



File No.: 2023 OCP Review

DATE OF MEETING: April 18, 2024

TO: Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

FROM: Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner  
Local Planning Services

COPY: Renee Jamurat, Regional Planning Manager  
Stephen Baugh, Island Planner

SUBJECT: Gabriola Island Official Community Plan Review: Phase 1 Review and Next Steps

## RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff to develop a Project Charter, Workplan and revised Engagement Plan for Phase 2 of the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project**
- 2. That the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request the Advisory Planning Commission revise the Official Community Plan Vision Statement based on feedback gathered from the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process, by June 15, 2024.**

## REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of what has been achieved in Phase 1 of the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project and identify next steps which involve:

- Completing Phase One
- Initiating Phase Two

## BACKGROUND

In July of 2023, Phase 1 of the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project was launched. As identified in the Project Charter (see Appendix 1), the Purpose of Phase 1 was:

*To identify and prioritize the community values and vision that will inform the review of Gabriola Island's Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw through engaging First Nations, the Gabriola community, community organizations and other relevant groups.*

The identification of community values and vision was achieved through the Gabriola Visioning 2050 Process. Through this process, the Gabriola community was provided the opportunity, through a survey, community led engagement process and community meeting, to identify what they valued about Gabriola Island, their hopes and dreams, and what they see needs to be changed.

Engagement with the Snuneymuxw First Nation has been addressed independent of the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process. Staff and Trustees are engaging with SFN on a regular basis, as capacity allows, around critical issues, and working toward establishing a framework to discuss some common goals. At their February 22, 2024 regular LTC meeting the Gabriola LTC supported the staff recommendation to prepare a capacity work agreement with the

Snuneymuxw and provide capacity funding of up to \$5,000 for the purposes of engaging the Nation on the Gabriola Island OCP Review Project. The agreement has been drafted by staff and sent to the Nation for feedback. The capacity funding amount will need to be re-evaluated now that a new fiscal year has begun.

As priority areas of focus for the OCP are more clearly defined, staff will be reaching out to the Nanaimo Regional District and other relevant agencies to identify interests and opportunities for synergy between related land use planning activities.

**The Gabriola Visioning 2050 Process**

The Gabriola Visioning 2050 process began in October 2023 and included the following:

**Information sharing**

- A [webpage](#) was created to share information about the project
- Staff launched the process and collected initial feedback at the Fall Fair
- Social media posts were sent updating the community on the process
- Newspaper advertising, newspaper inserts, posters and postcards distributed around the island

**Community Lead Engagement**

- Funding of up to \$500 was made available to support individuals and groups to facilitate their own engagement sessions
- Funding was proved to, and feedback was received from, 12 community groups
- Through this process it is estimated that about 200+ community members were engaged
- Feedback from the Housing Advisory Planning Commission (HAPC) was also included

**Online Survey**

- An online survey was available to the community from October 2023 - March 2024
- Close to 400 community members participated in the survey. Over half of the respondents were 25-64 with the majority of the remainder over 65 (58% of Gabriola’s population is 60+)

**Community Meeting**

- A community meeting was held at the end of March 2024. About 40 community members attended.
- At the meeting staff provided a synthesis of the values and related goals emerging form the community led engagement and the survey.
- Attendees were asked to identify gaps related to the values and goals presented.
- The majority of attendees were 55+
- A graphic facilitator was in attendance to capture the conversation. This illustration will be shared with the community once it has been completed and reviewed.

**ANALYSIS**

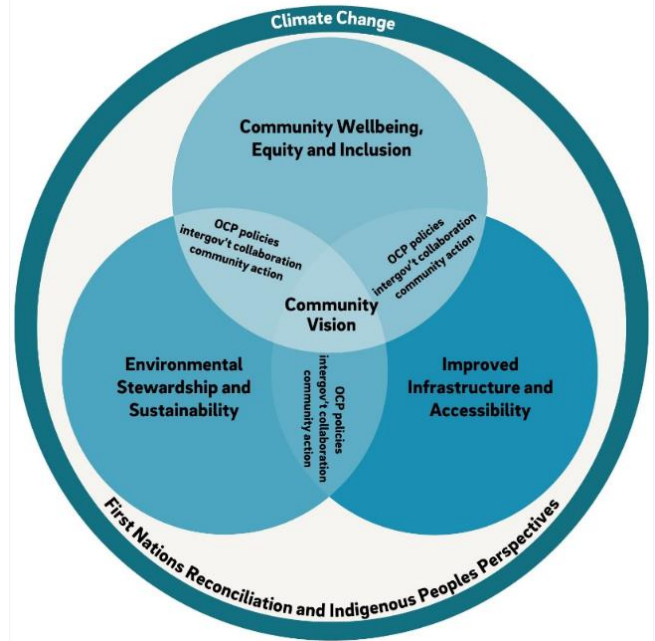
Analysis of the input provided through the survey and the community led engagement identified a number of key values. These values were organized by staff into three categories (see table below).

Natural Environment	Built Environment	Community
Environmental Stewardship	Inclusive Public Space	Community Engagement and Inclusivity
Environmental Sustainability	Diversity of Housing Options	Social Equity and Well-being
	Improved Infrastructure	Education and Awareness
		Collaboration, Collective Action and Advocacy

Much of the feedback received identified interests in considering Indigenous perspectives and engaging and building closer relationships with the Snuneymuxw First Nation. Climate change was also a key consideration. As identified by staff at the community meeting, as First Nations Reconciliation and addressing climate change are key priorities of the Islands Trust these are lenses through which all OCP policies need to be considered.

The diagram to the right summarizes the values and related goals into three potential priorities areas, identifying the influence of the lenses of climate change and First Nations Reconciliation and Indigenous peoples perspectives.

While finalizing how priority areas will ultimately be defined and how the climate and First Nation’s lens relate, are a work in progress, this diagram is presented to illustrate where the community vision fits in. The priority areas which influence and are influenced by the vision will inform OCP Policies (that address land use), Intergovernmental collaboration (including identifying the support needed from senior government and related advocacy) and community action (needed to advance community needs and interest that may not be the focus of government activities).



**Defining the Vision for the Future of Gabriola**

The Gabriola Visioning 2050 process was successful in identifying community values. However, articulating the vision emerging from these values in words is yet to be done.

Survey respondents and participants in community led engagement sessions were invited to comment on the vision statement that is in Gabriola’s current OCP which is as follows:

*Gabriola is a peaceful, diverse, safe, rural community in harmony with a protected, natural environment. The local economy is resilient, we walk and cycle the island, and the land and sea provide bountiful harvests for all inhabitants. Island and marine wildlife, here long before human populations, continue to flourish.*

Aspects of the vision statement that were appreciated included: its hopeful tone, emphasis on nature, appreciation of the rural character of the island and focus on harmony between the community and the environment. Suggestions for improvement included: addressing affordable housing, promoting sustainable and equitable service provision, fostering a sense of community care, promoting arts and culture and collaborating with government agencies, residents and Indigenous communities to work towards a sustainable future.

Staff recommends that the Gabriola LTC task the Advisory Planning Commission with crafting a new vision statement that considers the input gathered through the Gabriola Vision 2050 process by June 15, 2024.

**What’s Next?**

The next steps include: Completing the Gabriola Visioning 2050 work, beginning to define goals and objectives within the priority areas and gathering and reviewing data to inform OCP objectives and policies. The activities that are anticipated to be worked on through the coming months are identified below. The timing of these and who will be involved in the delivery will be more clearly articulated in the Phase 2 workplan yet to be developed.

**Defining Gabriola Islands Vision Statement** – Staff have recommended that this be done by the Advisory Planning Commission. Staff will provide the APC with all content that is needed to support this process.

**Creation of the Gabriola Visioning 2050 Document** – This document will provide a summary of the engagement process and the values that emerged.

**Initiation of Phase 2 of the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) Review Project** – \$77,000 has been allocated to this phase. This phase will be initiated following the approval of a project charter to be accompanied by a workplan and revised engagement plan.

**Creation of a baseline report** – The gathering of baseline and technical information to inform the OCP review is in process. Staff anticipate a draft report to be available by September 2024.

**Suitable Land and Build Out Analysis** – Due to staff changes this work could not be completed during Phase 1. Resources are being allocated to this work and outputs are anticipated by Fall of 2024.

**Water Balance Assessment** - \$50,000 of the total project budget has been allocated to the initiation and completion of a water balance assessment. The process to hire a consultant has been initiated.

**Review of OCP Priorities** – This will involve community engagement to help validate and identify gaps in proposed options for OCP goals and objectives. It will also help to determine where additional research may be needed to inform policy tools such as development permit area boundaries.

**ALTERNATIVES**

**1. The LTC could choose not to request that the APC create the updated vision statement for the OCP.** If the LTC chooses this option they will need to provide direction to staff on the vision statement drafting process they would like to support.

**2. The LTC could request that staff provide information in addition to the project charter, workplan and engagement plan.** If the LTC chooses this option they will need to specify to staff the information they require.

**NEXT STEPS**

If the staff recommendations are supported, staff will:

- Continue work related to completing Phase 1 (Visioning document)
- Continue work as indicated above under “What’s Next”
- Draft a project charter, work plan and engagement plan
- Provide the APC with data received through the community engagement process in order for them to work on articulating the community vision statement to be included in the OCP.

Submitted By:	Narissa Chadwick RPP MCIP, Island Planner	April 8, 2024
Concurrence:	Renee Jamurat RPP MCIP, Regional Planning Manager	April 8, 2024

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Gabriola Island Official Community Plan(OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project (Phase 1) Project Charter

# Gabriola Island Official Community Plan(OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project (Phase 1)- Charter

Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (LTC)

Date: July 20, 2023

**Purpose:** To identify and prioritize the community values and vision that will inform the review of Gabriola Island’s Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw through engaging First Nations, the Gabriola community, community organizations and other relevant groups. .

**Background:** An OCP describes the long-term vision for a community, through policy statement that guide decisions on planning and land use. An LUB contains regulations to implement the OCP policies. The Gabriola OCP have not been updated since 1997 and the LUB since 1999. The 2024/25 Gabriola Island OCP and LUB Comprehensive Review will address a number of issues of importance to the Gabriola Community. In Phase 1 (2023/24), effective community engagement will help to identify the vision and values of the community to guide the 2024-25 OCP and LUB review process. Housing was identified by the LTC as a priority of focus. \$18,000 has been allocated to this project from the 2023/24 Trust Council Budget.

## Objectives

To develop and prioritize community values and vision to inform the Phase 3 (2024/25) of Gabriola’s OCP and LUB review, through engagement of engagement of First Nations, the Gabriola community, community organizations, and other relevant groups.

## In Scope

- First Nations Engagement.
- Public education and engagement activities.
- Creation of a Gabriola values and vision document.
- Identification of options for housing related bylaw amendments

## Out of Scope

- Bylaw drafting

## Workplan Overview

Deliverable/Milestone	Date
Project initiation	July 2023
Initial First Nations consultation	July – Dec. 2023
Suitable Land And Build Out Analysis	July – Sept. 2023
Initiation of APC and HAPC work	July/August 2023
APC/HAPC/Community organization engagement	Sept – Jan. 2023
Public Education (What is the project about? How to get involved)	Sept. – Oct. 2023
Public engagement	Oct. – Jan. 2023
Suitable Land and Build Out Analysis	June – August 2023
Compiling baseline/technical information for OCP/ LUB review	August – Dec. 2023
Compiling Vision and Values Document	March - May 2024
Phase 2 of Project Initiated	May/June 2024

## Project Team

Regional Planning Manager	Renée Jamurat
Regional Planning Team Member	Narissa Chadwick
Planning Team Assistant	Chloë Straw
GIS Tech	Jackie O’Neil
Housing Advisory Planning Commission	As Appointed
Advisory Planning Commission	As Appointed

## Budget

Budget Sources:		
2023/24	Public Engagement	\$6,000
	FN Engagement	\$4,000
	Communications	\$8,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>