



**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2018**

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**SUBJECT**     **Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment**

**ISSUE**

A Housing Needs Assessment for the Southern Gulf Islands (Appendix A) has been completed using funding approved from the Electoral Area Community Works Fund and a report on the findings and process is presented to the Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC) as information.

**BACKGROUND**

The CRD Board, at its October 12, 2016 meeting, approved the following motion:

*That a contribution of \$40,000 from the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area Community Works Fund for a housing needs assessment for the Southern Gulf Islands be authorized.*

In early 2017, JG Consulting was chosen as the successful proponent in response to a request for quotes for the project and Regional Housing managed the project in partnership with Islands Trust. Project activities were supported by a Project Advisory Group, made up of representatives from each of the Southern Gulf Islands.

The consultant undertook demographic analysis, identified the present housing stock and the shortfalls in requisite affordable housing. The analysis looked at both present and future anticipated needs.

The assessment has helped establish a data base to support long-term housing planning needs, will provide an evidence-base to support applications for funding and provide data to guide planning and bylaw development.

**ALTERNATIVES**

*Alternative 1:*

That the Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A) be received for information.

*Alternative 2:*

That the Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A) be referred back to staff with alternative direction from the Committee.

**DISCUSSION**

Overall, the Housing Needs Assessment found that suitable and affordable housing remains unattainable for many Southern Gulf Island residents. Particular findings include:

- A gap in the availability of timely housing data between Census periods, particularly on the rental market on the Southern Gulf Islands;
- Rental supply is low and unit numbers are decreasing;

- A high proportion (44%) of renters paying more than 30% of their income on shelter costs with 44 renters who answered a survey indicating they were paying more than 50% of their income on shelter costs;
- Home ownership becoming increasingly out of reach for many households in the area. The median household income is \$54,000 annually, but it would take an income of over \$99,000 annually to afford a home sold at the median sale price of \$580,000 (February 2018);
- A very low and declining rate of permanent residency in the area with dwellings increasingly being used as vacation or short-term vacation purposes;
- High incidence of low income households; and
- Households with children and seniors showing particular vulnerability to housing stress.

The Project Advisory Committee has asked that consideration be given to hosting an event on the Southern Gulf Islands where the results of this Housing Needs Assessment can be shared with interested individuals and groups. The Committee also asked that government representatives attend to present current funding and resources available to groups wishing to build affordable housing. CRD and Islands Trust staff are working together to explore opportunities to help facilitate such an event.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **Social Implications**

The information provided in the Housing Needs Assessment will help inform and support efforts by local groups to secure funding for new affordable housing in the Southern Gulf Islands area.

### **Financial Implications**

The project was supported with \$40,000 in funding from the Electoral Area Community Works Fund and completed with a small surplus of less than \$500.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A) be received for information.

Submitted by:	John Reilly, MSW RSW, Manager Housing Planning and Programs
Concurrence:	Christine Culham, Senior Manager Regional Housing
Concurrence:	Kevin Lorette, P.Eng., MBA, General Manager Planning & Protective Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachments: Appendix A - Southern Gulf Islands Housing Needs Assessment