

Date: October 6, 2009

File No.: Climate Smart
Islands Program

To: Local Trust Committees
Denman Island, Gabriola Island, Gambier Island, Thetis Island,
Hornby Island, and Lasqueti Island

From: Pamela Shaw, PhD MCIP

**Re: Climate Change Initiative:
Implementing Bill 27 Requirements in Official Community Plans**

Location: Northern Federation Local Trust Areas

BACKGROUND

At the September Trust Council Meeting, all LTC's were asked to amend their work programs to prioritize Bill 27 OCP amendments and direct staff to report back to each LTC with specific options on OCP climate change policies and targets appropriate for each local trust area. It was noted that this work would need to be completed well in advance of the May 31, 2010 provincial deadline to allow sufficient time to coordinate changes to official community plans and land use bylaws. Later in the meeting, the Islands Trust Council voted to recommend that all LTCs make GHG emission reduction the top priority in their work program.

This report identifies a proposed timeline for the review and recommends that the final product reflect the unique issues and circumstances of each Plan Area under the jurisdiction of the six LTCs.

While this report is meant to provide discussion focus at an upcoming meeting of each LTC, it also includes a recommendation that each LTC consider holding a special meeting in the next couple of weeks.

DISCUSSION

Three issues are identified for discussion:

1. Proposed timetable for the review;
2. Recognition of unique issues/requirements for areas under each LTC's jurisdiction;
3. Setting up the first special meeting.

Proposed timetable for the review

The following timetable provides a starting point for discussion. Each LTC will develop their own specific timetable over the next few weeks, but all will likely follow a similar schedule:

- The consultant will work with local planners and administrative staff to schedule special meetings (separate from the regular LTC meetings) as soon as possible in each of the Plan Areas. This should occur in the next couple of weeks.
- Where practical, meetings could be combined for more than one Plan Area.
- At the special meetings, trustees and the consultant will review the requirements of Bill 27 with community members in attendance, present some “best practices” from other BC communities, and discuss possible bylaw amendment options.
- Community meetings and input should occur through November and possibly December.
- Draft bylaw amendments could be provided in December and January, with public hearings anticipated for March 2010.
- It is recognized that some Plan Areas are either immersed in or about to proceed into OCP/LUB reviews. Staff and the consultant will work to ensure the timelines for both the GHG project and local planning document amendments are coordinated. It may be that the two processes will mesh together for 1st reading in early 2010, or it may be that the OCP/LUB process proceeds independently but ultimately includes the GHG amendments.
- It is important to ensure that the public be fully informed of the projects and timelines so there is clear understanding on what is being reviewed at the public hearings planned for March 2010.

Recognition of unique issues/requirements for areas under each LTC’s jurisdiction

At the outset, one of the difficulties that will be encountered with the preparation of OCP/LUB amendments will be perceived deficiencies in inventory numbers on greenhouse gas emissions. While work is being completed now on preparing inventories for the Islands in the northern federation, it is anticipated that, given the complexity of the project, some residents may take issue with specific inventory numbers.

While the inventory numbers are important, the purpose of this project is to propose amendments to OCPs and LUBs to meet the requirements of Bill 27. It is anticipated that there will be some discussion at the community meetings on the specifics contained in the inventories, but the majority of time will be spent on crafting Plan Area specific amendments that accurately reflect local communities and meet provincial requirements.

Also important will be the recognition of unique concerns and issues in each Plan Area, and to ensure that work already completed is accurately represented in any proposed amendments. For example, a community group on Gabriola Island is already working on greenhouse gas emission measures independently of higher-level sponsored reviews, and it will be important to ensure that this work is considered as new text drafted in the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan.

The islands within the northern federation are faced with situations that differ from other BC municipalities. The implementation of the province’s mandate represents an interesting opportunity to establish targets that fit the unique circumstances of each of the Plan Areas.

Setting up the first special meeting

The demanding timetable and complex work required to successfully complete this project is challenging. As such, it is recommended that each LTC consider a Resolution Without Meeting (RWM) to hold a special meeting to discuss this project soon. Over the next week, you will receive an email or telephone call asking you which dates you are available. After determining

suitable dates, staff will send out RWM's for each LTC to consider. The consultant will then meet separately with each LTC and discuss this project in detail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior to the LTC discussion of this staff report, it is recommended that each Local Trust Committee instruct staff to set up a Special Meeting.

At the Special Meeting, it is recommended that:

1. That each LTC schedule upcoming special and community meetings in each Official Community Plan Area (or combined if practical);
2. That each LTC instruct the consultant and staff to prepare a mailout to all property owners/residents detailing the project and requesting comments and suggestions, and that feedback be used in developing proposed bylaw amendments; and
3. That following the completion of consultation and research on the required Bill 27 amendments, each LTC be presented with a proposed amendment bylaw for consideration.

Respectfully submitted by:

Date