands Trust Act and the Local Government Act (LGA).

McElhanney has been retained to provide consulting services to support SSI in completing a comprehensive review and update of the OCP. The policy gap analysis deliverable is identified in phase 1 of the Salt Spring Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Amendment Project work plan. This task entails reviewing the current OCP and identifying gaps, areas for improvement, and required updates relative to recent legislative changes to the LGA, enacted by Bill 44 – 2023.

### **Summary of OCP Review**

The OCP review and Gap Analysis highlights opportunities to strengthen and modernize the plan to better reflect current community needs and provincial requirements. While the existing OCP covers many important topics, improvements can be made to enhance clarity, usability, and alignment with updating housing, environmental and climate goals. The review encourages a more streamlined and accessible document that supports clear and effective decision making.

Key opportunities for improvement:

- Create dedicated sections for housing, environmental protection and climate resilience
- Align policies with updated legislation and local housing needs
- Use clear, consistent language and improve document structure and organization
- Ensure objectives are supported by actionable policies
- Refresh and consolidate content to reduce concept duplication and improve clarity

The table below identifies gaps and issues in the existing OCP split into categories of housing and development, environmental protection and water sustainability, climate action, compliance with the Local Government Act and Islands Trust Policy Statement, structure and length, clarity and actionability, and relevance. Recommendations follow for the OCP update based on the findings within these categories.

Existing OCP	Gap / Issue	Recommendation
<b>Housing and Development</b>		
<p>The current OCP addresses housing issues across various sections but does not provide a standalone housing section. As a result, housing-related objectives (such as affordability housing need, special housing etc.) are fragmented and often embedded in with regulatory style land use policies.</p>	<p>Affordable housing is generally treated as an exception to density limits rather than a central planning priority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a dedicated housing section in the updated OCP that consolidates all housing related objectives and policies including affordable housing, housing diversity, housing needs, rental supply and special needs housing. This section should touch on the key areas of local need. This would align the OCP with the provincial housing needs report requirements and making housing related policies easier to apply and interpret for all bylaw users.</li> <li>• Consider reframing affordable housing as a core community objective rather than an exception of land use rules. Policies could enable flexible density, partnerships, and innovative forms of housing where they address identified needs, ensuring the OCP actively supports housing solutions within servicing and environmental constraints.</li> <li>• Streamline the land use section to focus on location, form and scale of residential development, while referencing a new housing section for policies on needs, affordability and diversity. This will reduce duplication and clarify the intent of each section.</li> </ul>

	The current OCP does not align with the provincial housing legislation and requirements.	Establish in a dedicated housing section that explicitly references the Housing Needs Report, the 5- and 20-year projected housing needs metrics and ensures policies support the development of housing types and forms that aligns with the HNR and complies with the LGA. Growth management objectives should be located in the land use and settlement section to avoid conflict with provincial housing objectives.
<p>Objectives are missing actionable policies to support the written objectives. For example, see the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section B.2.1.1.1 Objective – To support a mix of housing types in appropriate locations without compromising protection of the natural environment.</li> <li>• Section B.2.1.1.2 Objective – To develop zoning that allows many different types of housing and accommodates a diverse population.</li> <li>• Section B.2.1.1.3 Objective – To acknowledge that a framework that limits growth may restrict housing choices as supply is limited; to respond to the challenge of fostering socioeconomic diversity within such a framework.</li> </ul>		Have policies that support the objectives section.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section B.2.1.2 Policy - Zoning changes should be avoided if they would likely result in a larger island population than is expected under the development potential zoned in 2008. Exceptions to this policy are to be few and minor and only to achieve affordable housing and other objectives of this Plan.</li> </ul>		
<p>Some policies included in the land use section would be better suited in a housing section as they are foundational tools in housing policy planning and not the physical use or designation of land. Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section B.2.2.2.1 – The Local Trust Committee will initiate a Housing Needs Assessment, to be updated regularly and on the basis of which the Local Trust Committee may establish priorities for consideration of affordable housing applications.</li> <li>Section B.2.2.2.2 – The Local Trust Committee, in cooperation with the Capital Regional District and the community, should work to establish a target level for the percentage of rented and owned affordable housing units in the total housing stock, based on projected community housing needs.</li> </ul>		<p>Create a Housing section to meet the requirements of the LGA. Restructure document to have existing policies and objectives in a consolidated housing section</p>

Environmental Protection and Sustainability		
<p>In “The Island Environment” section, there are currently 27 policies covering topics such as water quality, riparian and wetland protection, soil, environmentally sensitive areas, etc.</p>	<p>While comprehensive, there is some repetition, and the policy language is occasionally vague, which may reduce clarity. The volume of policies in may also make the section difficult to navigate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate overlapping policies into thematic groups (e.g., sensitive ecosystems, water management, habitat protection, sustainable development) to improve clarity.</li> <li>• Maintain comprehensive coverage of environmental topics while making the section more readable and user-friendly, potentially using subpoints under thematic policies.</li> </ul>
<p>Overall the document currently has fragmented environmental policies throughout the document as well as the 27 policies that exist in the Island Environmental section.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate environmental policies: develop a dedicated section in the OCP that consolidates all environmental protection policies providing clearing and cohesive framework.</li> <li>• Strengthen policy language: replace ambiguous terms with more definitive language to enhance the enforceability of environmental policies.</li> </ul>
Climate Action		
<p>Limited climate change considerations: the OCP does not adequately address climate change impacts or resilience strategies. An</p>	<p>The OCP lacks updated targets and policies that will achieve those targets.</p>	<p>Implement current targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and associated</p>

official community plan must include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets.		policies to support those targets.
	Some policies may be out of date or no longer allowed in the OCP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid referencing external documents and resources that could change over time.</li> <li>• No longer permitted to require building energy efficiency due to changes in the Building Act. Encourage the development of low carbon and energy efficient building through incentives.</li> </ul>

## Compliance with Local Government Act

The Local Government Act (LGA) outlines the provincial requirements for municipal Official Community Plans.	<p>The following sections of the LGA are not currently met by the current OCP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 473.1(2)(b)(c) Consider the most recent housing needs report received by the local government.</li> <li>• Section 473.1(3) Policy and maps must provide a 20-year total number of housing units required to meet anticipated housing needs (total per most recent Housing Needs Report.</li> <li>• Section 473.1(4) Housing policies respecting each</li> </ul>	<p>The updated OCP must comply with all requirements of the Local Government Act. Review the current OCP and ensure that all provincial requirements per the Local Government Act are met or exceeded in the updated OCP. Update permitted densities throughout the OCP to reflect updated population projections and Bill 44 requirements for additional units on single family and duplex lots.</p>
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	class of housing needs addressed in the most recent Housing Needs Report (HNR).	
<b>Compliance with Islands Trust Policy Statement</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Islands Trust is currently revising the Policy Statement and the timeline for adoption of a new Policy Statement is not presently defined. Trust Council currently utilizes a “check list” approach for ensuring that land-use related bylaws are consistent with the Island Trust Policy Statement. Islands Trust staff advise that if a new Policy Statement is adopted a new approach to review for Policy Statement congruency may be developed.</li> <li>The current draft of the updated Islands Trust Policy Statement builds off the existing Policy Statement but also addresses how the Trust Area will adapt to current and future challenges and opportunities, and to reflect its commitments related to climate change and housing development – key factors being considered through the Salt Spring Island OCP update.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly consult with the Islands Trust Policy Statement Amendment Project team to continually ensure the most up-to-date process for adoption of a new OCP is followed.</li> <li>Develop the new OCP against the draft Islands Trust Policy Statement to ensure the OCP is “future proofed” against the likely changes to the Policy Statement.</li> </ul>
<b>Structure and Length</b>		
The OCP is currently split into 2 volumes. Volume 1 is Land Use and Servicing Objectives and Volume 2 is Development Permit and Conservation Areas, Temporary	The OCP is divided into two volumes, which can be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidating the two volumes into a single document could improve accessibility and usability.</li> </ul>

Commercial and Industrial Use Permits, Appendices and Attachments.  The current OCP is organized in a manner that may lead to confusion and difficult wayfinding for document users and some section names could be made clearer.	cumbersome for users.  Section names like “The Island Environment” sounds more like a description of the Island vs a focused section on environmental protection and stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use clear section names that are not descriptive and rather directive.</li> <li>• Restructure the document for ease of use and administration.</li> </ul> <p><i>Recommended Table of Contents is attached in Appendix A</i></p>
The definitions are split between V1 & V2.	Definitions are separated between the two volumes and can be difficult to navigate.	Have one complete document with all definitions in once location.
Part A.1 The Islands Trust lacks any visual to represent the area.	A visual aid may be helpful to support representing the area.	Include visual aids throughout the document where appropriate.
Each objective and policy is numbered and it is difficult to differentiate between the two, as well as hard to navigate the document.	The current OCP has a complex numbering format that can make the document difficult to navigate and less accessible to readers.	Simplifying the numbering system or supplementing it with clearer headings, summaries or visual aids could improve usability for readers and users of the document.
<b>Clarity and Actionability</b>		
	Some policies use vague language, which can lead to inconsistent interpretation and application.	An OCP should use directive words like shall, should, and may to guide action and avoid descriptive or vague terms like has, can or important, that doesn’t provide clear direction or action.
Part A.3, Vision frames some of the many challenges faced by the	Aging population should not be seen as	Update the vision to be inclusive and forward focusing



island. Aging population is included in this paragraph	a problem, and rather a priority or emerging need.	and highlight problems and priorities in language that does not feel discriminatory. Add Guiding principles to provide context to the policy framework in the document.
Part A.4.3 Limits to Growth is focused on the capacity of the island for development.	This could be included in a growth management section.	Reword this section to growth management or capacity for growth and move to the Land Use and Settlement Patterns section. This would make the section feel more of a parameter for responsible development.
Part A.7.2.2 says “The Local Trust Committee will continue to require applicants for large new commercial, general employment or multifamily developments in village areas to ensure their development does not increase flooding of downslope properties”	The term “Large” could be interpreted differently and should be clarified to reduce ambiguity.	Consider defining or giving examples when referencing specific sizes or types of development.
Part B.2.1.2.1 is a growth management policy.	This policy is currently in the residential land use policy section.	Have growth management policies in a growth management section, and have housing related policies on use and form in the land use section as well as a new housing section.
Themes in different sections, e.g. environmentally sensitive areas.	There may be opportunity to streamline or condense recurring policy themes throughout the OCP, particularly where similar objectives appear in multiple sections.	Create key policy areas within the document to streamline the document while making it easier to find policies. This could enhance clarity, reduce redundancy and document length and help highlight the interconnections between policy areas.

There are times in the current document where the policies don't seem to provide direction for the objectives, or the policy is lacking all together. For example, B.2.2 Affordable, rental and special needs housing.	A lack of supportive policy can lead to unclear direction for staff and the local trust committee.	Consider ensuring that policy direction supports the objectives of each section.
Section B.4.1 General Community and Institutional Land Uses, Resource Land Use Objectives and Sand and Gravel Deposits have existing objectives but no supportive policy.	No policy to support these land uses and does not provide actionability or direction.	Include policy for this type of land use.
Section B.5.1.2.2 in General Village Land Use Objectives and Policies reads more regulatory and better suited for a zoning bylaw than an OCP.	The policy includes overly detailed regulatory standards better suited to a zoning bylaw.	The OCP should express broader policy intent and defer specific density and design limits to land use regulations.
<b>Relevance</b>		
There are policies in the OCP that are still relevant to the SSI community today and others that may not be as relevant.	Retain policies that are still relevant to the SSI Community.	Keep the existing policy framework and modernize. Engage with the community to ensure that policies that are still relevant to the community are retained. Implement policies to help achieve the community's needs.
There are currently multiple aquatic/marine related land use designations.	Review these different designations and consider relevance.	May be an opportunity to consolidate.
Table 2 in the OCP is related to the current water connections and remaining water supply capacity.	This may be out of date.	Ensure these tables are relevant and updated as necessary.
This DPA applies to foreshore owned by the crown.	There should be clarity that the DPA only applies to the	Provide clarity on this.

	crown land when a private party holds tenure.	
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## Closing

The Gap Analysis summarizes key findings from the review of the current Salt Spring Island OCP. The document is organized to present an overall summary, detailed observations, and an assessment of compliance with the LGA and Islands Trust Policy Statement. Observations are grouped by topic, each with associated recommendations to help guide updates to the OCP.

## **Appendix A – Draft OCP Table of Contents**

Context

Vision and Principles

Community Wellbeing

Housing

Environment & Sustainability

Land Use & Settlement

Facilities, Parks & Recreation

Infrastructure & Servicing

Implementation