

Comments on the draft 2026 OCP

The following are some personal comments and suggestions for change to the draft OCP.

a) **1.2.8** (p. 12) I wonder why the OCP is so negative about GERTIE. A difference in tone might actually encourage more people to use the bus. How about: “Public transportation is available on Gabriola Island. The GERTIE bus, operated by the Gabriola Community Bus Foundation, provides service in all areas of the island 6 days a week in the morning, mid-day and early evening. GERTIE is funded by a combination of tax support, grants, fares, and donations. Although the bus service is reliable and convenient for many, most residents and visitors still rely on private vehicles to get around. BC Ferries is the most common means for drivers and foot passengers to travel beyond Gabriola.”

b) 2.2.4 (p. 24) “**Objective 2.2.4.3:** Ensure housing and development locations consider freshwater availability, climate hazards, and land use practices that enhance community resilience.” I’m curious about the use of “locations” here. Should it not be “applications” or “projects” or something else? What does it mean by “locations”?

“**Objective 2.2.4.5:** Support transportation systems that reduce reliance on private automobiles while maintaining Gabriola’s rural island character.” How about being a little more specific, such as: “**Objective 2.2.4.5:** Support walking, cycling and taking the bus to reduce reliance on private automobiles while maintaining Gabriola’s rural island character.”

c) **2.4.2** (p. 29) “**POLICY 2.4.2.1.2:** This Plan supports flexible housing options by permitting two or more small dwellings within a maximum combined floor area on a lot as an alternative to one single large dwelling.

- The land use regulations **may** regulate areas of the island within which flexible housing may be permitted on a lot based on analysis of available data; and
- Land use regulations **may** establish overall floor area limits and the number of additional dwellings based on lot area.”

I worry about the term “may”. Can this not be stronger so that the land use regulations actually do create some limits? How about “**must**”? As it is written (“two or more”), there is no limit to the number of small dwellings, and that could have significant implications for water demand and septic load.

d) “**POLICY 2.4.2.9.4** (p. 32): Land use regulations should require potable rainwater catchment systems consistent with installation and maintenance requirements of Island Health for all secondary and accessory dwelling units located in freshwater hazard areas

(see Schedule D)” Why just secondary and accessory dwellings? Why not all new dwellings in all areas?

e) **POLICY 2.5.1.3** (p. 45) calls for “A Freshwater Management Plan for applications that significantly increase water use” What is a *Freshwater Management Plan*? Where can someone find the definition of its purpose, and descriptions of who can create one and what needs to be in it?

f) **3.1.6 Development Permit Area 6 Environmental Protection** (p. 67) This makes no sense to me because I cannot see any DPA 6 areas on Schedule C. Am I missing something? If not, how can you have a DPA if there is no area? If this is a placeholder for future DPA 6 areas, then it needs to say that clearly.

g) **Schedule D Freshwater Hazard Map** (p. 99) The map shows Freshwater Hazard areas in pink, and then “Freshwater Hazard Parcels Intersection with buffer and filtering” in grey. What does that mean? How is it defined? What are the implications? I don’t see any help with that in the Freshwater Footprint document either.

h) All of the maps at the back of this document (Schedules B, C and E especially) have poor resolution and are difficult to read (both in the print version and the pdf). I’m hoping that you’ll be able to insert much better versions of these maps in the next version.

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