

DATE: April 17, 2025

TO: Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

FROM: Narissa Chadwick RPP, MCIP, Island Planner
Southern Team

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

SUBJECT: Gabriola OCP Review – Engagement Next Steps

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to proceed with “Option 1: Community Review Existing Draft Policies” as the next step in the community engagement process for the OCP.
2. That the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee endorse revised project charter for the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project (Phase 2).
3. That the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to schedule a Community Information to share the outcomes of the Gabriola Freshwater Footprint project.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a revised project plan for endorsement by the LTC. It also provides options for the next phase of engagement.

BACKGROUND

The image below identifies steps in the OCP review process which are currently on the project webpage. Revised timing, based on how the project has proceeded, has been identified. The project charter (contained in attachment 1) has been updated to reflect updated timing and highlight potential timing milestones in the process. Staff note that the revised timeline below and the updated project charter is based on the implementation of Option 1 or Option 2 engagement process which are outlined later in the report. If the LTC chooses Option 3 or 4 the timeline and proposed project charter will need to be changed. Staff also note that the extent to which the LTC want to include new DPAs in the OCP and the time the Snuneymuxw First Nation may need to review draft policies will also influence the timing of bylaw readings.



The Fall/Winter OCP engagement process extended into the Spring of 2025 and included:

- Development and sharing of discussion guides for a number of topics
- Social media posts and posting of topic focussed information on website
- A public survey that was open from November - May
- Focus group meetings for the following themes: housing, economy, connectivity, resource stewardship, freshwater and environment
- LTC review of draft policies and focus group feedback at Special LTC meetings

It had been anticipated that a full draft of the OCP could be available for review by summer of 2025. Focus group engagement and related input from the public has indicated interest in more time to review draft policy language before a full OCP draft is compiled for review. Staff will be compiling the draft policies in a way that will help facilitate comment in a more targeted way. A complete draft of the OCP will be informed by the additional feedback gathered through summer engagement. This approach will not alter the anticipated timeline if the LTC proceeds with Option 1 or 2 for the next step in engagement.

Staff are recommending the following next steps for each Option:

- A community orientation to next engagement phase
- Sharing the community profile (integrates information from the discussion guides)
- Completion of focus group engagement
- Report back to LTC on what we heard from survey and focus group
- LTC endorsement of draft policy language to share with the community (June LTC meeting)
- Engaging the community in reviewing draft OCP policies

At the February 26th Gabriola LTC Special Meeting, following discussions related to interest in more focused engagement, the LTC directed staff to come up with options for the next step in community engagement. These options are identified in the following section.

ANALYSIS

Below are four options for next steps. Option 1 identifies what was the originally anticipated process. The difference between Option 1 and Option 2 is that Option 2 offers funding to groups to cover meeting space (This type of funding was provided during the visioning phase of the project). If the LTC chooses Option 2 they will need to identify how much budget they would like to put toward it and that this will require additional administration staff support. Options 1 and 2 would be ready by the beginning of July to be shared for the next phase of public review. The total budget for communications and engagement is \$6000 for fiscal 2025/26.

Option 3 and 4 identify processes whereby there is additional feedback gathered from the community and integrated into draft bylaws before the LTC endorses the draft policy language to send out to the greater community for review. This additional step will require additional staff time as well as additional costs for communications and outreach. It will also push timelines out (as identified in Table 2). Also, given that staff work on multiple projects at a time, additional time needed for Gabriola's project will impact the timing of other LTC projects.

Table 1, following a brief description of each options compares process, timing and costs. With each option the draft language will need to be endorsed by the LTC to share with the community. In addition to an indication of the option preferred, staff requires direction from the LTC on they type of communications methods prefers. Some communications opportunities have been identified in Table 1.

OPTION 1: Community review current draft policies

Under this option draft policy language as revised based on focus group input will be circulated to the community for review during the summer months.

OPTION 2: Community review current draft policies

Under this option draft policy language as revised based on focus group input will be circulated to the community for review during the summer months. Groups will be provided an opportunity to access funding for costs of renting meeting space.

OPTION 3: Community workshop before community review

Under this option a community workshop would be held to review the draft policy language. Further edits would be made before the draft policy language would be circulated to the community for comment.

OPTION 4: More Focus Groups before community review

Under this option additional focus groups would be organized to review draft policy language. Further edits would be made before the draft policy language would be circulated to the community for comment.

Table 1: Engagement Options Comparison

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
Draft policies to be reviewed	Based on focus group input	Based on focus group feedback	Based on additional community feedback	Based on additional community feedback
Additional group engagement	Groups invited to organize themselves	Groups provided with funding for space	Community open house workshop	Additional focus groups
Communications	Website, subscriber list, Trustee articles in the Sounder	Website, subscriber list, Trustee articles in the Sounder	Website, subscriber list, Trustee articles in the Sounder	Website, subscriber list, Trustee articles in the Sounder
Resources Impacts	As originally anticipated	More \$ for groups & admin support	More \$ for workshop & admin support, planner time	More \$ for focus groups & admin support, planner time
Impact on other LTC project timelines	Not anticipated	Not anticipated	There will be impact	There will be impact
LTC sign off on drafts for sharing	June 2025	June 2025	August 2025	August 2025
Community orientation meeting	Early July (zoom or in person)	Early July (zoom or in person)	August 2025	August 2025
Potential First Reading	November 2025	November 2025	February 2026	February 2026

Table 2 : Engagement Options Timing

	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025	Sept 2025	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026
OPTION 1	Engagement			Bylaw writing		1 st R?	Public review/referrals			2 nd / 3 rd ?	Province?		
OPTION 2	Engagement			Bylaw writing		1 st R?	Public review/referrals			2 nd / 3 rd ?	Province?		
OPTION 3	Open house +		policy draft update	Community Engagement			Bylaw writing		1 st R?	Public review/referral			2 nd / 3 rd ?
OPTION 4	Additional FG meeting		Policy draft update	Community Engagement			Bylaw writing		1 st R?	Public review/referral			2 nd / 3 rd ?

Rationale for Recommendation

Option 1 will be the most efficient process to move through. Gathering more feedback (options 3 & 4) before developing a final draft of policy language to share with the public is doubling up process. It is more efficient to hear all the feedback at once. It is important to remember that this is the beginning of another conversation with the community . There community will have a number of other opportunities to be engaged before and between bylaw readings.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Choose another option.** The impacts of choosing other options have been identified above.
- 2. Develop an alternative option.** Consider the impact on budget, staff time, and other LTCs' projects.
- 3. Provide direction to staff to draft the revised OCP for first reading without additional input from the community.** This direction may result in concerns related to process and ultimately result in having to through a community engagement process in the end.

NEXT STEPS

If Option 1 is chosen staff will:

- Complete focus groups
- Organize a zoom orientation to next phase of engagement for the community
- Update policy language with focus group feedback.
- Share the draft policy language with the LTC
- Organize a special meeting for discussion of policy language if needed
- Present draft policy language to the LTC for approval to engage community at the June 26th LTC meeting.

Submitted By:	Narissa Chadwick RPP MCIP, Island Planner	April 7, 2025
Approved By:	Renée Jamurat RPP MCIP, Regional Planning Manager	April 8, 2025

ATTACHMENTS

1. Revised Project Charter

Gabriola Island Official Community Plan(OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Review Project (Phase 2)- Charter

Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (LTC)

Date: April 2025 (Version 3)

Purpose: To explore, through targeted engagement specific questions related to key topics relevant to the OCP and LUB review and begin to draft OCP policies and identify related LUB changes needed to support these policies .

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 helped to identify vision and values of the community. From these, a number of principles, upon which to base OCP revised policies, has emerged. \$77,000 has been allocated to this project from the 2024/25 Trust Council Budget. \$50,000 of this has been allocated to do a water availability assessment which will inform decisions related to the location of additional density and the protection of land.

Objectives

Through targeted and focussed engagement on specific topic areas, begin to draft OCP policies and identify related LUB changed based on the values and principles emerging from Phase 1.

In Scope

- First Nations Engagement.
- Public education and engagement activities.
- Target and focussed engagement with relevant parties
- Identifying related LUB changes needed to support revised OCP policies

Out of Scope

- LUB updates
- New DPA mapping

Workplan Overview

Deliverable/Milestone	Date
First Nations consultation	ongoing
Suitable Land and Build Out Analysis	February 2025
Community Profile	June 2025
Topic Focussed Engagement	Jan 2025- April 2025
Milestone: LTC Review of draft policy language	June 2025
Water balance assessment	June 2025
Public Engagement - review of OCP draft policy language	July – August 2025
DPA mapping as needed	September 2025
Milestone: First Reading	November 2025
Legal Review	December 2025 – January 2026
Public Review of draft bylaws/referrals	December 2025 – February 2026
Phase 3 of Project(LUB Review) Initiated	December 2025
Milestone: Second/Third Reading	March 2026

Project Team

Regional Planning Manager	Renée Jamurat
Regional Planning Team Member	Narissa Chadwick
Planning Team Assistant	Chloë Straw
Advisory Planning Commission	As Appointed
Gabriola Planner	Stephen Baugh

Budget

Budget Sources:		
25/26	Communication and Engagement	\$6,000
	FN Engagement	\$10,000
	DPA data/ mapping	\$10,000
	Legal review	\$4,000
TOTAL		\$30,000