

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2012 Nominee Profile

Gabriola Island Health Care Foundation, Society and Auxiliary, Gabriola Island

Category:	Group
Project:	Gabriola Island Urgent Care Clinic
Nominator(s):	1. John Hodges 2. Gabriola Island Ratepayers

Letters of Support: Gabriola Land and Trails Trust and Derek Kilbourn, Editor and Co-Owner, Gabriola Sounder Media Inc.

Project Description:

The Gabriola Island Urgent Care Clinic was initiated six years ago by a small number of people concerned with the lack of access to emergency care and adequate health care services for residents of Gabriola Island. It was also intended to help recruit and retain qualified medical professionals.

Most of the Gabriola Island population became fully engaged in the process of planning and fundraising for the Centre. Local residents and visitors raised more than \$1.3 million, and more than 500 volunteers provided 95% of the labour, from planning to design to construction. Local building trades also contributed materials and machinery. Community volunteers will manage the building into the future. This project demonstrated that a collective of citizens can conceive and execute a complicated project that is normally the responsibility of various levels of government.

The high level of collaboration was accomplished by open public conversations that encouraged input from diverse sources. Positive collaboration with Gabriola Health care providers and organizations, the BC Ministry of Health and the Vancouver Island Health Authority created an inclusive planning process and helped provide funding support towards the recruitment of an additional on-call family practice physician for Gabriola Island.

The new Gabriola Island Urgent Care Clinic will operate within an integrated health services framework and act as a focus for community-based services and well-being initiatives. It may well result in lives saved and will benefit islanders who would otherwise be forced to leave the island to be closer to emergency services.