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REPORT TO SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION MEETING OF THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026

SUBJECT **Ganges Fire Hall Project Charter - Consultation**

ISSUE

The purpose of this report is to review and approve a Project Charter outlining the consultation steps associated with the Ganges Hall Repurposing Project.

BACKGROUND

The former Ganges Fire Hall will be vacated in late 2026 following completion and commissioning of the new Salt Spring Island (SSI) Fire Hall. Upon vacancy, responsibility for the operations and maintenance of the existing fire hall building will transfer to the Capital Regional District (CRD) through the SSI Parks and Recreation Service, as delegated to the SSI Local Community Commission (LCC).

In anticipation of this transition, the LCC engaged a registered professional to assess the existing building's compliance with the BC Building Code, and to evaluate the feasibility and cost implications of repurposing the structure for alternative uses. The completed assessment compared the requirements for repurposing the building for assembly occupancy, such as a community hall or farmers market, against demolition of the structure to enable future redevelopment.

The assessment concluded that the existing fire hall cannot support assembly occupancy without significant investment, including upgrades to building systems, fire and life safety measures, universal accessibility, interior reconfiguration and full replacement of the building envelope. Given the scale of required upgrades, the site's central location, and the high level of community interest in its future use, staff recommend a structured planning and engagement process before any decisions are made.

The attached Project Charter (Appendix A) outlines the scope, timeline, budget, governance, risks and consultation framework for this work.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission approve the Ganges Fire Hall Repurpose Project Charter (Appendix A) and authorize staff to proceed with the project as outlined, including community and First Nations engagement and associated assessments, within the approved project budget.

Alternative 2

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission refer the report back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

A total project budget of \$70,000 has been allocated to the Ganges Fire Hall Repurpose Project. Remaining funding sources include:

- \$21,050 remaining from 2025 Community Works Funding following completion of the initial architectural assessment.
- \$40,000 in reserve funding allocated in 2026.

The budget includes professional assessments, community engagement services, First Nations capacity funding, project management, and contingency. It is not anticipated that the full budget will be required. Any surplus funds will remain available for future project phases or be returned to reserves in accordance with CRD financial practices.

Approval of the Project Charter does not authorize future capital construction or redevelopment expenditures.

First Nations Implications

The property is located in an area of high First Nations interest and archaeological sensitivity. As a result, early and ongoing engagement with Indigenous governments will be a critical component of the project. Broader community consultation would follow to identify community needs, explore feasible options, and understand ratepayer support for various potential outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Approval of the Ganges Fire Hall Repurpose Project Charter will allow staff to undertake the necessary planning, assessment, and engagement work required to bring forward informed and community-supported options for the future use of the former Ganges Fire Hall site. This approach ensures that future decisions reflect community needs, respect Indigenous interests, and clearly outline the financial and operational implications for consideration by the Local Community Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission approve the Ganges Fire Hall Repurpose Project Charter (Appendix A) and authorize staff to proceed with the project as outlined, including community and First Nations engagement and associated assessments, within the approved project budget.

Submitted by:	Dan Ovington, BBA, Senior Manager, Salt Spring Island Administration
Concurrence:	Stephen Henderson, MBA, P.G.Dip.Eng, BSc, General Manager, Electoral Area Services

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Ganges Fire Hall Repurpose Project Charter