



Islands Trust

Ganges Village Area Plan Public Engagement Framework

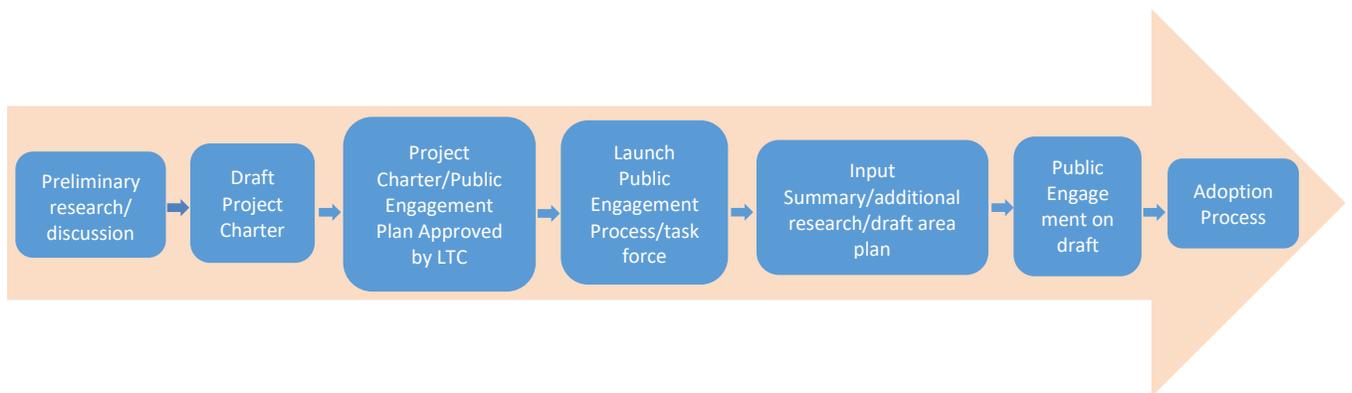
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On June 8, 2020, the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) prioritized Ganges Village Planning as a top priority project and subsequently passed the resolution requesting staff to develop a budget level project charter for the Ganges Village Planning for the Trust Council budget process for 2021/22. In order to develop a budget, and to seek direction on the project scope, staff presented a draft Project Charter to LTC on October 6, 2020. To ensure a healthy, resilient and environmentally sustainable village and future generations, LTC directed staff to develop a separate area plan to be referenced in the Official Community Plan for Ganges Village.

GANGES VILLAGE AREA PLAN

The goal of the Ganges Village Area Plan is to provide a planning document that ensures the community within Ganges Village will grow and develop sustainably through objectives, policies and holistic measures. The parameters for this village planning initiative include the Islands Trust's commitment to preserve and protect the unique and fragile environment of the island; to address the [climate emergency](#) (passed March 2019); and to advance reconciliation efforts set forth in the [Reconciliation Declaration](#) (passed March 2019) and the [Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022](#) (passed June 2019). This project will build on work by community groups, government agencies and collaboration with First Nations and stakeholders.

GENERAL PLANNING PROCESS



KEY ACTIVITIES

The project will be implemented in three key phases over the next two years:

Phase 1

- Approval of Project Charter, project budget, public engagement plan, Terms of Reference for Ganges Village Planning Task Force
- Meeting between LTC and First Nations
- Early conversation with First Nations, the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, Capital Regional District (CRD), School District (SD64), Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), Salt Spring Fire Rescue (SSIFR), Salt Spring Island Arts Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, harbour agencies, and health service agencies
- Launch public engagement program
- Develop vision and objectives for the Ganges Village Area Plan

Phase 2

- Research and analysis, meeting with stakeholders and agencies
- Draft Area Plan and its implementation measures
- Open houses on draft Ganges Village Area Plan
- Finalize draft Area Plan
- Public outreach and adoption of Area Plan

Phase 3

- Review of public engagement process
- Amendment to governing documents to reflect policies and implementation measures in the new area plan
- Public outreach and adoption of governing documents

GANGES VILLAGE PLANNING TASK FORCE

The Task Force is an appointed advisory working group to the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (LTC), which consisting of 11 members. The Task Force will have a hands-on role in creating and implementing engagement activities in the community under the direction of the LTC and coordinated by Islands Trust staff. The Task Force will facilitate discussions and host community events, review summary documents from the engagement sessions prepared by Islands Trust staff, and provide the LTC with recommendations on plan concepts, policy options, and the draft Ganges Village Area Plan. All discussions and meetings held by the Task Force are open to the public, and the Task Force members will objectively apply judgement based on their expertise, experience and knowledge of the subject matter as related to development of the “Ganges Village Area Plan” process.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Values and principles are fundamental norms or rules that guide the perspective of an organized group of people, as well as their actions. This Engagement Program is built upon the following Guiding Principles of the Islands Trust:

- The primary responsibility of the Islands Trust Council is to provide leadership for the preservation, protection and stewardship of the amenities, environment and resources of the Trust Area.
- When making decisions and exercising judgment, Trust Council will place priority on preserving and

protecting the integrity of the environment and amenities in the Trust Area.

- Trust Council will seek information from a broad range of sources in its decision-making processes, recognizing the importance of local and traditional knowledge in this regard.
- Trust Council believes that to achieve the Islands Trust objective, the rate and scale of growth and development in the Trust Area must be carefully managed and may require limitation.
- Trust Council believes that open, consultative public participation is vital to effective decision making for the Trust Area.

This Engagement Program is also built on the following values of the Islands Trust:

Inclusion

This Public Engagement Program seeks to ensure that every voice can be heard in an authentic way, and to create opportunities for people to contribute when, where and how they feel most heard. The priority interest of First Nations is a key element of the inclusion strategy, and the [First Nations Engagement Principles](#) of the Islands Trust will apply.

Respect

The strategy seeks to ensure that every voice is treated equitably, and the feelings, rights and traditions of others are honoured through the engagement process. Input from the engagement will be wholly and broadly considered.

Community Voice

The Strategy will result in an engagement process that shares relevant and accurate information in order to increase the self-determination of the community so they can better express their diverse interests, needs, and perspectives in the planning process.

Transparent

The public engagement process will be communicated clearly and openly, including the purpose, timing, roles and responsibilities, constraints and outcomes. Timely feedback will be provided for the participants including the range of views expressed and how public input will be considered by the decision makers.

Innovation

The options and mechanisms for engagement will provide a range of ways for citizens and stakeholders to effectively participate in this project. Likewise, the strategy encourages innovation from participants as it seeks input around the identified issues, and encourages new approaches in how the Area Plan may be developed for the Ganges Village community.

Wholly and Equitably Involved

The public engagement process seeks to ensure that anyone and everyone has access to relevant information on the issues related to this project and around the engagement process itself. Importantly, the public engagement program will ensure relevant information is available in a variety of ways and through multiple sources.

On-going Evaluation

This public engagement process will be evaluated on a regular basis to foster ongoing learning and improvement.

PRIORITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES

In order to build a sustainable community in Ganges Village, the development of an area plan for Ganges Village will provide objectives and policies that encompass a wide-range of issues; issues that are interconnected and all are within the context of the Trust Council's "preserve and protect" mandate. For this reason, the framework for the area plan will be outlined in the following Priority Engagement Themes:

Land Use Development

Land use designations and zoning districts are in place to ensure appropriate locations and site setting for different types of uses in order to protect the fragility natural environment and archeological significance of Salt Spring Island. Specific policies and guiding principles established for Ganges Village back in 2006 should be re-examined and strengthened to address current conditions within the Ganges Village community.

Transportation and Mobility

Trust Council is committed to promote local and inter-community transportation systems that reduce dependency on private automobile use, and to evaluate and modify road construction and road systems that encompass the environmental, economic and social values of the community.

Housing

The population on Salt Spring Island has increased over time, with more people living and working in the Ganges Village area, but housing options have not been able to meet current needs. Increasing the diversity of housing options, especially secure and affordable rental housing will be examined in the development of the Area Plan for Ganges Village, and in so far as within the SS LTC jurisdiction.

Cultural and Archeological Protection

Ganges Village has a rich First Nations history; Trust Council, through the Reconciliation Declaration, is committed to incorporate Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, stewardship, and understanding in the land use planning and policies guides, and to preserve and protect the cultural sites and archeological significances.

Climate Resiliency

The Islands Trust Council has joined thousands of governments around the world declaring a climate emergency with a goal to "pursue an absolute reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in this very special area." Accordingly, every Islands Trust project must be carried out with a view to minimizing the project's impacts on the climate.

Infrastructure Servicing

Efficient and cost-effective infrastructure servicing is vital to development growth in Ganges Village, but the provision of such services must not be at the expense of the environment, especially with the limited water, waste-water and storm-water systems on the island and within the Ganges Village core. Land-use planning, infrastructure design, and service delivery go hand-in-hand in creating and maintaining a healthy community.

Protection of Aquifers and Biodiversity

For all the islands in the Salish Sea, the impacts of a changing climate mean serious threats to our already limited aquifers. Furthermore, land conservation and more robust land use planning tools to minimize loss of species and their habitat are critical to allow for resilience of our ecosystems particularly as they relate to sustainable growth within the Ganges Village community.

PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT

The primary reason for public engagement is to **inform** the LTC's decisions in the planning process. In order to make an informed decision, the LTC is committed to **consulting** with the community, to **building**

relationships in the community, to **involving** the stakeholders, and to **collaborating** with First Nations.

EVALUATION OF THE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

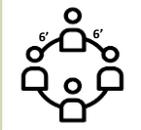
An on-going evaluation will be performed on the public engagement process, and the evaluation framework will include:

1. Evaluation sessions to examine, diagnose, discuss, and dialogue the cause-and-effect links and assumptions regarding the engagement process, outcomes, and intended and unintended consequences and impacts;
2. A plan to organize and allocate resources for total evidence-based evaluation of the engagement process (who was engaged, how many, number of responses, depth and quality of responses);
3. Incorporation of lessons learned to be included in future engagements;
4. Development of an ongoing engagement strategy to support current and future LTC processes and projects.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

- Virtual open houses, and/or in-person if proper physical distancing is achievable
- Virtual design charrettes, and/or in-person if proper physical distancing is achievable
- Virtual/telephonic conversation with the planner and/or in-person if proper physical distancing is achievable
- Online survey
- Subscribers option
- Email
- Direct mail
- New release
- Paid ad
- Letter to editor/editorial
- Webpage

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

Community Engagement Events			On-going Efforts			
						
Community Presentation	Design Charrettes		Online Survey	Social Media	Letters	Phone Calls
						
Virtual Open	Open Houses	Virtual Coffee with the planner	Website update	Press Release/Editorial	Email	Virtual Public Meetings