



Islands Trust

GABRIOLA OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW

Discussion Guides

CONNECTIVITY



November 2024

What is a Discussion Guide?

The Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee is updating the Official Community Plan (OCP) – which guides development to align with the community’s vision and values on a variety of topics. This guide is designed to provide community members with background needed to provide feedback on policy options related to connectivity.

Share your thoughts through focus groups, direct communication with the Local Trust Committee and the Gabriola OCP Review Topic-Focused Engagement online survey (December, 2024 - April, 2025).

What is an Official Community Plan (OCP) for Gabriola Island?

The OCP implements the community’s vision.

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

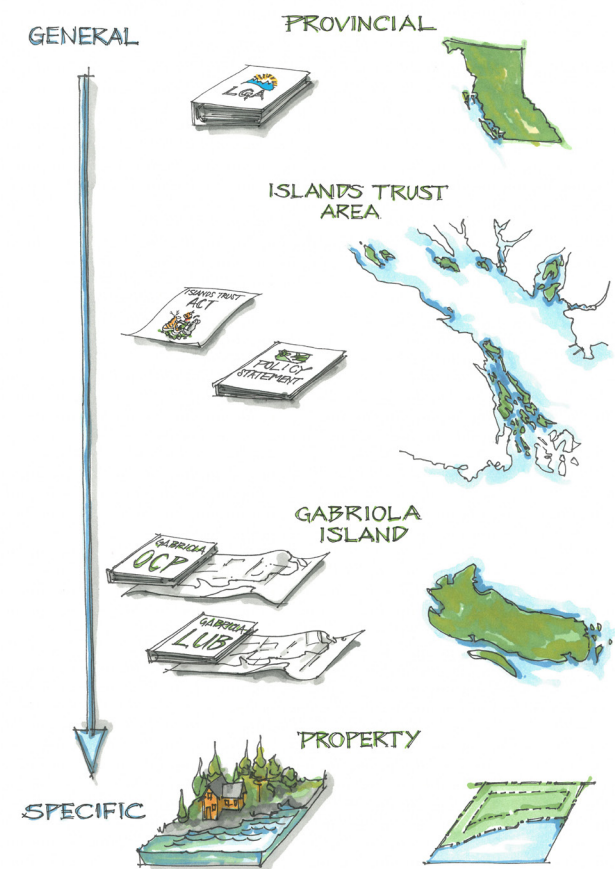
The OCP must align with higher level policies.

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

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

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

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



Legislation and Policy Influencing Land Use

What does the current OCP say about Connectivity?

The current Gabriola OCP places limitations on transportation and infrastructure to maintain the island’s rural character and environmental integrity. It prohibits land-based airports, supports water taxi services with proper facilities, and opposes a major ferry terminal. Road developments should respect the natural landscape and prioritize scenic routes, while minimizing impacts on agricultural and sensitive land.

Parks policies note the importance of community parks, trail networks, and public access to waterfront areas. The importance of parkland dedication through subdivision applications is noted and collaboration between the Local Trust Committee and the Regional District of Nanaimo is also expressed as a key aspect of the development and planning for parks and outdoor recreational space on Gabriola.

Exploring Connectivity

The approach to transportation in the OCP is one of caution. It supports the existing state of transportation and opposes major ferry terminals and land-based airports. One exception to this is the support for new bike lanes in new developments and along the roads within the bicycle route plan. Improved connection to Mudge Island is also supported, but only if it doesn’t disturb sensitive areas and parking issues are resolved. Roads are encouraged to respect the natural landscape, retain natural vegetation on the shoulders, and their locations should not fragment agricultural land or environmentally sensitive areas.

With regards to parks and recreation, the plan reflects an interest in increased parks, trails and access to the waterfront. It is also important to recognize that while OCP policies can play a role, coordination with the Regional District of Nanaimo is necessary for effective parks and recreation planning.

What we heard

The engagement process revealed that Gabriola takes pride in their expansive network of trails and parks and is keen to build it up further. Many community members expressed interests in improving roads to make biking and walking safer. These are things that would contribute to the goal of a sustainable and resilient community.

For details on community visioning and resulting goals and principle see: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/document/gabriola-visioning-2050-what-we-heard-report/>

How do you feel about Connectivity as it relates to the OCP?

We want to hear from you!

The survey is open to all Gabriola residents! Answer the survey to tell us what you think about connectivity, or any of the other topics that Gabriola residents told us is important during the last round of engagement. Complete the survey online, or contact Islands Trust to complete a paper version of the survey.

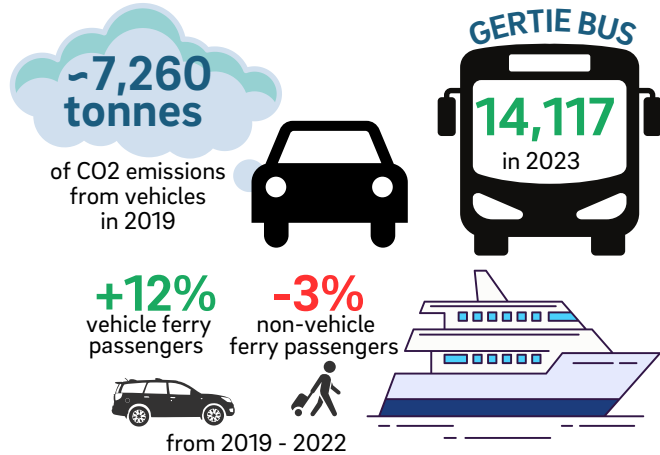


www.surveymonkey.com/r/GabriolaOCPFocus

GABRIOLA ISLAND community snapshot CONNECTIVITY

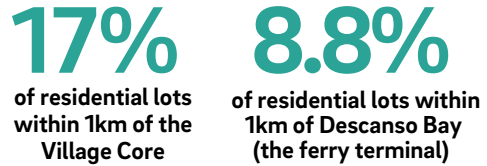


Ridership



Short Commutes

1km (approximately 15-20 minutes) of car-free travel is most accessible for:

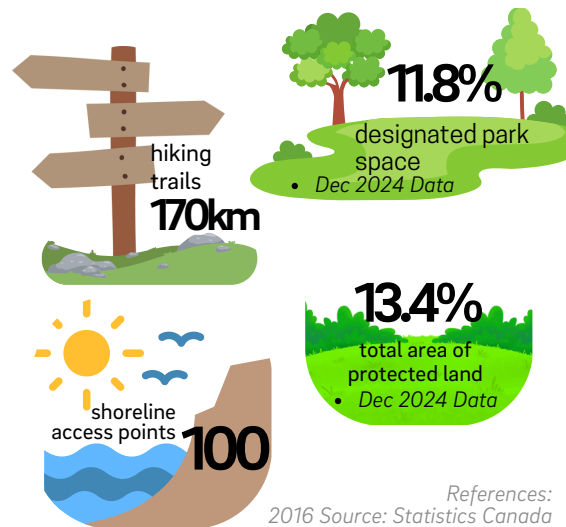


Did you know...

that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) is responsible for roads on Island, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) has contributed to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure



Park & Open Spaces



References:
2016 Source: Statistics Canada
2021 Source: Statistics Canada
Islands Trust Conservancy
2024 Gabriola Health & Wellness Report
2024 GERTIE data

Walkability

Score: **Low**

A walkability score assesses the ease of access to essential amenities (e.g., grocery stores) less than 30 minutes from home and safety factors, such as sidewalks and public transit, without relying on a personal vehicle. A low score indicates a highly car-dependent location. On Gabriola, this is most applicable from primary locations such as:

- BC Ferries Terminal
- Village Core



Learn more about next steps in the OCP review process



Participate in the topic-focused survey

