**MRDT Engagement Report**

**Date:** October 18, 2024
**Location:** Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre Lodge
*(With thanks for the use of this historic and cozy space!)*

**Land acknowledgement:** We acknowledge, with gratitude, that the Island where we now work, live and play sits within the unceded, traditional territory of the K'omoks First Nation.

**Consultant:** Calum Matthews, For V.I., and Forever Strategies

**Attendance:** & their affiliations (not necessarily attending as representing the organization)

1. Gord Campbell – Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre (TBOEC)
2. Allison Campbell - TBOEC
3. Chris Allen – Hornby bus
4. Patrick Lui – My Hornby Stay: property manages 14 homes. Hornby Island Residents & Ratepayers Association executive (HIRRA), Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association Board (HISTRA)
5. Eulala Mills – Vacation rental, HISTRA Board
6. Tina Wai – Natural History Centre (NHC) & Hornby Island Educational Society (HIES)
7. Ray Therrien – Wind n Waves: property manages 28 homes. Hornby bus, HISTRA Board president.
8. Joyce Hookings – Bed and Breakfast operator (B n B)
9. Kevin Woods – B n B, High Salal internet contact
10. Melanda Schmid- Ochieng – Executive Director for Conservancy Hornby Island (CHI) and NHC
11. John Grayson – Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Board (HICEEC) & Hornby Island Farmland Trust Board (HIFT)
12. Marilyn Kopansky – HICEEC Board & HIFT Board
13. Karen Ross – HICEEC staff. Hornby Island Community Fund Board (HICF)

**MRDT program Recap**

The program is not always ideal, but we must work within constraints. It is what we have to work with.

**Non-allowable projects:**

Services traditionally provided by government. This includes infrastructure like water, sewer, trails, etc.

**Eligible expenses under the program:**

1. Tourism, marketing, promotion
	1. Seasonal or specific frameworks can be used
2. Research & Building
	1. Carrying capacity
	2. Ambassador program
	3. Visitor services
	4. Trail signage
	5. Festivals & events
3. Operations
	1. Cost to doing extensive engagement, book-keeping & reporting. Typical administrative charges in the industry are 20 – 30%
4. Housing
	1. Planning – site, time-lines, zoning, etc.
	2. Research
	3. Construction
	4. Long term management
	5. Debt servicing

Q. How is the housing defined?

A. The legislation has a broad description, but on Hornby, the 5-year strategic plan specifies workforce housing, tourism focus.

* MRDT is not the silver bullet for housing, but it can contribute to solutions.
* Debt on projects can be serviced with future MRDT $.

**2024 Tactical Plan Implementation, Recap**

* Issues with Online Accommodation Platform (OAP) payments for the Hornby MRDT program have been resolved.
* Funds have been stabilized for 2024 and allocated according to the Strategic Plan, with approximately 60% directed to an Affordable Housing “Treasure Chest.”
* Remaining funds allocated to various programs, including:
* Natural History Speaker Series Sponsorship – 7 events
* Ambassador Program: Kiosk, staff and an over-arching benefit $2000. towards a Central Area outhouse
* Consultants, 4 V.I.: Messaging: Responsible Tourism Guide and Landing page on [www.hornbyisland.com](http://www.hornbyisland.com)
* No Horses Jazz Festival sponsorship for advertising

**BRAINSTORMING/DISCUSSIONS:**

1. **Messaging and Tourism Management**

Discussions emphasized the importance of managing tourism effectively, promoting wholesome activities, and fostering a sense of stewardship among residents.

* + 2 billion people on earth in our generation, now 8 billion people. People will come anyway. Choose how to manage that. Elevate the quality of tourism, like is done in Norway. Attract people to come for wholesome activities, like pilates, cooking instruction, etc.
	+ What you do here matters: Like to drink wine? Hornby does that. Like to litter? Hornby doesn’t do that.
	+ What do I personally like to model? What does stewardship look like? What role do residents play?
	+ Visual education project, not exclusive to STVR.
	+ “Love of Place” – with love comes responsibility and care
	+ “Fall in love with Hornby”
	+ “Place-based love”
	+ 400 seasonal residences on Hornby, the owners pay property taxes, and use their homes as they choose. Sometimes owner used homes are over-crowded. Part of messaging would be to those owners and the residents of the island.
	+ HISTRA is doing effective messaging, and oversight, for respectful use in the Vacation Rentals.
1. **Outside threats:**

Hornby Local Trust committee has introduced legislation that will have a potential negative impact on the local economy, many people’s livelihoods, the amount of money collected in the MRDT program, and limit development of affordable housing.

Specifics in the current draft Land Use Bylaw:

1. Designating all properties in the Galleon and Sandpiper subdivisions as part of a Vulnerable Water Aquifer area, which would restrict any development of suites or secondary units on these properties.
2. Make STVR’s illegal on Hornby.
	1. Only through Temporary Use application, and the Trustees acceptance of each application, could the use be allowed.
* It’s important to note that the MRDT collected by vacation rental operators constitutes a significant portion of the total MRDT funds.
* MRDT money is not the property of those collecting, but rather is the communities’ money.
* The legal use of STVR’S on Hornby represented the democratization of the Hornby economy. spreading economic benefits among residents.
* There have been some challenges with off-island involvement and external pressures related to STVR usage regulations (local and provincial).
* Business licensing with the CVRD could provide a more favorable approach than Temporary Use Permits (TUPs). This option allows for regulation while still enabling caps on the number of homes used. Unlike TUPs, which have a limited lifespan, business licensing offers a more stable framework. It has been noted that there are concerns about the Island Trust's position regarding CVRD involvement, particularly around control. However, there may still be opportunities for collaboration between the Island Trust and the CVRD to explore mutual interests?
* Could MRDT money be used to lobby the CVRD, or other levels of government, to give Hornby access to Business Licensing for STVR’s?

Discussions today will focus on the understanding that the income flowing into the MRDT program faces potential external challenges. Given that the number of commercial operators on the island is limited and that a significant portion of funding comes from vacation rentals, there is a possibility that future revenues may decline. This context is important as we explore strategies to implement the MRDT program moving forward.

1. **Affordable housing**

Remains a priority in the community, and for the MRDT funds. The next 5-year Strategic Plan could be positioned to increase the percentage of funds used.

* Regenerative business plan could include supporting the building of tiny homes on the Island. Businesses could buy these homes and rent them to their employees.
* Phased approach, the least expensive start could be providing serviced land for a manufactured home park.
* Option to build “dorm-style” – Communal buildings with individual bedrooms and common living area.
* Opportunities for land – the Crown Lands – some hitches have been experienced in acquisition. HICEEC has also talked to HIRRA and Hornby Arts about their land, and opportunities for partnerships to develop on their parcels. Note: the new Arts Centre is on HIRRA land, and not on the Hornby Arts crown lease.
* Emphasize that a lot of people don’t know what HICEEC is planning for housing. Would like a public meeting to review current plans, and help develop them.
	+ Improved transparency and input are requested.
* What role could the Hornby Island Housing Network play?
1. **Collaborations and Projects**
	1. **Ocean**

Concern regarding the overcrowding in Tribune Bay. Unsafe swimming, noisy, little contribution to the local economy.

* Melanda brought up that C.H.I. has a current project for an eel grass study on Tribune Bay, to be compared to a matching report done previously (2013, done by Islands Trust). Possible projects, building on the outcome of this current survey, include voluntary no-anchor zones in Tribune bay which can be communicated via either/both signage or boating software-based notifications for visitors to the area, as well as general public education (which may tie into the Seaweed Series that NHC is planning as part of the next phase of the speakers/talks/walks/workshops from now to next Spring)
* Joyce – counted up to 124 boats overnight in Tribune Bay, with another 75 day trippers. Noisy. Polluting.
* General consensus – too many boats, too little value to the Island. Suggestions:
	+ Safe swimming buoys (Karen talked to Derek at BCParks regarding establishing a safe swimming area, with no boats allowed inside that space. This is tentatively a future BCParks project).
	+ Gord explained that the water is federal, but the bottom is part of the park, and anchors could be set on the bottom. This could promote eel grass restoration. Project: Install mooring buoys and only those boats on the buoy could stay. They would pay for the spot, and education could be given to them when the Ranger collected the fee. Example of a working precedent: <https://newcastleisland.ca/moorage-info>
	1. **Road safety**

Calum: Walking trails are considered infrastructure. There may be a way to direct money to the trails during the next 5-year strategic planning. Would need to be costed ahead of time, and be tourism focused.

* 1. **Education**

Ideas on ways to share messaging:

* + Self guided tours? Brochure? Headphones?
	+ Podcasts? Calum shared an example of podcasts done for exploring Vancouver Island, with a focus on First Nations education. [F.M.I. link](https://forvi.ca/project/indigenous-voices-vancouver-island-podcast/#:~:text=Indigenous%20Voices%20of%20Vancouver%20Island%20is%20a%20five%2Depisode%20limited,for%20visitors%20to%20Vancouver%20Island.)
	+ Ambassador program and Welcome Centre– An ambassador answers questions and gives guidance at the kiosk at the Farmers Market, includes funding for a public washroom in the summer, in this Central area.
	+ CHI and NHC contribute to education of visitors and residents, from the basis of sharing our love and respect for the natural beauty of our island and with a view to promoting and encouraging respectful relationship with the ecosystem and the resources it provides.
	1. **Water**

A critical issue on an island with no lakes or reservoirs.

* + Support for rainwater collection? Perhaps at the larger businesses and STVR’s.
	+ Subsidize cisterns?
	+ Lobby Island Trust to have water catchment as mandatory in all new builds.
	+ Education - the value of wetlands, use water sparingly, a precious resource, etc.
	+ Support the work of hornbywater.org
	1. **Community Building**

Programs that are for visitors and residents alike. Visible, improve life on Hornby

* + Shoulder season activity would mean clients for businesses. If they stayed open longer it would also serve the local community. E.g. restaurants
	+ Off season events that benefit from visitors coming, and are for locals: Herring Fest, Forest Fest, Blues Camp, No Horses Jazz Festival, etc.

**Acknowledgements:**

Thanks to everyone for braving the rainy weather, and to Gord and Allison for putting on the fire and hot tea to welcome us to the historic Tribune Bay Lodge. And thanks to Calum Matthews for his willingness to be stranded on Hornby with forecasted ferry closures. He was able to find a roof over his head at Ford Cove, and had a bit of an adventure with a dead car battery. A memorable day.

*"Together, we build stronger foundations; constructive input paves the way for the best results."*

 - unknown

**Next Steps**

**2025 Tactical Plan Development:**

Calum and HICEEC will draft the 2025 Tactical Plan based on engagement themes, with a submission deadline in November.

1. **Budget Overview:**
	* Affordable Housing: 60%
	* Remaining 40% Allocations:
		+ Ambassador Program & Welcome Centre
		+ “Place-Based Love” messaging
		+ Events and initiatives – community applications
2. **Review Process:**
	* HICEEC Board to review and endorse the submission.
3. **2025 Implementation:**
	* Application process to be developed for Community Events & Initiatives Funding

**Feedback and Comments:**
Please share any additional thoughts or insights on this engagement. Email: karen@hiceec.org