



# SHÍSHÁLH-B.C. LAND USE PLAN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **WHY IS THIS JOINT LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS HAPPENING HERE AND NOW?**

In October 2018, shíshálh Nation and the Province of British Columbia signed the shíshálh-B.C. Foundation Agreement. The Foundation Agreement demonstrates a commitment to true, lasting reconciliation, co-operation, and partnership, based on recognition and respect for shíshálh rights and title and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Planning Table is one of six collaborative forums established under the Foundation Agreement. Comprised of equal representation from both parties, the Land Use Planning Table is tasked with developing a draft land use plan for the shíshálh Nation swiya.

## **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

shíshálh Nation and the Province of British Columbia are co-developing a Land Use Plan (LUP) as one way of implementing the transformative change that has been committed to by both parties in the shíshálh-B.C. Foundation Agreement.

The joint land use planning process will allow shíshálh Nation and the B.C. government to make progress on their Foundation Agreement goals of:

- Shared stewardship of the swiya;
- Creating economic prosperity for shíshálh people and those choosing to live, work and play within the swiya;
- Protecting cultural sites;
- Revitalizing shíshálh culture and language; and
- Strengthening shíshálh self-government.

## WHAT IS THE SWIYA?

The word 'swiya' describes the lands and waters that shíshálh Nation has occupied and utilized since time immemorial and can be translated as world, birthplace, lands or “territory”.

The swiya extends from xwésám (Roberts Creek) in the southeast to the height of land located north of xénichen (head of Queen’s Reach) in the north, kwékwenis (Lang Bay) to the west and spílksen (Texada Island) to the south.

## HOW ARE THE LANDS AND WATERS IN THE SWIYA CURRENTLY MANAGED?

### *shíshálh Nation Strategic Land Use Plan and Decision-Making Policy*

shíshálh Nation has occupied and utilized the swiya and managed its natural resources since time immemorial. In 2007, shíshálh Nation developed the lil xemit tems swiya nelh mes stutula ([shíshálh Nation Strategic Land Use Plan](#)), which identifies values and goals for managing land and resources in the swiya (514,520 hectares).

In 2013, shíshálh Nation developed a Lands and Resources [Decision-Making Policy](#) and process for lands and resources in the swiya, which outlines shíshálh’s expectations regarding resource management, including development, and documents the practices and principles that guide decision-making relating to the use of land, water, and resources of the swiya.

The shíshálh Nation Strategic Land Use Plan and Decision-Making Policy are expressions of shíshálh laws and jurisdiction which have governed the swiya since time immemorial.

### *Provincial Management*

The Province of British Columbia, working with Indigenous governments, makes decisions under provincial laws about the use of lands, or lands covered by water, which includes much of the swiya. Certain areas of the swiya have been designated by the Province as provincial parks and protected areas. Landscape level plans for sustaining elements of biodiversity (e.g. old growth forest, wildlife trees) have been developed for most of the landscape units overlapping the swiya, but there is currently no higher level strategic provincial land use plan (i.e. Land and Resource Management Plan) for the swiya.

## WHO ELSE PLAYS A ROLE IN MANAGING LAND AND RESOURCES IN THE SWIYA?

Municipal authorities, regional districts, First Nation governments, and the federal government all play a role in managing land, water and other natural resources in and around the swiya. While the joint land use plan will not apply to areas outside of the swiya, federal lands, private lands and lands within the District of Sechelt, collaboration with the following governing bodies is a key opportunity in this process:

### 1. Municipal Authorities

The District of Sechelt (DOS): The District of Sechelt is an incorporated municipality and one of the member municipalities of the Sunshine Coast Regional District. It manages aspects of private lands within its municipality guided by polices set out in its [Official Community Plan](#) and regulations set in its [Zoning Bylaw](#). Private lands in the DOS will not be included in the joint shíshálh-British Columbia Land Use Plan.

Sechelt Indian Government District (SIGD): The Sechelt Indian Government District (SIGD) is the municipal arm of shíshálh Nation and manages 33 parcels of land that hold fee simple title. SIGD has the authority to make laws in relation to land use planning for these lands and is responsible for government functions such as levying property taxes and providing public services, including fire protection and road maintenance. SIGD lands will not be included in the joint shíshálh-British Columbia Land Use Plan.

### 2. Regional Agencies

The Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) includes three municipal areas (District of Sechelt, Town of Gibsons and Sechelt Indian Government District) and five electoral areas. The SCRCD provides representation for rural areas, facilitates collaboration between municipalities and rural areas, while delivering regional and sub-regional services.

The qathet Regional District (qRD) includes five electoral areas and one municipality (City of Powell River) in the territories of the Tla'amin, shíshálh and K'ómoks First Nations. Their services include, but are not limited to, land use planning, emergency preparedness, solid waste management, regional parks, and fire protection.

The Islands Trust is a unique federation of local governments serving islands in the Salish Sea responsible for preserving and protecting the islands' unique amenities and environment. The Gambier Island Local Trust Area is responsible for land use planning and regulation for islands within the swiya which includes North and South Thormanby Islands.

### 3. First Nations

Tla'amin Nation is a self-governing Nation whose territory 'overlaps' with a small portion of the swiya. Squamish Nation, Klahoose First Nation and Homalco First Nation have neighbouring territories to the swiya.

### 4. Federal Government

The federal government along with Indigenous governments make management decisions under its federal laws about the use of lands, coastal waters and resources under their jurisdiction. This includes, but is not limited to: National Parks, National Marine Conservation Areas, coastal fisheries and habitat, migratory birds, coastal waters from the low tide mark out to 12 nautical miles along the outer coast, federal harbours and wharves, and Federal Reserve Lands. Federal lands will not be included in the joint shíshálh-British Columbia Land Use Plan.

## WHAT DO STRATEGIC LEVEL LAND USE PLANS TYPICALLY COVER?

Provincial strategic level planning establishes long-term land use goals and general management direction, usually over a broad scale, to guide sustainable resource stewardship over land, water, and resources to balance economic, environmental, social, and cultural values. In other words, strategic level planning sets high-level direction and helps define 'what' can occur on the land base. Over 90% of the land in British Columbia is covered by some sort of provincially endorsed higher-level strategic land use plan.

The B.C. government often undertakes tactical or operational level planning exercises to help further translate and implement the resource-related components of a strategic land use plan within a management unit to support forest management operations (e.g. Forest Landscape Plans, Sustainable Resource Management Plans, Landscape Unit Plans, Forest Stewardship Plans).

## WHAT WILL THE SHÍSHÁLH-B.C. LAND USE PLAN COVER?

This land use plan will articulate a shared vision for the stewardship of lands<sup>1</sup> and resources in the swiya.

The shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Plan will provide clear management direction on the following four initial planning themes:

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<sup>1</sup> swiya lands covered by the LUP do *not* include: shíshálh Band Lands (SBLs), shíshálh fee simple lands, federal lands and private lands.

- Biodiversity;
- Watershed integrity;
- Resources important to shíshálh culture; and
- Sustainable economic development.

## WHAT WILL THE SHÍSHÁLH-B.C. LAND USE PLAN INCLUDE?

The draft shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Plan could produce outputs such as:

- Land Use Zones (i.e. conservation areas, cultural emphasis areas, and integrated stewardship areas);
- Management Direction and Goals (for planning theme values);
- Legal Land Use Designations and Objectives (i.e. Wildlife Habitat Areas, Cultural Values Protection); and
- Priority Actions: Project and Tasks

Some elements of the plan, or its related initiatives, may be developed, adopted and approved in stages via mutual agreement of the parties prior to full completion of the plan.

## WHAT IS MODERNIZED LAND USE PLANNING?

[Modernized land use planning](#) is led by the B.C. government in partnership with Indigenous governments and with the engagement of communities, local government, industry and other stakeholders. Unlike large land use planning tables of the past, engagement for modernized land use planning will be targeted to make the most efficient use of time and resources. Land use planning will focus on priority areas in the province and will be scoped to resolve identified land use and resource management challenges.

Today's land and resource management challenges require a renewed approach to land use planning. Key drivers include:

- Reconciliation with Indigenous governments and the B.C. government's commitment to implement UNDRIP (B.C. Bill 41).
- Ensuring communities and stakeholders are engaged in land and resource planning.
- A growing economy and increased demand on natural resources and the need to balance economic, environmental, social, and cultural objectives.
- Increasing complexity as a result of climate change and factors that affect the land base, including species-at-risk management, wildfires, flooding, and drought.
- Addressing cumulative effects on natural resource values.

## **HOW ARE DECISIONS BEING MADE WITH REGARD TO THIS LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS?**

shíshálh Nation and the Province of British Columbia have established a series of government-to-government decision-making structures in accordance with the 2018 shíshálh-B.C. Foundation Agreement where representatives from both parties work together towards finding shared solutions to achieve their agreed-upon vision and objectives identified in the Foundation Agreement.

## **WILL RESOURCE EXTRACTION ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SWIYA CONTINUE DURING THE LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS?**

Yes, resource extraction activities will continue during the land use planning process. However, any new land use applications/permits for resource extraction activities within the swiya will be subject to a joint shíshálh-B.C. shared decision-making process as outlined in the 2018 shíshálh-B.C. Foundation Agreement. It is expected that any mature stewardship recommendations made by the shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Planning Table will be considered by proponents and the shíshálh-B.C. Shared Decision-Making Table until a final land use plan is approved and implemented by shíshálh and B.C. governments.

## **WHY IS THE PLANNING PROCESS TAKING PLACE OVER 4 YEARS?**

This planning process follows a period of pre-planning, which included preliminary discussions with shíshálh Nation on land use and management issues, the signing of the Foundation Agreement, and the establishment of the Land Use Planning Table.

The planning process for this project will occur in four major project phases over the course of four years:

**Phase 1: Setting the Stage (we are here).** In this phase, the Land Use Planning Table will establish how they will work together, set a workplan and identify gaps in information and resources. Stakeholders and members of the public will be informed of the planning scope and engaged in early identification of opportunities and concerns regarding the planning process.

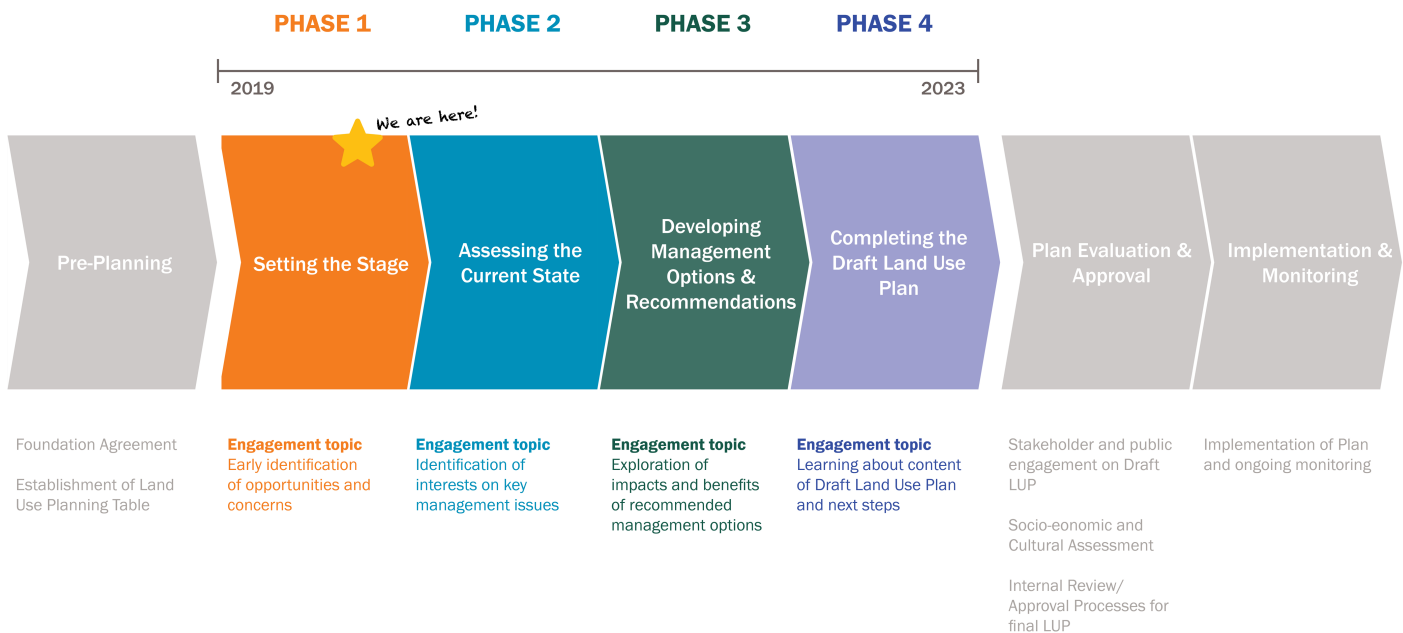
**Phase 2: Assessing the Current State.** During Phase 2, studies will be conducted to fill information gaps. Resources and current conditions of the key planning themes will also be assessed. Stakeholders and the public will be engaged to identify interests on key management issues.

**Phase 3: Developing Management Options and Recommendations.** In Phase 3, the Land Use Planning Table will develop and analyse different management options. The impacts and benefits of these management options will be explored with stakeholders to help determine a recommended management approach.

**Phase 4: Completing the Draft Land Use Plan.** Phase 4 is where the draft joint Land Use Plan is shared with key stakeholders and the public.

A separate stakeholder and public engagement approach for the Draft LUP will be determined following the completion of Phase 4 by October 4th, 2023. At this time, the next Phase of the land use planning mandate is expected to focus on:

- Stakeholder and public engagement on the Draft LUP;
- shísháhlh Nation and B.C. government Internal Review/Approval Processes for the final LUP;
- Preparation of the final LUP submission for decision by shísháhlh and B.C. governments;
- LUP implementation including: associated agreements with planning partners, legal land use designations, legal land use objectives, and key projects; and
- Monitoring planning outcomes to assess the LUP’s effectiveness and develop a review and feedback process for applying new information to the LUP.



*Phases of the shísháhlh-B.C. Land Use Planning Process*

## **WHAT ROLE DO STAKEHOLDERS AND THE PUBLIC HAVE IN THIS LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS?**

Engagement with stakeholders and the public is an important part of modernized land use planning in the swiya. Engagement with stakeholders and the public will occur at key plan development stages to ensure local interests and priorities are identified and factored into the land use planning process.

## **HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?**

The shíshálh-B.C. Land Use Planning Table is currently developing an engagement and information-sharing process for stakeholders and the public to support the development of a draft land use plan for the swiya.

We will be engaging with local governments, licensees and community members as we initiate this process of planning for the swiya.

We are in the early days of this multi-year land use planning process. In this first round of engagement, we want to understand early interests, opportunities and concerns as they relate to the planning process and our initial planning themes.

This understanding of early interests, opportunities and concerns will help shape an engagement and information-sharing plan with stakeholders and the public for the shíshálh-B.C. land use planning process.