



**RURAL
ISLANDS
ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP**
CULTIVATING RESILIENT
PARTNERSHIPS



2023
Forum

Gabriola Island
April 25-27

Action Resolution – Rural Island Housing Policy Now

Whereas:

1. Rural islands are experiencing crisis levels of problems that are decreasing the islands' abilities to support thriving communities:
 - Influx of baby boomers, resulting in uneven spread of population ages
 - High cost of real estate, limiting ability of even middle-income households to purchase property
 - Loss of community members and local businesses and services due to lack of housing
2. BC government is unaware of the crisis level of the lack of affordable housing for rural island communities
3. RIEP is the recognized vehicle facilitating connections with island settler and Indigenous communities across the Province towards effective socio-economic action. Therefore, RIEP is well-positioned to be a housing advocate on behalf of all rural coastal islands.

Action Resolution – Rural Island Housing Policy Now

Be it resolved that:

RIEP calls upon the BC government establish a "Rural Housing Authority" that would be:

- A source of information - accepted as credible by the government - regarding the lack of housing for rural island and coastal communities
- A voice - accepted as credible by the government - in the decision-making processes for government policies regarding affordable housing on rural coastal islands.

Rural Island Housing Policy Now

1. That RIEP move that rural islands (including Islands Trust) be blanketzoned to allow accessory dwelling units (ADU's) limited by lot coverage and bedrooms.
2. That RIEP move that rural islands (including Islands Trust) allow tiny homes and trailers (non-conforming housing) as a provincially legal use outright or by temporary use permit subject to safety and environmental inspection.
3. That RIEP move that rural islands (including Islands Trust) allow mobile home parks to provide both seasonal and permanent housing options.
4. That RIEP move that a percentage (3 to 8%) of the provincial property transfer tax collected on rural islands be redirected to support development of affordable/accessible housing on those rural islands.
5. That RIEP move that a vacancy tax apportioned to house value and restricted to income be collected from "vacant" homes on rural islands and redirected to support development of affordable/accessible housing on those rural islands.
6. That RIEP move that composting, outhouses and non-potable rainwater be legalized and subject to sensible rural-centric regulations.
7. That RIEP move that the Provincial Government establish an income tax program where income generated from secondary housing units is non-taxable, and where people offering rents at affordable rates can deduct that income from their income taxes.

Rural Housing Policy Now

8. That RIEP move that the Provincial Government establish an income tax program where income generated from secondary housing units is non-taxable, and where people offering rents at affordable rates can deduct that income from their income taxes.
9. That RIEP move that the Provincial Government as part of Trust Council's 2022 request for a full review of the Islands Trust Act, Mandate and Governance structure effect changes to the Islands Trust Act that would transfer responsibility for land use authority to Trust Council (rather than Local Trust Committees) and to potentially create a new Regional District that corresponds with the boundaries of the Islands Trust Area.
10. That RIEP move that the Island Health Authority work with the BC Authorizations Branch to develop straight forward and coordinated approvals for on-site water supply above 4 units without requiring a water utility, in recondition that rural communities need affordable housing and the status quo is unattainable.
11. That RIEP move that the Island Health Authority provide template designs for water systems that will meet the needs of small scale developments on rural islands, and that include alternatives such as greywater recycling and incorporating rainwater for potable uses.
12. That RIEP call upon the Province to implement a Regional Vacancy Tax to add long term rental supply to rural islands. This would be a 1-2% tax on the assessed value of a home which is not the owner's primary residence and is not a long term rental. Similar to BC spec tax. Home owners could avoid tax by renting out a suite on the property or entire dwelling.