

From: Carol Hemrich [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2026 3:25 PM
To: northinfo <northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: OCP review - Draft

Hi, I am just writing to reiterate my continuing concern about housing options on Gabriola for seniors as they age. As you are aware, many people move to Gabriola for their retirement. This means they very often do not have family here to assist them as they age. Consequently, as residents become more elderly, or develop more issues with health and mobility, life on a remote rural island becomes more and more challenging. Added to this is the reality of friends either dying or moving off island to be closer to medical services and care facilities, resulting in increasing isolation and loneliness for those who wish to age here in their own community. All of these factors reduce an aging person's ability to lead a healthy and independent life.

The result can be one of two things. The first is people moving off Gabriola prematurely, leaving behind their community of many years, their activities and interests, and whatever friends they still have here. The second possibility is remaining here too long, with a reduced quality of life due to loneliness, isolation and difficulty maintaining their rural properties and the increasing challenges of maintaining proper nutrition and oversight into their daily functioning, including accessing appropriate health care.

I would like to see support for options for senior's multi-housing, especially under organizations such as Abbeyfield Canada



This is a well established international not-for-profit organization, originally out of Britain, but now in several Commonwealth and other countries, providing guidance and direction to local communities who would like to establish suitable small residences for group living for seniors in need of support. Usually these residences, while not 'care' facilities, are 'caring' facilities, providing daily interaction, nutritious meals and possibilities for social interaction and shared recreational activities, as well as oversight to how individuals are faring and when they need more assistance.

There are currently five Abbeyfields in the southern half of Vancouver Island, two in Victoria, one in Sidney, one in Duncan and one in Port Alberni. They vary in size/number of resident rooms, and Abbeyfield is able to give advice on the size of residence and number of residents needed to be financially viable, since they must balance their books. Currently, the number of recommended residents are recommended to be from 12 to 15, in order to be self sustaining over time.

I am happy to see the recommended use of cisterns and the construction of potable rainwater catchment systems to support conscientious management of residential water use, going forward.

I am very pleased to see the changes being considered to the OCP, especially under 2.3.4.7 Multi-Unit Residential (MUR) that I feel would support addressing these concerns.

This support would promote seniors, not so much staying in their own homes, but being supported to stay in their own communities, as a viable option as we age.

Carol Hemrich, [REDACTED]