



May 18, 2026

To: Mayor and Council

[District of Ucluelet](#)

Re: Opposition to Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1394, 2026 and Related Development Proposal for Hyphocus Island

Mayor and Council,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 1394, 2026 and the associated large-scale development proposal for Hyphocus Island. As you know I have been a REALTOR® in Ucluelet for the past 34 years. I have participated in several OCP reviews over the years and contributed as much of my experience to the community as I am able. This opposition is heartfelt. You all know that I am not against thoughtful development. We have plenty of land available to develop. We also have many stalled developments that will fit the housing needs of the community once the nuances are overcome and most of which are now in process.

Hyphocus Island is one of the last truly sensitive and unique natural areas within the District of Ucluelet. It is not simply another parcel of land available for urban-style expansion. It is a narrow, environmentally sensitive island connected by a constrained causeway with significant evacuation, ecological, traffic, and community character concerns.

The current proposal represents a fundamental departure from the historic vision and intent for Hyphocus Island as outlined in earlier Official Community Plan documents. The former OCP clearly recognized Hyphocus Island as an area requiring careful environmental protection, limited development intensity, preservation of mature forest, and protection from hazardous conditions including tsunami and flooding risks.

The 2017 OCP specifically described the island as appropriate for single-family residential development ranging from approximately 0.65 to 10-hectare parcels, emphasizing preservation of the island's "natural character," ecological integrity, forest cover, and hazard protection.

This vision is dramatically different from the density and scale now being contemplated.

The current amendment proposes low-medium density residential development on the northern portion of the island. While the bylaw language attempts to reference environmental sensitivity, the

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reality is that increased density on Hyphocus Island will inevitably result in:

- Significantly increased traffic through existing quiet residential neighbourhoods;
- Increased vehicle congestion near schools and pedestrian areas;
- Greater pressure on emergency services;
- Increased wildfire evacuation risk;
- Increased tsunami evacuation challenges;
- Greater environmental disturbance to a fragile coastal ecosystem;
- Increased strain on existing infrastructure and wastewater systems;
- Permanent alteration of the rural and natural character of the island.

One of the most serious concerns is public safety.

Hyphocus Island is accessed by a narrow causeway with effectively a single point of ingress and egress. The previous OCP explicitly recognized the importance of the island's high ground as a potential emergency evacuation area. That recognition alone demonstrates longstanding awareness that this island presents unique hazard planning challenges.

Approving substantially increased residential density in an area with one constrained access route is deeply concerning in an era of increasing wildfire threats, tsunami risk awareness, and climate-related emergencies. Emergency evacuation bottlenecks are not hypothetical concerns on the west coast anymore — they are real planning considerations that local governments must prioritize.

Additionally, Hyphocus Island serves as an important ecological and visual buffer for Ucluelet. The previous OCP emphasized preservation of significant stands of forest, mature trees, natural drainage, shoreline access, and ecological function. The island's value lies precisely in what it is *not*: densely developed.

Many residents believe that if development is to occur at all, it should be limited to large-lot residential development in the approximate range of 0.5 to 5 acres per parcel. This approach would better align with:

- the historic intent of the earlier OCP,
- the environmental sensitivity of the island,
- wildfire and tsunami evacuation realities,
- preservation of forest cover and habitat,
- and the existing character of Ucluelet.



Ucluelet's identity and appeal come from its natural environment, low-scale character, and thoughtful relationship with the surrounding landscape. Overdevelopment of sensitive lands risks permanently

damaging the very qualities that make this community special. Once this character is lost, it cannot be reclaimed.


There is also a broader issue of community trust. A significant number of residents have voiced opposition to this proposal publicly and consistently. The concerns raised by residents are not unreasonable or anti-growth. Rather, they reflect legitimate concerns regarding safety, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and responsible long-term planning.

Growth must occur in locations and forms that make sense for the long-term resilience of the community. Hyphocus Island is not an appropriate location for high-density or medium-density expansion.

I respectfully urge Council to reject the proposed OCP amendment and associated zoning changes and instead preserve Hyphocus Island for very low-density development that respects the island's ecological sensitivity, access limitations, and longstanding community character.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Judy Gray

