

Salt Spring Island Housing Action Long List

MAY 2026 – FOR REVIEW BY LLC MEMBERS

This long list for housing action items is compiled from ideas generated through:

- **Public and targeted engagement** undertaken during the SSI Integrated Housing Strategy project (2025-2026)
- A comprehensive **background review** of housing planning on Salt Spring Island to date and the actions recommended from those documents, including:
 - *Salt Spring Island Complete Communities Assessment (2025)*
 - *Islands Trust Strategic Plan (2025)*
 - *Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment (2025)*
 - *Transition Salt Spring Common Ground Summit Materials (2024)*
 - *Islands Trust Housing Options Toolkit (2024)*
 - *Islands Trust Housing Strategic Action Plan (2024)*
 - *CRD Rural Housing Program – Pilot Project Analysis (2024)*
 - *Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission Workshop (2024)*
 - *Homes for Islanders – Integrated Housing Solutions Framework for SSI (2023)*
 - *Salt Spring Island Housing Action Program Task Force – Summary of Recommendations (2022)*
 - *Island Trust Housing Challenges and Solutions Project – Housing Working Group Report (2020)*
 - *Salt Spring Island Community Affordable Housing Strategy (CAHS) (2011)*
 - *Salt Spring Solutions Report Card*
 - *Common Ground Summit*
- **Input from CRD and Islands Trust staff**

The next steps will be to:

- Validate the long list through this current round of targeted engagement with LLC, infrastructure providers, and other partners
- Identify ownership, timelines, and priority levels for the chosen actions
- Develop an action plan and implementation framework for the chosen actions.

Please note these actions are in draft form.

Servicing definitions:

Servicing A:

- Hydro, Water and sewer connections existing or at road

Servicing B:

- Hydro, Well water and septic on site or able to be installed at site

Servicing C:

- One of A or B AND within 800 meters of transit, grocery stores or commercial services.

Preamble

A draft list of actions went to the LCC last week for discussion. The list below is modified to respond to questions about how these actions would support the goals and outcomes of the plan. The actions here have had very minor edits, such as adding the definition of servicing. The list below attempts to compile the ideas of the community (heard during engagement and through thorough review of other strategies and plans that have had engagement as part of their development), as well as review by housing planners at Urban Matters, and staff at the CRD and IT to determine the feasibility and potential outcomes of the actions towards the goals of this strategy.

GOAL: DEVELOPMENT IS PLANNED BASED ON DATA

- Resources are available to support decisions about where to build what to work within the environmental context.
- Housing Needs Reports as well as ongoing engagement are considered when determining priorities and action plans.

To do this we will...

COLLECT AND SHARE DATA AND INFORMATION

Collect and share data and information (environmental, development processes, compliance and regulations, Residential Tenancy Act) to support homeowners, renters, residents, landowners, developers and regulators make informed decisions and deliver housing more easily.

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
1.	Data Collection and Monitoring	<p>Develop a monitoring framework that continually tracks housing and related data to understand progress towards Salt Spring’s vision for housing.</p> <p>This will include data on growth trends and projections, fresh water supply, infrastructure, and development rate.</p>	Development is planned on data.
2.	Data Collection and Monitoring	Convene periodic meetings of relevant government agencies, affordable housing providers and funders to share information and facilitate collaboration. (LCC with support from CRD RHP).	Improved collaboration and governance.
3.	Data Collection and Monitoring	Compile and Synthesize existing environmental data that indicates at-risk species, sensitive eco-systems, and other areas of ecological significance for conservation. Overlay these maps with property line maps to identify where development of new housing is least impactful.	Support land owners to identify where to concentrate efforts for conservation

4.	Communications, Engagement, and Education	Provide forum to convene existing housing operators for collaboration and information sharing on an infrequent but regular basis	Improved collaboration, data collection and sharing.
5.	Communications, Engagement, and Education	<p>Develop an ongoing Engagement Plan to help ensure interested and affected parties including local non-profits, local businesses, vulnerable groups, and persons with lived experience of housing need are engaged as the Strategy is put into action.</p> <p>This plan could include strategies to share existing data with the community that has been requested (water system mapping, domestic water usage trends, previous water optimization studies)</p>	Improved collaboration and governance.

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
6.	Data Collection and Monitoring	<p>Develop a monitoring framework that continually tracks housing and related data to understand progress towards Salt Spring's vision for housing.</p> <p>This will include data on growth trends and projections, fresh water supply, infrastructure, and development rate.</p>	Development is planned on data.
7.	Data Collection and Monitoring	Convene periodic meetings of relevant government agencies, affordable housing providers and funders to share information and facilitate collaboration. (LCC with support from CRD RHP).	Improved collaboration and governance.
8.	Data Collection and Monitoring	Compile and Synthesize existing environmental data that indicates at-risk species, sensitive eco-systems, and other areas of ecological significance for conservation. Overlay these maps with property line maps to identify where development of new housing is least impactful.	Support land owners to identify where to concentrate efforts for conservation
9.	Communications, Engagement, and Education	Provide forum to convene existing housing operators for collaboration and information sharing on an infrequent but regular basis	Improved collaboration, data collection and sharing.
10.	Communications, Engagement, and Education	Develop an ongoing Engagement Plan to help ensure interested and affected parties including local non-profits, local businesses, vulnerable groups, and	Development is planned on data. People are provided with the tools they need to be part of the solution.

	<p>persons with lived experience of housing need are engaged as the Strategy is put into action.</p> <p>This plan could include strategies to share existing data with the community that has been requested (water system mapping, domestic water usage trends, previous water optimization studies)</p>	<p>The whole community works together and is well informed.</p>
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GOAL: PEOPLE ARE PROVIDED WITH THE TOOLS AND SUPPORTS TO BE PART OF SOLUTIONS

- Housing programs that match landlords and tenants.
- Resources for landlords to reduce risk and uncertainty.
- Support pathways to compliance to legalize existing rentals.

To do this we will...

FACILITATING OPTIMIZATION OF CURRENT HOUSING STOCK

- Increase supply through the optimization of current housing stock, creating a pathway to compliance for informal housing, and building new units.

	Type of tool	Action	Where would this help?
11.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to allow secondary suites and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in all zones that allow residential use (excluding short-term rentals) in locations with existing servicing level A.	Enables development. Optimizes current housing stock/ incentives for renovation.

12.	Incentives and Supports for Affordable Housing Projects	Continue the CRD's ADU Incentive program and expand to include minor renovations or other expenses related to renting out rooms.	Supports optimization of existing housing stock.
13.	Incentives and Supports for Affordable Housing Projects	<p>Explore opportunities for the LCC to provide economic development grants.</p> <p>Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore feasibility of an incentive program to support the legalization or upgrade of existing informal or unpermitted housing to safe, permitted units. • Promoting employee housing • Consider modest funding for minor renovations for sharing single family homes, existing ADUS, or boarding houses owned by local community groups. <p>Provide top-up PDF funding via to affordable housing projects</p>	Supports optimization of existing housing stock.
14.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Land Use Bylaw to enable the strata conversion of detached ADUs by a homeowner.	Supports clustered housing. Supports pathways to home ownership within existing and future housing stock.
15.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to support year-round use in campsites under conditions that support local employment.	Optimizes current housing stock and serviced locations. Supports actions that could be done quickly, even as temporary for individuals/families. Supports local employers and employees.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS:

- Public education – people have suites in their basement but people won't rent because of fear
 - o Ability to inform the public on best practices on renting their homes and how to do it well
 - o There is concern about the RTA legislation itself – MLA is looking at more resources to resolve disputes that could help people in decision regarding whether to rent or not.
 - o Talking about having someone on SSI and committing to resolving things in 10 days or less

- Rent bank funding
- Boarding houses were mentioned but make sure they are
- Low hanging fruit – build regulations for boarding houses should be aligned between agencies
 - o Have the more liberal ones met by IT

GOAL: THIS WORK IS ACTIONABLE

- Align housing policies with Islands Trust and other jurisdictions to reduce delays and regulatory barriers.
- Regulatory and infrastructure entities are communicating regularly and work together as needed.

To do this we will...

COLLABORATION

- Increase inter-agency coordination through collaborative agreements and processes

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
16.	Approvals and Regulations	<p>Conduct an evaluation of the existing development approvals process to ensure alignment and coordination among the CRD, NSSWD, and IT.</p> <p>This evaluation can be led by a Working Group of cross-agency local government staff and elected officials.</p>	<p>Improving collaboration and governance processes.</p> <p>Working Group to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Islands Trust - Building Inspection - Water purveyors - Sewer purveyors - Island Health - MOTT - Fire Dept <p><i>Note that these groups have been engaged in the process and will be part of final review of this plan to ensure that the actions relevant to them are within their organizations directives.</i></p>

17.	Approvals and Regulations	Create simplified, clear documents that outline procedures, guidelines, and processes for alternative forms of housing, such as tiny homes, or pathways to compliance for existing informal housing.	<p>Supports plan goals of improving collaboration and governance, providing tools to support land and homeowners to be part of the solution., and optimizing existing stock.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example is new building permitting guidelines tool from CRD - Working Group to continue to seek ways to align and communicate their policies
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GOAL: RESIDENTS NEW AND OLD CAN FIND APPROPRIATE HOUSING THEY CAN AFFORD, YEAR-ROUND.

- People can find appropriate housing on Salt Spring that allows them the security to plan their life and the life of their children on the Island.
- Housing is available across the spectrum, including subsidized, rental housing, and affordable home ownership
- Incentivize and prioritize affordable units for middle and low-income households.
- Incentives diversity of the housing stock (form, tenure, location, price) to increase the range of housing options available, allowing individuals/ households/ families the opportunity to rent or buy appropriate housing for their needs.
- Incentivize housing that aligns with the character of Salt Spring Island.
- Keep rural area development focused on maximizing existing infrastructure (buildings, hydro, sewer, and water connections) and minimizing ecological impact (compliance with regulations, maintaining a small foot print, ...

To do this we will...

Support diverse housing types

- Identify where to allow development and support conditions for development of diverse housing to occur, with an emphasis on

- Incentives diversity of the housing stock (form, tenure, location, price) to increase the range of housing options available, allowing individuals/ households/ families the opportunity to rent or buy appropriate housing for their needs.

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
18.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	<p>Review Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to ensure policies enable preferred typologies and tenure options.</p> <p>This action could be supplemented by a Development Permit Area Form and Character Guideline to ensure community character is maintained in new housing developments.</p>	<p>Enables the creation of diverse housing types that reflect the character and values of SSI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garden suites - Secondary suites - House-plex - Boarding houses - Small-scale multi-unit housing - Housing for specific populations such as seniors, staff, low-income, etc.
19.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	<p>Amend the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to allow short term and seasonal residential uses specifically for cultural housing for seasonal work, cultural participation, or harvest activities by local First Nations.</p>	<p>Promotes reconciliation with First Nations Supports diverse housing options for cultural activities.</p> <p><i>This action comes from First Nations engagement and a desire to see housing built for seasonal cultural activities.</i></p>

Subsidize affordable housing projects

20	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Explore the creation of a density bonus program that would grant additional density and/or units to a property in exchange for community benefits such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A percentage of the additional density as affordable housing secured through a housing agreement, or cash-in-lieu of affordable units which could go into a reserve fund to use for affordable housing projects. 	Generate funds for future provision of housing. Protect affordable units through agreements. Incentivise ecological-conscious building. Incentivising appropriate new development.
21	Incentives and Supports for Affordable Housing Projects	Consider reduced development fees for affordable housing.	Build more affordable units through subsidization of projects (reduction of fees).
22	Delivery of Affordable Housing	Identify surplus publicly owned land that could be used for affordable non-market housing development.	Build more affordable units by through subsidization of projects (provision of land).
23	Delivery of Affordable Housing	Explore partnerships to activate surplus lands for affordable non-market housing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-profit housing providers and local social services Local businesses CRD Housing Corporation All interest holding First Nations 	Build more affordable units by through subsidization of projects (provision of land).

Ensure that housing development reflects the character and values of SSI.

- Use environmentally conscious design principles and emphasize small footprints, energy efficient buildings, and eco-friendly materials.
- Seek to build community through housing types that support connection through placement, design features, and shared ownership (co-op, strata, etc.)

Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
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24.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to allow tiny home villages and tiny home mobile parks in locations with appropriate servicing capacity (Level B or C)	Enables new development. Enables housing that reflects the character and values of SSI.
25.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Land Use Plan Bylaw to incorporate a flexible/Homeplate zoning model to cluster growth on individual properties outside of town centres. It would allow for additional dwelling units on a lot, where the combined floor area of all dwellings does not exceed specified limits. The number of permitted dwellings on flexibly zoned lots would be limited by lot size, combined floor area ratio (FAR), and servicing infrastructure capacity (service level B).	Support new development, particularly on larger and more rural lots. Supports cluster housing types.

SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
26.	Advocacy Efforts	Support community groups seeking to access funding for affordable housing initiatives. This could work alongside the activation of surplus lands which could be developed through partnership with a non-profit that secures external funding for non-market affordable housing.	Supports deeper affordability by reducing costs to build, shows community and political support for housing projects.
27.	Advocacy Efforts	Prepare Advocacy Strategy to coordinate advocacy efforts for housing supports from Provincial and Federal governments.	Improving collaboration and coordination

28.	Delivery of Affordable Housing	Develop a business case to explore the feasibility of a Salt Spring Island Housing Authority or Land Trust that could develop, own, and operate housing for Salt Spring Island. This organization could also hold land and work with local non-profits to operate the housing.	Develop and retain affordable housing.
29.	Delivery of Affordable Housing	Develop a business case to explore the feasibility and role of a Housing Planner/Coordinator/Facilitator for Salt Spring Island.	Develop and retain affordable housing. Enable development of housing.

OTHER IDEAS

- Rental vs owned housing. We know there is a high percentage of owned housing – disturbingly low percentage of rental, not just affordable but across the board. A problem of a community of our size.
 - o Not sure what the strategy is but its an issue we need to address

GOAL: DEVELOPMENT IS FOCUSED IN GANGES

- Density in serviced areas to maximize existing infrastructure (access to services, water, sewer, transportation, and walkability).

To do this we will...

PLAN FOR GANGES AS A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

Densify Ganges through low-impact and character conforming development

	Type of Tool	Action	Where would this help?
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30.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Enable increased density in pre-zoned areas near Ganges where servicing (level C) is already available, and amenities such as commerce, transit and active transportation, schools, and community amenities already exist.	Supports complete communities and focusing density in Ganges. Could support projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drake Road - Kings Lane - Boarding houses - IWAV proposed housing
31.	Land Use Policy Changes / Enabling Housing Development	Amend the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan Bylaw and Land Use Plan Bylaw to support residential use in existing commercial zones.	Allows housing to be built in more areas.

INFRASTRUCTURE...

32.	Infrastructure	NO ACTION YET - Need to confirm with existing infrastructure providers that upgrades are needed to support 2008 zoning build out.	
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OTHER IDEAS

- Prioritizing water and sewer to affordable housing