

Thank you for your thoughtful questionnaire in which you raise both the constraints on our artistic community, and the opportunities which the arts sector presents for the whole island. I congratulate you on your visionary tone.

Some of you will know me as a fine art photographer and exhibitor, as well as commercial photographer for local artists. I maintain a studio at Merchants' Mews. I am also a former coordinator of Photosynthesis shows, the Through a Glass Darkly Show, and others. I am currently a member of the Artepelago group.

At the outset, I note that your questionnaire separates some issues as appropriate for the CRD.

Question 1: Support for the arts

The Trust legislation includes the mandated protection of the "unique amenities" of the Trust Islands, both natural and social. Senior government, and the Trust's own policies, direct local communities in BC to plan for economic and housing needs of their communities. These policies are given expression in our Official Community Plan. As a planning agency, the Trust can anticipate the needs of, an eventual art school on the island (if it evolves in time as a bricks and mortar proposition). The Trust plays an advocacy role on issues outside land use planning, such as with BC Ferries, and local trustees can play an advocacy role for SSAC initiatives.

The housing issue is by far the largest area of Trust jurisdiction relating to your questionnaire. I comment below.

Question 2: Opportunities to access regional and provincial funding

This is a question for the CRD. The Trust was created as a single planning and land use authority for the southern gulf islands. Significantly, funding authority was left largely with the regional districts surrounding the gulf, in our case the CRD.

Question 3: Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is addressed directly by the Trust. Our Official Community Plan anticipates housing needs. Specialized projects proceed smoothly because they are anticipated.

There are examples in the seniors' sector such as Meadowbrook, and Heritage Place, and in the assisted living sector such as Croftonbrook and Murakami Gardens. A longstanding proposal for 27 affordable units on Norton Road is a much hoped for, but as yet unrealized, project.

Artists are not a homogeneous group. They are young people, parents, seniors, caregivers, couples and singles. They have diverse family and social obligations. A few are financially secure, some are homeowners struggling to keep hearth and home intact. Some have day jobs, by preference. Some work outside the arts only out of necessity to support their careers.

This is why initiatives around secondary suites and cottages are important. As a member of the Advisory Planning Commission, I advocated for the widest possible liberalization of the rules on suites and cottages, and I will follow this policy if elected. Here is what I aim for: 1. A pool of affordable suites and cottages, which meet the standards for healthy housing; 2 Suites as mortgage helpers both for young

families acquiring their first home, and for struggling homeowners; 3 potential live-in assistance for those who are aging in their own home.

Salt Spring's broad provisions for home based business support studios, galleries, and workshops.

Question 4: Role of the SSAC and the arts in enhancing economic development on the island.

The unique factor here is the character of the island as a beauty spot and natural magnet for artists, whether as residents or visitors. The arts are a way of life, and a natural expression of the island character, music and performing arts included. I am encouraged by the growing linkages between the commercial and arts sectors, which recognize their shared interests, and their larger vision for the island.

Question 5: How to increase tourism.

I am encouraged by evidence that a comprehensive approach is being initiated, but financial initiative in this sector is primarily a question for the CRD. Advocacy with BC Ferries is crucial here, and I would play a role if elected.

Question 6: BC Ferries

Trustees from several islands sit on various Ferry Advisory Committees, and in the northern part of the Trust area, trustee Tony Law chairs the Denman and Hornby Committee. I would expect that one or both incoming Trustees would be island advocates on the Southern Islands FAC.

In this election, some candidates advocate for a trustee role confined to the strict limits of the Trust legislation. I am troubled by this, as they seem to be excluding themselves from advocating with BC Ferries. I believe that advocacy is a time-honoured role for trustees, and a necessity on an island with so few elected officials.

Question 7: BC Ferries gift shops.

See Question 6. There is also considerable help in this regard from those far more knowledgeable than myself.

David Borrowman