



Islands Trust

GABRIOLA OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN REVIEW

Discussion Guides

WASTE & WATER



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 waste and water.

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).

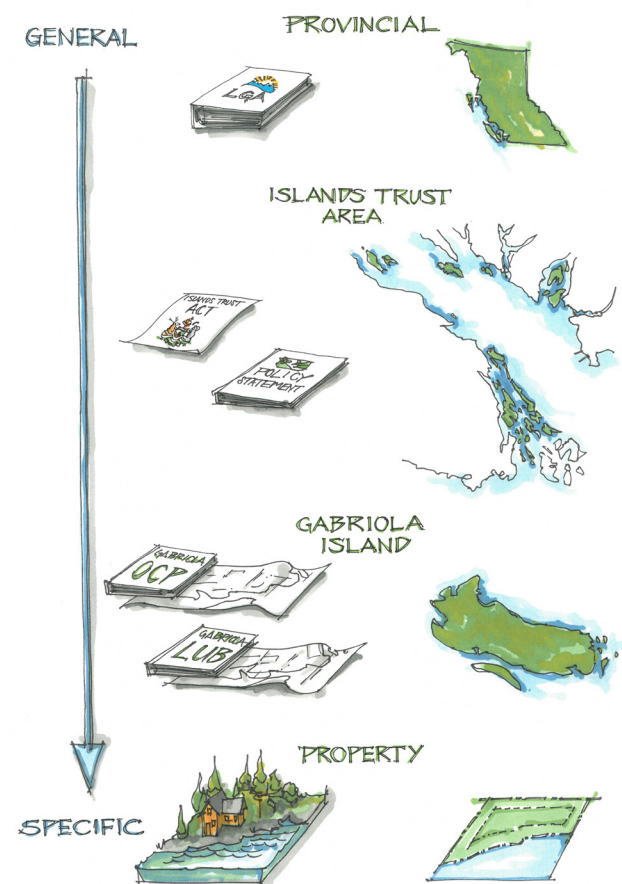
What is an Official Community Plan (OCP) for Gabriola Island?

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.



Legislation and Policy Influencing Land Use

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.

What does the current OCP say about waste & water?

The current Gabriola OCP emphasizes comprehensive waste management and environmental protection strategies. It supports recycling for all solid waste, with a preference for local services, and mandates compliance with the Regional District of Nanaimo’s Waste Management Plan for waste storage sites. The plan discourages burning waste from lot clearing.

Water conservation methods and the retention of rainwater are encouraged. Industrial and recreational uses that require lots of water and the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides are discouraged. Importing water from outside the area is prohibited, and community water systems must undergo professional reviews prior to approval. Development is restricted in areas with potential septic issues unless alternative disposal methods are approved. Sewage outfalls to marine waters are only allowed with tertiary treatment to prevent environmental harm.

The OCP also contains policies related to institutional uses that exist for the benefit of the local community. These include: the Community Hall, the Gabriola Recycling Depot, churches, schools, fire halls and health care centres.

Exploring waste & water

In general, the OCP takes the approach of supporting waste and water to the level that is sustainable to the natural environment. Policies focus on ensuring development is not permitted in areas where servicing can’t be sustained. This comes through specifically in the focus on supporting local recycling, protecting aquifers, ensuring sustainable use of groundwater, and prohibiting development from areas where septic cannot be disposed of properly. Prohibiting the piping of water from off island also supports the framework of only allowing development that can be sustained by the on-island resources.

As part of the OCP review project an assessment of water availability is being done to help inform policy development. Freshwater resources are accessed primarily through private wells and there are a few small water systems that service multiple lots.

There is no centralized sewage system on Gabriola Island. Liquid waste is dealt with through private septic systems. Solid waste management is overseen primarily by the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). The Gabriola Island Recycling Organization (GIRO) plays a significant role by offering recycling services, operating a reuse centre, and advocating for waste and environmental education.

What we heard

Water is recognized to be a limited resource. Given this there were interests expressed by community members for water availability and water recharge to be considered when making land use decisions. These interests connect to goals related to resource stewardship and resilient communities.

Waste and institutional uses were not directly brought up as areas of major interest through the visioning process.

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 waster & water 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 waste and water, 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.

Stay up to date by subscribing to updates or following along on the project page: islandstrust.bc.ca/island-planning/gabriola/projects/gabriola-ocpreview



www.surveymonkey.com/r/GabriolaOCPFocus