



**Robyn Mawhinney**

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## Director's Report

**July 18 2024**

**To: Chair & Directors, Regional Board**

**From: Director Robyn Mawhinney**

**Re: Rural & Island Housing**

Across our region and the province, housing is a serious issue. Housing needs are as diverse as the SRD's communities & rural areas, and attainable, secure housing builds healthy communities.

Rural Islands Economic Partnership (RIEP) is an organization focused on building sustainable economic resilience for eighteen coastal islands and nearby rural regions. In consideration of housing's current critical nature, RIEP struck a Housing Working Group. This group is focused on moving the needle on housing on the coastal islands: through conversation it's become clear that rural island housing projects have not been viewed favourably by provincial housing funders. Across the islands, at least three housing projects, including two which are 'shovel-ready', were not supported in BC Housing's 2023/2024 call for proposals.

The many voices emphasising BC's acute housing shortage increases the challenge of small island and rural projects being considered. Therefore, I propose the following motion for the Board's consideration:

**Whereas** housing needs are critical in rural communities and coastal islands, and rural housing projects which have applied for BC Housing support have not received it, therefore the SRD Board resolves to send a letter to the Premier and Minister of Housing calling on the Province to consider creating a rural housing stream and supports to facilitate construction of projects suited with the unique constraints of rural housing.

Respectfully,

Robyn Mawhinney

Director, Discovery Islands and Mainland Inlets, Area C, Strathcona Regional District