

January 15th 2026

Thetis Island Residents & Ratepayers Association

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Thetis Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC)

Delivered by email:

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**Subject: Proposed Bylaw Amendments
Mandatory 2000-gallon rainwater storage requirements for new construction
Fence Setbacks
Derelict Vehicles**

Thank you for allowing representation and discussion at the January 13, 2026 APC meeting. TIRRA wishes to submit the following comments and concerns regarding the proposed bylaw amendments for inclusion in the documentation.

Mandatory 2000-gallon rainwater storage requirements for new construction

Amendment to the rainwater storage requirements in the LUB [Land Use Bylaw] for minimum 2000-gallon non-potable water storage for new construction for garden, fire, property, and vehicle and equipment maintenance.

TIRRA is concerned about the costs this proposed amendment adds to the construction costs and questions how this relates to Islands Trust's efforts and mandate to improve housing affordability.

TIRRA also endorses the discussion items noted at the January 13, 2026 APC meeting:

1. For the Islands Trust to determine the cost implications of the proposed amendment.
2. For Islands Trust to provide an analysis if any similar amendment has been proposed elsewhere within the Islands Trust jurisdictions and the outcome of such a proposal.
3. For Islands Trust to determine a practical method of analysis for each new construction to determine when such a storage tank would be required on the property or when the storage tank would sit unused and provide no benefit for the property and therefore not be required.

Additional uncertainties as noted at the APC January 13, 2026 meeting include:

- How non-potable rainwater storage fits within the current Building Code and Island Health regulations.
- Additional regulations/requirements/expenses if the storage equipment is to be used for fire suppression per the June 3, 2025 Staff Report.
- Islands Trust to confirm that placement of the tank would not be subject to any regulatory requirements.

The purpose of this amendment remains unclear regarding whether it is to

- Ensure sufficient water supply to the homeowner
- Reduce aquifer drawdown
- Reduce drilling into the aquifer

If fire suppression is one of the justifications, then how will adequate storage be ensured during the dry summer months when water for gardening is also at a premium?

TIRRA suggests that the Thetis Advisory Planning Commission recommend to Islands Trust that it hold a public meeting on Thetis Island to review this proposed amendment.

Fence Setbacks

Amendment to the fence siting and setback regulations to prohibit them in the 7.6 metre setback to the natural boundary of the sea.

At the APC meeting on January 13, 2026 Islands Trust noted that the proposed fence setback of 7.6m (25') was the same as the existing setback for buildings. Islands Trust did not provide any further explanation on the necessity or practical implication of the proposed distance.

Islands Trust personnel also noted that existing fences within the proposed setback could be maintained within the amendment, but if a fence were damaged and required rebuilding or if the fence materials were changed that the work on the existing fence would contravene the bylaw.

TIRRA noted that the proposed amendment will affect all existing fences within the proposed setback as well as any fences required within the foreshore area.

St. Margaret's Cemetery is but one example of a location effected by the proposed amendment. The fence at that location is necessary for public safety as well as for protection of the foreshore ecosystem installed for bank stabilization. The foreshore stabilization project along with the fence were installed with recommendations from the Islands Trust. These types of projects would no longer be achievable within the proposed amendment.

Derelict Vehicles

Amendment to the definition of 'derelict vehicle' to only allow unlicensed vehicles outside on a lot for up to two years, instead of five years.

TIRRA notes that there is insufficient documentation available to determine the purpose, goal and viability of the proposed change.

TIRRA proposes that Islands Trust provide documentation and evidence on the number of vehicles currently older than 5 years as well as the planned path forward for enforcement of the existing bylaw as well as the proposed amended bylaw.

Respectfully submitted by

Thetis Island Residents and Ratepayers Association Board