



Islands Trust

GABRIOLA VISIONING 2050

What We Heard

Engagement Summary Report



June 2024

Land Acknowledgment

Islands Trust and Islands Trust Conservancy respectfully acknowledge that the lands and waters that encompass the Islands Trust Area have been home to Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. We are committed to reconciliation and to working together to preserve and protect this ecologically, culturally, and spiritually significant region in the Salish Sea. The Islands Trust Area is located within the treaty lands and territories of the BOKÉĆEN, Cowichan Tribes, K’ómoks, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Qualicum, scəwáθən, sə́ilwətał, SEMYOME, shíshálh, Skwxwú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Songhees, Spune’luxutth, STÁUTW, Stz’uminus, ɬaʔəmen, Ts’uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, W JOŁEŁP, W SIKEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhkwx, Xwsepsum, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm First Nations.

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What is Gabriola Visioning 2050?

The Gabriola Visioning 2050 project was Phase 1 in the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) Review Project. Gabriola Visioning 2050 was the community’s first opportunity to engage in the revision of the Official Community Plan (OCP) by identifying community vision and values. This feedback will support the development of an updated Gabriola OCP, which has not been updated since 1997.

The Gabriola community was asked about:

- What they value
- What their hopes and dreams for the Island are
- What they hope to see change

What is an Official Community Plan for Gabriola Island?

The OCP implements the community’s vision.

It provides a long-term strategy for land use management, outlining broad objectives and policies to guide future growth and development of the community.

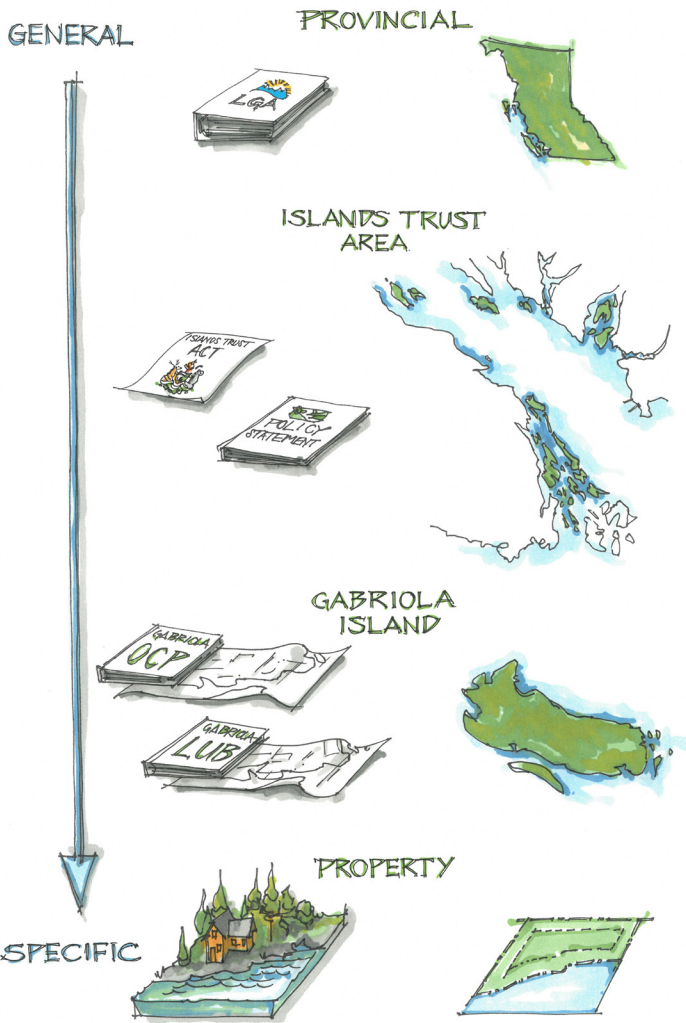
The OCP must align with higher level policies.

These include the Local Government Act, the Islands Trust Act, and the Islands Trust Policy Statement. This ensures that local plans are consistent with regional and provincial directives.

What is NOT part of an Official Community Plan for Gabriola Island?

The OCP is not a zoning bylaw or detailed regulatory document. Specific regulations and enforcement mechanisms are found in the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) and must be consistent with the OCP.

The OCP does not include the provision of infrastructure or services. Infrastructure such as sewer, or roads, and community services within the Islands Trust Area are the responsibility of other levels of government.



Legislation and Policy Influencing Land Use

Project Timeline



How was the Community Engaged?

Information was shared:

- On a webpage on the Islands Trust website
- At the Fall Fair
- Through social media posts
- In newspaper advertising and inserts
- Through posters and postcards distributed around the island

Community Groups Led Engagement Events

- Funding up to \$500 was made available to support groups to facilitate supported, self-led engagement sessions
- This process engaged more than 200 community members

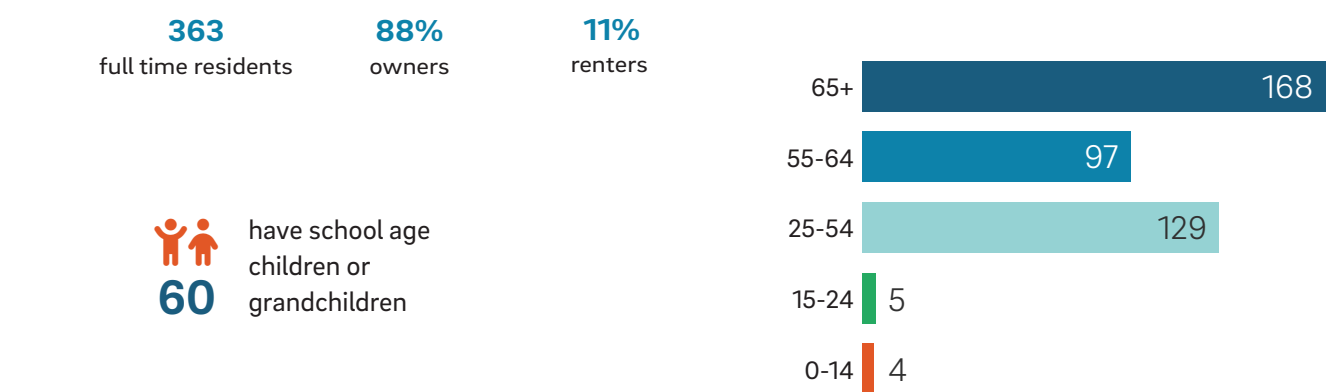
Groups involved

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farm Table Talk• Gabriola Housing Advisory Planning Commission• Gabriola Fibershed Working Group• Gabriola Arts Council• Gabriola Land and Trails Trust• Gabriola Rescue of Wildlife Society | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gabriola Memorial Society• Gabriola Island Land Stewards Society• Gabriola Island Shore Keepers Association• Youth at Gabriola Elementary• Mutual Aid Group• Gabriola Climate 12-12-12• Roamsted |
|---|--|

Online Survey

The online survey was an opportunity for Gabriola residents to identify values, hopes and dreams for Gabriola Island. The survey ran from October 24th, 2023 to February 7th, 2024, with 405 respondents.

The Gabriola Visioning 2050 - What We Heard From the Online Survey report is available [here](#).



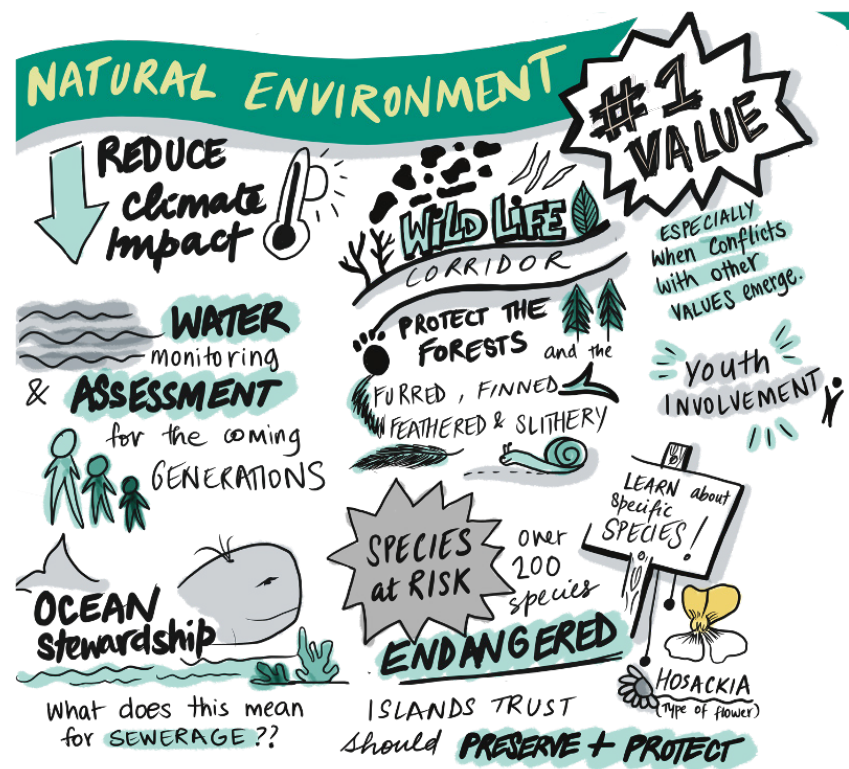
Community Meeting

At the end of March 2024, more than 40 community members attended a community meeting hosted by Islands Trust. At the meeting, staff provided a synthesis of the values and related goals emerging from the community led engagement and the survey. Attendees were then asked to identify gaps related to the values and goals presented. The majority of attendees were 55+.



Values and related goals that emerged from the engagement process were organized into three themes: Natural Environment, Built Environment, and Community.

Theme: Natural Environment



Value: Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

Goals

- Marine and terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity are protected, preserved and restored
- ▲ Climate impact is reduced
- Water conservation measures are implemented
- Wildlife corridors protected
- Ecological impacts are considered when making development decisions
- Impacts to water availability and water recharge are considered when making land use decisions
- ▲ Wildfire resilience is prioritized
- ▲ Agricultural land is protected and regenerative agricultural practices are supported
- Connections between ecosystems, culture, and the arts are fostered
- Indigenous perspectives are incorporated into land use decisions and traditional food lands for Indigenous peoples are protected
- Light pollution is minimized
- Economic activities prioritize environmental stewardship and sustainable land use

Theme: Built Environment

Value: Inclusive Public Spaces

Goals:

- ▲ Community gathering spaces are plentiful, inclusive and accessible
- ▲ There are a range of recreational facilities for children and adults
- There are a number of neighbourhood hubs

Value: Diversity of Housing and Workspace Options

Goals:

- A diversity of housing options are available
- ▲ Housing Affordability
- ▲ Availability and affordability of workspace/ artspace

Value: Improved Infrastructure Accessibility

Goals:

- Biking and walking paths are improved
- Roads are improved
- Public transportation options are available and accessible
- Increased and improved beach access
- Increased boat access
- Broadband access on all parts of the Island
- Better lighting in the village at night

- Actions that can be address through the OCP review process and resulting policy
- ▲ Actions that can be partially addressed through the OCP review process and resulting policy
- Actions that cannot be addressed through the OCP review process and resulting policy



Theme: Community

Value: Community Engagement and Inclusivity

Goals:

- Decision making is data informed and community driven
- Partnerships with First Nations communities are developed
- Residents are engaged in decision-making processes
- ▲ Diverse community needs are recognized and supported
- ▲ Access to resources and opportunities are equitable



Value: Social Equity and Well-being

Goals:

- Cultural diversity is encouraged and supported
- Accessible and affordable housing options are available
- ▲ More food is grown on Gabriola Island
- Healthcare is effectively addressed to support vulnerable populations
- Gabriola Island continues to be known as "Isle of the Arts", where artists are provided with space and local businesses thrive
- Emergency communication networks are developed

Value: Education and Awareness

Goals:

- Collaborative efforts and grassroots initiatives are encouraged and supported
- Mentorship opportunities are provided for newcomers and youth
- Educational programs with user-friendly and accessible messaging that deepen understanding of ecological and cultural practices are provided
- All Gabriola residents can take action in support of the Island's environment

Value: Collaboration, Collective Action, and Advocacy

Goals:

- Building partnerships between residents, local organizations, the Local Trust Committee, other government agencies, and Indigenous communities and First Nations governments
- Changes at all levels of government to address regulatory challenges and promote sustainability and community resilience

What about Climate Change ?

Much of the feedback received identified concerns related to climate change. Climate change is a clear reality that will impact the future of Gabriola's ecosystems and community. It is also a key priority for the Islands Trust. As such, addressing climate change will be a primary lens influencing policy development throughout the Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw update.

In 2019, Trust Council declared a climate emergency and committed to urgent and equitable climate action across the Trust Area. The Trust Area will see rising sea levels, flooding, windstorms, droughts, and wildfires, among other impacts.

Were First Nations Engaged?

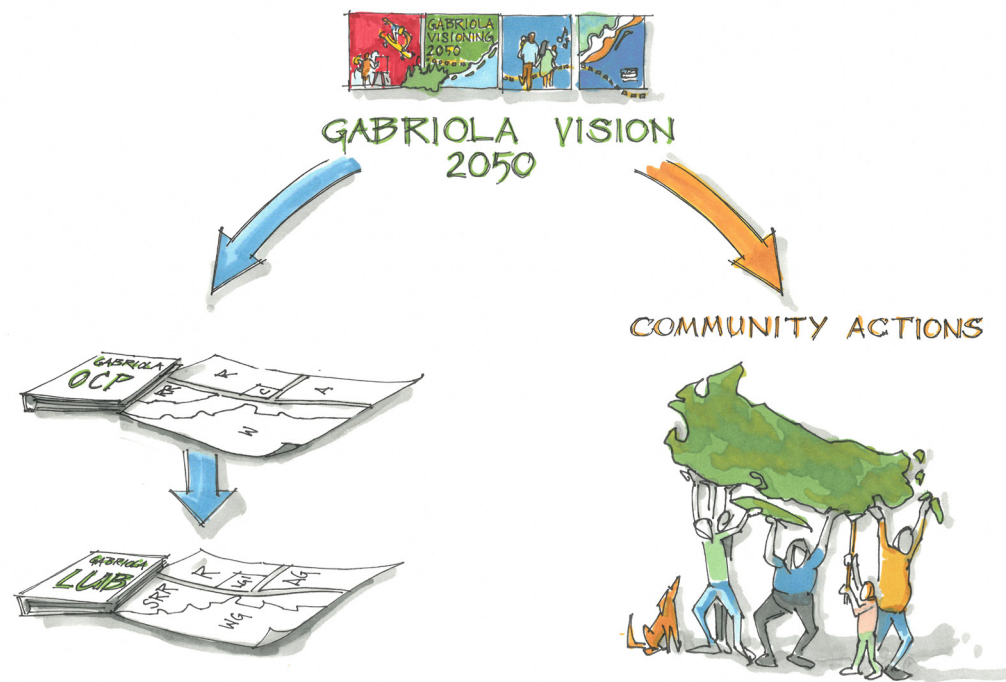
While there were Indigenous members of the community involved in the survey, community led engagement and community meetings, engagement with First Nations governments, primarily the Snuneymuxw First Nation, is separate from the community process. The recognition of the need for integration of Indigenous perspectives and First Nations interests will be a key focus for the OCP review.

Islands Trust Council is committed to establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. Islands Trust states a commitment to reconciliation with the understanding that this commitment is a long-term relationship-building and healing process.



Vision, Goals and the Official Community Plan

Only the goals related to land use that are within the Islands Trust jurisdiction can be addressed through OCP policy. Many of the goals identified through the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process will require community action and senior government support.



Next Steps

Public Engagement on the Gabriola Official Community Plan review will begin again in Summer 2024 and will focus on gathering feedback on the principles and goals that have emerged from the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process. Public engagement will include community events, as well as an online survey. Fall 2024 to Spring 2025 will see topic-focussed targeted engagement.

Drafting the bylaw and reviewing the draft will likely take place between Winter 2024 and Fall 2025, with the Bylaw approval process beginning in Winter 2025 and being complete by the summer of 2026.

Stay up to date by subscribing to updates or following along on the project page:

islandstrust.bc.ca/island-planning/gabriola/projects/gabriola-visioning-2050

Emerging Principles and Goals

The following are draft principles and key land use goals derived from feedback received through the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process. Principles and goals will inform the development of Gabriola OCP policies.

Principles - reflect the community's values, intended to align planning decisions with long-term vision and objectives of Gabriola Island residents

Stewardship - Responsible management and care of natural resources, ensuring sustainability for future generations. Protecting ecosystems, promoting sustainable practices, and engaging in conservation efforts.

Resilience - Building a resilient community that can adapt and thrive in the face of climate change and other challenges. Safeguarding freshwater resources, promoting sustainable development, and preparing for emergencies.

Equity - Fostering an inclusive community where all residents have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and services. Ensuring all voices are heard in decision-making processes.

Protection - Safeguarding diverse ecosystems and cultural heritage. Protecting sensitive habitats, endangered species, and culturally significant sites.

Reconciliation - Advancing Reconciliation with First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, recognizing their rights, and integrating their perspectives into land use and governance practices. Building respectful partnerships and promoting cultural understanding.

Goals - help turn principles into measurable objectives

Climate Resilience - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change by prioritizing sustainable development, and the protection and restoration of natural systems.



Cultural Heritage Preservation - Collaborate with First Nations to protect and preserve culturally significant areas, and species.



Collaborative Governance - Build strong partnerships with First Nations, local organizations, government agencies, and residents to support community and ecological sustainability and resilience.



Biodiverse Ecosystems - Preserve and protect terrestrial and marine ecosystems through the protection and restoration of forest ecosystems, watersheds, marine and nearshore areas, and species at risk.



Resource Stewardship - Manage land and water resources responsibly to ensure their sustainability for future generations. Ensure food security, and integrate economic, social, ethical, and cultural considerations into resource management.



Sustainable and Resilient Communities - Support equitable access to: housing, economic opportunities, freshwater, safe roads, biking and walking paths, public transportation, arts and culture, and recreational opportunities.





Learn more about next steps in the OCP review process



Participate in the survey to have your say on the draft principles and goals