



Thetis Island Community Questionnaire/Survey Analysis of Results July 2009

Background

The Thetis Island Local Trust Committee initiated a review of the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) in January 2008. In September 2008, a Community Questionnaire/ Survey was mailed to all property owners on Thetis Island. In total, 137 of the referenced addresses were on Thetis Island and 223 were sent to addresses off-Island, for a total of 360 surveys. The Thetis Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC) also emailed the survey to any Thetis Island residents registered on E—SPOKES, a Thetis Island listserv. Approximately 320-330 email addresses were contained on the list serve in Fall 2008.

In the mail out, the survey was accompanied by the Thetis OCP. Respondents were also provided with background information on land use bylaws and a cover letter that discussed the community bylaw review process.

The survey asked for responses to three open-ended questions:

- *In your opinion what is the most pressing and/or important **land use** issue facing our community?*
- *What changes, if any, to our Official Community Plan, and/or its content do you feel are required? Please indicate why, and exactly how, you propose any changes.*
- *Looking at short-term (5-10 years) and long-term (10 plus years) what hopes do you have for Thetis Island?*

In total, 26 emailed responses were received on the survey. No mailed responses were submitted.

The following summarizes the responses received and provides recommendations for the Thetis Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw review. The responses are first presented to each question, and then comments that did not directly fit the question format are presented under key themes. It is noted that a comment may occur more than once if it was reported in more than one response.

Survey Issues

Given that the survey database targeted property owners instead of tenants, it is possible that people who rent or otherwise live on Thetis Island but do not own property may not have received a copy of the survey. However, as the Advisory Planning Commission also sent out an email notice, it is anticipated that this would have added to number of potential respondents (by accessing part-time residents, short-term renters, and business tenants) receiving the survey.

Given that responses were sent in by email, it is not possible to guarantee the anonymity of respondents as the email address often clearly identified an individual's name and/or the individuals often signed the email and provided further contact information. However, any comments in this document are not attributed to any individual.

There was feedback following the receipt of the surveys from residents that the response timeframe (5 days) was insufficient to allow for adequate comment. It is noted that responses were received and accepted after the 5 day window, and the Advisory Planning Commission also allowed a longer time frame for responses (10 days). It does not appear that either of the suggested time frames would have discouraged residents or property owners from responding.

It is not accurate to state that each response represents the opinions of one individual. In some instances, the response is signed by more than one member of a household and some responses indicated that the questions were discussed with others prior to emailing back a shared response. While it is difficult to definitively record the number of persons represented in the responses, it is fair to say that the surveys represent the comments of more than 26 individuals.

The number of responses received is not statistically sufficient for the views expressed to be considered representative of the entire community, nor was the survey intended to be interpreted that way. Instead, the responses offer comprehensive and detail opinions on the survey questions. They responses also show a high level of local knowledge and interest in community issues. The survey responses provide useful information as the Local Trust Committee, Advisory Planning Committee, and Thetis Island residents proceed with a review of the Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw.

Review of Responses

The survey was structured as open-ended questions, which allows much latitude to respondents in providing comments and suggestions. The survey responses are presented first on the three questions and second grouped around key themes. While there is some overlap in presenting the information in these two ways, this most accurately represents the way respondents answered the survey.

It is noted that the responses are presented in no particular order and no hierarchical emphasis is implied.

Responses to the Three Questions

1. In your opinion what is the most pressing and/or important land use issue facing our community?

- 1.1. The build out of small lots, and more residential (versus recreational) use of small lots in high density subdivisions on the island. This will lead to increased friction between landowners/users. It will also lead to increased environmental impacts in some of the more sensitive areas of the island (waterfront, Garry Oak meadows, etc.)
- 1.2. As a secondary issue, at the same time increasing regulation or increasing enforcement of regulation will act to remove or disempower landowners who are interested in land stewardship
- 1.3. Rentals
- 1.4. Garbage and recycling
- 1.5. Water
- 1.6. Protection and maintenance of ground water
- 1.7. Garbage disposal
- 1.8. Maintaining the beauty and character of the foreshore (no Scott Island type breakwaters)
- 1.9. A plan to encourage land owners with large tracts of land to put their land in Managed Forest status
- 1.10. Protecting the shoreline (no shot rock wall or other structures that dramatically alter the shoreline)
- 1.11. Reducing our ecological footprint and fostering voluntary sustainable behaviour (we are not sustainable with our current population!!! Numbers/density aren't the problem, it is life style, consumption, pollution, resource usage and lack of sustainable infrastructure that must be addressed and modified)

- 1.12. Promoting local, environmentally friendly economic alternatives to support/encourage committed, full time, long term residents (= community sustainability)
- 1.13. Increasing locally produced food supply
- 1.14. Improving local air quality (initiatives for heating alternatives)
- 1.15. Proactive watershed and sensitive eco-area stewardship
- 1.16. Sustainability, both environmentally and economically
- 1.17. Need more emphasis on biodiversity and the need to preserve sensitive ecosystems- community plan should define sensitive ecosystems and how they should be protected
- 1.18. Provide an outline of how new development should proceed in a sustainable way
- 1.19. New development should include green technologies
- 1.20. Rainwater collection should be part of new designs
- 1.21. Use of alternative power source should also be a part of new development
- 1.22. In large developments, set aside land for the community (community gardens or parkland)
- 1.23. Be more tolerant regarding land use for home based business (for example, neighbourhood restaurant, more latitude on tourism uses, low impact agriculture, forestry) to build enterprise and employment opportunities, attract and hold young families and permanent residents
- 1.24. Maintain rural atmosphere
- 1.25. Full assessment of groundwater supply
- 1.26. Retain a rural type lifestyle while allowing for natural and planned growth
- 1.27. Density comes to mind, only to the extent that it can (but does not necessarily) result in the depletion of water resources and the degradation of the landscape
- 1.28. Perhaps conservation best summarizes the over-arching issue
- 1.29. Home Based Businesses- how much regulation is needed (particularly in R1 areas where homes are closer together)
- 1.30. Protection of watersheds
- 1.31. Creation of a culture of compliance to our bylaws
- 1.32. Encouragement of Home Based Businesses
- 1.33. Inadequate enforcement of bylaws. To ensure a peaceful, harmonious community we must be able to see that the community's will is adhered to
- 1.34. Water Use!! Water shortages, other islands running dry, water use by camps, impact of the two marinas on water use
- 1.35. Do we know how much water is in our underground water tables? Does this get renewed from annual rainfall?
- 1.36. Priority is maintaining the Island in a healthy, sustainable, eco-friendly manner

- 1.37. Land use bylaws must come from a consensus amongst a broad spectrum of individuals on the Island including all views- we want an OCP that truly reflects the whole community and not an OCP, like the current one, that reflects a few individual ideas or a small group of people's ideas
- 1.38. Vacation rentals with absentee landlords
- 1.39. Lack of commercial lands
- 1.40. Short term rentals: cause problems with too many people on small properties, noise from loud music/barking dogs, growth of small establishments into larger more intensive land uses, increased garbage, increased ferry traffic, increased pressure on first responders, strain on water supply, septic fields inadequate, beach accesses cut off, take over of public spaces by private users
- 1.41. Farmland should remain farmland (see some limitations on the amount of clearing that can be done, and percentage of land to be kept treed)
- 1.42. Density and housing: secondary dwelling units are an issue, causes growth not anticipated in forecasts
- 1.43. Some guest cottages are used by second and third owners on shared lots
- 1.44. Some lots have trailers permanently installed with water and sewage hookups beneath roofs- should be addressed in the bylaw
- 1.45. Concern with buildings with footprints too large to be classified as guest cottages being reclassified as accessory buildings. Enforcement is required
- 1.46. Some guest cottages have lofts that are no different than a second story
- 1.47. Need to protect our community against being further undermined and hollowed out by transient populations and becoming more of a holiday destination rather than an open and caring place to live and bring up families
- 1.48. A review of Bylaws is needed as well as the need for new guidelines and strategies for addressing land use complaints
- 1.49. You should be able to rent your home or cottage short term as well as long term if the property is >5 acres and you have a business license (guidelines need to be established)
- 1.50. Any development of properties and new dwelling should require water catchment systems
- 1.51. Properties >10 acres should be allowed to subdivide to 5 acres but must follow environmental guidelines
- 1.52. Any future subdivision should be a minimum of 3 acres (again, guidelines are needed)
- 1.53. All zoning must comply in letter and spirit with the "preserve and protect" intent of the Islands Trust Act
- 1.54. Preserve and protect the unique beauty and tranquility of this special place.

2. What changes, if any, to our Official Community Plan, and/or its content do you feel are required? Please indicate why, and exactly how, you propose any changes.

- 2.1. The goals of the OCP should be changed to relate to rural values rather than the suburban values currently represented by phrases such as “rural tranquil.” I believe that rural environments and communities are encouraged by less bylaws and more emphasis on private property owner rights, especially on larger pieces of land. This approach will encourage the type of people likely to be effective land stewards – who are repelled by excessive legislation
- 2.2. The OCP should be shortened considerably, and simplified. The object of this approach is to encourage rural values and land stewardship, and to reduce the OCP to a manageable document that can truly reflect the diverse values of the island community
- 2.3. The OCP should not be altered to reflect bylaws from other communities, but should be unique to Thetis
- 2.4. The concept of the “precautionary principle” is to be avoided
- 2.5. The OCP should concentrate on laying the foundations for voluntary protection and preservation of the environment
- 2.6. Put more emphasis on applied community initiatives: providing resource for people to make alternative building/resource choices; supporting (or even initiating) group efforts (eco-business Chamber of Commerce); and applied Green Building, food, health, and education networks
- 2.7. The current version of the OCP serves residents as is
- 2.8. Remove any mention of an airstrip from the plan (now in Outdoor Recreation)
- 2.9. I find it paradoxical that the Islands Trust is the driver for the review of our Community Plan. The Islands Trust is about Place not People!
- 2.10. Community is people and we have misplaced our hopes by relegating this fundamental land use issue to the Islands Trust. The Islands Trust is not our municipal government and its mandate is for land use and zoning only
- 2.11. The current plan covers all kinds of possibilities and no aspect of it causes me concern
- 2.12. Many areas in the OCP where the details are out of date or do not reflect current practice (for example, R2 policies on lot size (many are smaller than what is stated in the OCP), trash and recycling centre should be mentioned in Community Facilities, delete reference to airstrip in Outdoor Recreation, delete reference to federal government involvement in the wharf, and specify that the emergency helicopter evacuation site is the school playing field)
- 2.13. Bring definitions in line with other agencies (i.e.: septic field differs from CVRD health, which does not consider a septic field a structure)

- 2.14. Clarity of definitions is necessary to encourage voluntary compliance with our LUB (i.e.: definition of a loft area not to exceed 50% of the main floor area)
- 2.15. Availability of water is the major issue in the near future
- 2.16. Appears to be the fashion to construct ever larger buildings- perhaps look at a limit for cottages and ancillary buildings that would be more in keeping with “preserve and protect”
- 2.17. I hope that Thetis can retain its peace and lack of commercialization, although I have noticed a reduction in the former and a concomitant increase of the latter in last five years
- 2.18. How much septic is put into the ground (particularly from the three camps and thousands of campers a year?)
- 2.19. Constant emphasis on “tranquil, rural character” may be a bit overdone.
- 2.20. Too many bylaws for private property owners of larger pieces of land (10 acres or more) that are more appropriate for small property owners. We moved to a rural area to have more freedom with fewer bylaws and where private property rights are respected
- 2.21. Owners of larger pieces of land should have fewer bylaws such as renting out cabins or houses (but not limited to this)
- 2.22. What we have is pretty good... as was the previous version
- 2.23. Need more lands for housing for a variety of income levels
- 2.24. Need a diversified population that can contribute to the volunteerism required to operate programs such as TICA and the Fire Department
- 2.25. No changes required as the current OCP has not been “built out”
- 2.26. Water will become increasingly important as more development takes place (do a survey on amount and quality of well water and any changes in the last 10 years)
- 2.27. Keep limits on property sizes for short term rentals and B&Bs, cottages should not be rented out
- 2.28. In favour of a community plan that supports a self-sufficient lifestyle, small scale farming, and sustainable use of resources, balanced with a protective stance toward whatever areas we can keep wild.
- 2.29. In favour of protective liens on properties with a corresponding tax break to protect areas not already developed
- 2.30. Keep lot size restrictions as large as they are, or even larger
- 2.31. Continue to require full community participation and approval before any area is rezoned for greater density
- 2.32. Do not keep developing more rules and restrictions so that every detail of our lives is governed by some bureaucrat with a measuring tape
- 2.33. Use of a guest cottage as one of the three bedrooms allowed for a B&B
- 2.34. Allow B&B owners to provide more meals for guests

- 2.35. May need to consider limiting the number of B&Bs on the Island if visitor density is a concern (perhaps by a license system with a maximum number of permit holders)
- 2.36. Long term rentals could be considered for larger lots
- 2.37. Consider restaurants (of a limited size/impact) as a Home Based Business
- 2.38. For economic stability of our Island and in order to support new families and a tax base, the creating of small businesses should be permitted with requirements for a business license, as well as requiring available resources on site (water, septic). This will require bylaw reviews/amendments
- 2.39. Community Plan and bylaws should generally reflect the objectives set out in the existing community plan. Objectives must be set and stated, and enforced as well.

3. Looking at short-term (5-10 years) and long-term (10 plus years) what hopes do you have for Thetis Island?

- 3.1. Would hope to see considerably more conservation covenanting and land use management plans in place over the next five years, the record of the Island Trust in “protecting” land has been dismal to date. Let’s see more encouragement of stewardship of the environment rather than more bylaws and complaining
- 3.2. We hope that the Thetis community will continue to be diverse and rural in nature, and will not become a community of NIMBY suburbanites
- 3.3. I would like to see a health clinic on the Island staffed with an assortment of professionals- Dr, nurse, physio, foot care, etc. (near the community centre)
- 3.4. Gym and trainer to encourage and enable people to live health and independent lifestyles
- 3.5. Small complex for seniors or those who do not want to leave Thetis but can no longer live in their home (near the community centre)
- 3.6. Recycling thrift store
- 3.7. Initiatives that encourage positive and interesting interactions among community members
- 3.8. Short term vision- more socio-economic diversity, more on island services for residents and visitors, pro-active ecological stewardship
- 3.9. Long term vision- community self sufficiency in all areas that we are theoretically capable of achieving. A community that isn’t threatened by reduced ferry service because we have the ability to meet our own basic social and environmental needs
- 3.10. Continue with the school
- 3.11. Help seniors to stay in the community for as long as they can- perhaps a community support system for seniors
- 3.12. A clinic that is open a few days a week, staffed with qualified professionals

- 3.13. Move the post office to the community centre
- 3.14. Encourage more young families to the Island- needed to fill labour gaps
- 3.15. More affordable housing
- 3.16. Allow elders to remain on the Island as long as possible- build a space for seniors. The Dickies have offered land that could be used for a senior's drop in centre or assisted living complex
- 3.17. The Island has managed to remain a natural paradise in the midst of rapid population growth in the surrounding urban areas and will continue to do so with the high barriers to locating here. The OCP should continue to focus on the zoning and land use regulations that have kept the Island in its present condition but encourages a viable healthy community
- 3.18. Increased demand for Thetis property and population growth will have adverse effects on the quiet rural atmosphere and create demand for more commercial conveniences
- 3.19. I hope that the currently allowed growth will not stretch the capabilities of the Island (water, forested areas, trails, public beach access)
- 3.20. Hope it remains an affordable place for people with different financial means
- 3.21. I hope development and growth is managed consistent with the Principles and Objectives stated in the OCP
- 3.22. Continue on a slow and steady path of residential development with enough flexibility in land use to attract young families
- 3.23. Healthy home based businesses, which allow residents to live, work, and raise families on Thetis Island
- 3.24. Continued build out of possible residences (~450 lots). The current number of residential lots on Thetis Island must be maintained
- 3.25. Tourism: continue with the church camps, Overbury Farm Resort, Marinas and legal B&Bs (estimated that over 800 tourists could be accommodated on Thetis as documented by former APC)
- 3.26. When are the other 110 lots to be developed on Thetis- seems like a lot. Where will they be developed?
- 3.27. Our hope is that Thetis maintains its rural character and quiet, and that our water resources remain available for those of us who live here and for those with recreational property here
- 3.28. In 5 years- the OCP will be much smaller and more concise to be uses as a living document (now is cumbersome and not easily accessible)
- 3.29. Sense of community and stewardship of the environment needs to be focused on rather than the enforcement of bylaws
- 3.30. In 10 years- more people (especially on small lots) leaving 25% of their land untouched, including the understory

- 3.31. More gardening and orchards encouraged
- 3.32. Need a healthy mix of full time residents and part time residents
- 3.33. Need more people to be more than a sleepy retirement community
- 3.34. Hope to see a corner store, gas station, variety of community run programs for seniors, children, and teens
- 3.35. Love to see a community centre big enough to host family dances and sport events
- 3.36. Hope is that the current OCP will not change but instead the current bylaws will be enforced
- 3.37. Camps on the Island will continue to operate and become more involved in the community
- 3.38. More cottage industries allowed to develop on the Island
- 3.39. More self sufficient (farmers markets, residents growing their own food)
- 3.40. Would like to see something not too different than what we have today
- 3.41. Must address the long standing issue of garbage collection
- 3.42. An “Action Plan” for the future of Thetis Island is needed. Areas to be addressed include: long term economic sustainability; a plan for managed growth and responsible development; encouragement and incentive for agricultural development; and support for new families moving to the Island
- 3.43. Don’t need more than what we are able to provide for ourselves in the truly amateur, rural tradition
- 3.44. Unique qualities which we presently enjoy on Thetis will be available for our children and future generations
- 3.45. Disagree with the notion that Thetis people share values. The conflict over bylaw interpretation reflects opposing values – of people who take the OCP and bylaws at face value and want to simply live here and those who want to rewrite or dismiss bylaws that may frustrate their ambitions to exploit the island for their own means.
- 3.46. Need to honour and act in accord with the Trust Act and protect the Island’s social and natural environment, a goal that is correct, necessary, and already spelled out in provincial legislation and our local OCP and bylaws.

Key Themes in the Responses

Some responses did not fit directly under responses to the three questions posed in the survey. Instead, these responses are grouped under key themes. Again, the comments are presented in no particular order.

1. Quality of Life

- 1.1. Maintenance of tranquility and privacy
- 1.2. Outdoor recreation land use is in keeping with tranquil rural nature
- 1.3. “Perhaps a sign could be erected adjacent to the Fire Permit signs reminding visitors that Thetis Island is NOT the wilderness or an amusement park, it is HOME to the residents, that water AMPLIFIES sound, and that “we can hear you!” even if all you see around you is trees and water.”
- 1.4. One has to assume that whoever wrote “tranquil rural lifestyle” was not a true countryman or woman. Rural life is not particularly tranquil

2. Noise

- 2.1. Issue of amplified sound in summer months from group camps
- 2.2. Other noise and disturbances on the Island
- 2.3. Enforceable noise bylaws need to be addressed
- 2.4. Suggestion: permits be issued to each business or institution for a limited number of amplified events per season
- 2.5. I am concerned about increasing noise
- 2.6. Concerned that noise provisions in bylaws could be used to curtail perfectly appropriate activities in the camps. Kids make some noise, and have enjoyed doing so on Thetis for well over half a century. Expect that some recently arrived property owners will demand tranquility on his own terms

3. Land Use

- 3.1. Need to protect our wells and aquifers
- 3.2. Heavy water use by institutional camps during the summer months when we are most vulnerable is a concern
- 3.3. Lack of inspiration around the pub. It is time we allowed more development at the site so that it is more attractive to potential developers and might become a place that more of the locals can enjoy
- 3.4. Marinas should accommodate short term rental units (~6)
- 3.5. Seems that the camps get more discouragement than protection in the OCP- they are subtly portrayed as huge resource users and pesky ferry passengers (we need to remember that our ferry service levels are partially credited to these institutions)
- 3.6. An encouragement to institutional uses to provide appropriate zoning to expansion lands would make sense in the bylaw

4. Environmental Protection

- 4.1. With the small lot, waterfront subdivision being currently built out there is a need to encourage conservation initiatives that stretch along more than one of these lots
- 4.2. There is also a need to encourage commitment by lot owners to retain natural ecosystems. While a bylaw is not the way to do this, the OCP can provide a place for the community to state its values and an encouragement to individuals to buy into these values

5. Parks and Trails

- 5.1. Waterfront walking trails should be created in key areas of the Island such as Pilkey Point and Foster Point, not by bylaw or other top down approach but by encouragement and enabling actions by the Islands Trust based on OCP language
- 5.2. Concern that Section 3.3 Parks states that parks are established primarily for the use and enjoyment of Thetis Island residents and property owners. Aren't parks usually for the enjoyment of any well-behaved individual who comes along?

6. OCP and LUB Policy Recommendations

- 6.1. The OCP should include a statement strongly encouraging all lot owners to retain a minimum of 10% of their property in a state undisturbed by the hand of man, and for lots less than 2 acres, 25% minimum. The statement should go on to encourage the use of neighbourhood management agreements to provide conservation corridors and blocks of green space in small lot subdivisions
- 6.2. The OCP should include wording to support a cooperative and positive approach to development and to encourage quality development. Statements on the character of development should include support for cluster development (with suitable conservation covenanting) and should include opportunities for small scale commercial enterprises to encourage diversification of the Island economy.
- 6.3. The OCP should include wording to discourage the Ministry of Transport for requiring excessive highway standards (with attendant impacts)
- 6.4. The OCP should include wording to address interface/wildfire planning more effectively
- 6.5. Land use policies should be more specific (new developments must incorporate rain catchment systems, low water/energy appliances, etc)
- 6.6. Overall the OCP is not bad but lacks any teeth. The language is not strong enough. Encouraging, supporting, or discouraging certain things is nice but I would like to see stronger language. More- this is allowed, this is forbidden. I want to see a clearer message and the bylaws to support it
- 6.7. The current OCP is generally restrictive and intrusive in our community

7. Changes that should not be made to the OCP

- 7.1. The OCP should not include watershed management language unless it is based upon detailed and peer-reviewed study. To enshrine misconceptions about water supply in the OCP would be a mistake
- 7.2. Any language used to encourage preservation should adhere to the principle that preservation is most needed in areas of small lot subdivision. There is a tendency to absolve one's conscience by imposing bylaw based "preservation" on a few large lots, when what is needed is voluntary buy in by the larger community
- 7.3. No waste incinerators! Burning certain objects is harmful to our environment and our health

8. Other Issues

8.1. Bylaw enforcement

- 8.1.1. While a bylaw review is good, this should not mean that the number of bylaws should increase. Keep an eye out for unnecessary bylaws and repeal them.
- 8.1.2. We do not want to see bylaw enforcement as it has been encouraged as this does not enhance the "sense of community especially when everyone is not buying into the OCP.
- 8.1.3. Bylaws should be enforceable. Recently, the City of Calgary created a bylaw about throwing cigarette butts out the window. Now, how enforceable do you think that is?
- 8.1.4. The bylaw enforcement approach to attaining a community vision has not proved to be effective. Our collective energies and financial resources should be directed to a more pro-active approach that identifies the human and environmental needs equally and develops functional strategies to address and harmonize those needs
- 8.1.5. Do not divide the community by encouraging neighbours to report on neighbours for alleged infractions. If a complaint is made by an islander that individual must be prepared to be identified and the targeted property owner must have a copy of the complaint plus the Island Trust's comments regarding the legitimacy of the complaint
- 8.1.6. To spend the huge amount of time, energy, and tax resources necessary to conduct an official community plan review only to produce a document that cannot or will not be enforced when appropriate is foolish
- 8.1.7. One of the greatest sources of bylaw infringement relates to new construction. It is essential that the conditions in building permits be adhered to and that timely inspections are carried out to ensure that this is done. Will require considerable cooperation between the Islands Trust and building inspectors. Such problems should be dealt with before construction has proceeded too far to reverse and those found in contravention should face a fine or be required to post a bond prop to the resumption of construction

- 8.1.8. If more bylaw officers are too expensive might it be possible for our Island to have a committee of citizens to investigate complaints and to attempt to resolve them at a local level? If this fails, one could always fall back on the bylaw enforcement officer
- 8.1.9. The current complaint process where a group of individuals can complain about someone was sneakily passed and many people disagreed with it (does not encourage 'sense of community')
- 8.1.10. Most pressing issue is, in a word, compliance. The disparity between what is supposed to be regulated and what in fact is done has never been greater (in 30 years on the Island)
- 8.1.11. Educating people is important. Some of the restrictive policies pushes people off the Islands and leads to more and more homes becoming cottages for part timers
- 8.1.12. The existing bylaw prohibition on guest cottage rentals should be strengthened and strictly enforced
- 8.1.13. Wells and aquifers should be specifically protected by bylaw from blasting
- 8.1.14. Natural water should be specifically protected by bylaw from development, impediment, or redirection
- 8.1.15. A formal mediation and resolution body needs to be established to review any enforcement complaints/issues, prior to the involvement of bylaw enforcement official or formal filing of complaints
- 8.1.16. It is one thing to create an appropriate set of bylaws, but quite another to ensure those bylaws are implemented and policed
- 8.1.17. How can we think about changing bylaws when we can't enforce the ones we have?
- 8.1.18. Need assurances that the definitions of the words in bylaws will be treated with common sense (i.e.: grandfathering)

8.2. A variety of topics...

- 8.2.1. The Islands Trust should consciously become a positive influence on Island communities, separate itself from matters that are outside of its mandate of zoning and land use and not attempt to pick winners and losers in regard to any enterprise start up
- 8.2.2. Ferry costs and schedules may influence the percentage of part-time/full-time ownership, with resulting conflict between residential and recreational uses of land
- 8.2.3. APC process set up so that there are clearly voices from all types of property owners and not just those who have similar voices
- 8.2.4. Ferry is getting far to expensive to use every day to access employment and recreational events
- 8.2.5. Need to create small business opportunities and a population to support them (~660 would be a good thing!)

- 8.2.6. Support assisted living housing directed to seniors who have lived permanently on the Island at some point in their lives
- 8.2.7. In favour of bylaws that limit the number of buildings on a property, limit densities
- 8.2.8. Not in favour of rental projects or affordable housing projects- last place for people requiring affordable housing is a place with limited employment and high costs
- 8.2.9. Encourage the Islands Trust to err on the side of protection rather than acquiesce to the inevitable pressure for development or densification.

Summary of Responses

The OCP is widely recognized as the appropriate place to state or reflect on community values and the LUB is understood to be the regulatory bylaw. Respondents expressed a high level of understanding on the use and purpose of these two different bylaws.

Overall, respondents support a “made in Thetis” official community plan; several comments were made on ensuring that the OCP and Land Use Bylaw respond directly to local concerns and issues instead of referencing situations in other jurisdictions. These comments are supported by responses that recognize the unique attributes of Island life and the lifestyle choice made by the people who live on Thetis Island.

Residents placed top priority on community involvement and consultation. One respondent warned against polarization in the community, and several others spoke to the need for creating inclusive processes that bring people together. It was seen as essential that residents have opportunities to voice their concerns about development, land use, and change on the Island – that is, both part-time and full-time residents.

Of those responding to the survey, there were many who spoke to slow or planned growth as the preferred future for Thetis Island. A number of respondents commented on the build-out figures contained in the current OCP. One suggested delaying the OCP review until this number has been reached, and others suggested the reconsideration of the build-out number (either higher or lower).

There is a great deal of interest in bringing current practices and techniques into the OCP. For example, the introduction of green building technologies was noted by several respondents as an item that should be included as specific policies. Several respondents noted that regulatory bylaws could be amended to mandate the use of increased or green building standards. Other respondents supported the inclusion of policies on new forms of power generation and mandatory rainwater collection.

Several respondents mentioned the need to attract young families to the Island, either through expanded Home Based Business or by providing other work opportunities. It was recognized that ferry travel and the small range of economic activities on the Island could be seen as a barrier to attracting young families.

Some concerns were expressed with private group camps, generally focused on noise, water consumption, and septic issues. Other respondents commended the camps for encouraging BC Ferries to increase the number of ferry crossings and for providing opportunities for off-Islanders to enjoy the beauty of Thetis Island.

Water was noted many times as an issue from perspectives that focused around water conservation and protection. Specific concerns included maintaining water quality, protecting groundwater, aquifer recharge, over-consumption of a scarce resource and large water users, protecting surface water, and public access to the foreshore.

Clearly, bylaw enforcement is an issue that was voiced in many of the surveys. Responses were mixed on this topic, with some respondents requesting a higher level of bylaw enforcement and others expressing concerns with too much regulation and the current enforcement system process. Rental cottages and secondary dwelling units appear to be the greatest concern among those with comments on bylaw enforcement. Home Based Businesses also seem to be an issue, with respondents again divided on the desired shape and form of Home Based Businesses. Further discussion on this topic is required to reply to the level of concern expressed in the responses.

Recommendations

Topic Areas Identified for Further Consideration

- Ways to build connections among community members
- Protection of fragile ecosystems and Island environment
- The inclusion of green building and alternative energy policies into the OCP
- How to attract young families or otherwise provide for a range of ages and interests on Thetis Island
- “Made in Thetis” approach to bylaw enforcement
- Home Based Business regulations- calls for them to be both more restrictive and more lenient
- Consideration of conservation covenants (not just for large parcels)
- Trail development and access to waterfront
- Water conservation and protection.

Questions to the Community

- Accessory cottages- should there be a maximum size (and should this be smaller than what is currently permitted?)
- How many accessory cottages should be permitted, and should this change with property size (larger property=more cottages)?
- What should the minimum permitted lot size be for a dwelling unit and accessory cottage?
- Should new bylaws around noise reduction be introduced? How will they be enforced?
- What would be a “made on Thetis” approach to vacation rentals?
- Do you support additional commercial zoning? If so, what uses should be permitted? Where?
- Should there be a maximum size for dwelling units? For accessory buildings?
- Should there be enforcement for mandatory testing or septic systems on an annual/biannual/other basis to ensure that poorly maintained systems are detected early and impacts minimized?

Appendix 1: Questionnaire/Survey Document

Dear Thetis Island Community:

Attached are background information and a **Questionnaire/Survey** for your review and YOUR feedback. Your APC (Advisory Planning Commission) team members encourage you to carefully read this information as well as the attached OCP (Official Community Plan) document. We are planning to organize an important Community Meeting (on a Saturday - TBA) in late September. We urge all residents and property owners to attend. In addition, an outside facilitator will be contracted to conduct this meeting.

1. The Goals and Objectives (Short and Long Term), through facilitated meetings, in conjunction with our Official Community Plan (OCP):
 - Develop a positive working environment to review our existing OCP.
 - Establishing working, communication, and dialogue guidelines that support concepts of; a respectful, safe, and open environment.
2. The issues and challenges that our community needs to address:
 - Community concerns regarding specific bylaws.
 - The various views of community members regarding growth.
 - What is the best long-term plan for our Thetis Island community.

3. Questionnaire/Survey

*Please review carefully, answer concisely, to the point.

Please mail your response to: ISLANDS TRUST NORTHERN OFFICE,
700 North Road, Gabriola Island, VOR 1X3
Attention: Thetis Island, APC Survey

You also may E-Mail your response to: northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca

* Please respond within 5 days of receipt of this Questionnaire/Survey

- In your opinion what is the most pressing and/or important **land use** issue facing our community?
- What changes, if any, to our **Official Community Plan**, and/or it's content do you feel are required? Please indicate why, and exactly how, you propose any changes.
- Looking short-term (5-10 years) and long-term (10 plus years) what hopes do you have for Thetis Island?

It is our hope and goal to ensure that community meetings and dialogues will be productive and respectful while enhancing the strength, values, and the cohesion of our community. Even though we have differences, we do share values!

Please retain a copy of this survey for your records.

Thank you for your valued input.
Thetis Island APC