

July 25, 2025

File: 0220-20

Building BC: Community Housing Fund
Via email: BuildingBC@bchousing.org

Attention: John Wu

Dear John Wu:

RE: KINGS LANE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT SUPPORT LETTER

As the locally elected Capital Regional District (CRD) Director for Salt Spring Island, I'm writing to urge funding support for the 50-unit Kings Lane affordable housing project proposed by the Gulf Islands Seniors Residence Association (GISRA) to help address our community's housing crisis.

The critical need for affordable housing on Salt Spring is well-documented. The most recent housing needs assessment commissioned by Islands Trust in 2025 indicated that over 800 units of additional affordable housing across the full spectrum of need would be required on Salt Spring within 5 years, just to address the current shortfall and keep pace with population growth. As the assessments indicate, the housing shortage on Salt Spring is more acute at lower income levels, resulting in one of the highest homeless counts per capita in BC. The gap in affordable housing supply extends to well-paid professionals, public sector workers, and skilled trades resulting in unprecedented hospital closures, ferry cancellations, and private sector staff shortages.

The Kings Lane project will help address the housing supply gap at all levels by providing rental homes at shelter rates, as well as units geared to income at the low end of the market. The project is located within easy walking distance to a full range of private and public services, including a medical clinic, hospital, shopping centre, schools, and public transit. The lot is already zoned for 50 densities and will be fully serviced with water and community sewer.

The non-profit GISRA society developed and has successfully operated Meadowbrook, one of the most desirable housing facilities on Salt Spring. The highly capable GISRA Board and staff are well-known and respected community members who have demonstrated their capacity to plan, develop and operate a large housing facility. I have worked with members of the GISRA Board and staff over the years and can personally attest to their professionalism and integrity.

In addition to providing serviced land close to all amenities and services, I understand that GISRA is also prepared to commit additional equity to the project. However, funding from other partners will be required to ensure the viability and affordability of the project. GISRA has initiated discussions with the CRD, which is currently in the process of establishing a policy framework for a recent, voter-approved \$85 million regional housing fund. CRD is also seeking provincial and federal partners to match this funding, as with its successful Regional Housing First program that is supporting construction of up to 1,800 units of affordable housing, including the Croftonbrook project on Salt Spring.

The Kings Lane project currently offers the most promising opportunity for a larger scale

affordable housing project on Salt Spring. The GISRA Society is one of the most respected organizations in our community and has clearly demonstrated their capacity to successfully build and operate such a facility. I will be urging CRD Board support for the Kings Lane project from its proposed new Regional Housing Loan Authorization and am prepared to commit \$600,000 in Gas Tax funding for related sewer infrastructure and servicing, as I have with other affordable housing projects on Salt Spring. A significant equity contribution from BC Housing is essential in order for this important project to proceed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Holman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being more prominent than the last name "Holman".

Gary Holman,
Director, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area

cc: CRD Board
Ted Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer, CRD