



Islands Trust

GABRIOLA ISLAND

Community Profile



Land Acknowledgment

The Islands Trust Area is located within the treaty and territorial lands and waters of the BOKÉĆEN, Cowichan Tribes, K'ómoks, Lyackson, MÁLEXEŁ, Qualicum, scəwáθən, sə́ilwətał, SEMYOME, shíshálh, Skwx wú7mesh, Snaw-naw-as, Snuneymuxw, Songhees, Spune'luxutth, STÁUTW, Stz'uminus, ɬaʔəmen, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Wei Wai Kum, We Wai Kai, W JOŁEŁP, W SIKEM, Xeláltxw, Xwémalhkwu, Xwsepsum, and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm First Nations.

The Islands Trust Area lies within Coast Salish Territory, at the heart of numerous gathering places and villages that are home to these resilient and dynamic First Nations.

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 Islands Trust is committed to supporting these efforts.

Islands Trust and Islands Trust Conservancy respectfully acknowledge that the lands and waters that encompass the Islands Trust Area have been home to Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. We are committed to reconciliation and to working together to preserve and protect this ecologically, culturally, and spiritually significant region in the Salish Sea.

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Introduction

The following information provides a summary of baseline conditions and markers for trends for Gabriola Island. It provides a current context for understanding and assessing potential impacts for decision-making as it relates to land use to help inform the Gabriola Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Review.

Overview

Gabriola Island is one of the northernmost of the Southern Gulf islands situated in the Salish Sea between Vancouver Island and the mainland of BC. The island spans 5,256 hectares, stretching 14 kilometers in length and 4.2 kilometers in width. Nanaimo, the nearest major city, is accessible by a 20-minute Ferry ride. Gabriola is part of Electoral area B of the regional District of Nanaimo. Along within Islands Trust, governance and service provision on Gabriola Island includes Snuneymuxw First Nation, Regional District of Nanaimo, Province of British Columbia, Island Health and School District 68.

Settlement Patterns

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.

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)

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) passed in November 2019, 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



Current Context

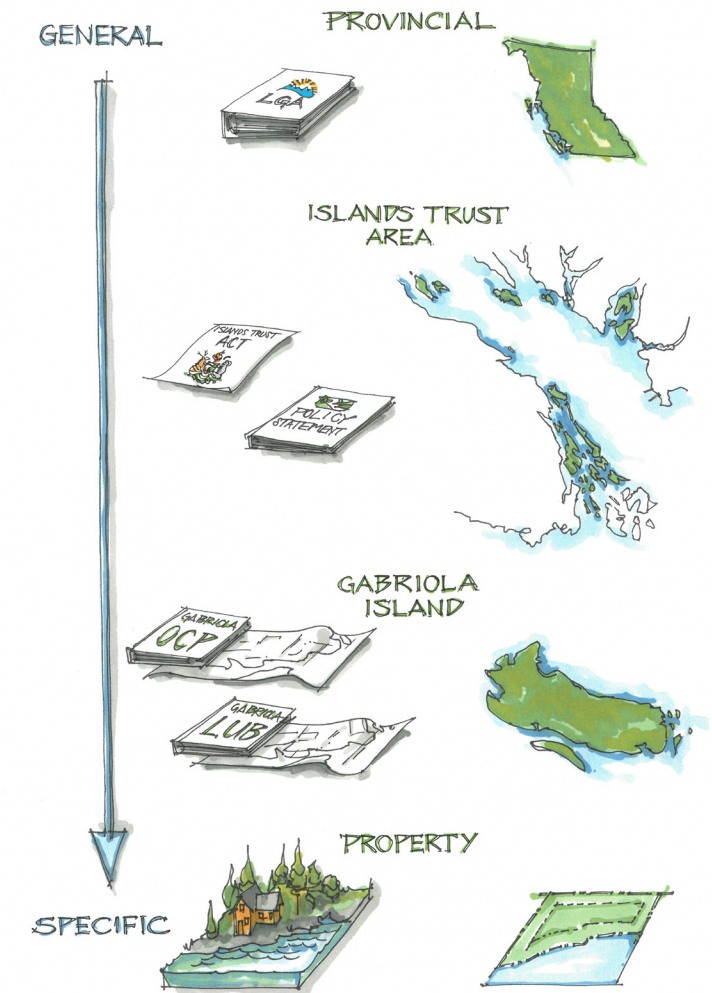
Governance

In 1974, the Province of British Columbia, in recognition of the unique amenities and environment of the islands, passed the *Islands Trust Act*, which established Islands Trust with a mandate, embodied in the "object" of the Islands Trust.

The Object of Islands Trust is to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Islands Trust Area and of the province generally, in cooperation with Indigenous Governing Bodies, municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organisations, and the government of the Province.

As part of the Islands Trust Area, the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee is authorized to adopt an Official Community Plan by the *Islands Trust Act* and the *Local Government Act*.

In the Islands Trust Area, an Official Community Plan must be consistent with the Islands Trust Policy Statement. The Policy Statement is intended to establish a vision for the future and provide a general strategy for land use planning in the Trust Area. It contains commitments of Islands Trust Council, policies related to the preservation and protection of the Islands Trust areas that that Local Trust Committees land use planning is required to adhere to.



Natural Landscape

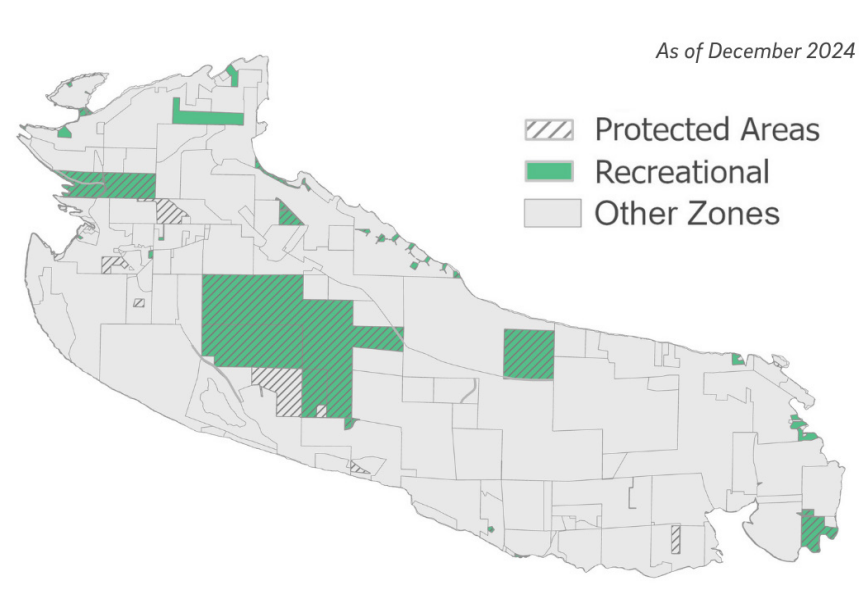
Geology

The island is predominantly composed of a range of sedimentary rock, as well as shale. These sedimentary rocks are part of the Nanaimo Group and are divided into four formations. Porosity affects how groundwater moves through the subsurface and plays a role in erosion and groundwater availability. Average erosion rates in coastal areas can range from 0.1 to 5 meters per year depending on factors like sediment type and vegetation.

Protected and Conserved

Protected areas on Gabriola Island encompass 12% of the total land area (698.04 ha out of 5817 hectares). They are areas that are diverse natural landscapes and environments and focus on conserving and ensuring ecologically sensitive areas remain protected. These protected lands include parks, pathways, and culturally significant sites and sensitive ecosystems. There are 16.3 hectares of land protected by conservation covenants. These covenants are legally binding agreements that restrict land use to preserve natural values.

Conserved land also includes parks and other protected areas.



Recreational and protected areas

Flora & Fauna

Gabriola Island has a diverse range of flora and fauna, indicating a healthy and robust marine ecosystem. According to Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Government of British Columbia's Ministry of Environment, such biodiversity signals effective ecosystem function and resilience, as diverse species help ecosystems withstand and recover from environmental changes and human impacts.

Species in the Gabriola Island Local Trust Area include:

- Marine Mammals: Orcas, Humpback Whales, Gray Whales, Harbor Seals, California Sea Lions, and Sea Otters
- Fish: Salmon (Chinook, Coho, Pink, and Sockeye), Pacific Herring, Rockfish, Lingcod, Pacific Cod, and Greenling)
- Invertebrates: Dungeness Crabs, Sea Stars, Sea Urchins, Giant Pacific Octopus, Barnacles, and Jellyfish
- Other Marine Life: Sea Anemones, various Kelp species, and Marine Algae like Bull Kelp



Community

Age

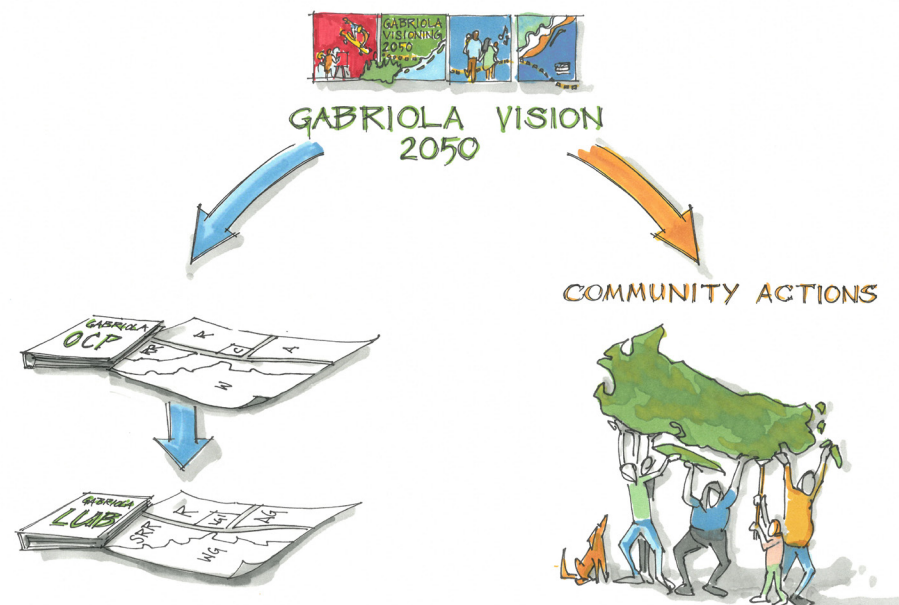
In 2021, based on census data, the year-round population was 4,522. Demographic changes of +11.6% were experienced between 2016 and 2021. Census data may not fully capture the actual population increase due to the presence of underreported seasonal residents.

The population is generally older than the Regional District of Nanaimo and the population of BC, with notably higher rates of those between 55 and 74 years than the Nanaimo Regional District (RDN) or BC, at 52.4% in this age group for Gabriola, 32.9% for RDN, and 25.1% for BC. The median age for Gabriola Island is 63, compared to 51.1 for RDN and 43.0 for BC.

Based on current population statistics, it is estimated that 66% of the population will be over 85 by 2050; however, this is not a population projection. Rather, it reflects an analysis of demographic trends and aging patterns within the current population.

Income

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 Regional District of Nanaimo (16%) and British Columbia as a whole (11%).



Housing

The total number of private dwellings on the island is 3,062, reflecting a 2.5% increase from 2016 to 2021, of these, 2,375 (78%) are occupied by full-time residents. Among the full-time occupied dwellings, 89% are owned, while 11% are rented. 5.88% of households live in housing that is considered unsuitable or in need of repair.

12% of residents are considered to be in core housing need. Core housing need is defined as households experiencing two of the following three:

- Housing adequacy: living in unsuitable housing
- Housing suitability: living in housing in need of repair
- Housing affordability: paying more than 30% of total before tax income towards housing

Services

Gabriola Island's water supply comes primarily from groundwater sources, including aquifers and springs. Aquifers are recharged primarily through rainfall and surface water infiltration. Seasonal variations and drought conditions impact water availability. About 10% of the island uses small-scale community water systems.

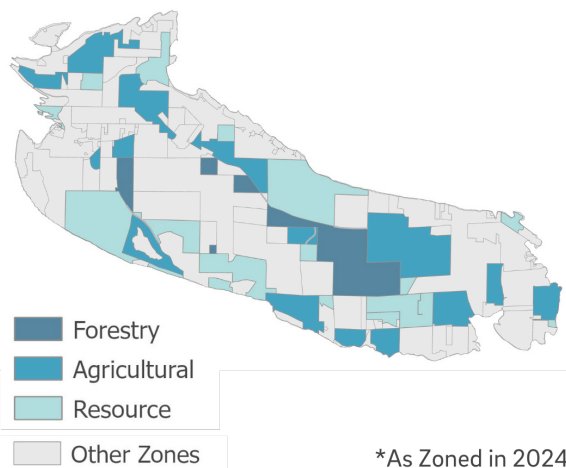
Sanitation services and some sewage services are managed by the Regional District of Nanaimo, which oversees a community-based wastewater treatment system designed to handle residential and small-scale commercial waste. According to the Regional District's reports, the island utilizes a combination of septic systems and a central sewage treatment facility to maintain environmental and public health standards.

According to the 2025 Gabriola OCP Review Topic-Focused Engagementsurvey, up to 60% of residents use rainwater and/or purchase water to augment water supply during dry periods.



Water and septic services

Resource Lands



Forestry

350.68

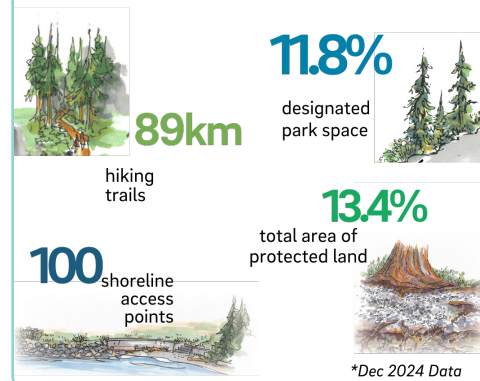
hectares of land zoned for forestry



Approximately equivalent to 501 soccer fields (0.7 ha each)

Slightly larger than Central Park, NY (341 ha)

Park & Open Spaces



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

17%

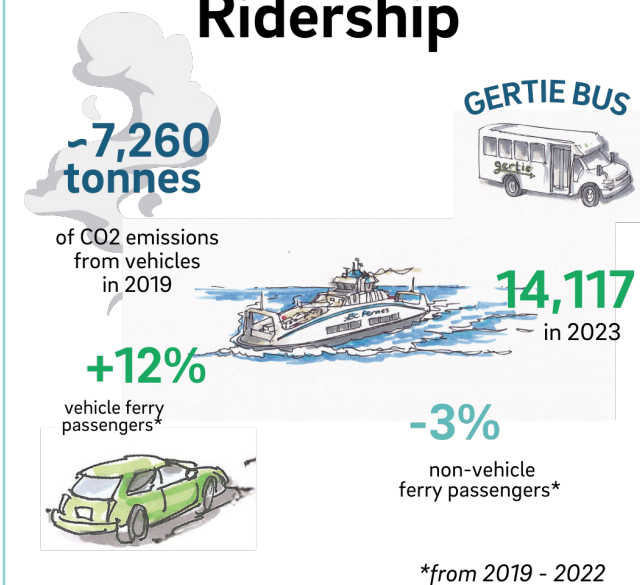
of residential lots within 1km of the Village Core

8.8%

of residential lots within 1km of Descanso Bay (the ferry terminal)

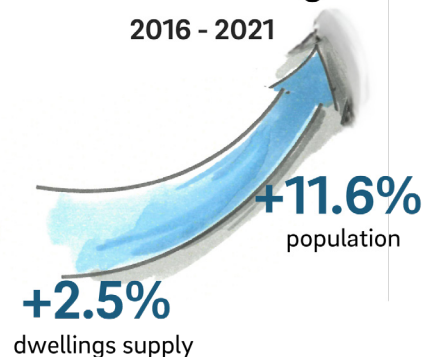
*not accounting for people with accessibility barriers

Ridership



Growth Changes

2016 - 2021



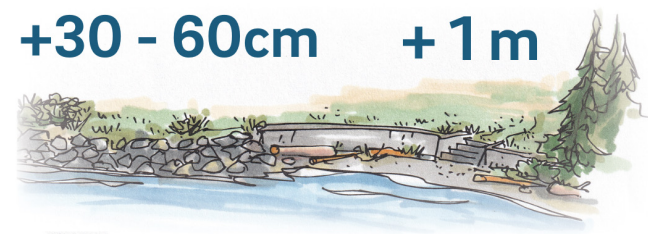
Sea Level Trends

Since 1990, sea levels have risen by

-3.5 mm per year

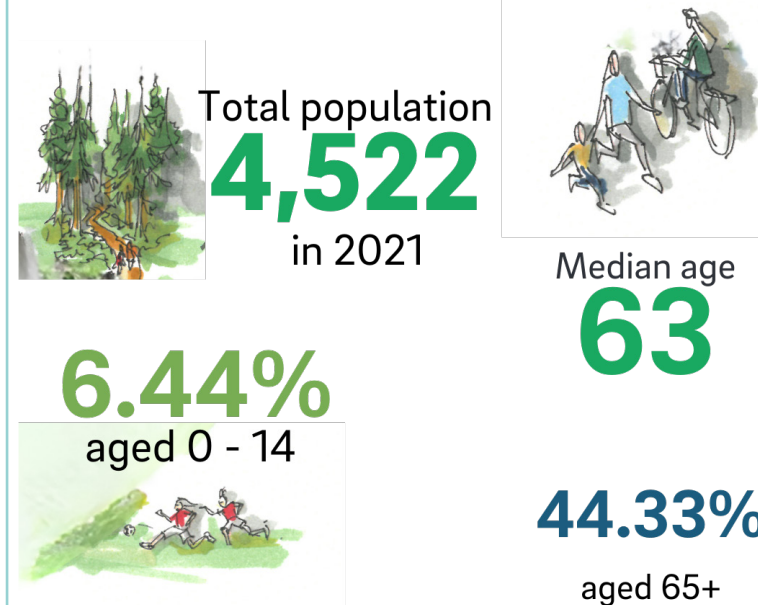
By **2050***, they may rise by an additional **+30 - 60cm**

By **2100*** they may reach up to **+1 m**

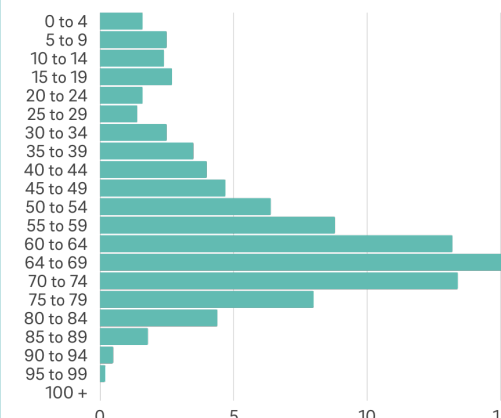


(*under high-emission scenarios)

At a Glance

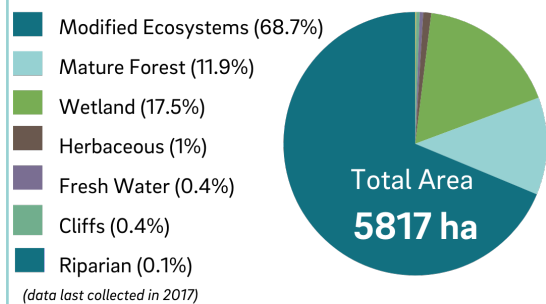


Population by Age (%)



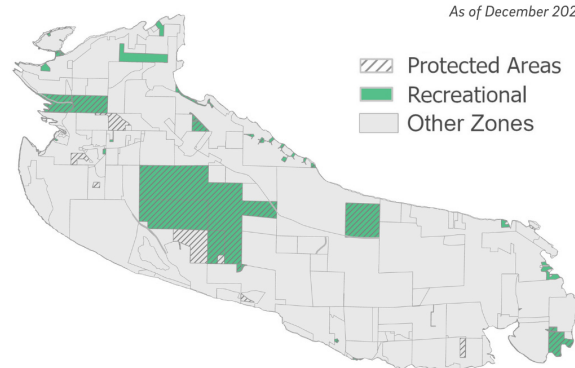
Sensitive Ecosystems

Across the Gabriola Local Trust Area

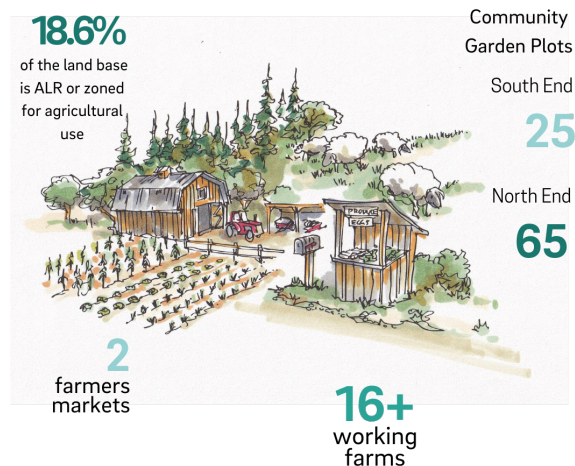


Recreational & Protected Areas

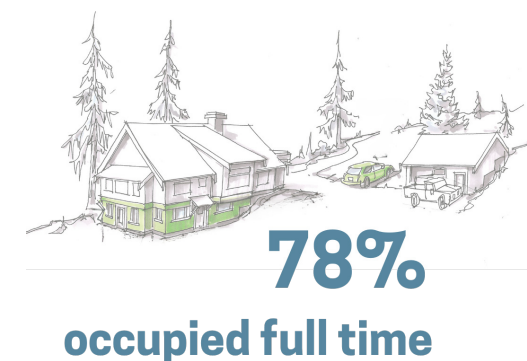
As of December 2024



Agriculture



Residential Availability



Public transportation on Gabriola is wholly operated by the Gabriola Community Bus Foundation (GERTIE) and is funded through donations, grants, capital funds and tax support with limited hours of operation, depending on seasonal and holiday schedule. The GERTIE bus operates on varied routes. For more comprehensive travel, residents often rely on private vehicles or ferry services to connect with nearby regions.



A GERTIE Gabriola Community bus

Community Spaces & Connectivity

Outdoor Public Recreation Facilities

The Gabriola Health and Wellness Report 2024 shows that over 50% of residents utilize local parks for physical activities. There are a significant number of hiking and biking trails on Gabriola Island, many of which are maintained by the Gabriola Land & Trails Trust (GALTT). These parks serve as critical venues for organized sports leagues, which have seen a 25% increase in participation over the past three years. The availability of these green spaces has been linked to a 15% rise in overall physical activity levels among residents. Many recreational and sports activities on the Island are organized through the Gabriola Recreation Society, which also offers recreation based activities at various locations across the island.

Opened in 2019 with support from the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), the skate park is located in the Huxley Community Park. This park spans just under 1 hectare (929m²) and includes a variety of features alongside the skate park, including tennis courts, picnic areas, walking trails and a basketball court. Since its opening, the skate park has attracted around 200 visitors each week during the summer season. According to a 2022 article in the Gabriola Sounder, the skate park has played a crucial role in fostering youth engagement. Community feedback also indicates that 90% of users feel that Huxley Park has positively impacted their social connections and overall community wellbeing.

Indoor Public Spaces

The Gabriola Island Public Library branch has one of the highest usership rates across the Vancouver Island Regional Library system, with approximately 40% of residents utilizing its resources and services regularly. In 2022, 2,643 residents (59%) of Gabriola held a public library card, a decline from 75% in 2019. Nanaimo's library card ownership stands at 26% of its population, highlighting a relatively higher engagement amongst Gabriolans despite the decrease. The library also hosts various community events, youth-oriented activities, social and educational programs and also provides a public space for community organizations to gather.

There are several other community-operated spaces for social engagement that are low- or no-cost. Including:

- Rollo Centre, run by the Gabriola Senior Citizens Association which can accommodate up to 200 people for events
- Gabriola Community Hall, provides a venue for community events and activities
- Gabriola Island Museum which provides a space to learn about the community history as well as hosting community events
- Gabriola Commons (the Commons) provides a host of indoor and outdoor spaces for community socializing and events

There are also several informal home-based community event spaces for social engagement.

Transportation & Walkability

Residents and visitors rely on BC Ferries to bring them on and off the island and on private vehicles for transportation due to the island's limited public transit options. There are 158 kilometers of roads on island. Gabriola Island is considered a car-dependent island with a walk score of 4 and a bike score of 33. This means errands primarily require vehicle access and bike infrastructure is minimal.

Walkability scores 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, the walkability scores are most relevant to primary locations such as BC Ferries Terminal and the Village Core.

The current walkability of Gabriola Island is low.

Land Uses

Agriculture Land Use

Agricultural land on Gabriola Island covers approximately 10% (~2000 hectares) of the Island's total area. Approximately 5% of the island's total land area falls within the ALR and includes both cultivated and unused agricultural lands. The ALR designates land for agricultural use and restricts non-farming development. In 2020 18.6% of Gabriola's land base was zoned specifically for food production. The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) reports that Gabriola Island has around 50 active farms.

Accessible, reliable, affordable, and nutritious food is important to food security on the island. This is threatened by climate change and biodiversity loss.

Forestry Land Use

Forest Land on Agricultural land on Gabriola Island covers approximately 10% (~2000 hectares) of the island's total area. In 2024, 0.5% of land parcels were zoned for forestry accounting for 350.68 hectares of land. Forestry zoning contributes to the island's economic sustainability by allowing for controlled, responsible resource extraction while preserving the integrity of its natural environment.

Commercial Land Use

The commercial landscape of Gabriola Island is predominantly driven by small-scale businesses, which are central to the island's economy. There are approximately 115 registered businesses represented by the Gabriola Island Chamber of Commerce, with a notable emphasis on tourism, arts and crafts, and agriculture. Commercial business includes convenience retail, comparison retail, restaurants and recreation, as well as automobile businesses. In addition, Gabriola's labour force has increased by 3.8% from 2016 to 2021. Commercial land uses play a crucial role both in employment opportunity on Gabriola Island as well as shaping the island's economic and cultural identity and encourage diversity in opportunities for supporting local economic vitality.

Industrial Land Use

As of the latest figures, there are about 15 light manufacturing businesses on the island, including woodworking and specialty food production operations. Additionally, the island hosts approximately 10 businesses focused on renewable energy and sustainable practices, reflecting its commitment to eco-friendly initiatives. Collectively, these industrial activities provide employment for a portion of the island's workforce, with around 1,200 people engaged in various sectors.

Residential Land Use

There are a number of different residential zones on Gabriola Island, each with specific regulations to guide development. Alongside these zones, opportunities for residential dwellings to exist within other zoning encourage flexibility.

Single unit housing has been predominantly supported in the past. Opportunities for secondary suites and detached accessory dwellings as well as multifamily housing exist. Home-based businesses are supported. Specific regulations governing these uses include density, setbacks, and lot size requirements, and they vary between zones.

Sustainability & Resilience

Commitment to Reconciliation

The Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) has committed to reconciliation guided by the principles in the following foundational reconciliation documents:

- Islands Trust Reconciliation Declaration (2019)
- Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)

Islands Trust has engaged in intergovernmental relationships with the Snuneymuxw First Nation based on a protocol agreement and is committed to fostering collaboration and mutual respect. Islands Trust is dedicated to fostering meaningful partnerships with Indigenous Nations, ensuring that land use planning and development on Gabriola Island are conducted in a manner that respects Indigenous rights.

Climate Change

Recent trends on Gabriola Island show increasing variability in rainfall, with more intense events becoming common. Climate projections for 2024 indicate that annual rainfall has already increased, with more frequent extreme weather events than in previous decades. By mid-century, annual rainfall is expected to rise by about 10% to 15%, along with a higher frequency of extreme weather events. Historical data from the BC Climate Data Portal reveals that average annual temperatures on Gabriola Island are approximately 11°C to 13°C. Summer highs have risen from an average of 18°C to 20°C 15 years ago to 20°C to 22°C in 2024, while winter lows remain around 5°C to 7°C. These recent climate trends, including altered precipitation patterns and rising temperatures, have the potential to affect groundwater recharge rates and overall water availability on the island.

Population Projections

According to BC Stats, Gabriola Island's population is projected to experience steady growth over the next 18 years. At the current rate, the population is anticipated to increase by approximately 1,262 individuals, with a cumulative growth of 28% by 2041. Historically, Gabriola Island has seen an average annual population growth rate of about 1.2% over the past decade with the 2020 census populations indicating a 27.8% increase in the past 20 years. It is important to note these population projections are not certain and represent estimates based on current trends, which may change due to a variety of factors.

Housing Needs Projections

According to the 2021 Census, the population was about 4,500. The Islands Trust 2025 Needs Assessment highlights recent population trends: a 13.6% increase between 2001 and 2006, a modest 0.6% increase between 2011 and 2016, and a -12% increase between 2016 and 2021. Based on these patterns, the average annual growth rate is approximately 1.03%. If this trend continues, Gabriola's population is projected to reach roughly 6,000 by 2050 – an increase of about 1,300 residents.

Currently, there are 3,228 lots that permit residential use, of which 589 remain vacant. Considering zoning allowances for principal and secondary dwellings, the maximum potential build-out is approximately 4,100 dwellings. With an average household size of 1.9 persons, this supply may appear sufficient to meet projected population growth (+724 units by 2050). However, it does not address the need for affordable housing options.

In 2021, the median property value was \$576,000, reflecting a 15% increase since 2016. According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the average rent for a two-bedroom home on Gabriola is approximately \$1,500 per month, while the average monthly shelter cost is \$903. About 270 Gabriola residents were identified to be in core housing need (household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability or suitability, and spends 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent).

With a median household income of \$78,000 and a median individual income of about \$34,400, limited rental options, and steadily rising housing costs, the theoretical build-out potential does not fully reflect actual housing need. The actual need is potentially less than projected. However, to meet community needs now and into the future, more affordable and diverse housing options are required.

Economic Projections

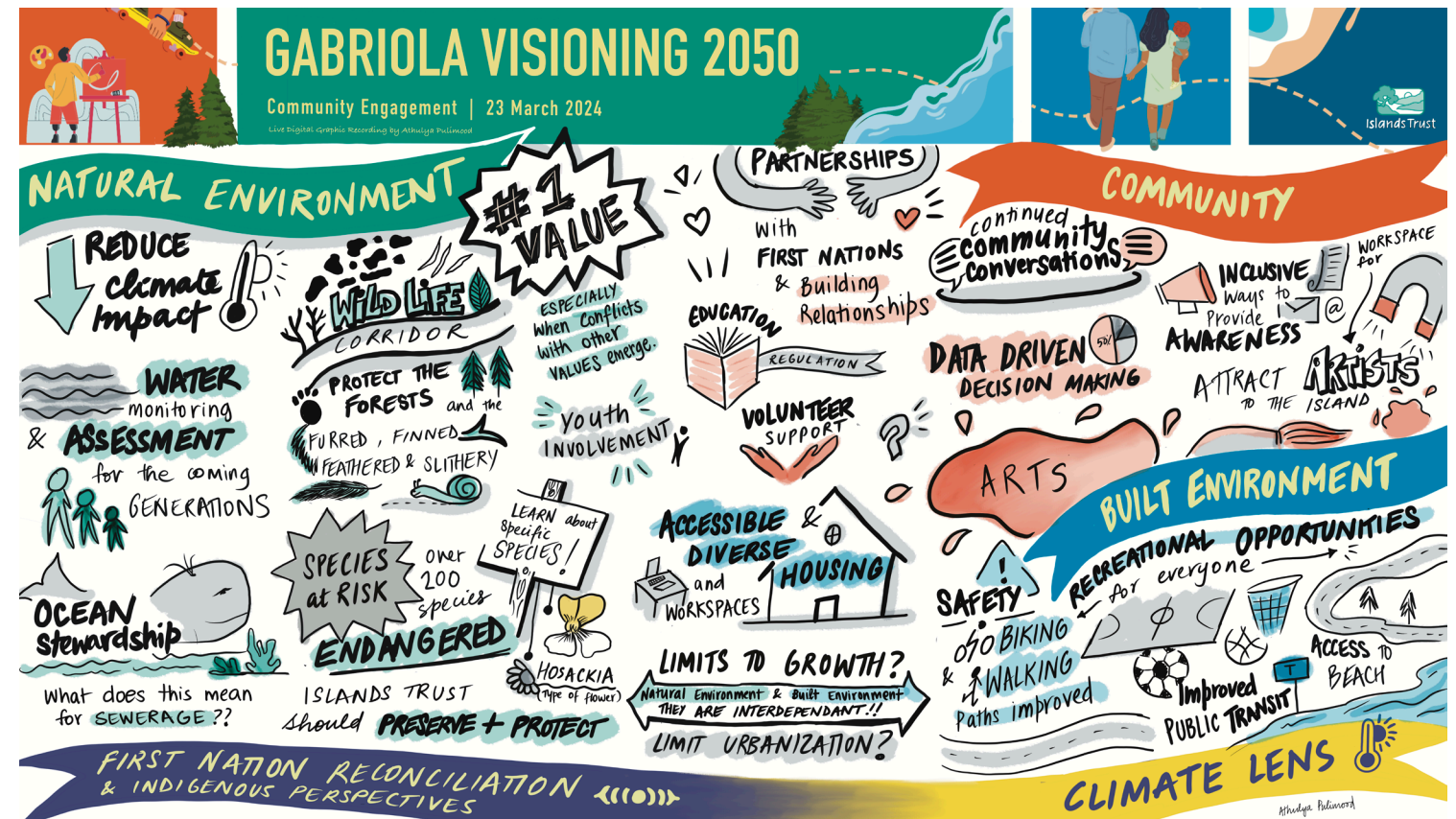
With so many changes in the world influencing the economy in general, the future is hard to predict. Members of the Gabriola Island business community have identified lack of affordable housing to be a significant threat to the business community. The lack of affordable housing on Gabriola Island has led to staff shortages, with many businesses reporting difficulties in hiring due to limited housing options. This challenge grew during the COVID-19 pandemic, when shifts in the job market—especially the rise of hybrid and work-from-home arrangements—led more people to move to Gabriola. Combined with rising living costs across North America and a very limited rental supply of just 11%, these pressures have made affordable housing even harder to find.

Gabriola Island Vision

A Community-Guided Process

In 2024, as part of their OCP Review, the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee initiated the Gabriola Visioning 2050 process to develop a long-range vision for the island's future. This community-driven initiative brought together a wide cross-section of Gabriolans to reflect on what they value most about the island and how it can evolve to meet future challenges and opportunities.

Through online surveys, focus groups, public meetings, and community-led events hosted by local organizations, more than 700 people contributed their voices. Participants represented the diversity of Gabriola Island - from long-time residents to newcomers, artists to farmers, youth to elders, business owners, environmental stewards, and housing advocates. The process encouraged open dialogue, collective problem-solving, and reflection on the long-term implications of today's decisions. The resulting vision reflects the shared aspirations of Gabriolans and is grounded in principles of ecological stewardship, equity, reconciliation, resilience, and community well-being.



Gabriola Island Vision Statement for 2050

By 2050, Gabriola Island is a sustainable, climate resilient, and inclusive rural community that respects Indigenous cultural heritage, protects ecological systems, encourages local food production and supports an active, healthy lifestyle. Guided by stewardship, reconciliation, and community collaboration, Gabriola Island balances human needs with the island's ecological limits. Walkable neighbourhoods, safe cycling routes, and extensive trails foster physical and social connection. Housing is diverse and affordable, transportation is low-impact, and nature-based solutions to climate change are embedded in how the Island grows, adapts, and thrives. Key themes include:

Environmental protection and climate resilience

- Growth is carefully aligned with ecological limits, including water supply, septic capacity, and climate risk
- Forests, wetlands, and recharge areas are protected through enforceable land-use tools, science-based mapping, and Indigenous-led stewardship
- Climate resilience is built through wildfire preparedness, low-impact forestry, water conservation, and shoreline protection

Physically active, healthy community

- A walkable village core, safe biking infrastructure, and well-connected trails support daily physical activity for all ages and abilities
- Community well-being is enhanced through parks, greenways, and gathering spaces that encourage movement and social interaction
- Low-impact transportation options, including the GERTIE community bus, to improve accessibility while reducing emissions

Housing diversity and sustainability

- A mix of housing types—small homes, suites, co-housing, and multi-unit dwellings—meets a range of needs across incomes and life stages
- Clustered housing near services supports aging in place, intergenerational living, and reduced vehicle use
- Development protects ecological features like forest cover, aquifers, and wildlife corridors

Active community engagement

- Gabriolans are actively involved in shaping their future through local planning, stewardship, and collective action
- Community support for local farms, businesses, and sustainability initiatives that strengthen economic and social resilience
- Public involvement fosters a strong sense of belonging and mutual responsibility

Respect for Indigenous Cultural Heritage

- Planning and land use decisions are informed by Indigenous knowledge and leadership
- Cultural landscapes and archaeological sites are protected and recognized as part of the island's shared history
- Reconciliation is ongoing and rooted in respect, awareness, and collaboration

Social equity, arts and culture

- Inclusive planning promotes belonging and access for all residents
- Community identity is enriched by vibrant arts, cultural expression, and support for creative initiatives

Resilient local economy

- Gabriola supports place-based, sustainable livelihoods that provide meaningful work for all generations
- Innovation and environmental responsibility underpin a resilient, community-oriented economy