

PROPOSED

GABRIOLA ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

BYLAW NO. 325

A BYLAW TO ADOPT THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN FOR PART OF THE GABRIOLA ISLAND LOCAL TRUST AREA

The Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee enacts as follows:

Citation

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as “Gabriola Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 325, 2026”.

Application

2. This Bylaw applies to Gabriola Island, Lily Island, Carlos Island, Vance Island, Gaviola Island, Acorn Island, Tugboat Island, Sear Island, Bath Island, Saturnina Island, Breakwater Island, Entrance Island and all other named and unnamed islands and islets within that part of the Gabriola Local Trust Area as shown in the area indicated on Map 2 of Schedule “A”.

Organization

3. Schedules “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, “E”, and appendices, “1”, “2”, and “3”, attached to and forming part of this Bylaw, are hereby adopted as the “Gabriola Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 325, 2026”.
4. The schedules and appendices comprising this Bylaw are as follows:

SCHEDULE A – Official Community Plan
SCHEDULE B – Land and Marine Designations
SCHEDULE C – Development Permit Areas
SCHEDULE D – Freshwater Hazard Areas
SCHEDULE E – Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas
APPENDIX 1 – Definitions
APPENDIX 2 – Parks and Protected Areas
APPENDIX 3 – Land Status

Bylaw Repeal

5. The “Gabriola Official Community Plan (Gabriola) Bylaw No. 166, 1997” and all amendments thereto are hereby repealed.

Severability

6. If any provision of this Bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by a decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalid provision must be severed from the Bylaw and the decision that such provision is invalid must not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of the Bylaw.

Readings

READ A FIRST TIME THIS 3RD DAY OF SEPTEMBER , 2026

READ A SECOND TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

PUBLIC HEARING HELD THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

READ A THIRD TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ISLANDS TRUST THIS
_____ DAY OF _____ 20____

APPROVED BY THE MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING THIS
_____ DAY OF _____ 20____

ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20____

Chair

Secretary



Gabriola Island Official Community Plan 2026

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SCHEDULE A – Official Community Plan

PART 1 – Planning Context, Community Profile, Vision and Values

1.1 Purpose, Structure and Application

1.1.1 Purpose of an Official Community Plan

An Official Community Plan’s legal purpose is to provide a statement of objectives and policies that guide decisions related to land use planning. In the Gabriola Planning Area, this Plan fulfills that purpose for the defined area and is an expression of the community’s vision. It supports land and water stewardship through place-based planning that reflects the Islands Trust mandate, the community’s values, and recognizes the responsibilities of Indigenous Peoples to their territories. This Plan is the result of an Official Community Plan (OCP) review process that took place 2024-2026.

1.1.2 Plan Structure

This plan is divided into four main parts:

PART 1 – Provides the planning context, the community profile, community vision and values.

PART 2 – Includes goals and objectives, climate targets, land use designations, OCP and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) amendment evaluation policies and criteria.

PART 3 – Includes an identification of tools for supporting the implementation of Plan goals and objectives as well as advocacy directions.

ADDITIONAL SCHEDULES – Maps

APPENDIX – Includes definitions relevant to OCP as well as reference maps

1.1.3 Legislative Authority

Once adopted by bylaw, this Plan becomes an OCP which thereafter restricts the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (Gabriola LTC) to enact only those bylaws and undertake only that work which is consistent with the OCP.

1.1.4 Amendment Procedure

This Bylaw may be amended by the Trust Committee at its initiative or in response to an application. Individuals seeking amendment shall submit applications in the form provided for in the bylaws of the Trust Committee that addresses fees and procedures. All amendments to this Plan shall be in keeping with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

1.1.5 Interpretation

The final interpretation as to the precise location of boundaries of any designation or symbol contained in the map schedules, will be legally defined by the appropriate LUBs enacted over time by the Trust Committee or by site survey, as required.

The exact location and extent of environmental symbols and boundaries in this Plan will be determined through more detailed studies, policy decisions or LUB amendments. The precise boundaries of the land use designations are shown on Schedule B and the precise boundaries of DPA designations are shown on Schedule C.

As an OCP is a strategic policy document rather than a regulatory bylaw, "should" is used as the default term instead of "must" for most policies. It expresses the Local Trust Committee's intended policy direction while recognizing that future land use decisions require consideration of site-specific circumstances, technical information, and the balancing of multiple OCP policies. The term "may" is used where flexibility or discretion is intended, such as when describing actions the Local Trust Committee may choose to undertake or support, or where a range of implementation approaches may be appropriate. The term "must" is generally reserved for circumstances where the OCP refers to mandatory requirements established through provincial legislation, regulations, or other regulatory processes, rather than creating new mandatory obligations through the OCP itself.

The term "shall" has generally been avoided in the draft OCP. While historically used to express mandatory obligations, modern legislative and policy drafting practices have largely replaced "shall" with "must" because it is clearer and less susceptible to differing legal interpretations. Avoiding the use of "shall" also supports a plain-language approach and reinforces the OCP's role as a policy document that guides future decision-making rather than regulating land use directly.

Appendix A to this Plan provides a set of definitions which apply to the interpretation of this Plan.

1.2 Community Context

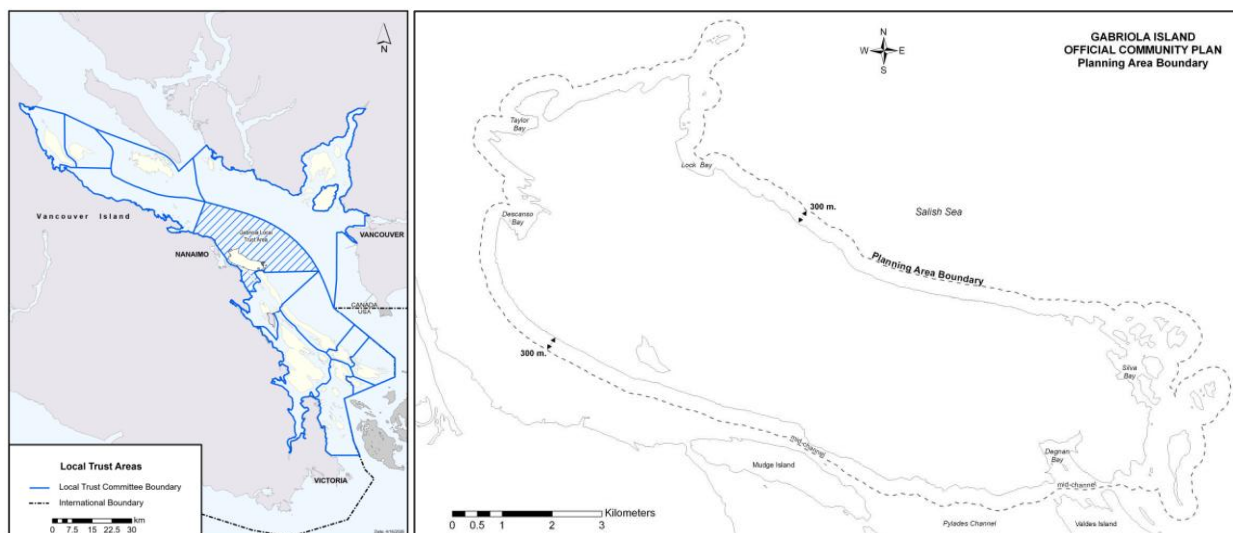
Gabriola Island's planning context is defined by its rural island setting, ecological sensitivity, cultural significance, and strong community identity. These characteristics, combined with infrastructure constraints and evolving demographic and economic conditions, shape land use planning and underscore the importance of balancing growth with environmental stewardship and community well-being.

1.2.1 Location

This Plan applies to the Gabriola Island Planning Area (Plan Area) (Map 1). The Plan Area, covers Gabriola, Breakwater and Entrance Island, and the group of nine smaller islets known as the Flat Top Islands (see highlighted areas on Map 2) and is a part of the Islands Trust Planning Area (see Map 1).

Gabriola Island, and related islands in the Plan Area, is a rural island community located in the Salish Sea between Vancouver Island and the British Columbia mainland. It is one of the northernmost Southern Gulf Islands.

Gabriola encompasses approximately 5,256 hectares and is situated within Electoral Area B of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). The island is connected to the City of Nanaimo by a 20-minute ferry crossing, which shapes daily travel patterns, access to services, employment opportunities, and economic relationships. Governance and service provision on Gabriola Island involve multiple jurisdictions, including Islands Trust, the Snuneymuxw First Nation, RDN, the Province of British Columbia, Island Health, and School District 68.



Map 1 Gabriola Local Trust Area

Map 2 Gabriola Planning Area

1.2.2 Indigenous Context

The lands and waters of Gabriola Island Local Trust Area and other islands within the Islands Trust Area have been home to Coast Salish Peoples since time immemorial. This region is rich with history, place names, historical village locations, ancestral resting places, and other culturally significant sites. The Indigenous cultural history of the Islands Trust Area is preserved in Indigenous languages, traditions, oral history, and landscapes.

The Gabriola Island Local Trust Area acknowledges the territorial and treaty rights of the First Nations on whose lands Gabriola Island sits, including the Sarléquun Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854. First Nations have a vital, long-standing, and forward-thinking interest in preserving their history and protecting the environment of their traditional territories and treaty lands for future generations. Strengthening relationships with the First Nations in the area to ensure meaningful engagement in land use decisions is also a key priority.

Today, the Snuneymuxw First Nation remains present on Gabriola Island, with their Tribal Headquarters located in Nanaimo and Reserve lands spread across the island and

surrounding area. The ongoing connection between the Snuneymuxw and the land underscores the importance of collaboration and mutual respect in land stewardship and governance. The Gabriola Local Trust Committee is committed to supporting these efforts.

Throughout Snuneymuxw Territory, including Gabriola Island, numerous archaeological sites demonstrate the Nation's deep-rooted and enduring presence. Villages such as Tle:ltx'w, along with shell middens, petroglyphs, culturally modified trees, and other features, illustrates Snuneymuxw's dynamic relationships with its territory since time immemorial.

Cultural shell deposits, for example, are often found near ancient coastal or riverine settlements and provide valuable insights into the diet, lifestyle, and environment of past human communities. Cultural shell deposits can indicate long-term habitation as they reflect repeated shellfish harvesting and consumption over time. They also often include artifacts and eco-facts that help to understand the cultural and subsistence practices of the people who created them.

The broader history of Gabriola Island includes waves of change-from its original Indigenous nation to European exploration and ongoing settlement. Snuneymuxw resource management practices such as culturally modified trees, shellfish gardens and forest gardens were strategically placed for sustainable and plentiful resource cultivation indicate Snuneymuxw's impact on the island, in the modern and colonial context, the island's landscape was significantly changed by developments such as farming, population growth, advancements in transportation (such as increased ferry services and road development) and influences of land use regulations and global trends.

With the expansion of settlement on Gabriola Island, impacts on Snuneymuxw cultural heritage and occupation became increasingly significant. The absence of adequate recognition of Snuneymuxw title and limited cultural protection during residential expansion led to the disturbance - and in some cases, the desecration and destruction-of important archaeological and cultural sites, including the displacement of ancestral remains. These impacts highlight the critical importance of proactive heritage protection, culturally informed planning processes, co-decision making, and respectful engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation and other Nations with connections to Gabriola Island.

This Plan acknowledges a historical disregard for and lack of protection of the collective heritage of the area for Indigenous Peoples. All archaeological sites are protected by the Provincial Government through the *Heritage Conservation Act*. This protection applies to all lands and means that any person wishing to undertake land-altering activities must have a provincial heritage permit to alter or develop an archaeological site.

Settlement Timeline:

Time Immemorial - First Nations inhabited what we now call Gabriola Island with permanent and seasonal village settlements, the largest of which was at Tle:ltx'w, with archeological records and evidence dating as far back as ~3,000 BCE.

1791 - Spanish explorers sight Gabriola Island and begin occupying the land the following year, they would call the island Gaviola, later changed to Gabriola

1854 - The Sarlequun Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854 between the Snuneymuxw and the Crown recognized the Snuneymuxw way of life and established Aboriginal Title

Early 20th Century - 1901 Census reports: 20 married farmers (most with children); 5 widows or widowers with children; 6 single male farmers

1940 - Across North America post WWII migration contributed to an increase urban to rural migration. 1940 Census reports: 275 total population on Gabriola Island

1962 - The Government of British Columbia's Toll Highways and Bridges Authority purchased the Gabriola Ferry Company which allowed the Island more reliable and regular ferry services to Nanaimo. Census reports the approximate population on Gabriola Island in 1971 at 380

1965 - The Sarlequun Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854 was upheld in the BC Supreme Court of Appeal Regina V. White & Bob case, reaffirming that Snuneymuxw right were never surrendered

1974 - The Islands Trust Act was passed by the Provincial Government with the Object of Islands Trust to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment

1981 – Census reports island population to be at 1,000

1998 – Snuneymuxw First Nation issues statement regarding protection of lands and sacred sites on Gabriola Island and urges the provincial government and citizens of Gabriola to respect Snuneymuxw burial sites

2010s – Approximate census population: 4,076, census 2011. Gabriola Island experienced a 15% increase in real estate values

2017 - BC Ferries introduced a new ferry service which improved the frequency and reliability of ferry services between Gabriola Island and Nanaimo

2019 - Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) came into effect as law of British Columbia. The purpose of this Act is to affirm the application of UNDRIP to the laws of British Columbia and to contribute to the implementation of UNDRIP

2019 - Snuneymuxw -Government of Canada: Letter of Understanding Snuneymuxw and the Government of Canada signed a Letter of Understanding, which commits both parties “to move forward together to renew and strengthen the historic treaty relationship and take the next step on meaningful reconciliation of governance and rights of the Snuneymuxw peoples”, which represents an important step towards reconciliation in a manner consistent with UNDRIP

2020 - The rise in remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic allowed more individuals to relocate to rural areas

1.2.3 Population and Demographics

Gabriola Island’s population has grown steadily since the mid-20th century, influenced by improved ferry service, broader societal shifts, and more recently, increased remote work opportunities. According to the 2021 Census, the year-round population was approximately 4,522, representing an increase of 11.6 percent since 2016, with additional seasonal residents not fully captured in census data. The population is significantly older than regional and provincial averages, with a median age of 63 and more than half of residents between the ages of 55 and 74. These demographic trends have important implications for housing diversity, accessibility, health and social services, transportation, and long-term community resilience.

Population projections anticipate continued growth over the coming decades. Population projections to 2030 and 2045 were prepared using multiple methods. Linear, logarithmic, and regional step-down approaches all project modest growth, estimating a population of approximately 4,800 by 2030 (about 6% growth from 2021) and 5,000 – 5,200 by 2045 (11%-15% growth from 2021), equivalent to an annual growth rate of roughly ~0.4 – 0.6%.

While projections are estimates are subject to challenge based on methodology and can change overtime, growth is trending upward. Planning for future growth must therefore balance accommodating change with the island’s environmental limits, infrastructure capacity, and community values.

1.2.4 Housing and Services Needs

The BC Provincial Government requires all local governments in BC to consider its most recent Housing Needs Report and housing information when amending OCPs. Based on the Islands Trust Housing Needs Assessment prepared in 2025, the projected housing need in the next five years is 367 additional housing units and 1,196 additional housing units in the next twenty years. As the housing needs assessment was calculated based on a portion of growth projects of the Nanaimo Region that does not consider the unique nature of the Islands it has limited value to planning for housing Gabriola Island. The population projections identified above provide a more realistic estimation of housing need. In addition, given the freshwater limitations and interests in preserving and protecting the environment on the island the provision of housing should be limited, and

focussed on the type of housing that is needed most – non-market housing accessible to low and moderate income residents.

Gabriola Island currently has approximately 589 vacant residentially zoned lots, however this does not suggest that true housing needs will be adequately addressed. A limited rental supply, rising property costs, and a growing proportion of residents on fixed or lower incomes has contributed to housing insecurity. The portion of households that experience core housing need ¹ (270 units as indicated in 2021 Census), and projected population growth, combined with demographic aging, points to increasing demand for more diverse, accessible, and affordable housing options. Market conditions and affordability challenges limit the ability of existing housing supply to meet community needs.

Essential services further shape land use planning decisions. Land within the Plan Area, including Gabriola Island, relies primarily on groundwater for water supply, which is sensitive to seasonal variation and drought conditions. Many residents supplement their water supply during dry periods. Wastewater services are provided primarily through private septic systems, water and waste service limitation impose practical limits on development intensity and location.

1.2.5 Groundwater Resources

Groundwater is an essential freshwater resource in the Gabriola Island Local Trust Area and an integrated component of the island’s natural ecosystems. Gabriola is underlain by fractured sedimentary bedrock aquifers within the Nanaimo Group. Aquifers store and transmit groundwater through fractures and related pathways and contribute to springs, wetlands, streams, and coastal discharge zones. Groundwater supports human use, watershed function, and groundwater-dependent freshwater ecosystems.

Groundwater is the primary source of freshwater for most properties in the Plan Area, including Gabriola Island. Provincial well records indicate a high level of groundwater development, with over 2500 registered wells on the island, most constructed in sedimentary bedrock and are privately owned and managed. Groundwater supplies most domestic demand and is relied upon by agriculture, businesses, institutions, industry, and small water systems. Groundwater is a critical community amenity that supports rural settlement, local livelihood, and use of the land, while placing practical limits on the density and intensity of development.

Groundwater has a central role in the freshwater assessment work completed for Gabriola Island. The Freshwater Footprint project, prepared for the Gabriola LTC, included an updated conceptual and hydro stratigraphic model, a water balance assessment, and a freshwater hazard assessment. The Freshwater Footprint considered groundwater use relative to recharge, key water quality indicators such as chloride and total dissolved

¹ When a private household’s housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and it spends 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (i.e., attains all three housing indicator thresholds).

solids, and freshwater hazards including saltwater intrusion. The results confirm that freshwater conditions on Gabriola must be understood in terms of both groundwater quantity and groundwater quality and that these conditions vary across the island.

Climate change is expected to increase stress on groundwater resources in the Local Trust Area. Changes in precipitation patterns, warmer temperatures, longer summer dry periods, and more frequent drought conditions are expected to affect recharge, seasonal water availability, and freshwater demand. Sea level rise and coastal processes may further increase saltwater intrusion risk in vulnerable shoreline areas. In this context, protection of aquifers, recharge areas, groundwater quality, and groundwater-dependent ecosystems is important to long-term freshwater security, ecological resilience, and land use planning for the Plan Area.

Currently the availability of groundwater can, in certain areas be variable in especially dry seasons; wells can and do fail, resulting in situations where freshwater must come from alternate sources. Rainwater harvesting over water delivery is encouraged.

1.2.6 Natural Environment and Biodiversity

The natural environment of the Plan Area is a defining feature of community identity and land use planning. The island is underlain primarily by sedimentary rock formations of the Nanaimo Group, influencing groundwater movement, erosion patterns, and freshwater availability. The Trust Area is located within the Coastal Douglas-fir moist maritime biogeoclimatic Zone, which is found nowhere else in Canada and is one of the most ecologically sensitive areas.

Approximately 12 percent of the island's land base is protected through parks, conserved lands, and conservation covenants, reflecting only a small fraction of the ecological sensitivity of island ecosystems and the importance of long-term stewardship. Data presented in the Islands Trust Conservancy Regional Conservation Plan for 2018-2027 indicated that the amount of land conversion in the Gabriola Island Local Trust Area was approaching the threshold for increased species loss within ecosystem types. In total there are 16.3 hectares of land protected by conservation covenant. The Islands Trust Conservancy protects the 65-hectare Elder Cedar (S'ul-hween X'pey) Nature Reserve, a site of significant ecological and cultural value.

The Plan Area supports diverse terrestrial and marine species, including marine mammals, fish, invertebrates, and kelp forests, contributing to ecosystem resilience within the Salish Sea. Multiple species and ecosystems at risk and culturally significant species are found on land as well, with habitat requirements ranging from old growth forests to Garry oak ecosystems to wet meadows and seepage areas. Federally and provincially protected species include plants (bog bird's foot trefoil, Macoun's meadow-foam), birds (marbled murrelet, western screech-owl, great blue heron, peregrine falcon, double-crested cormorant) and butterflies (Moss' elfin, Propertius duskywing). Endangered ecosystems

include Douglas-fir/dull Oregon grape, grand fir/dull Oregon grape, and trembling aspen/Pacific crab-apple/slough sedge.

Habitat loss and degradation through land conversion and development is a common threat for all these species, along with competition from invasive species, pollution and other contaminants, and climate change. Large scale industrial logging and gravel/sandstone extraction had huge impacts on the biodiversity, and clear cutting of forests during the early 1900s for homesteading and agriculture altered much of the landscape and natural water flows.

1.2.7 Local Economy and Income Levels

Land use on Gabriola Island reflects a mix of residential, agricultural, forestry, commercial, industrial, and protected lands. Agricultural land represents a significant portion of the island's land base and supports food production, local livelihoods, and food security, although this system is increasingly vulnerable to climate change and biodiversity loss. A big driver of the economy is new residential construction and renovation.

The island's economy also includes small-scale, locally oriented businesses, including tourism, arts and culture, agriculture, retail, and service industries. Home-based businesses are common and play an important role in economic vitality. Limited industrial activity includes light manufacturing, renewable energy, and specialty production. Housing affordability has emerged as a significant constraint on economic sustainability, with local businesses reporting challenges in attracting and retaining employees due to limited housing options.

In the 2021 census, the median income on Gabriola Island was \$34,400 for individuals and \$78,000 for households with two or more people. Approximately 15% of the island's population was considered low income in 2020, compared to an estimated 11% average for British Columbia. Of those classified as low income, 28.7% were aged 18 to 64. In 2022, 21% of Gabriola Island residents relied on government transfers for income, compared to the RDN (16%) and British Columbia as a whole (11%).

1.2.8 Transportation and Connectivity

With over 150 kilometres of roads and minimal active transportation infrastructure, Gabriola Island is considered a highly car-dependent community, with walkability largely concentrated in key areas such as the village commercial area. The majority of the roads on the Island are built and maintained by the Province.

Public transportation is available on Gabriola Island. The GERTIE bus, operated by the Gabriola Community Bus Foundation, provides regular reliable service in all areas of the island. Most residents rely on private vehicles to get around the island. BC Ferries is the most common means for drivers and foot passengers to travel beyond Gabriola.

The island is home to one federal government dock and two private marinas offering highly valued anchorage in the Salish Sea. Float plane service to and from Gabriola to Vancouver is regularly scheduled.

1.2.9 Community Spaces

Community spaces and recreational amenities play an important role in supporting health, social connection, and quality of life. Many parks, trails, and recreation facilities are supported by community organizations, these amenities are widely used and contribute to high levels of community engagement. Spaces such as the Gabriola Branch of the Vancouver Island Regional Library, Gabriola Arts and Heritage Centre, the Community Hall, the Agricultural Hall, Gabriola Museum, Rollo Centre, and the Gabriola Commons serve as important gathering places, offering accessible venues for social, educational, and cultural activities across age groups.

1.2.10 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Parks and outdoor recreation areas are an essential extension of Gabriola Island's community spaces, supporting health, social connection, and quality of life. Given limited transportation options and the island's reliance on outdoor amenities, access to parks, trails, and waterfront areas is particularly important. Parks and protected areas currently comprise approximately 12% of Gabriola's land base, a level considered insufficient to meet current and future community and ecological needs.

Parkland on Gabriola Island is provided primarily by BC Parks and the RDN (RDN). Three Class "A" Provincial Parks -Drumbeg, Gabriola Sands, and Sandwell - support coastal and nature-based recreation, while community and regional parks provide locally and regionally significant open space. Community parks are funded locally, while regional parks are funded across the RDN.

Outdoor recreation opportunities extend beyond formal park boundaries and include courts, playing fields, school sites used for recreation, a privately operated golf course, public road ends, Crown foreshore access, and an extensive trail network. While the Islands Trust does not manage park operations, this Plan recognizes the importance of parks and open space and includes objectives and policies to guide their future protection and enhancement.

1.2.11 Growth Management

Gabriola Island is expected to continue experiencing modest population growth over the coming decades. Population growth on the island presents unique challenges where freshwater resources, ecosystem integrity, transportation, wastewater servicing, and emergency response capacity place practical limits on development. Unlike municipalities that may accommodate growth through major infrastructure expansion, Gabriola's

capacity for growth is largely determined by the carrying capacity of its natural systems and the availability of essential services.

The Islands Trust Act establishes the preservation and protection of the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment as the primary objective for land use planning. Land use planning on Gabriola Island can not focus on maximizing development potential, but must carefully manage the location, form, and pace of development so that it remains within the ecological limits of the island, to the largest extent possible, while supporting community well-being.

Population growth and housing demand are influenced by factors that extend beyond local government control. People continue to relocate to Gabriola Island because of its natural beauty, rural character, and quality of life. Where appropriate housing options are unavailable, some residents have resorted to living in unauthorized or informal forms of accommodation that may not meet health, safety, or building standards. Limiting new housing opportunities has not prevented population growth or housing demand; instead, it has contributed to affordability challenges and a shortage of suitable housing for many residents.

A balanced approach to growth management recognizes both the environmental limits of the island and the need to respond to changing community needs. Growth needs to be directed toward better aligning the existing housing supply with identified community needs. Priority should be placed on attainable, non-market, and workforce housing that enables the people who provide essential services, -including health care workers, teachers, tradespeople, service workers, land use planners, emergency responders, and others - to live on the island and not have to commute. Supporting these housing needs contributes to the long-term resilience and sustainability of the community while respecting the island's finite freshwater resources and sensitive ecosystems.

Environmental capacity remains the foundation for land use planning in the Trust Area. Future growth should make efficient use of existing developed areas, protect groundwater resources, sensitive ecosystems, agricultural lands, and the island's rural character, and carefully consider cumulative impacts on infrastructure and the natural environment. In this way, growth management seeks to balance environmental stewardship with the social and economic needs of a healthy, resilient island community.

1.3 Land Use Planning Context

1.3.1 Policy Layers

This Plan works alongside the LUB to shape community informed decisions about how land and marine areas are protected, restored, used and/or developed.

“Land use planning” is a commonly used legal and professional term, though it originates in colonial approaches to land control and ownership that have been harmful to Indigenous Peoples and the natural environment. The term is used in this document to describe the statutory planning framework set out in the *Local Government Act* and the *Islands Trust Act*, and Gabriola Island’s inclusion in the Islands Trust governance structure.

As such, this plan is aligned with Islands Trust object and the Islands Trust Policy Statement, is consistent with the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act*, as well as being grounded in a set of community values. These priorities and values support community resilience in a changing climate through the protection of biodiversity, responsible resource stewardship, and a commitment to reconciliation.

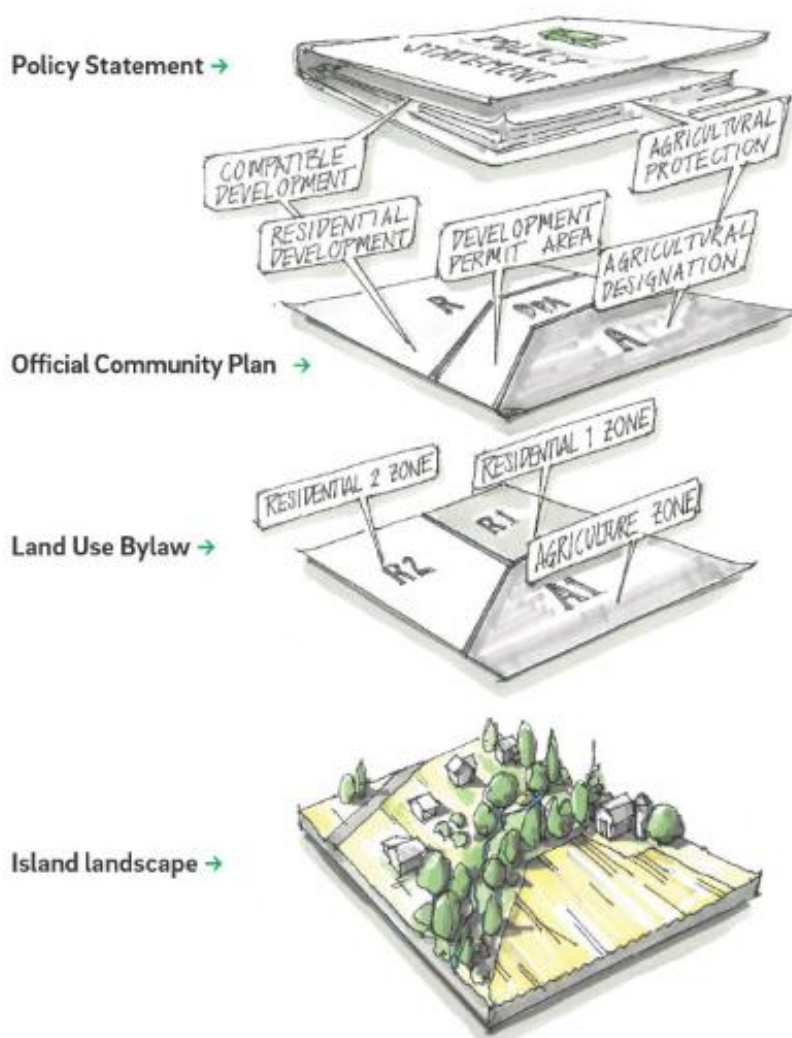


Figure1: Policy Layers

1.3.2 Legislative Framework

The *Local Government Act* (LGA) governs the process whereby a local government can prepare and adopt an OCP. The LGA outlines policy statements and requirements that the OCP must include, as well as policies that the Gabriola LTC may choose to include in the OCP.

Once an OCP has been adopted, all decisions related to planning, subdivision, development, and land use matters must conform to the OCP. In accordance with the LGA, the OCP should be reviewed and updated every five years, incorporating public engagement to ensure that it continues to represent community objectives and addresses important and emerging issues and trends as they evolve over time.

The LGA outlines the required OCP content applicable to the Islands Trust Area is as follows:

- **Land Use:** Statements and map designations identifying the approximate location, amount, type, and density of residential development to meet anticipated housing needs over at least a 20-year period, and the approximate location, amount, and type of present and proposed commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, and public utility land uses.
- **Natural Resources, Environment, and Hazard Lands:** Identification of the approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits suitable for future extraction where such deposits exist, and policies and restrictions on the use of land that is subject to hazardous conditions or is environmentally sensitive to development.
- **Infrastructure and Public Facilities:** Identification of the approximate location of present and proposed public facilities, including schools, parks, and disposal sites.
- **Housing:** Policies respecting affordable housing, rental housing, and special needs housing, consideration of the most recent Housing Needs Report when developing or amending the OCP.
- **Climate Change:** Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within the plan area, and policies and actions proposed to achieve those targets.
- **Provincial Policy Context:** Consideration of applicable provincial policy guidelines.

1.3.3 The Islands Trust

In 1974, the Government of British Columbia established the *Islands Trust Act* to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment against unrestrained growth and development. Islands Trust is a federated body responsible for the Trust Area, comprised of 13 major islands, more than 450 smaller islands, and the surrounding waters in the Strait of Georgia and Howe Sound. Islands Trust regulates local land use, works with other levels of government, and the Islands Trust Conservancy to preserve and protect places of natural or cultural significance. This unique governmental mandate is defined in Section 3 of the *Islands Trust Act* and is commonly referred to as the “Islands Trust Object.”

The object of the Islands Trust, established by British Columbia law, is to “*preserve and protect the Trust Area (islands and waters) and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of residents of the Trust Area and British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, First Nations, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.*”

Islands Trust Priorities

The “Islands Trust Object” is expressed through the Islands Trust Policy Statement. The themes of environmental protection, reconciliation with Indigenous People, addressing climate change and housing affordability are also key priorities across the Islands Trust and are described through three declarations of Islands Trust Council.

Environmental Protection This legislated mandate of the Islands Trust Council recognizes the ecological sensitivity of island environments and the importance of long-term stewardship. Land use planning plays a central role in achieving this objective by guiding growth and development in ways that preserve and protect ecosystems, freshwater resources, coastal processes, biodiversity, and the natural features that support community well-being and island character.

Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples – In 2019, the Islands Trust Council adopted the *Islands Trust Reconciliation Declaration*, affirming a commitment to advancing reconciliation within its mandate and decision-making processes. For the purposes of this plan, reconciliation means planning and managing land in ways that respect First Nations’ enduring relationships to their territories, acknowledging the past and ongoing impacts of colonial land use systems, and supporting respectful, collaborative approaches to decision-making. This includes early and meaningful engagement, recognition of Indigenous rights and interests, and the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into planning processes to help ensure that land use decisions support cultural continuity, stewardship responsibilities, and community well-being.

Climate Change – The *Local Government Act* requires all OCPs to contain GHG reduction targets, policies and actions. In March 2019 the Islands Trust Council declared a climate change emergency committing the Islands Trust to work with local communities, First Nations, partner agencies, and other levels of government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the challenges for a changing climate. Gabriola residents are experiencing the impacts of climate change with increased drought periods and shifts in biodiversity such as the increasing loss of Western Red Cedar trees. Average global temperatures are now more than 1.4 °C warmer than pre-industrial levels, with the past decade being the warmest on record and recent years among the hottest ever documented; this warming is linked to rising sea levels, more intense weather events, and shifting environmental conditions

Housing Affordability – In 2023, the Islands Trust Council declared that a housing equity and workforce shortage crisis exists within the Islands Trust Area, identifying a severe lack

of housing options that are accessible and affordable for residents and local workers. This declaration reflects long-standing concerns that the limited supply of diverse housing types, combined with rising property values and rental costs, has made it increasingly difficult for people of many income levels to live and remain in island communities. Multiple housing needs assessments have documented shortages in secure, appropriate, and affordable housing for low-to-moderate income earners, impacting community well-being and economic sustainability across the Trust Area.

Island's Trust Policy Statement

Section 15 of the Islands Trust Act states that Trust Council must adopt, by bylaw, a Trust Policy Statement that applies to the Islands Trust Area as a whole. The Islands Trust Act specifies that the Policy Statement must be a general statement of the policies of Trust Council to carry out the Islands Trust Object, that it may establish different policies for different parts of the Islands Trust Area. The Policy Statement represents Trust Council's vision for the preservation and protection of the draft Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment.

This Plan is required to be consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement in effect at the time of adoption.

1.3.4 The Development of the Plan

The Plan Area's social, environmental, economic, and infrastructure conditions establish the context within which this Plan is developed and implemented. The development of this Plan reflects this information and public input, and guides land use decisions that balance environmental protection, housing needs, infrastructure capacity, economic vitality, and community well-being, consistent with the Islands Trust mandate, reconciliation commitments, and community values identified through the engagement process for this Plan.

The development of the Plan involved a number opportunities for public involvement through 3 Phases of the Plan development.

Phase 1 – Gabriola Vision 2050 Launched in 2023, focused on the identification of community values, vision and related principles through the Gabriola Visioning 2050 Process. This process included:

- Online survey (363 respondents)
- Group led engagement events (200 community members engaged)
- Community meeting (40+ community members attended)
- Engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation initiated

Phase 2 - Launched in July 2024 phase 2 involved two parts:

- **Part 1** - Reviewing the key principles emerging from the Gabriola Visioning 2050 engagement
 - Survey (163 Survey respondents)
 - Summer engagement at markets and events
- **Part 2** - Engaging the community in topic-focussed discussion.
 - Survey (590 respondents)
 - Focus groups on the following themes: connectivity, economy, environment, housing, resources stewardship, water. Focus group reviewed draft policies.
 - Methodology and data collection for the water balance project.
 - Engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation continued

Phase 3 – Launched in Summer 2025, supported the OCP drafting and review involving:

- Reimagining Growth workshop (September 2025)
- Freshwater Footprint project work
- Survey on Reimagining Growth (156 respondents)
- Draft Plan writing (including values, vision/guiding directions)
- Draft Plan review by public and referral agencies
- Deeper engagement with Snuneymuxw First Nation

1.4 Guiding Vision, Values and Goals

The community vision, values, and resulting goals form an integrated foundation for this Plan. They guide the development, interpretation, and implementation of policies and actions that advance reconciliation, environmental protection, climate resilience, community diversity and well-being and sustainable livelihoods while fostering collaboration, inclusion, and a strong sense of belonging across Gabriola Island.

1.4.1 Community Vision

Gabriola Island is an active, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable island community that respects Indigenous and local cultural heritage, preserves and protects the natural environment and biodiversity, supports diverse housing and livelihoods, and works collaboratively to balance human needs and the island's ecological limits.

The Island fosters a rural sensibility with a strong sense of belonging and care by supporting diverse and affordable housing, accessible services, active and low-impact transportation, vibrant arts and culture, resilient local food systems and livelihoods, and cooperation among residents, First Nations, and all levels of government.

1.4.2 Achieving the Community Vision

Achieving Gabriola's vision for 2050 depends on strong collaboration among Indigenous Governing Bodies, community organizations, regional and provincial partners, and residents. Many of the Island's defining strengths -its arts and culture, local food systems, environmental stewardship, and social connections- are sustained through community-driven initiatives that play a central role in advancing priorities such as housing, community diversity, active transportation, emergency preparedness, and environmental preservation and protection.

Regional districts and provincial agencies provide essential infrastructure, services, and regulatory oversight that support local efforts and ensure alignment with broader public interests. Meaningful and ongoing collaboration with Indigenous Governing Bodies is fundamental, bringing Indigenous knowledge, values, and stewardship practices into planning and decision-making. Together, these partnerships create the conditions for a socially equitable, culturally vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and resilient Gabriola for generations to come.

1.4.3 Community Values

The following Community Values articulate the core considerations that guide the Gabriola LTC's decision-making within its jurisdiction and provide a foundation for implementing the Gabriola 2050 vision through planning and regulatory actions. Each value is supported by a corresponding goal identified in Part 2 of this plan:

Integrating First Nations Interests - Honouring and protecting Indigenous cultural heritage, and meaningfully integrating the knowledge, perspectives, priorities, and stewardship practices of First Nations.

Preservation and Protection of the Natural Environment and Biodiversity - Prioritizing the protection, preservation, enhancement, and restoration of environmentally sensitive areas, ecosystems at risk, and biodiversity to maintain healthy natural systems.

Responsible Resource Stewardship - Balancing ecological, social, cultural, and economic considerations to support long-term sustainability, freshwater integrity, local food security, and resilient livelihoods.

Community Resilience and Climate Readiness - Reducing risk and strengthen the Island's ability to anticipate, adapt to, and thrive amid climate change by safeguarding critical systems and embedding climate resilience in decision-making.

Community Diversity, Well-Being, and Sustainability - Supporting diverse housing options, access to essential services, safe and active mobility, recreation, arts and culture, and local economic opportunities, while respecting community character and long-term sustainability

Collaboration, Transparency, and Shared Responsibility - Coordinated governance that builds and maintains strong, respectful partnerships with Indigenous Governing Bodies, residents, local organizations, and other government agencies.

PART 2 – Plan Goals, Objectives, Designations and Policies

2.1 Using This Plan

2.1.1 Policy Structure

The format of this Plan is intended to be easy to understand by residents, property owners, community groups, First Nations, other levels of government and the Gabriola LTC. It supports consistent and effective policy implementation when considering land use planning proposals and assists the Gabriola LTC in making informed land use decisions.

This Part of the Plan includes:

- Goals and objectives across all themes;
- Land use designations;
- Policies that guide decision making related to change in use and density; and
- Policies that guide decision making related to development applications and referrals.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are applicable to the designation of land use, development application review (as identified in this part of the Plan) and advocacy policies (identified in part 4 of the Plan) of the Gabriola LTC.

2.2.1 Integrating First Nations Interests

GOAL: *Ensure land use and development decisions respect First Nations interests in preserving and protecting the environment and cultural heritage, and are guided by meaningful collaboration with Indigenous Governing Bodies, including the integration of Indigenous knowledge and stewardship practices.*

Objective 2.2.1.1: Collaborate with First Nations to identify, protect, and steward areas, species, and landscapes of cultural significance through the integration of Indigenous knowledge, values, and perspectives into land use planning.

Objective 2.2.1.2: Ensure early, ongoing, and respectful engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies on development applications and amendments to the Plan and LUB.

Objective 2.2.1.3: Protect archaeological sites and culturally significant areas through; Heritage Conservation Areas, covenants, and other regulatory tools.

Objective 2.2.1.4: Promote community awareness and understanding of First Nations history, rights, and cultural values.

Objective 2.2.1.5: Support the protection of First Nations traditional food lands, stewardship practices, and harvesting rights.

2.2.2 Preservation and Protection of the Natural Environment and Biodiversity

GOAL: *Preserve, Protect, restore, and enhance natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and environmentally sensitive areas to maintain healthy, functioning ecological systems for present and future generations.*

Objective 2.2.2.1: Ensure that land use planning prioritizes ecosystem preservation and protection and decisions are guided by comprehensive ecological, climate change, and freshwater vulnerability data as well as Indigenous cultural knowledge.

Objective 2.2.2.2: Preserve, protect, restore, enhance and revitalize ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, and habitat connectivity by identifying, safeguarding, and connecting sensitive ecosystems and habitats, including those important to species at risk.

Objective 2.2.2.4: Adopt land use policies and regulations to increase climate change mitigation through ecosystem-based solutions and address ecosystem threats such as wildfire and other climate change-related threats to ecosystem integrity.

2.2.3 Responsible Resource Stewardship

GOAL: *Manage land and resources in a way that sustains ecological health, supports local economies and food systems, protects freshwater resources, and promotes long-term social and cultural well-being.*

Objective 2.2.3.1: Preserve and protect the quality and quantity of Gabriola Island's freshwater resources (aquifer recharge areas, watersheds, wetlands, and freshwater ecosystems) and ensure that neither the density nor the intensity of land uses is increased where the quality and quantity of the supply of freshwater is likely to be inadequate or increase the vulnerability of freshwater supply.

Objective 2.2.3.2: Preserve agricultural land and strengthen local food systems by supporting environmentally sustainable, economically viable farming and related activities while avoiding fragmentation and conflicts with non-farm uses.

Objective 2.2.3.3: Preserve large, contiguous areas of forested land to protect and preserve biodiversity, ecosystem services, wildlife habitat, and natural landscapes, while supporting compatible low-impact recreation and education.

Objective 2.2.3.4: Work with the Province to minimize the environmental and community impacts of mineral and aggregate extraction and processing by limiting such uses and ensuring responsible site management and restoration.

Objective 2.2.3.5: Enhance groundwater infiltration and improve water quality and aquifer recharge by promoting nature-based solutions, such as permeable paving, rain gardens, and bioswales.

2.2.4 Community Resilience and Climate Readiness

GOAL: *Reduce climate-related risks and strengthen the Island’s capacity to adapt to climate change by protecting critical systems, supporting resilient infrastructure, and integrating climate considerations into all land use and development decisions.*

Objective 2.2.4.1: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing development close to amenities and protecting/restoring natural systems and increasing carbon sequestering opportunities.

Objective 2.2.4.2: Direct development away from areas vulnerable to natural hazards and climate-related risks, including wildfire, flooding, and saltwater intrusion.

Objective 2.2.4.3: Ensure housing and development designation and zoning consider freshwater availability, climate hazards, and land use practices that enhance community resilience.

Objective 2.2.4.4: Protect, restore, enhance and revitalize forests, wetlands, and other natural features that contribute to climate mitigation, adaptation, and ecological and community resilience.

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.

2.2.5 Diversity and Community Wellbeing

GOAL: *Foster inclusive, healthy, and vibrant community by supporting diverse housing options, access to services, active transportation, recreation, arts and culture, and sustainable local economic opportunities.*

Objective 2.2.5.1: Support a mix of land uses that strengthens community self-reliance and wellbeing.

Objective 2.2.5.2: Provide a range of housing options and settlement patterns that meet the diverse needs of Gabriola residents, with attention to housing accessible to low and moderate income residents and families close to amenities and housing compatible with rural character, infrastructure capacity and environmental protection.

Objective 2.2.5.3: Maintain and expand parkland and public access to natural areas and outdoor recreation through planning processes and collaboration with government and community partners.

Objective 2.2.5.4: Provide for a wide range of commercial and light industrial development including home occupation that is appropriately scaled and located to serve local needs and compatible with the natural environment and local neighbourhood character.

Objective 2.2.5.5: Support and encourage opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with local arts, culture, and creative expression, fostering community identity, cultural heritage, and economic resilience.

Objective 2.2.5.6: Support health, wellbeing and community connection with opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to participate in physical activity, sports, recreation, and active transportation.

Objective 2.2.5.7: Support equitable and safe access to healthy natural environments, green spaces, shorelines, and ecosystem services regardless of an individual's income, cultural identity, age, or mobility.

Objective 2.2.5.8: Promote compatibility between commercial and residential uses through the mitigation of noise, odour, air quality, and other potential impacts.

2.2.6 Collaboration, Transparency, and Shared Responsibility

GOAL: *Promote and engage in coordinated and transparent decision-making through strong partnerships with First Nations, Indigenous Governing Bodies, residents, community organizations, and other levels of government, facilitating shared responsibility for land stewardship.*

Objective 2.2.6.1: Ensure early and ongoing coordination with Indigenous Governing Bodies and relevant agencies in the development and amendment of land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Objective 2.2.6.2: Promote shared understanding of roles and responsibilities in land use planning and decision-making across jurisdictions and among planning partners.

Objective 2.2.6.3: Align land use planning with related plans and initiatives of Indigenous Governing Bodies, regional partners, and other levels of government to advance shared environmental and cultural heritage protection and housing that meets community needs.

Objective 2.2.6.4: Foster transparent, inclusive, and accessible planning processes that build trust, support informed participation, and strengthen accountability in land use decision-making.

2.3 Climate Action

British Columbia has established legislated greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets under the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, including a 40% reduction below 2007 levels by

2030, 60% by 2040, and net-zero emissions by 2050. Through the *Local Government Act*, local governments are required to include GHG reduction targets, policies, and actions in OCPs. While many sources of emission, such as energy supply standards, building codes, and vehicle regulations, are set by senior levels of government, land use planning plays an important role in shaping long-term emissions outcomes.

Climate change is influencing local conditions, with rising temperatures, increasing rainfall variability, and more frequent extreme weather events expected to affect freshwater recharge, coastal processes, ecosystems, and community infrastructure over time. In the Plan Area, the most effective tools available to the Gabriola LTC for reducing GHG emissions are those related to how land is used and protected. This includes guiding where and how development occurs, supporting compact and complete settlement patterns, protecting forests, wetlands, and other natural areas that store carbon, and encouraging walking, cycling, and shared transportation where feasible.

Through land use policies, this Plan establishes a local framework for climate action that reflects Gabriola's rural character, environmental values, and the Islands Trust mandate to preserve and protect the Island for present and future generations.

Land use planning plays a key role in reducing GHG emissions and building resilience. The following are a set of climate action target policies to guide policy development and land use planning decisions. Detailed policies to address these targets are included in the related sections of this Plan and specific regulations to address these targets are included in the Gabriola Island LUB.

2.3.1 Climate Mitigation Targets to Reduce GHG Emissions:

From 2026 levels:

TARGET 2.3.1.1: Increase the concentration of new residential and commercial development in the village commercial area where freshwater is sufficient and create secondary commercial nodes close to existing residential, service and amenity areas and on public transit routes to encourage walking, cycling and transit use

TARGET 2.3.1.2: Increase protection of forests, wetlands, soils, and other ecosystems that store carbon.

TARGET 2.3.1.3: Increase trail development with minimal ecological disturbance.

TARGET 2.3.1.4: Increase the percentage of new development close to the public transit to encourage walking, cycling and transit use.

TARGET 2.3.1.5: Increase agricultural use of land to support access to local food.

2.3.2 Climate Adaptation Targets for Increasing Climate Resilience:

TARGET 2.3.2.1: Increase protection and preservation of natural areas that reduce climate-related risks such as wildfire, flooding, and erosion.

TARGET 2.3.2.2: All new buildings and infrastructure be built with consideration of local hazards and long-term resilience.

TARGET 2.3.2.3: Increase the number of rainwater catchment systems on the Island.

TARGET 2.3.2.4: Increase protection and preservation of watersheds, aquifers, and riparian zones to ensure long-term water supply and quality.

TARGET 2.3.2.5: Increase the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives related to ecosystem health.

TARGET 2.3.2.6: Increase community understanding of climate change by including climate change considerations in land use decision making.

2.4 Land and Marine General Policies

Purpose

Land and marine designations provide a framework for how land within the Plan Area is intended to be used and managed over the long term. Designations translate the community's vision, values, and goals into a spatial plan that guides future development, conservation, and infrastructure decisions.

Land and marine designations inform zoning, policy decisions, and regulatory tools to ensure land use changes occur in a coordinated, transparent, and sustainable way. The Gabriola LTC has chosen to designate all land and marine areas in this Plan to provide clear land use direction.

All land and marine designations are identified on the Map in Schedule B.

Policies

The following policies apply to all applicable use designations. Designation specific policies are outlined in Section 2.5.

2.4.1 Residential Density Policies

POLICY 2.4.1.1: This plan does not support strata conversions of buildings under the *Land Title Act* or the *Strata Property Act*.

POLICY 2.4.1.2: Land use regulations should identify where detached secondary dwelling units must be located in relationship to the principal dwelling unit thereby defining

residential footprint. Locating detached secondary dwelling units in close proximity to the principal dwelling unit is encouraged to reduce impact to the lot and facilitate sharing of well and septic system where feasible.

2.4.2 Home Occupation Use Policies

POLICY 2.4.2.1: A home occupation use should be permitted as an accessory use in all land use designations where a residential use is permitted. Land use regulations should establish conditions of use for home occupations, such as:

- Specifying the range of uses permitted as a home occupation;
- Restricting the floor area used by a home occupation;
- Requiring the use to be conducted by a resident of the lot;
- Specifying a limit on the number of non-resident persons who may be employed, based on the size of the lot;
- Prohibiting or limiting the exterior storage of material or equipment;
- Requiring screening from adjacent properties and the roadway;
- Requiring adequate off-street parking;
- Considering different home occupation regulations for different zones;
- Compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood and environment; and
- Considering impacts to archeological sites.

POLICY 2.4.2.2: Bed and Breakfast tourist accommodation use may be permitted as a home occupation on a lot where the home occupation operator resides in the legal dwelling where the bed and breakfast occurs.

POLICY 2.4.2.3: Short term vacation rental of a dwelling in its entirety should not be permitted as a home occupation and may be permitted through a temporary use permit (TUP).

2.4.3 Boarding Homes and Supportive Home Care

POLICY 2.4.3.1 Boarding homes, hospice care, community care facilities, transition homes and similar small-scale supportive residential uses as forms of residential accommodation and support should be permitted where residential is a principal use.

2.4.4 Trails and Parks

POLICY 2.4.4.1: Public parks, trails, ecological reserves, and public utilities should be permitted in all land use designations.

2.4.5 Marine Access

POLICY 2.4.5.1: Public boat launch and emergency dock facilities may be permitted in any land use designation providing waterfront access, subject to adequate parking and consideration of First Nations' interests.

2.4.6 Commercial and Industrial

POLICY 2.4.6.1: Heavy industrial uses such as industrial production that generates significant noise, vibration, odour, emissions, or heavy truck traffic and/or uses a significant amount of water should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.4.6.2: The use of lands, buildings, or structures for the manufacturing or research of genetically engineered seeds, plants, or animals should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.4.6.3: Timeshare developments should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.4.6.4: Land-based airports and heliports, other than an emergency helicopter landing area, should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.4.6.5: Destination gaming facilities, such as casinos and commercial bingo halls, should not be permitted.

2.4.7 Agricultural Use

POLICY 2.4.7.1: Horticulture uses should be permitted in all designations except for areas designated Parks and Protected Areas.

POLICY 2.4.7.2: Establish land use regulations to prohibit the removal of soil from or the deposition of soil where it would reduce the agricultural viability of the lot.

2.4.8 Aggregate Extraction

POLICY 2.4.8.1 Processing of mineral and aggregate resources is not permitted unless the product will be exclusively for local use.

POLICY 2.4.8.2: Bylaw amendment applications for new aggregate extraction facilities should not be supported.

2.4.9 Cemeteries and Green Burial

POLICY 2.4.9.1: Cemetery use, including green burial, should only be permitted in Institutional, Forest Protection and Park designations subject to an analysis of groundwater impacts.

2.4.10 Freshwater Sustainability

POLICY 2.4.10.1: The commercial sale of groundwater for use outside of the Plan Area should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.4.10.2: Land use regulations should require new residential, commercial, and institutional development to incorporate freshwater capture and storage infrastructure, such as cisterns and holding ponds. Other systems designed to retain freshwater from natural on-island sources that would be available to offset the use of groundwater and serve as backup during prolonged drought conditions and for fire protection may also be considered in place of, or in addition to, cisterns and holding ponds.

POLICY 2.4.10.3: Land use regulations should require potable rainwater catchment systems consistent with installation and maintenance requirements of Island Health for all secondary dwelling units located in freshwater hazard areas (see Schedule D).

POLICY 2.4.10.4: Land use regulations should support community water supply as a permitted use in appropriate areas.

2.4.11 Protection of Archaeological Sites

POLICY 2.4.11.1 Ground disturbance activities in areas of known or potential archaeological significance are subject to the requirements of the provincial *Heritage Conservation Act* and may require a provincial heritage alteration permit prior to site alteration or disturbance.

POLICY 2.4.11.2: Property owners undertaking ground disturbance must implement a chance find protocol, including the immediate cessation of work and notification of the province and affected First Nations if archaeological materials are encountered.

POLICY 2.4.11.3: Early notification and engagement with the Snuneymuxw First Nation is encouraged when development or land alteration is proposed in areas of known or potential archaeological significance.

POLICY 2.4.11.4: Notification and engagement with the province is required as a first step when archaeological materials are found on a property.

2.4.12 Fire Safety

POLICY 2.4.12.1: Fire safety measures must be considered with all new development, including:

- Defensible space around structures
- Safe and accessible evacuation routes
- Integration with emergency response planning

2.4.13 Dark Skies

POLICY 2.4.13.1: Development in all zones should be designed and located to adhere to dark skies best practices. The Local Trust Committee may use zoning regulations, Development Permit Areas, and development approval processes to manage the siting, orientation, and intensity of outdoor lighting associated with land use, rezoning, subdivision, and variance applications.

POLICY 2.4.13.2: The Local Trust Committee will work with other levels of government and agencies to encourage outdoor lighting on public lands, roads, parks, and facilities to be appropriately scaled and designed to adhere to dark skies best practices.

2.4.14 Road Classification

POLICY 2.4.14.1: The classification of roadways should be consistent with agreements between the Province and Islands Trust.

2.4.15 General Siting and Use

POLICY 2.4.15.1: Land use regulations, including use, density, lot size, setbacks, and lot coverage, should be informed by site conditions, surrounding land uses, rural character, ecological values, cultural heritage and community safety.

2.4.16 Subdivision

POLICY 2.4.16.1 The minimum lot size for subdivision should be 35 hectares except where the subdivision is for one or more of the following uses:

- Park;
- Conservation;
- Community service use;
- Heritage conservation, including Indigenous cultural or historical heritage protection;
- Utilities;
- Public infrastructure; and
- Non-market housing

POLICY 2.4.16.2 The minimum lot size for single unit non-market housing subdivisions should be at least 1 hectare, and for multi-unit non-market housing subdivisions at least 2 hectares.

POLICY 2.4.16.3: Lot consolidation and boundary adjustment subdivisions which do not increase the number of lots or increase subdivision potential should be exempt from minimum lot size regulations.

2.5 Land Use Designations

The following designation categories include specific sub-designations and specific policies:

Parks and Protected Areas

Park (P)

Conservation (C)

Small Island Stewardship (SI)

Sustainable Resource

Agriculture (A)

Forest Protection (FP)

Residential

Rural Residential (RR)

Multi-Unit Residential (MUR)

Commercial

Village Commercial (VC)

Secondary Commercial (SC)

Tourist Commercial (TC)

Institutional (IN)

Industrial (I)

Aggregate Deposit (AD)

Marine

Marine (M)

Ferry Terminal (FT)

Parks and Protected Areas

2.5.1 Park (P)

The Park (P) designation applies to parkland that supports outdoor recreation, or conserves ecologically significant areas. Given the mix of jurisdiction overseeing parkland, cooperative stewardship with provincial agencies, RDN, and the community is critical to ensure parks are responsibly managed, minimally developed, and responsive to local needs.

POLICY 2.5.1.1 In the Park designation, land use regulations:

- Should establish different zones for active recreation parks (which provide a range of recreation opportunities) and passive recreation parks (which focus on passive recreation, preservation and restoration of the environment);
- Should not permit residential use, except where the residential use is accessory to a campground use;
- May permit campground use; and
- Should regulate accessory uses, buildings and structures to ensure they are in suitable locations.

2.5.2 Conservation (C)

The Conservation (C) designation applies to areas that focus on the preservation of ecological function.

POLICY 2.5.2.1: In the Conservation designation, land use regulations should only permit wilderness recreation, ecological reserves, cultural heritage protection, environmental protection, and environmental restoration.

Small Island Stewardship Designation

2.5.3 Small Island Stewardship (SI)

The Small Island (SI) designation applies to the small islands and islets in the Plan area. This designation recognizes the sensitivity of small islands and islets where cultural sites and fragile ecosystems are vulnerable to destruction, erosion, sea level rise, and saltwater intrusion.

POLICY 2.5.3.1: In the Small Island Stewardship designation, land use regulations should:

- Permit conservation as a principal use;
- Permit residential use as an accessory use; and
- Regulate accessory uses to ensure they have minimal impact to the natural environment.

POLICY 2.5.3.2: All lands designated Small Island/Islet should be designated part of a DPA for the purposes of protection of the natural environment and biodiversity.

Sustainable Resource Designations

Purpose: to permit uses connected to the direct use of the land that contribute to the local economy and food security. This includes agricultural and forestry uses.

2.5.4 Agriculture (A)

All lands within the provincial Agricultural Land Reserve should be designated ‘Agriculture’ (A). The (A) designation is established to preserve agricultural and food-producing lands by designating areas intended primarily for farming and related activities, minimizing land fragmentation, and supporting activities that compliment sustainable agricultural use.

POLICY 2.5.4.1: Generally, land in the Agricultural Land Reserve is designated Agriculture (A).

POLICY 2.5.4.2: In the Agriculture designation, land use regulations should permit:

- Agriculture and residential use as principal uses;
- One principal dwelling and one secondary suite on lots 2 hectares or larger;

- In addition to one principal dwelling and one secondary suite, one detached secondary dwelling unit may be permitted on lots 2 hectares or larger; and
- Passive recreation park use.

POLICY 2.5.4.3: Small scale, low impact, uses related to agriculture (such as selling of farm goods and agri-tourism) should be permitted where it is demonstrated that such uses:

- Are directly related to and supportive of on-site agricultural activity;
- Remain secondary to farm use in scale and intensity; and
- Do not generate traffic, servicing, or environmental impacts that would compromise agricultural operations, surrounding farm uses and the surrounding neighbourhood.

POLICY 2.5.4.4: Additional dwellings on farms for seasonal workers actively employed in the farm operation, where permitted by the Agricultural Land Commission, consistent with this Plan and required for farming purposes may be permitted.

Forestry Protection Designation

2.5.5 Forest Protection (FP)

Purpose: The Forest Protection (FP) Designation applies to large lots to preserve large contiguous areas of forested land and encourage the use of forested land for recreation, wildlife habitat and maintaining biological diversity.

POLICY 2.5.5.1: All land within the Private Managed Forest Land should be included in this designation.

POLICY 2.5.5.2: In the Forest Protection designation, land use regulations should permit:

- Small scale sustainable forestry and residential use as principal uses;
- One principal dwelling and one secondary dwelling unit per lot; and
- Passive recreation park.

Residential Designations

Purpose: Support housing diversity and community well-being by designating residential areas that can accommodate a range of housing forms at densities appropriate to local conditions, while protecting environmental values, cultural heritage, and natural landscapes.

2.5.6 Rural Residential (RR)

The rural residential designation applies to residential lots on Gabriola Island including smaller lots, approved prior to the inception of the Islands Trust in 1975, and larger lots which provide low density rural settlement options and may be suitable for agricultural, and conservation uses.

POLICY 2.5.6.1 Consolidation of small lots is encouraged.

POLICY 2.5.6.2: In the Rural Residential designation, land use regulations should:

- Permit one principal dwelling per lot;
- One principal dwelling and one secondary suite on lots 2 hectares or larger;
- In addition to one principal dwelling and one secondary suite, one detached secondary dwelling unit may be permitted on lots 2 hectares or larger on land located outside the freshwater hazard areas;
- Permit horticulture and the raising of animals for personal use;
- Permit agriculture on lots 2 hectares or larger; and
- Permit accessory uses consistent with rural residential character.

2.5.7 Multi-Unit Residential (MUR)

Purpose: The Multi-Unit Residential (MUR) Designation applies to lots supporting housing for low to moderate income earners, seniors and those with special needs.

POLICY 2.5.7.1: In the Multi-Unit Residential designation, land use regulations should permit:

- Residential use as a principal use;
- Multiple dwelling units per lot; and
- Accessory uses consistent with residential character.

POLICY 2.5.7.2: All new multi-unit housing requires a housing agreement which restricts use to one or more of the following:

- Special needs residents living with physical or mental disabilities; and/or
- Seniors 60 years of age or older; and/or
- Low to moderate income individuals and families.

POLICY 2.5.7.3: Any lands designated for multi-unit housing should be included in DPA 9 (Multi-Unit Residential) for the purposes of addressing form and character.

Commercial Designations

2.5.8 General Commercial Policies

The following policies apply to all commercial designations in order to strengthen local economic resilience by identifying appropriate areas for commercial uses that serve local needs, support employment, and are compatible with surrounding land uses and the natural environment.

POLICY 2.5.8.1: In commercial designations, land use regulations:

- Should specify an appropriate range of commercial uses to be permitted in each commercial zone;

- May permit secondary dwelling units to a maximum of half the total floor area of all commercial buildings; and
- May permit campgrounds, subject to the provision of adequate water, appropriate sewage treatment, and consideration of environmental impacts and effects to the surrounding area.

POLICY 2.5.8.2: All commercial designated lots should be designated within a DPA to regulate the form and character of development.

2.5.9 Village Commercial (VC)

The Village Commercial (VC) designation applies to locations for commercial activity on Gabriola Island that are concentrated in the Village Centre close to residential, public recreation and institutional uses.

POLICY 2.5.9.1: The Village Commercial area should be recognized as the main location for commercial activity in the Plan Area providing for a range of uses including commercial, institutional, and residential.

POLICY 2.5.9.2: Land in the Village Commercial designation and any future additions to the Village Commercial designation should be placed in the DPA 8 Village Commercial so as to ensure that the form and character of development:

- Contains small scale building design;
- Includes pedestrian oriented development with amenities such as public open spaces and walkways; and
- Prioritizes water conservation.

POLICY 2.5.9.3: Land should only be added to the Village Commercial designation if it is contiguous with other land in the designation.

2.5.10 Secondary Commercial (SC)

The Secondary Commercial (SC) designation applies to areas outside of the Village Commercial area that support the needs of the immediate neighbourhood and the island as a whole.

POLICY 2.5.10.1: In the Secondary Commercial designation, zoning regulations should:

- Only permit a limited range of commercial uses that are compatible with the surrounding area; and
- Consider screening regulations where appropriate.

POLICY 2.5.10.2: Expansion of the SC designation in the Twin Beaches area is not supported by this Plan.

2.5.11 Tourist Commercial (TC)

The Tourist Commercial (TC) designation applies to areas that support tourist activities that include but are not limited to marina, restaurant, licensed lounge, tourist accommodation, tackle shop and marine outfitters shop, laundromat, campground, and retail and office use accessory to tourist commercial use.

POLICY 2.5.11.1: In the Tourist Commercial designation, land use regulations should not permit more than 13 tourist accommodation units per hectare and 30 tourist accommodation units per lot.

POLICY 2.5.11.2: Land use regulations should support a campsite zone subject to analysis of freshwater impact.

Institutional Designation

2.5.12 Institutional (IN)

The Institutional (IN) designation applies to a broad range of institutional uses, such as health and wellness facilities, providing services to the Gabriola Island community and a focal point for community life. Institutional uses include facilities, services, and uses which are operated by government or non-profit organizations and include medical clinics open for community service use.

POLICY 2.5.12.1: In the institutional designation, land use regulations should:

- Permit institutional as a principal use.

POLICY 2.5.12.2: In the institutional designation, land use regulations may:

- Permit commercial uses, provided they are small in scale and support the principal use; and
- Permit secondary dwelling units to a maximum of half the total floor area of all institutional buildings.

Industrial Designation

2.5.13 Industrial (I)

The Industrial (I) designation applies to areas that support small scale non-polluting light industrial activities, encourage small scale value-added industrial activities and any light industry that would permit the Gabriola community to become more self-sufficient.

POLICY 2.5.13.1: In the Industrial designation, land use regulations:

- Should permit light industrial uses;
- May permit local small-scale manufacturing;
- May permit one dwelling unit that is limited in floor area;

- Should not permit any industrial uses that are:
 - Likely to generate significant off-site impacts;
 - Incompatible with Gabriola Island’s rural character, environmental sensitivity, and limited servicing capacity;
 - Located within an area where residential lots under 2 hectares are clustered;
 - Likely to result in significant industrial traffic through small lot residential areas; or
 - Likely to threaten the sustainability of groundwater
 ; and
- Should address the need for screening, fencing, buffering and landscaping to separate the proposed use from adjoining properties.

POLICY 2.5.13.2: All Industrial designated sites should be designated as a DPA to establish objectives for the form and character of development and, energy and water conservation.

Aggregate Deposit Designation

2.5.14 Aggregate Deposit (AD)

The Aggregate Deposit (AD) designation applies to approximate location and area of sand and gravel deposits as required by the *Local Government Act*.

POLICY 2.5.14.1: The processing of mineral and aggregate resources should be directed to locations where potential impacts on surrounding land uses, community character, environmental values, and infrastructure capacity can be appropriately considered and managed through applicable land use planning processes.

POLICY 2.5.14.2: The establishment of new aggregate extraction facilities should be carefully considered in relation to potential impacts on environmental values, neighbouring properties, community character, and infrastructure capacity. The Local Trust Committee encourages provincial agencies to consider these values in decisions related to aggregate resource development.

Marine Designations

2.5.15 Marine (M)

The Marine (M) Designation applies to marine and foreshore areas to restrict uses and structures that could compromise ecological integrity, cultural heritage values, anchorage and navigation. The designation supports essential ferry infrastructure and low-impact public marine access, and the regulation of shoreline development to address environmental protection, climate resilience, and public safety considerations.

POLICY 2.5.15.1: In the Marine designation, zoning regulations should:

- Only permit private floats, docks or wharves for owners of land adjacent to the shoreline of the water area subject to the zone;
- Ensure adequate separation between potentially conflicting uses;
- Not permit buildings;
- Not permit residential use;
- Establish a marine protection zone for the protection of significant marine and foreshore areas;
- Permit public access trailer boat launch ramps, canoe/kayak hand launch beach sites, and dinghy docks are permitted, subject to adequate parking;
- Permit one public dock or wharf that provides a water connection between Gabriola Island and Mudge Island; and
- Not permit structures or uses which would impede the ability for boats to anchor temporarily in bays suitable for temporary anchorage.

POLICY 2.5.15.2: Marshes, bluffs and beaches along the coast shall be protected from the impacts of development by ensuring foreshore zoning protects against disruption of the natural systems and pollution.

POLICY 2.5.15.3: Setbacks from the natural boundary of the sea should protect shoreline and marine ecological processes, cultural heritage, and development from coastal hazards, including sea-level rise, erosion and saltwater intrusion.

POLICY 2.5.15.4: When necessary, shoreline erosion control should be achieved using an approach that preserves, protects and restores natural shoreline processes, and hard shoreline armoring (including seawalls, bulkheads, and riprap) should be prohibited, except where a qualified professional confirms that no feasible nature-based alternative exists and the works are necessary to address an immediate threat to public safety or critical infrastructure.

POLICY 2.5.15.4: Land use regulations for commercial use of the foreshore and coastal areas should:

- Require public access to the foreshore;
- Protect coastal areas by balancing waterfront development with natural areas;
- Not result in disruption of traditional swimming beaches or areas used for marine navigation; and
- Not result in pollution into the marine area.

POLICY 2.5.15.5: No offshore reef or islet shall be developed or used for commercial activities.

POLICY 2.5.15.6: Large-scale water supply infrastructure should not be considered unless it can be demonstrated that local water conservation, stewardship, and supply

management approaches are insufficient and that significant impacts can be avoided or mitigated.

POLICY 2.5.15.7: Pipeline connections to Vancouver Island (Or any other land mass) should not be permitted.

POLICY 2.5.15.8: Ferry service from Gabriola Island to the mainland is not supported by this Plan.

2.5.16 Ferry Terminal (FT)

POLICY 2.5.16.1: Land use regulations should permit the existing Descanso Bay ferry terminal site on Gabriola Island.

POLICY 2.5.16.2: The following uses are permitted:

- Ferry terminal; and
- Uses accessory to ferry terminal use.

POLICY 2.5.16.3: Residential use is not permitted.

POLICY 2.5.16.4: Land use regulations should require public parking for vehicles and other modes of transportation.

2.6 General Policies Related to Amendments to the Plan and Land Use Bylaw

Bylaw Amendment Considerations

When considering an application to amend this Plan or the Land Use Bylaw, the Local Trust Committee should consider whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Community Values and related considerations below. The policies in this section establish considerations and information requirements for evaluating proposed amendments to this Plan and the Land Use Bylaw. They are intended to be read together with the broader policy directions in this Plan and do not replace or duplicate those policies.

2.6.1. Integrating First Nations Interests

POLICY 2.6.1.1: When considering amendments to the Plan or LUB, the Gabriola LTC should consider:

- Indigenous Knowledge, when available and shared, alongside ecological, climate, and technical information in land use and development decision making;
- Impacts of land use and development on interests of Indigenous Governing Bodies, including cultural practices, cultural heritage, impact to groundwater and ecosystem relationships;

- Cultural heritage and archaeological information, including non-tangible cultural heritage identified by First Nations, to inform the review and consideration of development applications;
- Long-term cumulative impacts on Indigenous access to resources including traditional harvesting areas and freshwater for future use.

POLICY 2.6.1.2: The Snuneymuxw First Nation and other relevant First Nations should be informed at early stages for bylaw amendments within:

- 200m from the natural boundary of the sea, and
- 200 m of known archaeological sites or areas of high archaeological potential.

POLICY 2.6.1.3: Where a petroglyph or other fragile archeological sites are located on a property subject of a bylaw amendment application that would result in development or alteration of land, these features should be protected through a covenant or other appropriate means.

2.6.2 Preservation and Protection of the Natural Environment and Biodiversity

POLICY 2.6.2.1: When considering amendments to the LUB, the Gabriola LTC should consider the following information related to ecosystem preservation, protection and integrity:

- Potential land use and development impacts, at appropriate ecological scales, on terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems, with particular attention to cumulative effects on ecosystem integrity, ecosystem connectivity, and projected climate change impacts; and
- The interests and expertise of the Islands Trust Conservancy and local land conservancies in land use decision-making, including opportunities for collaboration on land protection, stewardship, and the use of conservation covenants.
- Development standards that minimize light pollution, reduce light trespass and glare, and protect dark skies, nocturnal wildlife, ecosystem function, and the rural nighttime character of Gabriola Island.

POLICY 2.6.2.2: Bylaw amendments should not result in development that is anticipated to:

- significantly harm terrestrial, freshwater, or marine ecosystems
- disrupt habitat connectivity, or
- undermine ecosystem resilience.

POLICY 2.6.2.3: When a bylaw amendment increases the density or intensity of use; protections and, where feasible, restoration of ecologically significant ecosystems (including wetlands, forests, riparian areas, shorelines, and nearshore marine environments) should take place through the use of land use regulations, DPAs, covenants, or other regulatory mechanisms.

POLICY 2.6.2.4: When considering bylaw amendment applications, the Gabriola LTC should require the retention or establishment of native vegetation buffers around sensitive ecosystems, watercourses, and shorelines, including the retention of natural tree cover along shorelines, through the use of DPAs or a covenant.

2.6.3 Responsible Resource Stewardship

POLICY 2.6.3.1: When considering amendments to the Plan and LUB, the Gabriola LTC should consider the following related to responsible resource stewardship:

- Critical aquifer recharge mapping (Schedule E) and freshwater hazard mapping (Schedule D) to assess the impacts of increased density and intensity on the sustainability of groundwater regions;
- Requiring a Freshwater Management Plan for applications that significantly increase water use;
- The potential impacts on agricultural uses on adjacent ALR land;
- When adjacent to land in the Agriculture designation:
 - Potential impacts on adjacent agricultural uses;
 - Demonstration that sufficient water supply will be available to support agricultural activities; and
 - Buffering, siting and design measures to reduce conflicts between farm and non-farm uses.

POLICY 2.6.3.2: Proposed bylaw amendments should demonstrate approaches that protect watersheds and freshwater resources, such as clustering, covenants, parkland dedication, and other suitable approaches.

POLICY 2.6.3.3: Bylaw amendments should not result in increases in density or intensity of development where it would result in adverse effects on watersheds and aquifers.

POLICY 2.6.3.4: Bylaw amendments for land in the Agriculture designation should not result in increased subdivision potential or risk for agricultural land to be fragmented. Exceptions may be considered when land is being subdivided for environmental conservation purposes.

2.6.4 Community Resilience and Climate Readiness

POLICY 2.6.4.1: When considering amendments to the Plan and LUB, the Gabriola LTC should consider the following related to community resilience and climate readiness:

- Climate change projections, including freshwater availability, wildfire risk, flooding, risk of salt water intrusion to aquifers, and sea-level rise;
- Whether proposed increases in residential density can be supported by community services, emergency response, and transportation networks without degrading service levels;

- Whether proposed increases in residential density enables access to parks, trails, or public open space without creating increased pressure that is likely to result in damage to sensitive ecosystems; and
- The establishment and protection of climate-resilient water conservation areas.

POLICY 2.6.4.2: Bylaw amendments should not result in higher density residential and mixed-use development in locations where emergency response, evacuation capacity, and firefighting services cannot be efficiently and safely provided.

POLICY 2.6.4.3: Bylaw amendments should not result in higher density or intensity of use along shorelines that are subject to erosion, flooding, or sea-level rise.

POLICY 2.6.4.4: When considering bylaw amendment applications, the Gabriola LTC should require sewage disposal systems to be designed and sited to avoid adverse effects on groundwater, surface water, and marine ecosystems.

POLICY 2.6.4.5: When considering bylaw amendment applications, the Gabriola LTC should require evidence of sufficient quantity and quality of freshwater to support the proposed use without adverse effects to existing water users, neighbouring properties and future use by First Nations.

POLICY 2.6.4.6: When considering bylaw amendment applications, the Gabriola LTC should require the integration of wildfire resilience by:

- Avoiding increases in density in high wildfire-risk areas;
- Requiring adequate setbacks from forested or vegetated areas;
- Supporting defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, and fire-smart building design;
- Ensuring emergency vehicle access and evacuation routes are feasible; and
- Maintaining forested and natural areas as buffers to reduce wildfire risk while maintaining ecosystem integrity.

2.6.5 Community Diversity and Wellbeing

POLICY 2.6.5.1: When considering amendments to the Plan and LUB, the Gabriola LTC should consider the following related to community diversity and wellbeing:

- Whether the application supports additional housing types that address housing needs;
- The cumulative impacts of increases in housing density on community service; and
- Whether the location and site design support access to public transit and active transportation networks.

POLICY 2.6.5.2: When considering bylaw amendment applications for commercial or multi-unit residential uses, the Gabriola LTC should require provisions for bicycle parking and connections to existing or planned trail networks in commercial, institutional, and multi-unit residential developments.

POLICY 2.6.5.3: When considering bylaw amendment applications for commercial or multi-unit residential uses, the Gabriola LTC should identify opportunities to secure trail connections or public access through covenants, easements, statutory rights-of-way, or other legal mechanisms. Parks and trail development and acquisition should be consistent with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Parks and Trails Master Plan for Area B, where feasible.

POLICY 2.6.5.4: Trails and parks should incorporate wildfire risk reduction measures, including defensible space along trail corridors and fire-resistant landscaping in parklands adjacent to residential areas.

POLICY 2.6.5.5: Bylaw amendments should, where possible, enhance safe public access to waterfronts and parks, provided that environmental preservation and protection, cultural heritage, and fire safety considerations are not compromised.

POLICY 2.6.5.6: Bylaw amendments should, where possible, support low-impact recreational uses.

POLICY 2.6.5.7: Bylaw amendments should, where possible, encourage the establishment of ecological reserves to protect environmental values.

POLICY 2.6.5.8: Bylaw amendments should, where possible, encourage community parks within residential neighbourhoods to support local recreation needs, including, playgrounds, greenbelts, and pocket parks and the development of additional field space in close proximity to the Village Centre or existing playing fields.

2.7 Bylaw Amendments for Change in Use and Density

2.7.1 Bylaw Amendments to Permit Subdivision

POLICY 2.7.1.1: When received, applications to facilitate the creation of additional lots should provide community benefits such as:

- the provision of land for:
 - preservation of natural environments and ecologically sensitive areas;
 - preservation of groundwater regions;
 - protection of archeological sites and other cultural heritage interests;
 - community park or public open space;
 - community sewage treatment facilities or community water systems; or
 - community facility or use;
- the provision of:
 - community wells for domestic water supply;
 - fire protection infrastructure, including storage reservoirs;
 - a community facility or service;
 - easements or rights of way for utilities or publicly accessible trails;
 - non-market housing;

- the transfer of land to a First Nation or Indigenous governing body, where feasible and mutually agreed, for housing, cultural, conservation, or community purposes; and/or
- the provision of any other amenity which is similar in nature to the foregoing and/or is consistent with the objectives and policies of the OCP.

POLICY 2.7.1.2: Land transferred to support the uses in POLICY 2.4.15.1 must be secured through a covenant, restrictive covenant, housing agreement, or other legal instrument registered against the parent lot prior to final subdivision approval, ensuring that upon creation the lot will be used only for the intended purposes.

POLICY 2.7.1.3: Where the subdivided lot is intended for residential use or community use involving development and/or the use of groundwater the applicant should demonstrate land suitability, including but not limited to:

- Potable water availability;
- Wastewater disposal capability;
- Impacts to sensitive ecosystems;
- Impacts to species at risk;
- Impacts to critical habitat;
- Impacts to groundwater recharge;
- Hazard lands and geotechnical suitability; and
- Buildings and structures setback a minimum of 200m from the natural boundary of the sea except where it has been identified that the development will not impact archeological sites, or be impacted by sea level rise, coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion.

POLICY 2.7.1.4: All subdivisions for the purposes of supporting housing should ensure that water supply is provided for through designs that are supported by a freshwater footprint informed water management plan demonstrating long-term aquifer sustainability under expected changes to climate conditions.

POLICY 2.7.1.5: In areas where individual septic systems are adversely affecting the environment or the quality of water, a sewer system for new development should be required.

2.7.2 Bylaw Amendments to Permit Residential Uses

In keeping with goal and objectives for housing, the policies in this section primarily address criteria related to bylaw amendments to permit additional density or new uses to support non-market housing intended for moderate and low-income persons. The policies in this section are applicable to lands in any Land Use designation except Small Island Stewardship, Park, and Conservation except where otherwise stated.

Multi-Unit Housing

POLICY 2.7.2.1: Consideration of multi-unit housing may only be given to applications intending to provide non-market housing for special needs residents living with physical and cognitive disabilities, seniors 60 years of age or older or moderate and low-income persons to be secured through a housing agreement.

POLICY 2.7.2.2: Multi-unit housing should be located within proximity to roadways and include screening to minimize environmental impacts and visual impacts on surrounding properties.

POLICY 2.7.2.3: The siting and height of the proposal should be sensitive to the surrounding land uses and should not negatively impact adjacent properties.

POLICY 2.7.2.4: Multi-unit housing should be included in DPA 9 – Multi-Unit Residential.

POLICY 2.7.2.5: Multi-unit housing may consist of clustered detached units such as tiny homes, including tiny homes on wheels or manufactured homes in addition to traditional forms of housing.

POLICY 2.7.2.6: For bylaw amendment applications to permit detached multi-unit housing, the following considerations should be addressed:

- Units will be constructed to the BC Building Code, or CSA standards for manufactured homes, or equivalent and receive a Building Permit from the RDN;
- Units must be connected to a source of potable water, and connected to an approved wastewater system;
- Communal facilities maybe provided, such as laundry or common rooms.

Additional Secondary Dwelling Unit

POLICY 2.7.2.7: This Plan supports rezoning for one additional secondary dwelling unit on lots within the Rural Residential, Forest Protection, or Agricultural designation provided that the property is not located within the freshwater hazard areas as identified in Schedule D, and does not:

- Abut any portion of the natural boundary of the sea, a lake or wetland;
- Contain any portion of recorded archaeological and cultural heritage sites;
- Contain sensitive ecosystems; or
- Contain conditions considered hazardous to development.

POLICY 2.7.2.8: The total number of secondary dwelling units created through a rezonings described in 2.7.2.7 may not exceed 12 as of the introduction of this OCP. Once this number has been reached, the LTC should re-evaluate policies related to rezoning for additional secondary dwelling units.

2.7.3 Bylaw Amendments to Permit Commercial and Tourism Uses

POLICY 2.7.3.1: Bylaw amendment applications for commercial or tourist accommodation uses should assess cumulative impacts on housing availability, freshwater demand, parking, and transportation infrastructure.

POLICY 2.7.3.2: Where an application for commercial or tourist accommodation development requiring a bylaw amendment is proposed to generate significant employment, on-site or nearby employee housing may be required, with priority given to locations accessible by active transportation or transit.

POLICY 2.7.3.3: Bylaw amendment applications for commercial uses should take into account access to other commercial uses as well as residential areas through active transportation routes.

POLICY 2.7.3.4: Applications to allow for commercial uses must provide a conditional provincial water license for the proposed use.

2.7.4 Bylaw Amendments for Lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve

POLICY 2.7.4.1: Bylaw amendment proposals affecting lands within the Agricultural Land Reserve, or lands designated Agriculture, should not be supported where they would:

- Fragment agricultural landholdings,
- Introduce non-farm uses that are not accessory to agricultural activity, or
- Undermine current or future farm use.

POLICY 2.7.4.2: The Local Trust Committee may support applications to the Agricultural Land Commission for non-adhering residential use, or exclusion where the proposal provides small-scale, permanently affordable housing and meets all of the following:

- The land is outside the freshwater hazard areas
- Housing is designed and sited to minimize impact on the agricultural capacity of the land
- Long-term affordability is provided through a housing agreement.

2.7.5 Bylaw Amendments for Forest Protection Land

POLICY 2.7.5.1: Bylaw amendment applications to increase density or use of or adjacent to Forest Protection designated lands should not be supported where it would introduce residential, institutional, or infrastructure uses that undermine long-term forest management, ecological integrity, contiguous forest cover, wildfire safety or watershed resilience.

2.7.6 Bylaw Amendments for Marine Areas

POLICY 2.7.6.1: Bylaw amendment applications for marine-related commercial, recreational, institutional, or transportation uses should demonstrate how potential

impacts on marine ecosystems, shorelines, cultural heritage and marine resources will be avoided, minimized, or mitigated.

POLICY 2.7.6.2: Proposals for marinas, docks, wharves, boat launches, and other marine infrastructure should be appropriately sited, designed, and serviced to minimize impacts on ecological values, public access, navigation, surrounding land uses, and community infrastructure.

POLICY 2.7.6.3: Bylaw amendment applications should demonstrate adequate wastewater management, sewage pump-out facilities, solid waste management, spill prevention measures, transportation access, parking, and compatibility with ferry operations, public wharves, and community docks.

POLICY 2.7.6.4: Development in the marine area should minimize visual and environmental impacts and incorporate measures to respond to coastal hazards, including sea level rise, flooding, storm surge, and erosion.

POLICY 2.7.6.5: Floating accommodations, live-aboard facilities, or other forms of permanent residential use on the water should not be supported.

POLICY 2.7.6.6: When assessing applications for a marina, the provision of toilet facilities should be considered.

2.8 Development Variance

2.8.1 General Policies

POLICY 2.8.1.1: Development Variance Permits should only be issued where variances are consistent with the objectives of this Plan.

POLICY 2.8.1.2: In considering a development variance permit application, the Gabriola LTC will evaluate whether the proposed variance:

- Is minor in nature;
- Does not undermine the intent of the bylaw being varied;
- Is consistent with the form and character of the surrounding area; and
- Will not result in significant adverse impacts on adjacent properties.

POLICY 2.8.1.3: Development Variance Permit applications should demonstrate that environmental values, ecosystem functions, and archaeological sites are adequately protected.

POLICY 2.8.1.4: Development Variance Permit applications near the shoreline should demonstrate that natural shoreline processes, coastal vegetation, and public access to the foreshore are maintained.

POLICY 2.8.1.5: Where a Development Variance Permit affects setbacks, siting, or lot coverage near environmentally sensitive areas, a Section 219 covenant may be required to preserve and protect ecological values, including vegetation retention, wildlife habitat, or shoreline integrity.

POLICY 2.8.1.6: Where a retroactive Development Variance Permit is considered, the Gabriola LTC may require conditions to mitigate impacts of the existing development, including but not limited to environmental remediation, landscaping, or registration of protective covenants.

2.9 Crown Lease Referrals

2.9.1 General Policies

POLICY 2.9.1.1: Crown Lease referrals will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- Consistency with land use regulations;
- Whether the proposed referral advances the objectives of this plan;
- Avoidance or mitigation of impacts to sensitive ecosystems, known First Nations interests, and archaeological sites;
- Appropriate management of hazards, including climate related hazards; and
- Whether there is appropriate servicing that will not impact sustainability of freshwater resources or generate waste that cannot be managed without detrimental impacts to the environment.

POLICY 2.9.1.2: When insufficient information is available for a review of a crown lease referral, additional information may be requested prior to a response in support of an application.

POLICY 2.9.1.3: When a crown lease referral significantly affects community interests, recreational areas, or neighbourhood amenities; referral responses will request that additional consultation occurs to understand and address community concerns prior to an application advancing.

2.10 Temporary Use Permit Applications

This Plan supports the designation of areas where TUPs may be allowed, and the establishment of conditions regarding the issue of TUPs in the Land Use Bylaw. An OCP or zoning bylaw may designate areas where temporary uses may be allowed. A TUP may allow a use not permitted by zoning, specify conditions under which the temporary use may be carried on, and allow and regulate the construction of buildings or structures in respect of the use for which the permit is issued. A permit may be issued for a period of up to three years and may be renewed only once, after which a new application is required.

Guidelines recognize conditions that may be taken into account when evaluating a TUP application. The Gabriola LTC may identify site-specific performance measures to be attached as conditions of an approved permit.

2.11 Development Permit Areas

Pursuant to the *Local Government Act*, DPAs are designated in this OCP to establish objectives and guidelines for the protection of the natural environment, the protection of development from hazardous conditions, and the establishment of the form and character of development.

Within areas designated as DPAs, a development permit may be required prior to subdivision, construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or structure, or prior to certain alterations of land.

This section designates DPAs, describes the special conditions or objectives that justify the designation and specifies guidelines for each DPA intended to guide applicants, staff, and decision-makers in the review of development proposals.

Unless otherwise noted, the geographic areas that apply to each DPA are defined in Schedule C. Where land is subject to more than one DPA, guidelines from all relevant DPAs will apply, and only one development permit application is required.

2.11.1 Development Permit Area 1 – The Tunnel

Designation

DPA1 – The Tunnel is designated as a DPA for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Justification

This DPA relates to the shrub and tree canopy along North Road, this is an important scenic, heritage and environmental amenity that enhances the rural character of Gabriola.

The designation of this area as a DPA will help ensure that the tree canopy and shrub buffer area will be maintained along North Road.

Objective

The objective of this DPA is to maintain these natural values by minimizing the encroachment of subdivision roads, works and services, buildings and structures into the designated area.

2.11.2 Development Permit Area 2 – Lock Bay

Designation

DPA2 – Lock Bay is designated as a DPA for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Justification and Objective

Lock Bay has been identified as a sensitive, unique beach of sand and gravel isolating a marsh of about 40 acres. The designation of this area as a DPA will help ensure that the environmental values of this area are protected from the potential impacts of land development.

2.11.3 Development Permit Area 3 – Riparian Areas

Designation

DPA3 - Riparian Areas is established for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Location

POLICY 2.11.3.1: DPA 3 – Riparian Areas, includes all land designated on Schedule C of this Plan. This mapping is intended to include any of the following that provides fish habitat:

- A watercourse, whether it usually contains water or not;
- A pond, lake, river, creek or brook; or
- A ditch, spring or wetland that is connected by surface flow to something referred to in the above bullet points.

The DPA also includes a buffer around these features as determined by the following:

- For a stream that is not located in a ravine, the DPA is a 30 metre strip on both sides of the stream measured from the high water mark, except for areas where a lesser distance is indicated on Schedule C;
- For a stream located within a ravine, the DPA is a 30 metre strip on both sides of the stream measured from the high water mark to a point that is 30 metres beyond the top of the ravine bank;
- For a lake, wetland or other water body, the DPA is 30 metres around the water body measured from the high water mark of the water body;
- For a ditch or lotic system, a 10 metre strip on both sides of the ditch measured from the high water mark.

However, due to the ephemeral nature of some streams and other factors, the actual location of the streams and water bodies and the actual extent of the DPA may need to be determined on a site-specific basis by a qualified environmental professional or a surveyor.

Justification and Objectives

Local governments in British Columbia are required to designate DPAs for the protection of riparian areas under the Local Government Act and the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation. These requirements ensure that development near streams, wetlands, and other watercourses is assessed to prevent harmful alteration of riparian ecosystems and fish habitat. Designating a Riparian DPA in the OCP helps ensure that development on Gabriola Island maintains appropriate setbacks, protects riparian vegetation, and supports the long-term health of watercourses and freshwater resources.

This DPA includes streams, lakes, wetlands, and their associated riparian areas that may provide fish habitat. Riparian ecosystems play a critical role in watershed health by supporting biodiversity, stabilizing stream banks, filtering sediments and pollutants, moderating water flows, and regulating water temperatures. Riparian vegetation also provides food, shade, and habitat for fish and wildlife, while fallen woody debris helps shape stream channels and creates aquatic habitat.

Land-altering activities such as clearing vegetation, building roads or structures, and installing septic systems near watercourses can damage these functions. Protecting riparian areas is therefore necessary to maintain ecosystem health and biological diversity on Gabriola Island.

Objectives of this DPA are to:

- Protect the biological diversity and habitat values of riparian and aquatic ecosystems;
- Conserve streams, wetlands, and associated riparian vegetation that support fish habitat; and
- Minimize the impacts of development and land use practices on riparian ecosystems and water quality.

2.11.4 Development Permit Area 4 – Flat Top Islands

Designation

DPA4 - Flat Top Islands is designated as a DPA for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Justification and Objectives

The Flat Top Islands and Breakwater Island have been identified as having high and moderate-high marine, vegetation and wildlife natural areas.

The objective of this DPA is to help ensure that the environmental values of this area are protected from the potential impacts of land development.

2.11.5 Development Permit Area 5 – Gabriola Pass

Designation

DPA5 – Gabriola Pass is designated as a DPA for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Justification and Objectives

Within the Gabriola Pass Area, the intertidal area is boulder-tiered ledges, sandstone and shale formations and sand and gravel banks. Tide pools exist along the length of Gabriola Island. The sub-tidal area is largely devoid of human impact and is exceptionally rich in an abundance of marine life. The designation of this area as a DPA will help ensure that the environmental values of this area are protected from the potential impacts of development.

The objectives of this DPA are:

- To provide a refuge for the naturally existing species;
- To provide opportunities for a wide-range of multiuse non-consumptive recreational activities; and
- To provide an educational opportunity for people to learn about the marine environment.

2.11.6 Development Permit Area 6 – Environmental Protection

Designation

DPA6 – Environmental Protection is designated as a DPA for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Justification and Objectives

Gabriola Island has significant natural areas that support important plants and animal habitats. This DPA is intended for the protection of sensitive ecosystems that are generally classified as mature forest, woodland, herbaceous, cliff, wetland and freshwater. These ecosystems are sensitive to development due to their rarity and potential vulnerability to disturbance.

The objectives of this DPA are as follows:

To preserve, protect, restore or enhance environmental features and sensitive ecosystems on Gabriola Island;

- To manage development in environmentally sensitive areas;
- To minimize the loss of sensitive ecosystems;
- To increase protection for species at risk;
- To encourage retention of Coastal Douglas-fir and associated ecosystems; and
- To manage development in an environmentally sensitive manner.

2.11.7 Development Permit Area 7 – Escarpment Areas

Designation

DPA7 – Escarpment Areas is designated as a DPA for the protection of development from hazardous conditions.

Justification

Escarpment areas are areas where there is significant land slope, often greater than 80 per cent. These escarpment areas may not be suitable for development as they may be subject to erosion, land slip, rock falls or subsidence, or other hazards.

Objective

The objective of this DPA is to protect development from natural hazards, including terrain instability, erosion, land slippage, rock falls, subsidence, debris flows and flooding or changes to storm water runoff due to development on or in proximity to lands with excessive slope conditions.

2.11.8 Development Permit Area 8 – Village Commercial

Designation

DPA8 – Village Commercial is designated as a DPA for the establishment of objectives:

- For the form and character of commercial development;
- To promote water conservation; and
- To promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Justification

The Gabriola village commercial area is designated as a DPA to help ensure that commercial development will be pedestrian oriented, landscaped to conserve water resources, and encourage fuel efficient vehicles and alternative modes of transportation.

Objectives:

The objectives of this DPA are as follows:

- To promote small scale building design;
- To promote development that is pedestrian oriented with amenities such as public open spaces and walkways;
- To promote water conservation; and
- To promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

2.11.9 Development Permit Area 9 – Multi-Unit Residential

Designation

DPA9 – Multi-Unit Residential is designated as a DPA for the establishment of objectives for the form and character of multi-unit residential development.

Justification

This DPA is established to ensure that the scale and character of new multi-unit residential development and alteration of existing multi-unit residential development is undertaken in a manner which is in keeping with the rural character of the Island.

Objectives

To ensure that the scale and character of any new multi-unit residential development and alteration of existing multi-unit residential development is undertaken in a manner which is in keeping with the rural character of the Island.

2.11.10 Development Permit Area 10 – Industrial

Designation

DPA10 – Industrial is designated as a DPA for the establishment of objectives for the form and character of industrial development.

Justification

While it is important to have some industrial use on the island, it should not impact the rural character of the island.

Objective

This DPA is established to ensure that the scale and character of the new and existing industrial development is undertaken in a manner which is in keeping with the rural character of the Island.

PART 3 – Implementation and Advocacy

Implementation of the goals and objectives of the Plan in support of the community’s vision for 2050 will involve making use of planning tools available as well as working with other agencies and government bodies.

This part of the Plan identifies steps, beyond what is currently in Part 2 and Part 3 of the Plan, that could be taken by the Gabriola LTC to support the goals and objectives of the Plan. These steps include the use of development approval information, the creation of additional DPAs and the creation of heritage conservation areas.

In addition, this part of the Plan identifies steps to be taken in collaboration with First Nations, other agencies and government bodies as well as community groups, in support of the Gabriola 2050 vision and related community values, to address interests and implement actions beyond the scope of the Gabriola LTC’s jurisdiction and area of focus.

3.1 Using Development Approval Information

The Plan Area is designated as an area for which development approval information can be required. In accordance with the *Local Government Act* and a development approval information bylaw adopted by the Gabriola LTC, applicants for bylaw amendments, TUPs, and Development Permits may be required to provide development approval information.

Requiring development approval information is justified given the island’s unique environmental conditions, including sensitive shoreline ecosystems, aquifer-dependent water supply, areas subject to slope instability, coastal erosion, and sea level rise, as well as the presence of significant biodiversity and cultural heritage resources.

In addition, the island’s limited transportation infrastructure, rural land use pattern, and finite servicing capacity create conditions where development proposals may have notable impacts on ecological integrity, public safety, freshwater availability, and community character. Collectively, these special conditions and community objectives support the need for technical information that enables the Gabriola LTC to evaluate the potential impacts of proposed development and ensure that land use decisions are consistent with OCP goals.

3.2 Implementing the Freshwater Footprint

A Freshwater Footprint was developed for Gabriola Island, as part of the 2020-2026 OCP review, to provide a planning-scale framework for assessing freshwater conditions, constraints, and vulnerabilities in relation to land use planning. The Freshwater Footprint included aquifer conceptualization, groundwater region mapping, groundwater recharge mapping, water balance, aquifer stress analysis, freshwater hazard mapping, saltwater

intrusion assessment, groundwater quality interpretation, watercourse mapping, wet-area interpretation, and watershed resilience mapping.

Freshwater information forms an integrated planning framework for land use planning and decision making. The mapped and interpretive layers contained in the Freshwater Footprint address interrelated aspects of groundwater recharge, water balance, aquifer stress, freshwater hazard, groundwater quality, groundwater-dependent ecosystem function, and watershed condition. Used in combination, they support assessment of freshwater constraints, site sensitivity, and the implications of land use change, including where additional technical information, protection, restoration, or land use limitations may be warranted.

3.3 Implementing New Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas

DPAs and a Heritage Conservation Area can both be used to achieve some of the goals and objectives of this Plan. DPAs are designated in this OCP to establish objectives and guidelines for the preservation and protection of the natural environment, the protection of development from hazardous conditions, and the establishment of the form and character of development. Heritage Conservation Areas, which have not yet been implemented through this plan, can be created to protect both settler and indigenous cultural heritage.

3.3.1 Priority Development Permit Areas

In the development of this plan, it was identified that the existing DPAs, which focus primarily on location specific interests, were inadequate to implement the community's vision on their own. Through the development of the Plan a number of topics for future DPAs were identified as priorities. These topics are listed below in order of priority. Those with existing data and where model guidelines exist are identified as top priority followed by those where there was no data or guidelines at the time of the drafting of this Plan. Form and Character DPAs are not included in the list of priority DPAs as they can be created at anytime when there are specific changes to bylaws in particular locations. They do not require data.

Priority DPA topics which could be supported with existing mapping, data, and model guidelines:

1. Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas: This DPA would address the critical need to protect limited freshwater resources. The Freshwater Footprint project provided sufficient information to inform the creation of a DPA. In addition, guidelines exist for Galiano Island which could inform the development of guidelines of DPA guidelines for Gabriola.

2. Steep Slopes Hazard: Steep Slope Hazard DPAs help to protect property owners from potential geotechnical issues due to erosion, earthquake and other natural hazards. While there was a steep slope hazard DPA for Gabriola Island at the time of the Plan development,

the data upon which the DPA was developed was identified to need review. New mapping would be required.

3. Shorelines and Marine Areas: Shoreline and marine areas are vulnerable to erosion, sea-level rise and destruction of vulnerable ecosystems requiring protection. A DPA for shoreline and marine areas is of particular interest to First Nations as there is much cultural heritage and archaeological sites along the shoreline. A number of islands in the Islands Trust Area have DPA's for shoreline and marine areas, their guidelines can help inform guidelines for Gabriola.

4. Endangered Species Habitat: Changing climates and development impacts threaten endangered species. As the provincial government updates endangered species data annually, the boundaries of a DPA could be easily informed by updated data.

5. Riparian Areas: Provincial legislation requires all local governments have DPAs to protect riparian areas. Gabriola's riparian area DPA boundaries are out of date. The province updated riparian area data in 2019.

Priority DPAs without existing data or guidelines:

6. Fire Resilience: With the increase in dryer periods during the year, the importance of addressing fire resilience increases. The development of a fire resilience DPA would require working closely with the Gabriola fire department.

7. Sensitive Ecosystems: There are a number of sensitive ecosystems in the Plan Area. Current sensitive ecosystem data is out of date. Identifying DPA boundaries would require detailed studies to update data involving collaboration with professionals, local environmental protection groups as well as First Nations. Some of Gabriola's existing DPAs can also help inform DPA boundaries and guidelines.

8. Forested Areas: There is very strong interest in protecting forested areas in the Plan Area. The development of a DPA would need to begin with an assessment of land which could involve community members and groups.

9. Wetlands: The freshwater footprint work can help inform the identification of wetlands. Additional work by professionals and the community would be needed to establish the boundaries for a wetland DPA.

10. Habitat Corridors: During the development of the Plan, interest in a DPA to support habitat corridors was identified. Identifying DPA boundaries would require detailed studies to update data involving collaboration with professionals, local environmental protection groups as well as First Nations.

3.3.2 Heritage Conservation Areas

Consistent with an objective of this plan to protect Indigenous heritage and advance reconciliation the Gabriola LTC may establish Heritage Conservation Areas for the purposes of:

- Protecting settler and/or Indigenous cultural heritage
- Protecting historic buildings, view corridors, and settler heritage sites.
- Protecting values, including Indigenous values, stories, cultural uses of landscapes and ecosystems that are integral to the cultural safety of Indigenous peoples

A Heritage Protection Area should:

- Reflect multiple voices representing broad cultural uses of the island and protect them for all future generations, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous.
- Be uniquely tailored to the heritage it protects, and can include other structures, lands or features of the land, significant trees or First Nations cultural heritage sites.

The establishment of a Heritage Conservation Area to protect cultural heritage should be undertaken through a future project to amend this Plan. The protections, restrictions and geographic boundaries that apply to an HCA should be described in the Plan or an addendum to the Plan. A future HCA would include the following:

- Location;
- Justification;
- Objectives;
- Essential Features and Characteristics of the area;
- Guidelines that development must adhere to;
- Exemptions from Permit Requirements to help balance development with conservation objectives.

HCAs are a means of increasing public awareness, recognition, and protection of cultural heritage, and provide a framework to explore and accommodate cultural interests in the context of development and land disturbance.

3.4 Advocacy

This Plan focuses on the land use planning tools available to the Gabriola LTC to guide land use in the Plan Area. Previous Parts of the Plan do not include actions that fall outside the Islands Trust's jurisdiction. At the same time, it is recognized that achieving the Plan's goals, and advancing the broader interests of the community, will require partnership and collaboration with community organizations, other levels of government, First Nations, and other partners.

Rather than identifying detailed advocacy policies, this Plan highlights key challenges and opportunities. This approach reflects past experience, where direct action-oriented

advocacy policies have often been difficult to support or have not been consistently implemented. By focusing instead on issues, opportunities, and areas for collaboration, the Plan creates space for agencies, First Nations, and community groups to take the lead on matters that cannot be fully addressed through land use planning tools alone.

Plan Goals and Advocacy Action

Advocacy actions in this section are organized according to the primary goal they support, recognizing that many contribute to multiple goals. While some potential actions and partners have been identified, they reflect only the ideas identified through the engagement process during the development of the Plan and are not intended to be comprehensive. Other actions or partners not specifically identified may also help advance these issues in meaningful ways.

The actions identified in this section:

- Relate directly to land use;
- Support the goals of the Plan; and
- Address matters outside the sole authority of the Gabriola LTC or require collaboration with other governments, organizations, and community partners.

3.4.1 Integrating First Nations Interests

3.4.1.1 Protecting Cultural Heritage Sites

Why Advocacy is Needed:

While the Gabriola LTC can influence land use and development, the identification, management, and legal protection of cultural heritage sites involve provincial legislation, Crown processes, and First Nations governance. Effective protection requires coordinated advocacy and collaboration.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Support completion of an Archaeological Overview Assessment in collaboration with Snuneymuxw First Nation;
- Advocate for monitoring, enforcement, and protection measures to prevent damage or disturbance;
- Ensure land use decisions, provincial approvals, and Crown referrals meaningfully involve First Nations and respect Indigenous rights;
- Support joint advocacy with First Nations to advance shared stewardship goals.
- Promote public education to increase awareness of cultural heritage values and appropriate protocols;
- Encourage agreements, partnerships, or conditions that support shared stewardship, land protection, or management outcomes with First Nations, where consistent with this Plan.

Key Collaborators:

Snuneymuxw First Nation and other First Nations, Province of BC, private landowners, and community organizations.

3.4.1.2 Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into Land Use Planning**Why Advocacy is Needed:**

The Gabriola LTC can incorporate Indigenous perspectives into planning policies; however, meaningful integration depends on collaboration with Indigenous Governing Bodies and alignment with provincial and federal decision-making processes.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Strengthen referral processes to ensure timely and meaningful First Nations involvement;
- Advocate for alignment of provincial and federal decisions with First Nations' cultural and ecological priorities;
- Support respectful handling of Indigenous knowledge, including confidentiality and cultural protocols.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, Province of BC, Government of Canada, Islands Trust Conservancy, RDN, and local stewardship organizations.

3.4.1.3 Educating on First Nations History, Rights, and Cultural Values**Why Advocacy is Needed:**

The history, cultural values, governance systems, and ongoing rights of First Nations shape Gabriola Island's identity and contribute to a fuller understanding of its past and future. The Gabriola LTC has a central role in guiding community conversations about land use. However, many opportunities to share First Nations history and cultural values, such as public signage, school curricula, park programming, and public lands interpretation, fall outside LTC jurisdiction.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Public education initiatives such as cultural programming, interpretive signage, storytelling events, and land-based learning;
- Collaboration with First Nations to develop accurate and respectful educational materials related to local history, cultural values, and Indigenous governance;
- Integration of First Nations perspectives into parks planning, public art, interpretive trails, community facilities, and public signage;

- Expansion of opportunities for youth and adults to learn about First Nations rights, title, and responsibilities through schools, workshops, and community programs; and
- Promotion of awareness of legal obligations related to cultural heritage protection, including respectful land stewardship practices.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, School District No. 68, RDN, Province, Federal agencies, Gabriola Museum, Islands Trust Area Services, local stewardship organizations.

3.4.2 Preservation and Protection of the Natural Environment and Biodiversity

3.4.2.1 Ecosystem Preservation, Protection and Restoration of Terrestrial Ecosystems

Why Advocacy is Needed:

The Islands Trust mandate includes environmental preservation and protection, but coordinated action across jurisdictions provides additional opportunities. The LTC has limited authority over private land management and relies on cooperation with others to preserve and protect sensitive ecosystems.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Ensuring up to date data is available to support decision making, such as ecosystem health indicators to track environmental performance and inform adaptive management;
- Educating the public to develop land responsibly and with ecological care;
- Placing covenants on areas of high ecological value;
- Protecting ecologically sensitive lands through stewardship, and conservation tools;
- Preventing habitat destruction and undertaking ecological restoration in areas where damage or destruction has occurred;
- Restoring damaged habitat and ecosystems.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, private landowners, the Gabriola community, local conservancies, the Islands Trust Conservancy, Islands Trust Area Services, RDN, the Province.

3.4.2.2 Preservation and Protection of Marine and Shoreline Ecosystems

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Shorelines are high-value areas with significant ecological, cultural, and heritage importance. They are also subject to substantial natural change, intensified by climate

change. The Gabriola LTC does not regulate fisheries, issue Crown land tenures, or have knowledge of all culturally significant shoreline sites.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Educating the public about the implications of developing near the shoreline;
- Educating the public on green shores approaches to shoreline impacts;
- Simplifying Crown tenure processes that support nature-based shoreline protection;
- Support coordinated shoreline planning and protection efforts;
- Finfish farming should not be supported within the Plan Area.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, private Landowners, RDN, the Province, the Federal Government, and First Nations all share responsibilities for shoreline management.

3.4.2.3 Species at Risk

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Species at risk are highly valued for their contribution to ecosystem health but remain vulnerable to impacts from existing and new development. The Gabriola LTC can use DPAs and regulatory tools to support protection, but primary authority to protect species at risk rests with senior governments.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Educating the public about local species at risk;
- Protecting species at risk and their habitats;
- Supporting data collection, mapping, and monitoring programs;
- Conserving land that provides suitable habitat for local species at risk.

Key Collaborators:

Private land owners, the Gabriola community, the Province, local conservancies, the Islands Trust Conservancy, Islands Trust Area Service, RDN, and the Federal Government.

3.4.3 Responsible Resource Stewardship

3.4.3.1 Preservation and Protection of Quality and Quantity of Freshwater Resources

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Gabriola has limited freshwater resources, which are critical to ecological health, watershed function, agriculture, and the well-being of residents. The Gabriola LTC does

not regulate groundwater licencing, well construction standards, water allocation, drinking water regulation, or regional water programs. Those responsibilities are shared across multiple provincial agencies. Advocacy is needed to improve coordination, strengthen freshwater literacy, support stewardship initiatives, and advance programs that protect freshwater quality and quantity.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Support continued development of tools for public access to freshwater mapping, data, and planning information such as the Islands Trust Freshwater Atlas;
- Support coordination with the RDN Drinking Water and Watershed Protection Program;
- Support collaboration with First Nations, the Province, the Regional District of Nanaimo, Island Health, and community organizations on freshwater protection priorities and watershed stewardship including public education on limiting water consumption;
- Encourage the Islands Trust to work with the Regional District and provincial government in creating a fund to help property owners who cannot afford to install rainwater collection
- Support monitoring programs that improve the evidence base for freshwater planning and protection;
- Advocate for provincial groundwater authorization, water allocation, and regulatory processes that reflect freshwater sustainability, local hydrogeologic conditions, and cumulative effects;
- Advocate for programs and partnerships that support rainwater harvesting, freshwater storage, drought preparedness, source protection, and reduction of contamination risks.
- Support public education initiatives that improve freshwater literacy, good well practices, among residents, visitors, trustees, landowners, and applicants.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, Province, RDN, Island Health, Islands Trust Conservancy, private land owners, local stewardship organizations, and water users.

3.4.3.2 Preservation of Agriculture

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Agricultural lands fall under multiple jurisdictions, including the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and local regulatory bodies. Although the Gabriola LTC regulates land use and density, it does not oversee agricultural practices, farm classification, or enforcement within the Agricultural Land Reserve. Many policies that influence agricultural viability (such as water licensing, taxation, farm standards, and provincial agricultural programs) are outside Gabriola LTC control.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Protecting agricultural land through ALC decision-making, land stewardship tools, and prevention of non-farm uses that fragment or degrade farmland;
- Supporting farmers by improving access to water, infrastructure, and programs that strengthen agricultural viability;
- Promoting regenerative and climate-resilient farming practices that maintain soil health, protect groundwater, and enhance biodiversity;
- Advancing food security initiatives, including local food distribution networks, farm-to-community programs, and agricultural education.
- Support and encourage local agricultural organizations to purchase and hold agricultural land for agricultural purposes.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, Agricultural Land Commission, Province of British Columbia, RDN, local farmers and agricultural organizations.

3.4.3.3 Preservation of Forests

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Forests in the Plan Area provide essential ecological functions, including carbon storage, groundwater recharge, habitat connectivity, and climate regulation. They also support cultural values, recreation, and the rural character of the island. Many forested areas are privately owned or fall under provincial jurisdiction for land and resource management, making long-term forest preservation a shared responsibility across agencies and landowners.

The Gabriola LTC can regulate land use, subdivision, and certain development activities, but it does not manage forestry practices, issue cutting permits, or regulate resource extraction on private managed forest land or Crown land. Because many decisions affecting forest health (such as logging approvals, provincial land authorizations, wildfire management, and conservation funding) lie outside Gabriola LTC authority, advocacy is necessary.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Prioritizing conservation of ecologically important and mature forest areas through land acquisition, covenants, and stewardship agreements.
- Supporting sustainable forest management practices that preserve biodiversity, soil health, and long-term forest function.
- Reducing wildfire risk through fuel management and forest health initiatives led by provincial agencies and First Nations.
- Protecting habitat connectivity in decisions related to forestry, subdivision, and Crown land.

- Providing incentives and support for private landowners to maintain forest cover and adopt stewardship practices.
- Educating on sustainable forestry practices.

Key Collaborators:

First Nations, Province, Islands Trust Conservancy, RDN, Private landowners and forestry operators, Local conservancy and stewardship organizations

3.4.3.4 Mining and Aggregate Extraction

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Mining and aggregate extraction can create noise, dust, pollution, and significant environmental and cultural impacts. The Gabriola LTC does not have jurisdiction to regulate mining activities.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Referral of Crown applications for mining to the Islands Trust;
- Ensuring mining permits protect cultural heritage, groundwater, and the environment; and
- Monitoring operations to ensure compliance with permit conditions.

Key Collaborators:

The Provincial government

3.4.4 Community Resilience and Climate Readiness

Addressing climate change on Gabriola requires both reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and preparing for the impacts of a changing climate (adaptation). While emissions in the community are primarily generated by transportation, buildings, and waste, the Plan Area is also increasingly affected by climate-related risks such as drought, wildfire, flooding, and coastal erosion.

The Gabriola LTC plays an important role by shaping land use policies that support low-carbon and resilient community systems, while advocating to other levels of government and organizations that hold responsibility for infrastructure, services, and regulatory frameworks. Through a coordinated approach to mitigation and adaptation, Gabriola can reduce its climate impact while strengthening long-term community resilience and well-being.

3.4.4.1 Transportation and Mobility

Why Advocacy is Needed:

As many rural communities, Gabriola's transportation system relies heavily on personal vehicles. The community seeks safer and more accessible walking, biking, and transit options as well as increased ability to access community amenities without the use of a personal vehicle. The Gabriola LTC can influence land use to support active transportation but does not build paths, construct roads, or operate public transit.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Build walking and biking paths within rights-of-way and in new development areas. A high priority area is creating a link between the Village and Descanso Bay Ferry Terminal;
- Reduce speed limits where appropriate;
- Expand public transportation infrastructure and service; and
- Use Gabriola Safe Roadways document for reference when considering road improvements to support increased walkability and safety.
- Establishment of new trails to connect public parks, waterfront access points, and existing trail systems.
- Support trail development and acquisition to be consistent with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Parks and Trails Master Plan for Area B.

Key Collaborators:

Gabriola Transportation Society, GERTIE, the Province, and RDN.

3.4.4.2 Buildings

Why Advocacy is Needed:

On Gabriola, many homes rely on these fuels, and the island's older housing stock can be less energy efficient. Improving building performance and transitioning to low-carbon energy sources are key opportunities to reduce emissions while enhancing comfort, affordability, and resilience. The Gabriola LTC can influence land use patterns and housing form but does not regulate or enforce building codes, energy systems, or fuel sources, which are governed by the Province and the RDN.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Encourage higher energy efficiency standards for new construction (e.g., Step Code implementation).
- Advocate for programs and incentives to retrofit existing homes (insulation, windows, heat pumps);

- Encourage the transition from fossil fuel heating to electric systems;
- Support local renewable energy initiatives (e.g., rooftop solar where appropriate); and
- Promote education and capacity-building for builders, trades, and homeowners.

Key Collaborators:

BC Energy Step Code / Province, RDN, BC Hydro, FortisBC, and local builders and contractors.

3.4.4.3 Waste

Why Advocacy is Needed:

On Gabriola, reducing waste and supporting reuse and recycling can significantly lower emissions while conserving resources. The Gabriola LTC can influence land use and support local initiatives but does not manage waste collection, disposal systems, or regional waste policy, which are the responsibility of the Regional District.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Expand organics diversion (e.g., composting) to reduce landfill methane emissions;
 - Support local reuse, repair, and sharing initiatives to reduce overall waste generation;
 - Encourage waste reduction in new development (e.g., space for sorting, composting);
 - Advocate for enhanced recycling and waste diversion programs at the regional level; and
- Promote education and behaviour change to reduce single-use materials and food waste.

Key Collaborators:

RDN, local reuse and recycling organizations, community groups, and residents.

3.4.4.4 Food Security

Why Advocacy is Needed:

On Gabriola, strengthening local food systems can reduce reliance on imported goods, lower transportation-related emissions, and improve food security. Supporting local agriculture, food distribution networks, and community-based food initiatives also enhances the island's ability to respond to disruptions and climate impacts.

The Gabriola LTC can influence land use to support agriculture and local food production but does not regulate farming practices, food distribution systems, or broader food policy, which involve multiple levels of government and organizations.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Encourage local food production, including small-scale farms, community gardens, and urban agriculture.
- Promote programs that improve access to affordable, healthy, and locally produced food.
- Encourage reduction of food waste through education and community initiatives, such as recovery programs that redistribute surplus food.
- Encourage that water be identified for current and future food production.
- Support equitable access to healthy food and other food assets.
- Support agriculture and edible landscaping on public lands.
- Support shared commercial kitchens and temporary markets.

Key Collaborators:

Local farmers and food producers, community organizations, RDN, Island Health, and provincial agencies.

3.4.4.5. Natural Areas and Hazard Protection

Why Advocacy is Needed:

On Gabriola, forests, wetlands, coastal areas, and riparian zones help absorb and store water, stabilize soils, and reduce the impacts of extreme weather events. Protecting and restoring these natural systems is a cost-effective and sustainable approach to climate adaptation, particularly in an island context where infrastructure is limited and ecosystems are closely tied to community well-being.

The Gabriola LTC can influence land use to protect environmentally sensitive areas and reduce exposure to hazards but does not manage forests, regulate natural resource use, or oversee emergency response. Many tools and decisions related to wildfire management, watershed protection, and coastal processes fall under provincial, regional, or other jurisdictions, requiring advocacy and collaboration.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Advocate for improved wildfire risk reduction strategies, including forest management and FireSmart initiatives;
- Encourage the use of nature-based solutions to address flooding, erosion (eg. green shores), and heat; and
- Support mapping and monitoring of hazard areas, including floodplains, erosion zones, and wildfire interface areas.

Key Collaborators:

Snuneymuxw First Nation and other Indigenous knowledge holders, RDN, Province of BC, local stewardship organizations, and emergency services.

3.4.5 Diversity and Community Wellbeing**3.4.5.1 Housing Diversity & Affordability****Why Advocacy is Needed:**

Housing on Gabriola faces pressures from limited supply, high costs, and the need to accommodate residents at different life stages and income levels. Ensuring a range of housing type with a focus on non-market options, is critical for sustaining a diverse and vibrant community. The Gabriola LTC cannot directly provide housing or manage housing policy, but it can guide land use, zoning, and community planning to support diverse housing options. Advocacy is essential to ensure regional and provincial policies align with local housing goals.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Encourage development of multi-unit and mixed-income housing that aligns with community character.
- Promote affordable and moderate-income housing near services and commercial areas to reduce transportation emissions and support community accessibility.
- Support housing designs that integrate energy efficiency, water conservation, and minimal environmental impact.
- Advocate for funding from senior government to supply non-market housing.
- Support partnerships with non-profit and housing organizations to increase housing options.
- Support initiatives to educate the public about the responsibilities and public health implications of shared private wells.

Key Collaborators:

RDN, BC Housing, Island Health, non-profit housing providers, developers, community groups, and residents.

3.4.5.2 Local Economy**Why Advocacy is Needed:**

A resilient local economy depends on accessible commercial spaces, home occupations, and light industrial uses that serve local needs and reduce reliance on off-island services. The Gabriola LTC can influence zoning and land use but does not control economic

development programs, business funding, or regional infrastructure. Advocacy is needed to support local economic resilience through external programs.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Advocate for regional or provincial programs that provide support, grants, or incentives for local businesses and home occupations.
- Encourage infrastructure investments (e.g., broadband, transportation) to support small-scale commercial and light industrial activities.
- Promote initiatives that strengthen local supply chains, self-reliance, and sustainable economic development.
- Support training and mentorship programs for local entrepreneurs.

Key Collaborators:

RDN, Chamber of Commerce, local business associations, economic development agencies, and community groups.

3.4.5.3 Parks & Public Access

Why Advocacy is Needed:

Public access to parks, trails, and natural areas supports recreation, ecological health, and overall community well-being. The Gabriola LTC can guide planning and designate areas for protection but does not manage parkland acquisition, funding, or stewardship programs. Advocacy is required to secure resources and partnerships for maintaining and expanding public access.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Advocate for province, RDN to acquire and maintain parkland and trails including shoreline access.
- Work with the Islands Trust Conservancy when considering land use covenants.
- Encourage and support programs that enhance stewardship, conservation, and public education about natural areas.
- Encourage partnerships with non-profits and community groups to manage and expand public access responsibly.
- Promote initiatives that balance public access with protection of sensitive ecological areas.
- Encourage incorporation of wildfire risk reduction measures, including defensible space along trail corridors and fire-resistant landscaping in parklands adjacent to residential areas.
- Support Park development and acquisition to be consistent with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Parks and Trails Master Plan for Area B.

Key Collaborators:

Islands Trust Conservancy, RDN, provincial agencies, environmental and community groups, and residents.

3.4.5.4 Arts and Culture**Why Advocacy is Needed:**

While the Gabriola LTC can influence land use and zoning for cultural facilities, many funding, programming, and operational decisions are controlled by regional, provincial, and community and private organizations. The Gabriola LTC cannot directly fund, operate, or manage arts and cultural programs. Advocacy is essential to secure resources, partnerships, and supportive policies that allow local artists, organizations, and cultural initiatives to thrive.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Advocate for provincial and regional funding programs that support local arts organizations, festivals, and cultural events.
- Encourage partnerships with arts councils, heritage societies, and community groups to expand access to creative spaces.
- Advocate for infrastructure investments, such as performance venues, studios, and galleries, that are accessible to residents and visitors.
- Promote initiatives that integrate arts and culture into public spaces, education, and tourism strategies.
- Encourage programs that preserve and celebrate Indigenous cultural heritage and practices.

Key Collaborators:

Gabriola Arts Council, local artists and cultural organizations, RDN, provincial arts agencies, Indigenous communities, schools, and community groups.

3.4.5.5 Sports, Recreation, and Active Living**Why Advocacy is Needed:**

While the Gabriola LTC can guide land use to accommodate recreational spaces, many programming, funding, and operational responsibilities lie with regional, provincial, or non-profit organizations.

The Gabriola LTC cannot directly fund, operate, or manage recreation programs, facilities, or sports leagues. Advocacy is essential to secure partnerships, funding, and supportive policies that enhance recreational opportunities for residents.

Supports and Advocacy:

- Advocate for regional and provincial funding to build, maintain, and upgrade recreational facilities, trails, and active transportation networks.
- Encourage partnerships with local sports clubs, recreation societies, schools, and community groups to expand program availability.
- Promote initiatives that make recreation accessible to all ages, abilities, and income levels.
- Support programs that integrate active living into community design, including safe walking and cycling routes.
- Advocate for environmental stewardship in recreational planning to ensure natural areas are preserved while supporting public use.

Key Collaborators:

RDN, local recreation societies, schools, sports clubs, provincial recreation agencies, Indigenous communities, and community groups.

3.4.6 Collaboration, Transparency, and Shared Responsibility

Advocacy statements in this OCP reinforce the goal of Collaboration, Transparency, and Shared Responsibility by guiding the Gabriola LTC in championing coordinated, respectful, and accountable land use planning across jurisdictions.

By promoting interagency cooperation, recognition of Indigenous rights and knowledge, and transparent, inclusive engagement practices, the Plan can strengthen trust, improve information-sharing, and help the community participate meaningfully in decision-making. The Plan creates a foundation for land use planning that is collaborative, and grounded in mutual responsibility for the shared environmental, cultural heritage, housing, and community wellbeing goals.

3.5 Implementation Plan

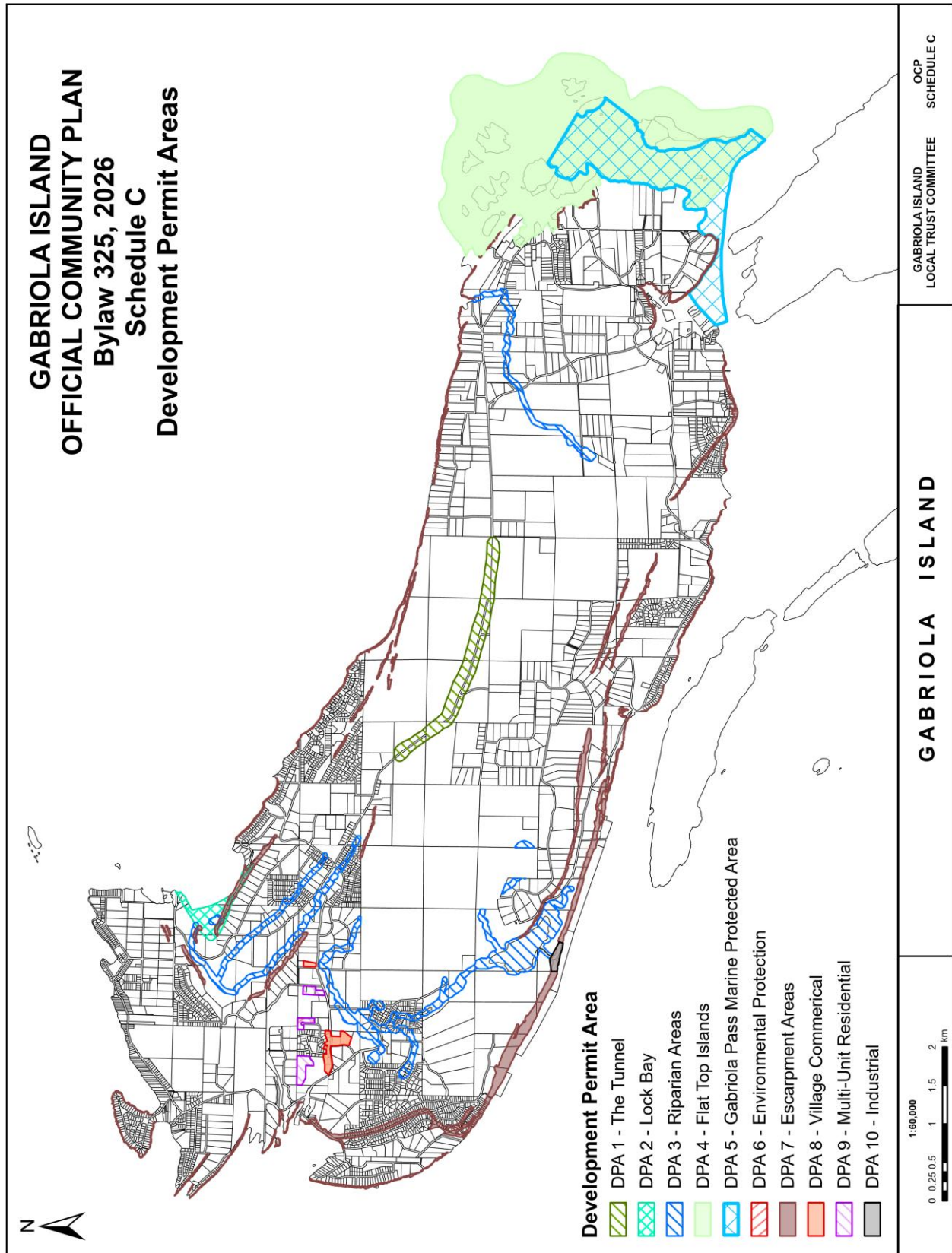
The LTC encourages the development of an implementation plan to coordinate actions and initiatives beyond the jurisdiction of the LTC that support the implementation of the Gabriola Vision 2050. Effective partnerships often require further dialogue before clear actions can be defined, a separate implementation plan outside this bylaw, led by the community, is the appropriate place to outline concrete advocacy measures and targets.



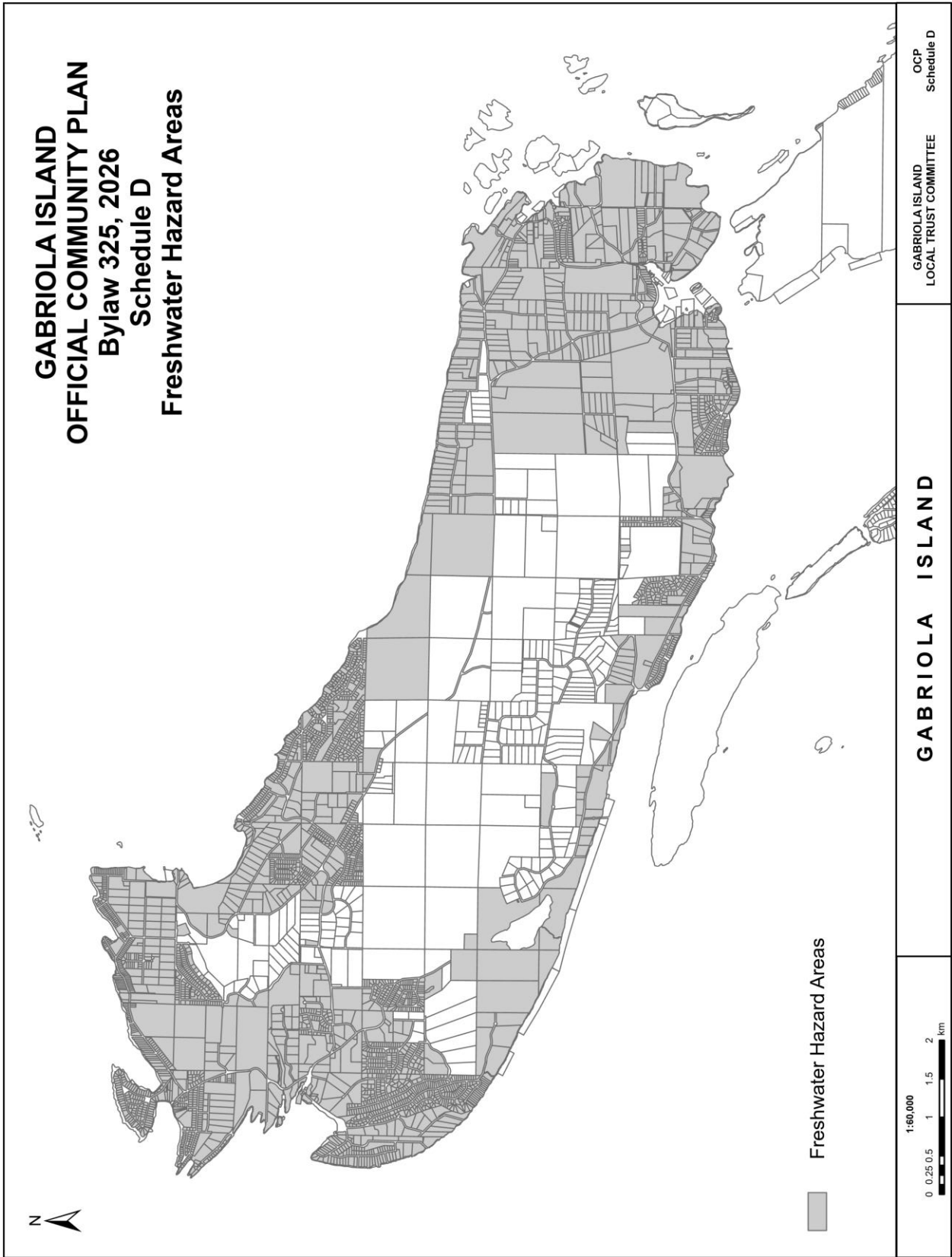
Schedule B – Land and Marine Designations



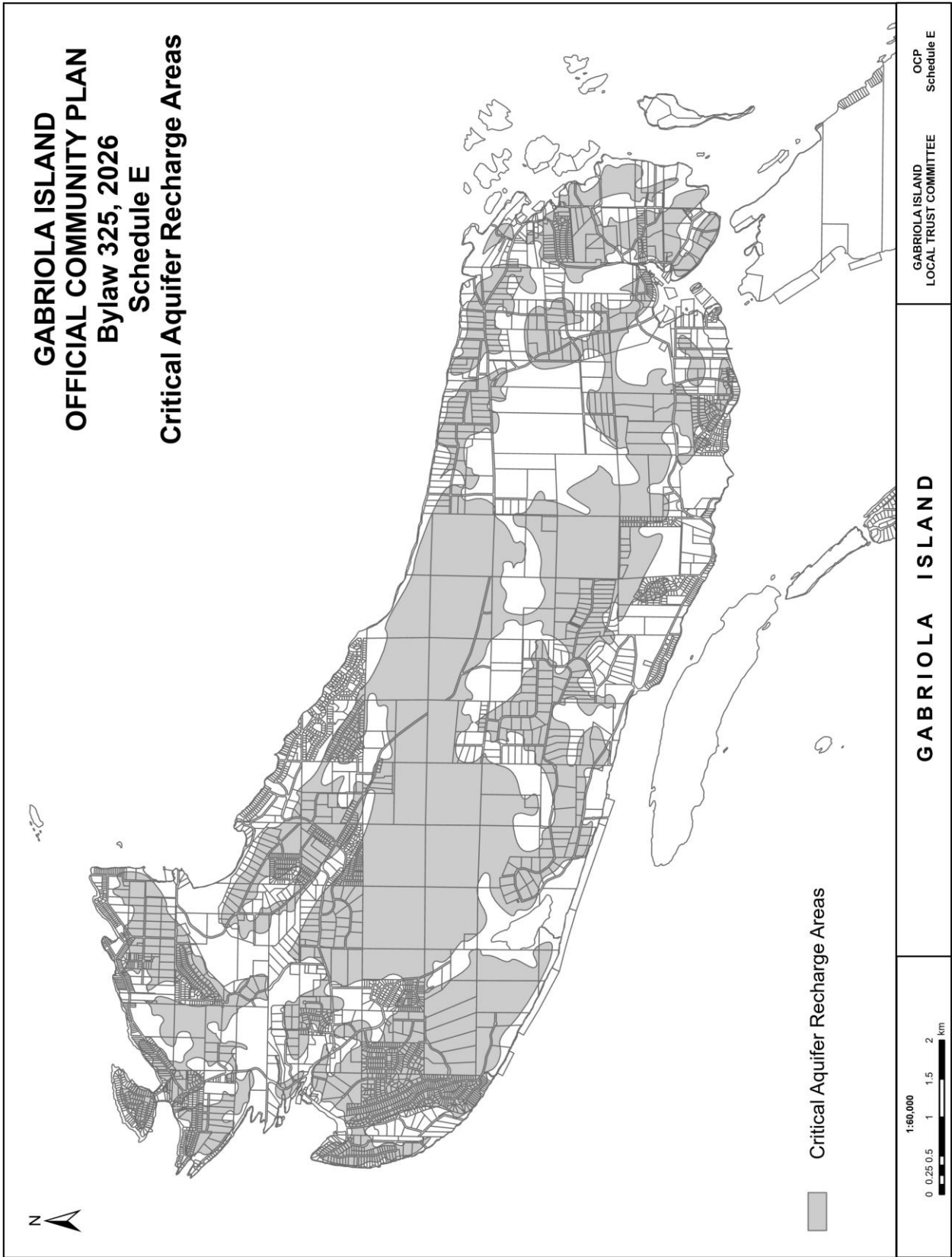
Schedule C – Development Permit Areas



Schedule D – Freshwater Hazard Areas



Schedule E – Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas



APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Affordable Housing means a deed restricted and/or rent controlled dwelling unit that is secured by a housing agreement, and is accessible to persons with moderate to low income as defined by the housing agreement for the dwelling unit.

Horticulture means the cultivation of plants, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, herbs, sprouts, mushrooms, and ornamental/landscape plants.

Community Services Uses means uses that support community services and are managed by an established government or registered not for profit organization. Examples include schools, health care facilities, community centres, and recycling depots.

Bed and Breakfast means short term rental of a bedroom in a dwelling which is occupied by the operator.

Community Water Supply means a water supply system that provides potable water to multiple properties through shared infrastructure. A community water supply is typically managed by a public authority, improvement district, strata corporation, utility provider, or other organization responsible for the operation, maintenance, and regulation of the system.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Area means an area designated as such in Schedule E.

Dwelling Unit means a structure or set of rooms in a building, intended for year round human habitation containing cooking, sleeping, and living facilities.

Dwelling Unit, Secondary means a self-contained dwelling unit that is limited in floor area and located on the same lot as another dwelling unit or use, including institutional and commercial uses.

Dwelling Unit, Principal means the primary Dwelling Unit on a parcel that constitutes the principal residential use of the property.

Sustainable Forestry means the management, stewardship, and sustainable use of forested lands and forest resources, including the growing, maintaining, harvesting, and protection of trees, for ecological, economic, and community benefit over the long term. This includes measures to conserve forest ecosystems, soil, water, biodiversity, and climate values, while supporting forest-based livelihoods and rural land uses.

Freshwater Footprint means a spatial planning framework that identifies areas where freshwater quantity, freshwater quality, recharge conditions, saltwater intrusion risk, land use density, and water demand indicate known or potential pressure on freshwater supply.

Freshwater Management Plan means a site-specific assessment and management plan prepared by a qualified professional that evaluates the anticipated impacts of a proposed development or land use change on freshwater resources and identifies measures to ensure sustainable water use.

Income, Low means a level of income at which an individual or household has fewer economic resources than typical members of society, measured as having an adjusted household income below 50% of the median population income, accounting for household size.

Income, Moderate means a level of income that falls between the low-income threshold (commonly defined as 50% of median income) and the median income of the population, indicating modest but not severely constrained economic resources.

Multi-unit dwelling means a building comprised of two or more dwelling units (excluding a principal dwelling with a secondary suite), each having their own entrance, which may include an entrance in the form of a common interior corridor and an exterior entrance.

Non-market Housing means housing provided by governments, non-profit organizations, housing cooperatives, Indigenous housing providers, or other community-based entities, where affordability is secured over the long term and rents or housing charges are set based on income or established affordability benchmarks rather than market demand.

Park, Passive Recreation means a park which is retained in its natural state other than low impact infrastructure required to support nature appreciate such as walking and hiking trails, and signage.

Public Utilities means a use of land, or unoccupied works and structures including pipes, wires, poles or towers, for the provision of electricity, gas, water, sewage collection, telephone, internet, or telecommunication services for the benefit of the general population; or the use of land or unoccupied structures for navigational aids.

Secondary Suite means a secondary dwelling unit that is within the principal dwelling having equal or lesser floor area than the principal dwelling unit.

Sensitive Ecosystems means ecosystems which are fragile or rare, and those ecosystems which are ecologically important because of the diversity of species they support.

Short Term Vacation Rental means a rental of a dwelling or part of dwelling with a duration that is less than 30 days.

Special Needs Housing means housing that is purpose-designed or operated to accommodate individuals or households who require additional supports, services, or physical adaptations in order to live safely and independently, including housing for persons with disabilities, seniors requiring assistance, and others with identifiable support needs.

Wilderness Recreation means outdoor activities, including hiking and wildlife observation, conducted in natural, undeveloped areas that emphasize connection with nature and involve minimal human interference.

Gabriola Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 325



Appendix 3 – Land Status

