SYOWT
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Islands Trust

APRIL 2022

Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt)
Village Area Plan

Engagement Summary

Gathers

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Executive Summary

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Who We Reached

Over 800 participants provided input in a far-reaching engagement process that sought community input on the future of Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt) Village. What was heard will be used to help create a vision, objectives, and policies in a Village Area Plan that will guide future development and change.

The process reached out to the broad public as well as specific agencies and community groups, including some of the demographics whose voices can go unheard in planning processes. The process heard from people of all ages, renters and home-owners, business owners and employees, and people belonging to equity-denied groups.

How We Reached Them

In addition to extensive outreach and promotions, engagement activities included an online survey (with hard/physical copies also available for participants), walkshops, online sessions, a drop-in "Ideas Fair", pop-up engagement around the village, and a conversation circle with underhoused residents.

Evaluations by participants on the quality of their experience with the engagement were largely positive.

What We Heard

Input was plentiful and diverse, however several themes emerged across the various engagement activities. The strongest themes are as follows:

Walkable Village

Some of people's favourite attributes of the village are its walking connections and the way they connect residents with places of nature or gathering. People enjoy bumping into neighbours and others while on foot.

At the same time, the village is currently seen as car-oriented and hostile to pedestrians. Participants want to see parking better managed, less congestion, and less vehicular traffic overall. People want the village to prioritize travel by foot (or bicycle or wheelchair) so that the experience is safe, accessible, and delightful, and better contributes to public life.

Affordable Housing

Affordability overall is a real concern on the island, with locals expressing fear that the village is decreasingly accessible to working families, seniors, young people, artists, and others. People see affordable housing as being a top priority, which could include rental, non-market, low-income, and seniors housing, and more. People who are currently inadequately housed have underscored this as a priority as well.

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Village Housing

Related to the topic of affordable housing, people want to see more housing generally in the village – including above commercial spaces – to provide homes for people employed in local businesses, to create more transportation choices, to support local businesses, and to create an active night life. People also understand that increasing residential density in the village helps prevent sprawl and fragmentation of habitat outside the village.

Public Life and Gathering Spaces

Some of peoples' favourite places in the village are those where they connect with other people and local culture. These spaces range from small sitting areas like those near the Treehouse, to the boardwalk and public parks. On the other hand, people want more spaces to informally gather in outdoor spaces, including in parks, streets, and in a potentially new/central gathering space like a village square. These spaces would provide opportunities for mingling, taking in events and the arts, celebrating local food, and more. People also want to see indoor community spaces, including spaces and amenities for youth.

Folks living rough and dealing with addictions and mental health challenges have suggested that new, welcoming public spaces – like communal kitchens and maker spaces – would improve life on the island.

Green Spaces and Natural Landscapes

Related to the "public life and gathering spaces" theme, people cherish the village's parks and other green spaces for coming together, respite, habitat/nature, active play and performances, and events. There is also some concern that some of these spaces are unkept and need better maintenance or beautification.

People wish to see more trees that provide shade and beauty, and more spaces for being in nature. Many responses spoke to healthy and/or restored natural landscapes and habitat areas.

Centennial Park

Centennial Park was one of the most commonly referenced places in the village. People describe the park as an important community gathering place near the water, one that has been vital to the village for many years. It was also identified more than any other space as having challenges, due to concerns about safety and comfort associated with off-leash dogs, drinking, drug use, and perceived aggressive behaviours.

At the same time, the folks living rough who use the park are aware that there is a stigma associated with them being there. However for underhoused people, public spaces like this one are important social spaces, particularly as there are little to no other places for them to gather and experience community.

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Local Businesses

People cherish local businesses, and the opportunities they bring for social interaction, enjoying food, taking in music and culture, and generally enjoying village life. Participants also value the historic importance and iconic nature of some businesses, and they see them as essential to local character and identity. People want to see more businesses – a high diversity of shops and retail destinations – and they want to support local products, local business owners, and local people.

Waterfront and Boardwalk

The harbour setting of the village – including the views, natural habit, sensorial experience of the water, and marina and docks – is greatly valued. People enjoy both the activities and respite offered by the Salish Sea. However people also want better public access to and along the water, and frequently mention the desire to see the boardwalk / habour walk completed. They aspire to have better views and opportunities to linger near the water.

Village Character

Participants value the village's unique character, with descriptions ranging from a historic, small-scale, "small town" atmosphere, to being quirky, whimsical, and organic in a way that is authentic and unpretentious. People envision strengthened character in the future, and recognize the importance that building character plays in overall streetscape quality and experience.

Other

Other themes that emerged include a desire for:

- genuine reconciliation, decolonization, and increased presence of Indigenous peoples and knowledge;
- vibrancy all day (including evenings) and all year;
- cleaner and better maintained public spaces, including in locations like Gasoline alley;
- more or improved public realm amenities like seating, waste receptacles, and toilets;
- improved sense of safety, particularly for children and families;
- continued support for the public library as a vital, inclusive community asset;
- more public art and creative spaces and venues for art and artists;
- an overall sense of inclusivity and welcome to all;
- better climate action in terms of both mitigation and adaptation, including preparing for sea level rise;
- expanded market opportunities and food production/culture; and
- a reimagined firehall.

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One community.
Many voices.

LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE VILLAGE TOGETHER.

Islands Trust



The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee is working with residents, businesses, and First Nations to create a vision and plan for the future of Ganges (Shiya'hwt/SYOW̲T) Village. The new plan will be shaped by the hopes and insights of the community. Public engagement begins this fall.

WE INVITE YOU TO GET INVOLVED

Before Dec 31: Complete the **survey** online or pick up a paper copy at 500 Lower Ganges Road

Dec 4: Join a **walking tour** of the village (register online)

Dec 5, 1-6pm: Drop by the **Community Ideas Fair** at the Public Library (129 McPhillips Avenue)

For dates, full details, or online survey access, scan here or visit

islandstrust.bc.ca/ganges

Shiya'hwt/SWOWT are the names of this place used by the Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples.

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A photo of walkshop participants discussing important community topics during one of two guided village tours.

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Introduction

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Engagement Objectives and Values

This report provides an overview of the engagement activities undertaken – and input received – between November 2021 and February 2022 as part of the Ganges Village Area Plan process. The planning process is intended to ensure development occurs in a coordinated, sustainable, and resilience manner in order to address issues impacting the social, economic, cultural, and environmental sustainability of Ganges Village.

The overarching objectives for this engagement were to launch the engagement process and to inform development of a vision, objectives, and overall plan. Additional engagement will occur once the vision and objectives are developed, to further inform the creation of the plan.

The engagement process was designed in a way that acknowledges that: people deserve to be part of the planning processes that affect their lives; people are experts in their own lived experiences and therefore have inherent expertise to share; and people's input strengthens the plan and planning process. Engagement also aligned with Islands Trust's values of inclusion, respect, community voice, transparency, innovation, whole and equitable involvement, and on-going evaluation.

Participation Level

The engagement level – as defined by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Framework's Spectrum of Public Participation – is "involve".

This means that the project team will *"work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered".*

The promise to the community is that *"we will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are collected and will directly be reflected in the alternatives developed. We will provide feedback on how public input influenced the draft and final plans."*

Engagement Activities

The engagement activities described in this document posed similar questions through through diverse channels and varied participation opportunities that included both virtual and in-person activities across the village.

Consistent with the engagement objectives and values, the desired outcomes of the following activities are to: raise awareness about the planning process; obtain input on assets, issues, aspirations, and ideas; and reach both the broad public as well as diverse participants, including equity-seeking voices often not heard in processes such as this one.



To raise awareness and reach broad participation, an invitational postcard was mailed to every household on the island.

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Outreach and Promotions

In an effort to reach as many people as possible to promote engagement opportunities and build awareness about the project, several outreach and advertising mechanisms were used.

Project Identity

A unique identity was created for the engagement program to capture the attention of the community, which included symbols and the project name of "Ganges (SYOWT/ Shiya'hwt) Gathers". The concept celebrates the community value of coming together, while also offering a call to action for people to gather together their ideas for the future. Graphics feature materials and objects traditionally used for gathering (i.e. baskets, pails, bags) with an implicit invitation for residents and others to "fill" these with their hopes and ideas for the village.

The project identity was created through input from the Task Force, and was integrated into all promotional and engagement materials.

Website

The project website was updated with the project identity, information about the process, and opportunities for engagement.

Poster

Dozens of posters were posted in high-traffic locations around Salt Spring Island. It included brief information about the process, as well as engagement events and opportunities. A link and QR code were included to direct people to the website and online survey.

Postcards

Postcards with the same information contained in the poster were mailed to every address on Salt Spring Island.

Newspaper Advertisements

Advertisements were printed in the Gulf Islands Driftwood (print version) that contained the same information as the poster/postcard. An advertisement was also included in the digital version of the Community Exchange Paper.

Emails

Community agencies and other groups were invited to participate in online workshops by email. Groups were sent invitations six weeks ahead of the workshops, and were also provided with follow up emails/reminders.

Emails to these groups also contained a link to the online survey as well as information on other participation opportunities. When relevant, recipients were encouraged to forward the email to their members.

Posters were pinned up inside local businesses and other visible communal locations, including popular spots such as the community pool.



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Community Survey

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Overview

A survey was launched in mid-November, with opportunities to participate both online and via hard copy (i.e. paper). The survey was advertised as being open until the end of the year, providing a 6-week participation period, however it was kept open a few weeks into the new year in order to allow for additional participation.

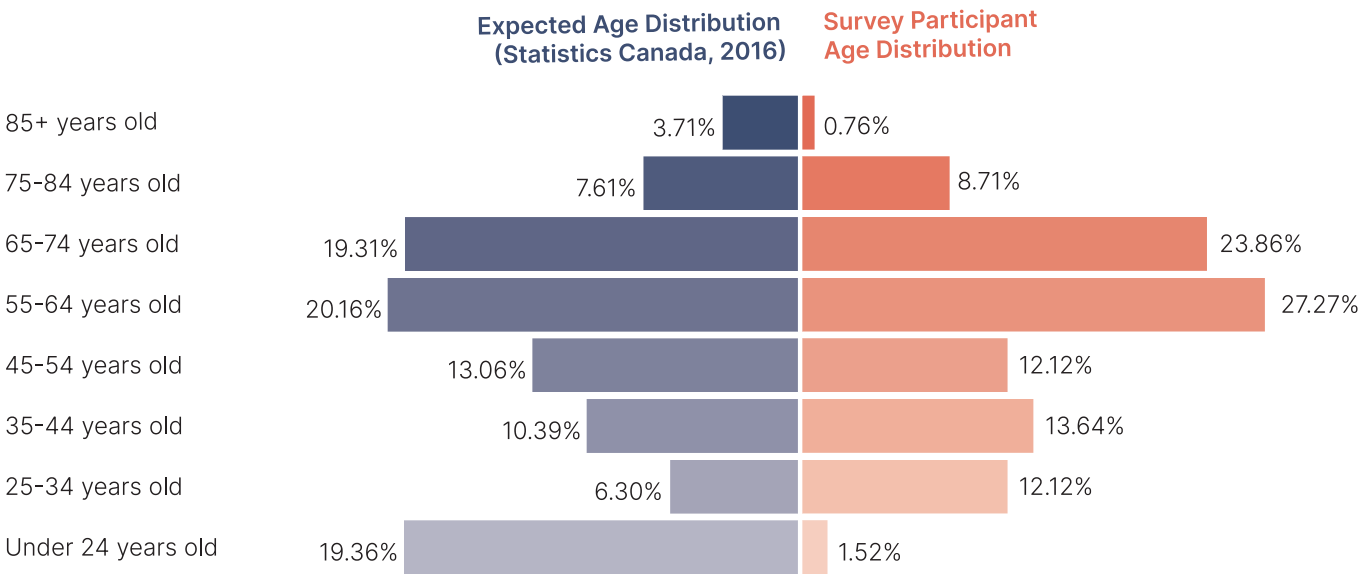
Participation was high, with 553 surveys completed. 550 were completed online, and three were completed on paper.

Approximately half of participants provided demographic information, which helps reveal which perspectives are included in the survey outcomes. They are:

Age

The survey included participation by all age groups except for those under the age of 18. Likewise, very few participants identified as students. This is common for surveys and was anticipated, so other engagement activities (e.g. in school engagement activities) were offered that effectively includes the perspectives of youth and children. Other age groups that were under-represented in survey were those between 18 and 24 years old, and those over 84 years old. Again, other outreach efforts sought to include these perspectives.

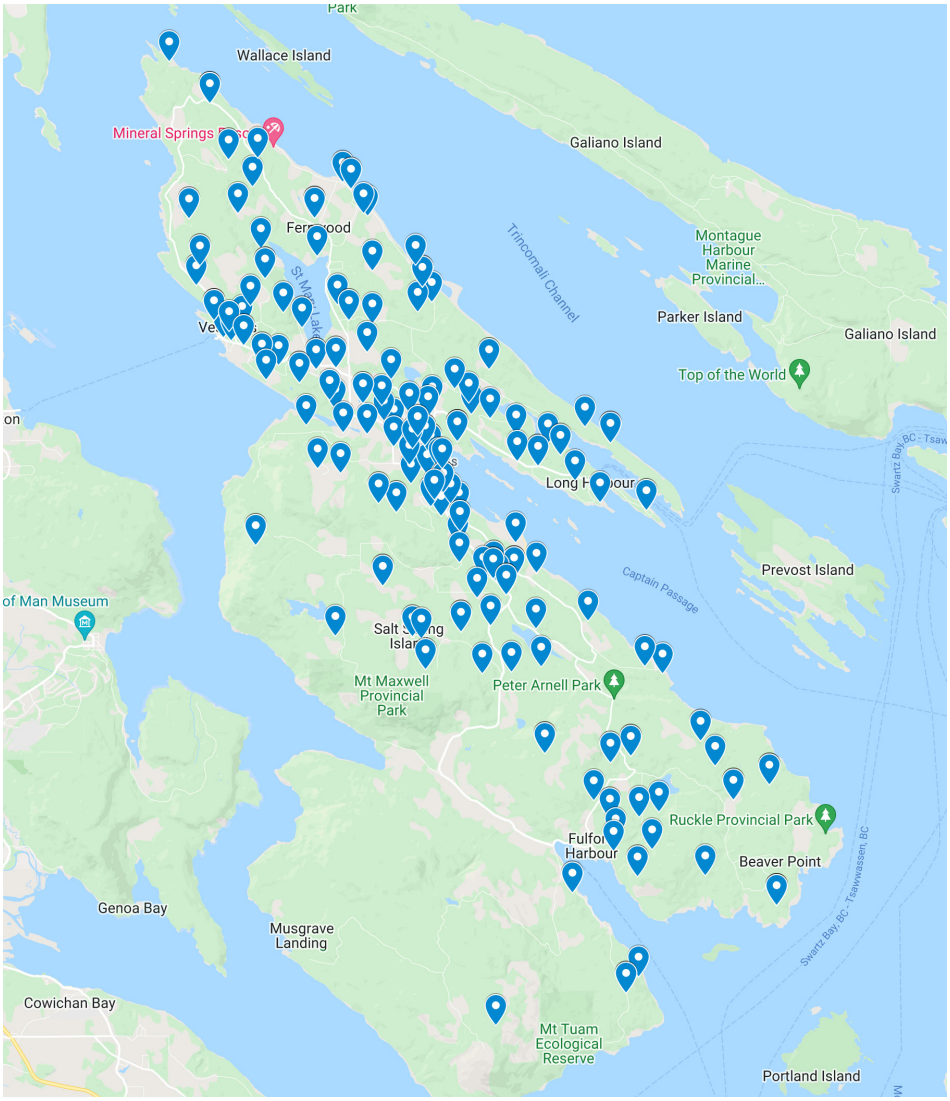
People between the ages of 55 and 64 years old, and 25 and 34 years old, were over-represented in survey participation, while other age groups were either representative or slightly over-represented.


Expected Age Distribution (Statistics Canada, 2016)
Survey Participant Age Distribution
85+ years old
75-84 years old
65-74 years old
55-64 years old
45-54 years old
35-44 years old
25-34 years old
Under 24 years old
3.71%
0.76%
7.61%
8.71%
19.31%
23.86%
20.16%
27.27%
13.06%
12.12%
10.39%
13.64%
6.30%
12.12%
19.36%
1.52%

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Location

Participants were invited to include their postal code, the results of which are shown in the map below. Nearly all participants reside on Salt Spring Island, with only 2.8% of valid postal codes being from off Island. In a related question, 28 participants identified as "visitors".



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Other Demographic Information

Among the participants providing demographic information:

- ~14% identified as renters, compared to ~25% on the island
- ~7% identified as low income compared with ~8% on the island
- ~3% identified as single parents, compared with ~13% on the island
- ~2% identified as Indigenous, compared with ~4% on the island
- ~1% identified as Black, compared with ~1% on the island
- ~2% identified as a Person of Colour, compared with ~4% on the island

As many of these participants belong to equity-denied groups, the engagement process was designed to include activities that would be effective at reaching more of these voices. Examples of activities included: workshops with agencies that work with equity-denied groups; a conversation circle with people experiencing homelessness, housing insecurity, and challenges with mental health and addictions; and pop-up engagement, which brought the engagement to the streets and public spaces around the village, capturing the input of passersby including those who might not otherwise participate in this engagement.

The survey heard from non-binary and LGBTQ2S+ people, and persons with disabilities, however it is difficult to ascertain whether participation is proportionate to island demographics because these data are not readily available. However the survey input of these groups – as well as those from the equity-denied groups listed above – has been filtered and reviewed to check for unique perspectives and views that would otherwise be diluted in the broader survey results.

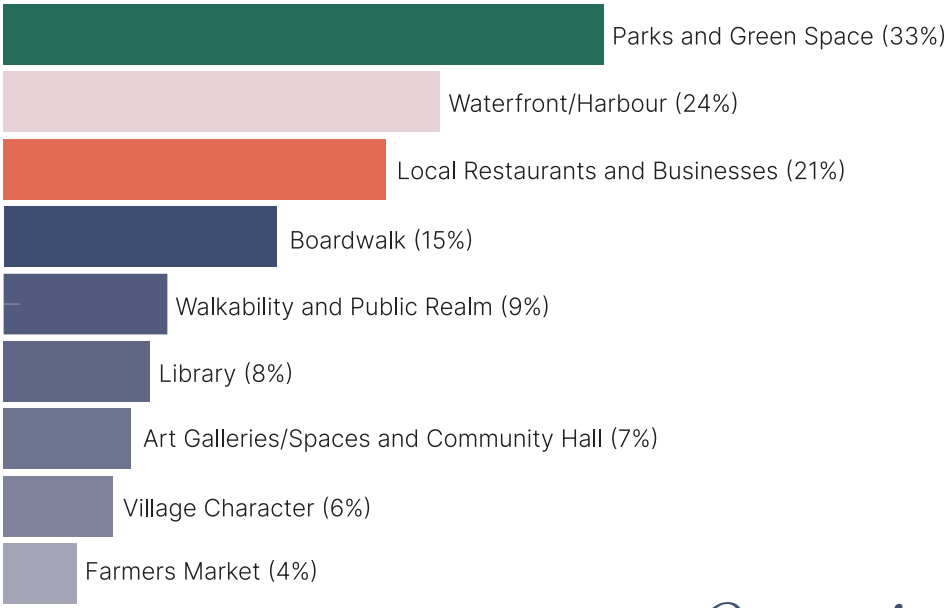
The survey also heard from retirees (~28% of participants providing demographic information), international immigrants (~13%), as well as both business owners and employees.

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How do you see Ganges (SYOWT/ Shiya'hwt) Village today?

What place do you cherish in the Ganges (SYOWT/ Shiya'hwt) Village?

Almost 300 responses to this question were received and coded by theme. The following chart presents the themes that were each mentioned more than 10 times, highlighting the proportion of responses that included each theme. Some responses included more than one theme.



Quotes in the following pages are representative of those received for each theme.

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Parks and Green Space

With almost one in three responses mentioning a park or green space, this theme emerged as the most dominant cherished place. By a wide margin, the most frequently cited park was Centennial Park. Participants value this space as a community hub and important gathering place near the water. Many participants reminisced about spending time in this park for many years, including as children, teenagers, and adults.

Other frequently mentioned parks were Mouat Park and the United Church Meadow. Grace Point Square was also commonly listed.

People value green spaces and parks as places for gathering and community (i.e. non-commercial spaces that are welcoming and "free" for everyone), respite, habitat/nature, active play and performances, and events ranging from bi-weekly markets to annual celebrations.

Centennial park, a gathering place, Saturday market, the children's playground, People gathering to play music and dance. A great family meeting and gathering place.

The little park behind island savings. It is typically a quiet spot and it's very nice to sit in the grass in the summer on your lunch break or with a coffee.

The common community gardens & spaces & parks-green spaces. Clean Places to visit, kids play & picnic.

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Waterfront/Harbour

Nearly one in four participants mention the waterfront/harbour in response to this question.

Specific attributes that were frequently mentioned include views out to the harbour, connections between land and water, natural habitat, the marina and docks, and public access to – and along – the water. Participants appreciate both the peaceful moments it offers, as well as the activities that take place there (e.g. float planes and boats coming and going).

People value the deeply sensorial experience of the Salish Sea – its smell, sounds, sight, and touch.

Participants appreciate how the water provides a uniquely beautiful, natural setting for the village. It provides respite, interest, and sense of place and history. It also helps set Ganges Village apart from other places.

I love the smell of the sea, the harbour activities with boats and seaplanes coming in and going out.

You can experience the Salish sea, look out and see islands, water. In places when the tide is low you can walk on the shore, see the water up close. Viewing and being near the water is soothing, reassuring. Having access to the water is extremely important to me.

The harbour location I cherish for its ancient association with Indigenous people. The tidal foreshore area and shoreline continues to exude a sense of deep connection to nature as the tide breathes to keep time.

The waters that surround Ganges, both fresh and salt, are the essence of place. I cherish that they exist, as beat up by humans as they are, and these waters give me hope that humans will plan to honour the waters above all else.

The water - from the docks, wharves, beaches, walkways.

I cherish the water view from above the information panels uphill from Harbour's End Marine. I have walked past this for 25 years in all seasons, all weathers, and it draws my attention and spirit out to sea. When I was a school teacher I often brought students down to the water's edge on impromptu "field trips". I know this place nourished them, as well.

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Local Restaurants and Businesses

Over one in five participants mention local businesses – usually food-related – in response to this question.

Participants value the businesses that comprise the commercial hub of Salt Spring Island, and specifically the mix of shops and services that can be found there. One of the most frequently cited business is Mouat's, given its long standing presence in the community and continued role as part of the community hub. Others mentioned include businesses that have an adjoining public or semi-public space such as a patio (e.g. T J Beans), or are proximate to other important public spaces such as the boardwalk (e.g. Treehouse).

Participants value the role that many local businesses play in bringing people together to eat, enjoy live music/entertainment, and socialize. They value the fact that the businesses themselves are locally owned by and employed with 'great' people.

Participants value the historic importance and iconic nature of some businesses, and specifically the buildings in which they are situated. There is a recognition that local businesses are an essential part of local character and identity.

I cherish small businesses like cafes, bakeries, designs shops and restaurants and hope to see more affordable lease options for young entrepreneurs.

Small artisanal businesses, such as Switchboard cafe and Francis bread, who authentically carry the spirit of Ganges and Salt Spring.

The small shops. The absence of all franchises (no Starbucks; no Tim's; no Macdonalds). We enjoy the wide veranda at TJ Beans coffee shop and how it functions as a 'gathering place'.

Mouats Home Hardware. It's been a staple for many decades... I "cherish" it because of its historic architecture, ambience and historical significance.

I love the Treehouse restaurant. I love it for its rustic-ness, the honoring of the tree, the food and its role as a gathering place and a place for local talent to perform. It brings people together.

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Boardwalk

The boardwalk is valued for the views and physical access it provides to the water. Specific locations frequently cited include the area near Mouat's and the Treehouse, as well as the stretch near Centennial Park. Participants value the boardwalk for both its access to more natural areas (e.g. beaches, shoreline, water) as well as to businesses and gathering places.

Many participants also reference the boardwalk's attributes of safety and "pedestrian only" as being important.

[The boardwalk near businesses is] a spot that allows for engaging and safe pedestrian-only traffic. Because it's somewhat removed from cars, it's easy for pedestrians to enjoy and peruse small businesses at their leisure, as well as to appreciate the unique beauty of the island's waterfront.

Interesting ocean action along the boardwalk, and the beach by Grace Islet is so peaceful.

The waterfront restaurants, especially The Treehouse and Oystercatcher, and the board walk that accesses them. I like to stroll along there on a summer evening, while waiting for a table, listening to the music, watching the boats and the visitors, and enjoying the uninterrupted view of the sunset.

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Walkability and Other Public Realm

There were many references to the walking experience of the village being important and – related – important public realm "moments" that exist in addition to those already described above.

Participants value the pedestrian connections throughout the village, particularly those that help bring people to places of nature or gathering while traveling on foot. People also enjoy bumping into neighbours and others in the village's public and pedestrian spaces.

Valued public realm spaces range from entire streetscapes like Gasoline Alley to small sitting areas like those near the Treehouse and ice-cream shop. People value these moments to rest, people-watch, and visit.

Ganges Village provides views of the ocean and nature that are second to none in most semi "urban" places, exquisitely beautiful, even splendid... and excellent for sitting, gathering with friends and pondering life.

The tree and bench by the corner of Mouat's store, facing Glads Ice Cream.

I cherish walking areas as it puts us all in closer contact with community. Conversations abound as people greet one another.

I love the quirky bridges and pathways that connect different parts of Ganges together (e.g. the park between switchboard and the bank, the bridge between the library and Barbs).

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Library

The library is valued as a welcoming place for all people, and is recognized as an important community asset. In addition to being valued as a place of reading and learning, it is valued as a place for community members to meet.

It's a free place where all can learn, discover, explore and connect in a welcoming environment.

The Salt Spring Library is the most beautiful, earthy library I've ever been in. It's so reflective of its natural environment, so progressive for a town this size, and such an amazing cornerstone of this community.

A warm and welcoming place for the complete demographic of Salt Spring: young, old, wealthy, low income, etc. Great resource for all, offering access to books, newspapers, wifi and internet access, desks, comfortable chairs. Rare on Salt Spring to have a big open indoor public space.

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Village Character

Participants value the village's unique character, with people offering different descriptions about what this constitutes. One of the most common references is to the "small town" atmosphere, and many mention the diversity and intimate scale of the built environment (e.g. small businesses and lower-rise buildings). Several people identity historic buildings as being iconic, and an important part of village character.

Many participants also greatly value the quirky, whimsical, organic (i.e. "unplanned") nature of the village. Participants feel that these qualities reflect the culture of the island, and convey a character that is approachable and unpretentious.

I cherish the village as is. It is small, intimate with a wonderful small town feeling.

All heritage buildings that are used as storefronts (switchboard, twang and pearl, moats home hardware) and the little shops in odd tiny spaces such as the getting place (and the shops beside it). The colours of the gasoline alley shops are another thing I love to see.

I cherish it for its shabbiness and complete lack of charm. Look anywhere, gravel in the gutters, chaotic sidewalks, the unfinished boardwalk, the faded road markings, cars parked halter skelter, people living in cars. Even the inhabitants look shabby. And the architecture, the place can't even decide what it wants to be, a down on its luck prairie town, or a strip mall somewhere in suburbia.

Local and authentic spirit, things being done in simple, non-corporate ways. The rustic and personal feel of this place is special and cherished.

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Other

There were also many comments that did not readily fit within the themes above. Each of the following received 10 or fewer mentions.

While people frequently list the **farmers markets** in their reasons for cherishing or valuing Centennial Park, they also sometimes independently/separately listed the markets.

People recognize that Indigenous peoples stewarded these territories for thousands of years, and mention the stone bowl, petroglyphs, middens, and burial grounds as important elements of this **Indigenous history** that remain. Many also speak of the importance of Indigenous presence today.

Participants value **Ganges Creek**, which weaves its way through the village. In addition to mentioning trees and habitat values as part of the valued "parks and green spaces" outlined above, participants also speak of the value of **hiking trails, natural features, and pockets of nature** in the village.

Participants value the **firehall** and the public spaces around it.

A number of participants also indicated that "cherish" might be too strong of a word to describe their feelings about different attributes of the village.

Finally, some participants value the village as a whole, unable to pick out a single place or attribute. They see the village a complication of elements that make it unique and well-loved.

The preservation of Grace Islet by Indigenous communities and allies was a great achievement. Glad to hear that interpretive panels with info about indigenous presence are being developed.

I cherish Ganges Creek that runs through town, along with the walking bridges that criss cross it before discharging out to the ocean.

I like coming down the hill to the village feeling of Ganges.

I love to walk, birdwatch and be among the trees.

[At the markets], I get to see friends and other people in the community and support local farmers on the island. I see it as a day in the week to plan around, to check in with what I want to eat for the week and which friends to see. I don't go to church so going to the market is when I get to see community and touch base with others.

Rock bowl in the (former) estuary of Ganges Creek. It reminds me of whose land this is and why we all need to work together to help protect it.

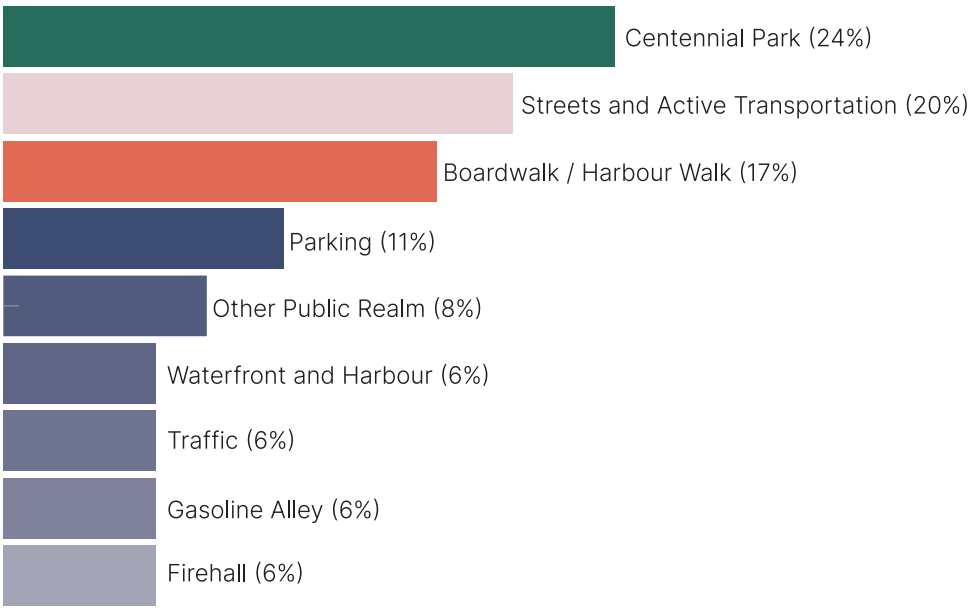
Loved the piano project, hugging signs outside Chamber of Commerce, hitchhiking signs at Embe, bench for musicians outside Embe, mural by Quw'utsun artist at library, Coast Salish welcome pole at SD64 grounds, the library, murals by Amarah Gabriel, the thousands of years of indigenous stewardship, the boardwalk, the walking trails, the farmer's markets, walkability, the community, places to meet each other and talk, the herring, the harbour and its fragile natural beauty and species, paddling.

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Challenged Area:

What place would benefit from improvement in the future?

Almost 280 responses to this question were received and coded by theme. The following chart presents the themes that were each mentioned more than 10 times, highlighting the proportion of responses that included each theme. Some responses included more than one theme.



Quotes in the following pages are representative of those received for each theme.

Gathers

Centennial Park

Just as in the “cherished places” portion of the survey, Centennial Park was the most frequently listed “challenged area”. Participants most frequently identified concerns about safety and comfort – for families and children in particular – due to off-leash/aggressive dogs, drinking, drug use, and perceived aggressive behaviours. Many participants also described the park as dirty and unkept, with places like the gazebo falling into disrepair.

Very poor lighting, especially in the evenings. Gazebo is rotting and falling down. Nothing there to attract anyone, very few planned activities, dogs running loose and pooping everywhere.

Drug use, litter, fights, dogs

I don't feel comfortable bringing my kid there alone if I'm not in a group of others. The off leash dogs that aren't supposed to be there have been scary. People smoking and doing drugs is not fun to be around.

Streets and Active Transportation

People characterize the village as car-centric – even hostile to pedestrians – with poor infrastructure for walking, cycling, wheelchair use, and other forms of active transportation. Participants are concerned by the poor condition of sidewalks and crosswalks, or the lack thereof. Many indicated accessibility concerns, noting that walking is especially hazardous for older people and those with mobility challenges.

In addition to safety and accessibility challenges, participants note that the car-centric nature of the village makes it noisy, less attractive/enjoyable, and a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

Ganges is too car focused. Bikes lanes in Ganges would help this. I live close to town yet feel nervous walking or even riding my bike. Ganges should be progressive and have better pedestrian and bike access.

We need proper side walks and ramps to accommodate our disabled community members, parents with strollers and the elderly.

Pedestrians beware whenever crossing any road! Cyclists beware...the flow of traffic cuts right through the "heart". Town caters to cars.

Boardwalk / Harbour Walk

Due to its frequent mentions, the boardwalk was categorized separate from other references to active transportation, public spaces, and the waterfront. People want to see the boardwalk finished and better maintained, in order to enable better public access to and enjoyment of the waterfront. Participants wish to have more views of the harbour, with opportunities to sit and gather along the boardwalk.

A completed boardwalk from Moby's all the way to Gasoline alley. Wide enough for wheelchairs, lots of walking, and baby strollers.

The boardwalk has never been finished! Other small towns have beautiful accesses to the waterfront,

It is a wasted opportunity for the residents of Ganges, Salt Spring and visitors to enjoy the fantastic vistas of the waterfront as a place to recreate, socialize and commute by foot.

Syowt
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Parking

Most references to parking were related to concerns about its unwelcomed dominance of space and aesthetic in the commercial core. The large parking area at Grace Point Square was most frequently mentioned. Participants also raised concerns about accessibility, lack of trees/shade, and overall lack of visual appeal. Many indicated that parking should be consolidated or situated outside of the commercial core.

A much smaller proportion of parking comments were in relation to the lack of parking availability, with specific reference to the summer months / tourist season.

The big parking lot by Thriftys, Mouats, etc. I want a Ganges that is pleasant to walk in. I don't like dodging cars, they seem to have the right of way.

Moving a parking lot from the centre of Ganges. It's like having a parking garage for our main feature.

Presently Saturdays there is little or no parking available. Used to be just in the summer months but now it is almost every Saturday.

Other Public Realm

Several comments about public realm were provided that fall outside the themes already listed above. These include references to parks other than Centennial (though with no themes emerging for any particular park), as well the need for more public realm amenities such as seating, waste/recycling receptacles, water fountains, and landscaping including flowers and trees. Many felt that public spaces look unattractive or unkept, and called for beautification of the village. There were a handful of comments that also called for more public art.

Downtown looks shabby. The streets are not cleaned; lines are not painted; often garbage cans are overflowing. Lighting in Grace Point Square is way too dark. Hanging baskets in the summer say we care. Look at places like Sidney. They have beautification projects. We need them too.

The skatepark is in need of maintenance and upgrades as the major youth area on the island.

Visually a mess with no coordination of street amenities, landscaping, pedestrian-friendly areas, architectural guidelines.

Syowt
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Waterfront and Harbour

In reference to the waterfront and harbour, participants raised concerns about upkeep of the marina and public areas. Many referenced garbage and pollution, and overall ecosystem damage and habitat loss.

Participants also feel there are currently insufficient opportunities to access, view, and linger at the waterfront.

The splendid views and scenic values of the waterfront are lost as folks can't get from one end to the other. No access to the best beach in town.

Really the entire water front requires improvement where it is possible - from the bottom of Ganges hill to the intersection of Lower Ganges and Robinson. It currently is mostly shabby, not accessible, and under developed.

Ganges Harbour needs care. On the beach between Moby's and the Marina, near Moby's especially is strewn with styrofoam bits and some garbage. All along the shoreline this kind of garbage needs detailed clean up.

Traffic

Related to the “streets and active transportation” theme, concerns about traffic specifically were mentioned by many participants. People are concerned about congestion, bottlenecks at unsafe intersections, and speeding. Some participants indicated a need for traffic calming, providing suggestions such as boulevard trees and roundabouts.

In general the whole village feel is compromised by the traffic going through town. The main road is cutting the village in half.

Ganges would benefit from far less traffic funnelling through the village. The traffic divides the village core and is not compatible with pedestrian use.

Too many cars, no crosswalks, too many cars in Ganges.

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Gasoline Alley

Some participants indicated that Gasoline Alley is neglected and appears unkept. Several comments were also in relation to the adjacent Centennial Park.

Centennial park / Ganges alley - needs to be safe and free from being hassled or abused.

It can be so much more and seems to require more space to function at its full potential. It has great potential for an outdoor local shopping centre.

Gasoline Alley needs an upgrade that is more conducive for the market. In poor shape.

Firehall

Comments relating to the firehall were often in relation to it being derelict, with many references also including the surrounding parking area, which was identified as being visually unappealing. Some called for a new firehall, or for the rehabilitation and/or relocation of the existing one.

Others identify the currently unrealized potential of this building and space to be a community hub.

The existing firehall is a landmark and should be preserved and kept in public ownership once fire dept gets their new building.

The fire station is unattractive and badly located in a busy area. It should be moved.

People disagree on the need for a new firehall. The potential replacement options are even less agreeable.

Syowt
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Other

There were also many comments that did not readily fit within the themes above. Each of the following received 10 or fewer mentions.

Participants reference the **lack of residential density** – and the need for more housing including units above commercial spaces – as a challenge for village vitality (including in evenings), affordable housing, and sprawl including natural areas. A need for a greater diversity of uses and destinations was also mentioned, Inappropriate planning and zoning were identified as related challenges.

Related to the other comments above about public realm and other public spaces, participants expressed a need for **more gathering places**, including indoor and community/non-commercial spaces.

Participants identify homelessness and **overall lack of affordability** in the village as challenges. They are also concerned that the village is increasingly accessible only to wealthy residents and tourists.

Some indicated colonization and a **lack of Indigenous** presence as a concern.

Related to concerns about the waterfront, challenges of **ecological damage** or lack of appreciation of natural assets (e.g. Ganges Creek) were also mentioned. Some participants also raised concerns about **sea level rise and flooding**, and the significant impact it would have on the village. Others referred to issues of **water management** and sustainability, as well as wood smoke.

Some called for **improved governance models/structures**.

Several comments indicated that the **entire commercial core or village itself** is challenged, often in relation to physical appearance. On the other hand, many comments related specifically to a diversity of **individual buildings, properties, or sections of rights of way**. These comments tended to focus on poor aesthetic and physical condition.

I feel the housing in Ganges should be densified so that the core becomes more energized and creates activity that supports the businesses. This could alleviate the housing shortage and revitalize Ganges Village.

Current zoning discourages multi family housing, having a vibrant populated town centre with retailers that thrive and prevents affordable housing.

More Indigenous presence. Street names art, murals, education.

I would like to see the community provide a dry/ warm place for homeless/ boat people to gather--I would like to see a drop-in center for this population. A place where homeless can receive mail, take a shower.

Preparing the shoreline for rising sea level, otherwise it won't matter what 'improvements' are done to human structures because we will simply be offloading the problem to future generations. Create walking-only pathways nearshore and move all building/roads upslope. If the response is 'this is too big, too expensive', then at least write a letter to the upcoming generations explaining why you left the well-understood problem for them.

Syowt Ganges Shiya'hwt

Imagine:

Pause for a moment and imagine what your ideal village would be like.

Please describe that ideal village.

275 participants responded to this question. Responses were more multifaceted than those received in the other questions, with many themes often embedded within each response. Some themes refer to a physical element of the village, while others refer to a non-tangible attribute or quality.

These themes were coded and are outlined below in order of prominence, with the strongest themes near the top.

Walkable

By far the strongest theme, approximately half of comments referenced walkability. People want the village to prioritize ¬– or at least significantly improve – the experience of people travelling on foot. Participants want the experience to be safe and delightful, and to strengthen public spaces and public life.

Many people called for pedestrian-only areas, while others referred to controls to minimize traffic and parking. Participants described wide, complete, continuous, well-connected, and accessible sidewalks. They also described safe cycling lanes and facilities.

Many participants comment on the links between walkability and land use mix, residential intensification, public realm amenities, and a high quality built form. These topics are described on the following pages.

An additional 13 comments called for improved transit or shuttles. An additional 12 comments called for a bypass that reroutes traffic around/outside of the village core.

Public Gathering Places

One in five responses referred to spaces for community gathering and/or lingering in public. About half of these comments related specifically to public outdoor spaces, including references to a village square or new or improved park spaces. Covered / rain-protected spaces were frequently mentioned, as well as spaces for sitting and resting.

The other half of these comments were in relation to indoor community spaces for coming together and mingling, such as a community centre, cultural centre, and traditional gathering lodge.

Village Housing

Almost one in every six responses referred to more housing in the village, and often specifically homes above commercial spaces. Participants often spoke of increasing density and taller buildings (i.e. 2-4 storeys), including in mixed-use settings.

People commonly referenced housing that provides homes for people employed in local businesses, creates more transportation choice (i.e. as more residents would be able to walk to work), and supports an active nightlife.

Trees, Natural Landscapes, and Green Spaces

Almost one in every six responses fall within this theme. These included references to more trees that provide shade and beauty, and more landscaping and green spaces generally. People describe spaces for being in nature. Other responses speak to healthy and/or restored natural landscapes and habitat areas, including the harbour, creek, and other riparian areas, and with the prevalence of indigenous plant species.

Local Businesses

Again, almost one in every six responses referred to local businesses, namely the experience of patronizing them. Comments were often in relation to cafes/restaurants/food trucks and sidewalk patios, and linked these spaces with opportunities for social interaction, taking in music and culture, and generally enjoying village life.

People referenced a high diversity of shops and businesses, with a focus on local products, local business owners, and supporting local people (e.g. and not “chain” stores). A few participants also noted the importance of supporting entrepreneurs more generally.

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Waterfront Access and Boardwalk

Participants describe a readily accessible waterfront, in which people can visit, linger, socialize, and travel along it. The large majority of comments related to the waterfront include reference to a boardwalk that safely and enjoyably connects people along the edge of the waterfront. Some participants describe access to waterfront views.

Vibrant (All Day and All Year)

Several comments were shared about a vibrant village – one that is dynamic, bustling, and thriving. Participants described a village with an active night life, with extended business hours, and destinations and events that create an evening draw. Many called for year round vibrancy as well.

Clean and Well-Maintained

Participants describe a waterfront, parks, and other public spaces that are well-maintained and clean. References are often made to tidying up garbage, addressing pollution, and restoring otherwise unkept places.

Public Realm Amenities

Participants refer to more and/or high quality amenities in the public realm, such as lighting, waste receptacles, flower baskets, toilets, and decorative elements like water features and street banners. People identify these amenities as important to creating a cohesive and attractive character in the village, and often reference links to walkability, safety, and cleanliness.

Safety

Participants describe a safe village, often in reference to Centennial Park and seeing the elimination of public drug use, off-leash dogs, and aggressive behaviours. Participants often specifically refer to a village that is safe for families and children.

Built Form Character

The character of buildings was referenced many times, with reference given to them having a human scale (e.g. low rise with friendly relationship to the public realm), being bright and colourful, having a west coast ambience, and having character overall. Some called for an eclectic and funky character, while others called for a continuity in building design. Several referenced the importance of building character to the quality of the streetscape.

Gathers

Art, Artists, and Artisans

These references ranged from public art such as murals, to busking and other ways in which music can be enjoyed in public and semi-public spaces. Participants spoke of creative spaces, studios, galleries, and venues for arts and culture, as well as to supporting artists more generally.

Affordable Housing and Housing Options

Participants describe housing that is affordable for working families, seniors, and low income people. References were often made to rental, non-market, and live-work housing, as well to housing that meets the needs of diverse people and lifecycles ranging from young professionals to the elderly.

Many affordable housing references were linked to references to increasing residential density in the village, including in homes above commercial spaces.

Inclusive and Welcoming

Participants describe a welcoming, inclusive, kind, and community-minded village. References are made to being welcoming to all ages, incomes, and ethnicities. References range from providing supports and services for people who are unhoused and dealing with addictions, to supporting young families with more daycare and play options.

General affordability is also referenced. Some describe catering to all people rather than just the wealthy or tourists (though others note the importance of tourism to the village). The affordable housing comments are related but have not been included here because they are described above as a standalone, dominant theme.

Likewise, an additional 11 comments were made about age-friendliness and physical accessibility of the village.

Parking

While most references to parking related to scaling it back or moving it – as noted in the "walkable village" theme description – a number of comments were received that spoke to improving its access or functionality. For example, a few participants described a parkade that consolidates parking either within the village or outside of it.

Reconciliation and Indigenous Presence and Knowledge

Participants called for genuine reconciliation. Reference was given to valuing and working with Indigenous knowledge, and to heightening awareness of Indigenous history on the island. Many comments spoke to the presence of Indigenous peoples today, including through art, cultural expression, businesses, and in "lived shared experiences".

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Climate Action

References are made to both climate change mitigation (e.g. green buildings, renewable energy) and climate change adaptation (e.g. planning for sea level rise). Net zero emissions planning/design is also described.

Market and Food Production

Some participants referred to a year round covered or indoor food market, community gardens, and edible landscaping.

Reimagined Firehall

Some references are made to redeveloping the current Firehall into a central public space, community centre, and/or market.



Gathers

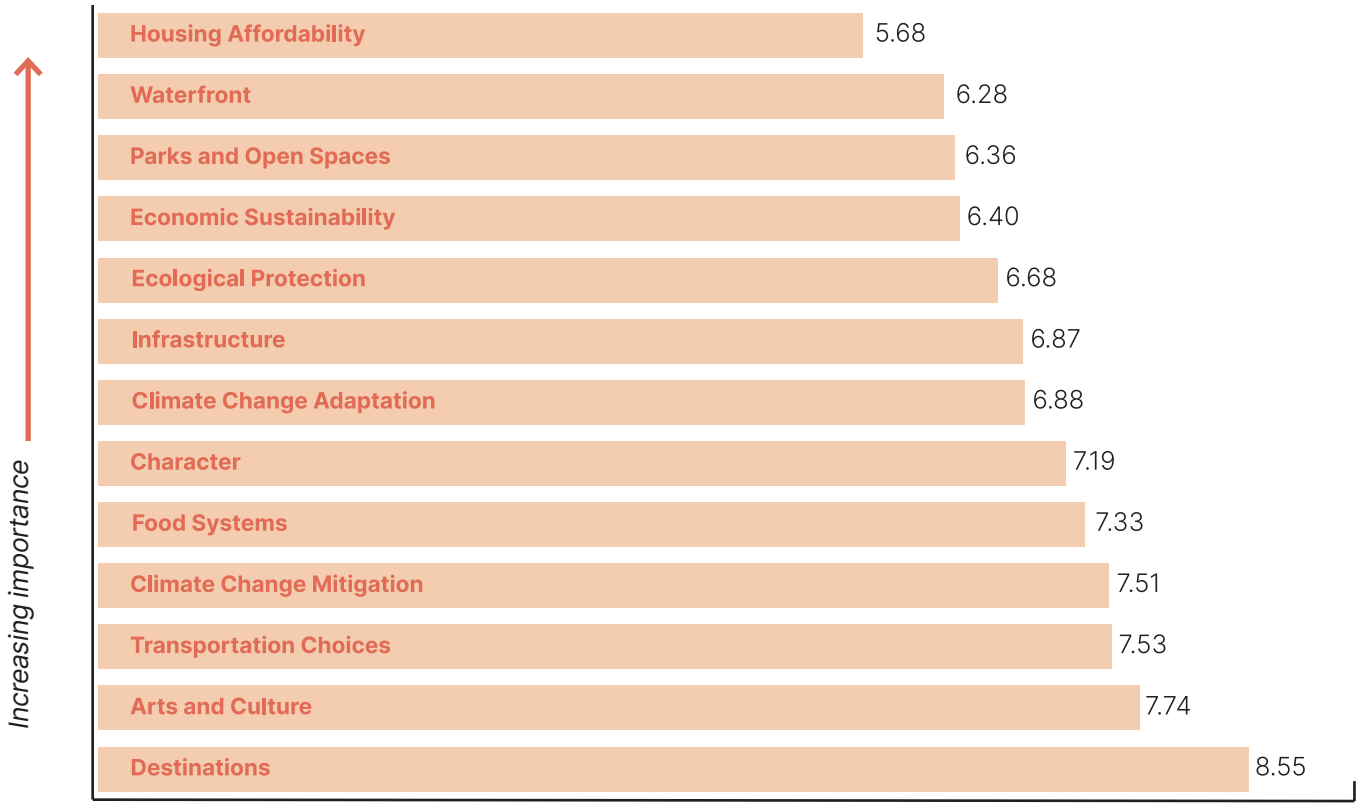

Map It
INSTRUCTIONS
Sharpie
ELLY HANSEN

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Priorities

A plan helps address a wide range of community priorities. Which ones are most important to you?

Overall, the highest rated priority was “affordable housing”, followed by the “waterfront”, “parks and open spaces”, and “economic sustainability”. The lowest rated priority was “diversity of year round destinations” however it is important to note that the overall ratings were fairly similar across the priority areas. In other words, the difference between the highest rated priorities and lowest rated priorities was fewer than three places out of 13.



Gathers

The standard deviations – which is a measure of how much the responses deviate from one another – reveal that some themes received very similar rankings across participants, while others were more polarized. The greatest alignment in the rankings across all participants was for the priority areas of “arts and culture” and “parks and open space”, where most participants ranked these similarly. The least alignment was for the priority areas of “climate change mitigation” and “climate change adaptation”. This means that many participants rated them very high (i.e. first or second), and several participants rated them very low (12th or 13th).

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Other Priorities

129 participants identified other priorities not included in the list provided. The ones most frequently offered included:

- Decolonization and reconciliation
- Streets and other public spaces (e.g. calmed traffic, accessibility, car-free spaces, bike lanes, parking situated outside of downtown, completion of boardwalk, pedestrian safety)
- Adding housing and density to village
- Addressing homelessness (e.g. providing washrooms and other facilities, safety, services, housing)
- Inclusivity and welcoming (e.g.age-friendly town / activities and facilities for kids, teens, families / planning for disabled and BIPOC people)
- Public safety
- Improved governance

Other priorities mentioned either once or a small handful of times included: implementing the plan with integrity; other housing; more evening and year-round activities; less signage; focusing on non-wealthy residents; rewilding; parks with natural areas/ habitat; sports and recreation; food culture; food security; provision of bathrooms and garbage facilities; sea level rise; beauty; pollution abatement (e.g. noise, light, exhaust); growth management (e.g. village expansion, population management); highway maintenance; emergency preparedness and services; reflecting true history with emphasis on First Nations; eliminate wood burning (as part of GHG reduction); waterfront access; car-free ferry services; water infrastructure; tourism; shoreline restoration; harbour clean-up; and engaging artists in built form design.

Many participants indicated that the priority areas are related and/or mutually-reinforcing, and should therefore be addressed together.

Streets and Other Public Space! Streets are the most critical park of the village -- it's the public space where so much the social, cultural and logistical parts of village life come together. This is where buildings connect with transportation, parks, etc. Streets are also an excellent measure of success. If you design and plan great streets -- where people come together, move around and linger with ease and enjoyment -- you've designed and planned a great village.

Decolonization: foregrounding Indigenous history and presence in Shihawt with interpretive signage, art, and revenues back to First Nations i.e. a portion of property taxes paid to FN.

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Gathers

In-Person Village Activities

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Overview

To complement the online survey and promote visibility of the area planning process, a series of engagement activities were hosted in and around the village from December 2nd to December 5th, 2022. These included an afternoon Community Ideas Fair hosted at the public library, which invited participation in diverse stations such as interactive mapping, design activities, prioritization exercises, "big ideas" brainstorms, children's activities, and more.

Approximately **28 residents participated in the Ideas Fair and over 100 residents offered input through pop up stations.**

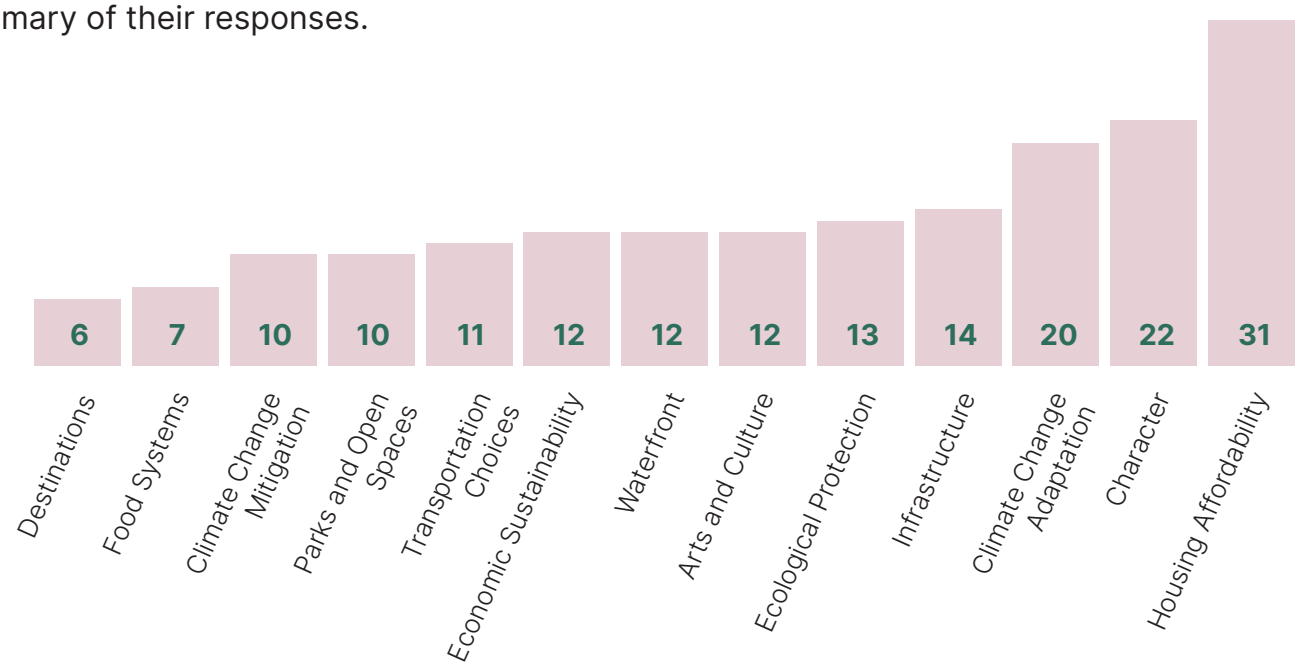
The following pages summarize the input that was gathered through these various efforts.

As several questions were overlapping in nature between pop ups and the activities of the Ideas Fair, the responses have been combined for efficiency. These include Priorities, Vision, Honouring First Nations Territory, and Mapping.

Priorities

Participants were asked to identify their top five most important priorities for the future of the village across 13 categories. Below are a summary of their responses.

Participants were also offered the opportunity to share other priorities not listed. No participants provided additional priorities.



Gathers

Pop ups offer the opportunity for passersby to share their ideas, perspectives, and experiences in a fun and casual way.



Interactive pop up stations were set up in three different locations over two days: on the sidewalk outside Creekhouse, in front of Country Grocer, and in the lobby of Rainbow Road Aquatic Centre.

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Vision

Participants were asked to describe what their ideal Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt) Village would be like. The following themes emerged, with representative comments highlighted under each category.

Vibrant Public Life

- *"A place to gather also in evenings"*
- *"Lots of village activities"*
- *"Creative vibrant friendly"*
- *"Promote arts district"*
- *"Communal spaces"*
- *"Indigenous artwork"*
- *"More music!"*
- *"Outdoor covered areas for the winter / rain"*
- *"A place full of life!"*
- *"A quiet, natural setting with amenities for walking, picnics, and community groups"*

Village Character

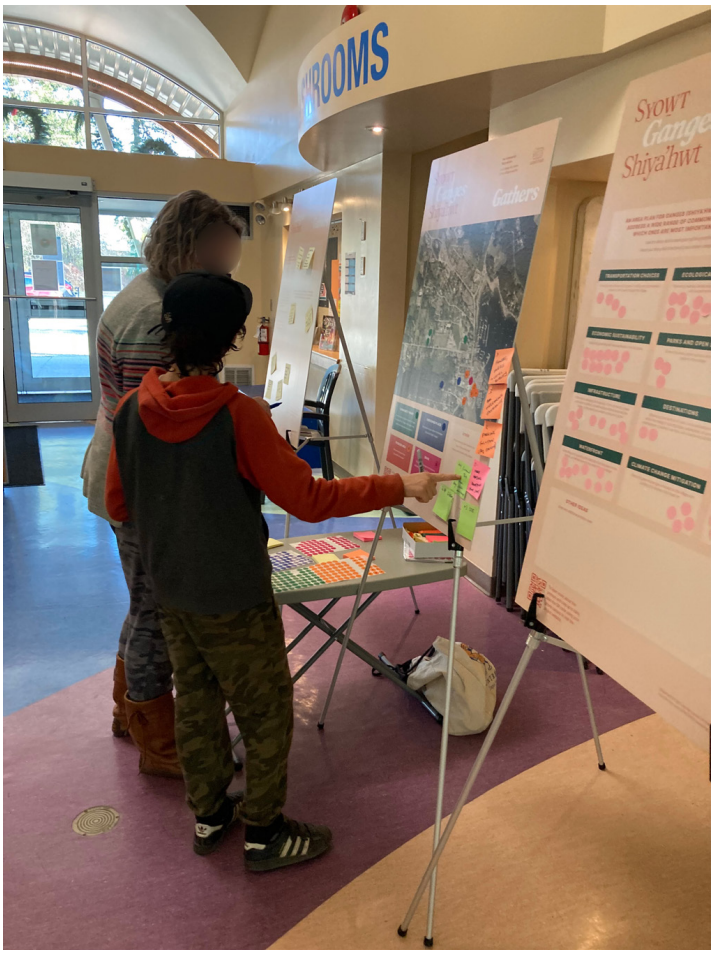
- *"Beautiful plantings"*
- *"Maintain historic small-town character"*
- *"More colour. Everything bright colours"*
- *"Individuality – colours – don't lose our uniqueness"*
- *"Make Ganges an arts village – connecting all arts facilities, vibrant murals, etc."*

Moving Around the Village

- *"Pedestrian only downtown, as well as service vehicles"*
- *"Park and then walk. Shuttle?"*
- *"Bus accessibility for seniors"*
- *"Access to the water"*
- *"Boardwalk"*
- *"Cycling safety"*

Gathers

Community members sharing their ideas following a swimming lesson.



Village Opportunities

- *"Fire hall as a public building"*
- *"A community indoor centre in Ganges available to all – a warm indoor hangout"*
- *"Low cost housing and senior housing close to village"*
- *"More people / residential access in town"*
- *"Smaller stores / live-work zoning"*
- *"Mixed-use, diverse, complete community and cultural tourism destination"*
- *"A space for the community to support and engage with one another"*

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Honouring First Nations Territory

Participants were asked how the new plan could honour Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples and their unceded territories.

The project team understands that **this question is best answered by Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples.** The Islands Trust has been in communication with the many Nations whose unceded territories encompass the village to determine how each would like to participate in the planning process.

Many comments from participants shared this perspective, highlighting the importance of asking First Nations as a starting point for reconciliation. Many also called for land to be given back.

Based on this, the value of this question rested primarily in raising awareness among settlers about the village being situated on unceded territories, and offering an opportunity to reflect on what that could mean for the planning process.

From other participant responses, several thematic areas emerged. These are summarized to the right with accompanying representative comments.

Gathers

Cultural facilities and other opportunities for community education and learning

- *"Somewhere to learn more about SSI or Ganges before colonization. Museum?"*
- *"Gathering place – learn, celebrate, inform"*
- *"Maybe create special places for reflection"*
- *"Get us all together to learn and share and respect."*

Processes and other engagement considerations

- *"Invite them to everything"*
- *"Arrange their transport to and from"*
- *"Respect archaeological resources and provide interpretive opportunities throughout village *especially shoreline"*

Visibility and language

- *"Names in English and Indigenous languages"*
- *"Add Indigenous names everywhere plus phonetic welcome sign as well"*
- *"Murals? / arts"*
- *"Mouat Park renamed Settlers' Park"*
- *"Interpretive signage and centre"*
- *"Return the village to its traditional name"*



All communication material supporting this process included the names of this place used by the Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples.

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Mapping

Participants were asked to identify important locations on an aerial map of Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt) Village, across five categories: Community Hearts, Cherished Places, Problem Areas, Ideas, and Other. Thematic responses for each category are highlighted on the following pages.

Community Hearts

- *"Salt Spring Island Public Library"*
- *"ArtSpring programs and arts shows"*
- *"Rainbow Road Aquatic Centre"*
- *"Salt Spring Elementary"*
- *"Farmers Market"*
- *"Harbour area 'Hanging out at the docks'"*

Cherished Places

- *"ArtSpring"*
- *"Salt Spring Island Public Library"*
- *"Green spaces, including Mouat's Park."*
- *"Waterfront/shoreline/harbour and the need for it to be protected"*
- *"Beach area beyond Grace Point Sq."*

Ideas

- *"Bypass to remove commercial traffic from the village"*
- *"Traffic lights in the downtown"*
- *"Curated, safe, encouraged "hitchhiking" stops in town (i.e. car stops)"*
- *"Make waterfront more accessible. Waterfront boardwalk."*
- *"Maintain handicap parking. Not everyone can walk"*
- *"Greater connection between upper Ganges and village core"*
- *"Beachfront walkway widened and seating installed"*
- *"Tactical urbanism wayfinding i.e. paint direction. Commission artists to design lighting and wayfinding directional art."*
- *"Re-development of fire hall and park area to create large plaza and green space in environmentally adaptive ways"*
- *"Year-round covered farmers market"*
- *"More housing downtown (above shops)"*
- *"Repurpose Middle School as low-cost housing for much needed staff (hospital site)"*
- *"Expansion of ArtSpring"*
- *"Support multi use artist / guild spaces. Annual or seasonal."*
- *"Ecological protection of Walter Bay / Estuary"*
- *"Need to accept water supply and sewage capacity limits"*
- *"Interpretive centre, including First Nations and ocean-related learning opportunities"*



Problem Areas

- *"Propane Beach"*
- *"Better flow / pedestrian safety downtown"*
- *"Parking solution"*
- *"Centennial Park. Off-leash dogs, public drunkenness."*
- *"Large areas of private ownership along the waterfront"*
- *"Sea level – plan for 20-year rise. Flood adaptation – move development."*

Other

- *"Road improvements for cyclists"*

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Ideate Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt)

This activity station invited participants to work with a graphic facilitator to sketch their ideas for the future of the village. The following pages summarize several thematic categories that emerged from participant conversations. Some of the output generated during these co-creative discussions are also provided.

There is a need to **improve the quality and efficiency of the road network** in the village:

- Potential interventions include traffic calming and narrowing with restorative plantings and creative practices
- Possibility of introducing a sidewalk on the water side (east edge) of Lower Ganges Road or connect and repair the boardwalk

The fill area below the village core is **vulnerable to flooding**. Several potential solutions for mitigation were explored, including:

- A dike along the water's edge
- Fill in/raise over time with small development
- Developing the site with structured parking and cisterns below new businesses and homes (concern this would be like a mall as village centre)

A large portion of these conversations focused around **water challenges and potential solutions** for the village, including:

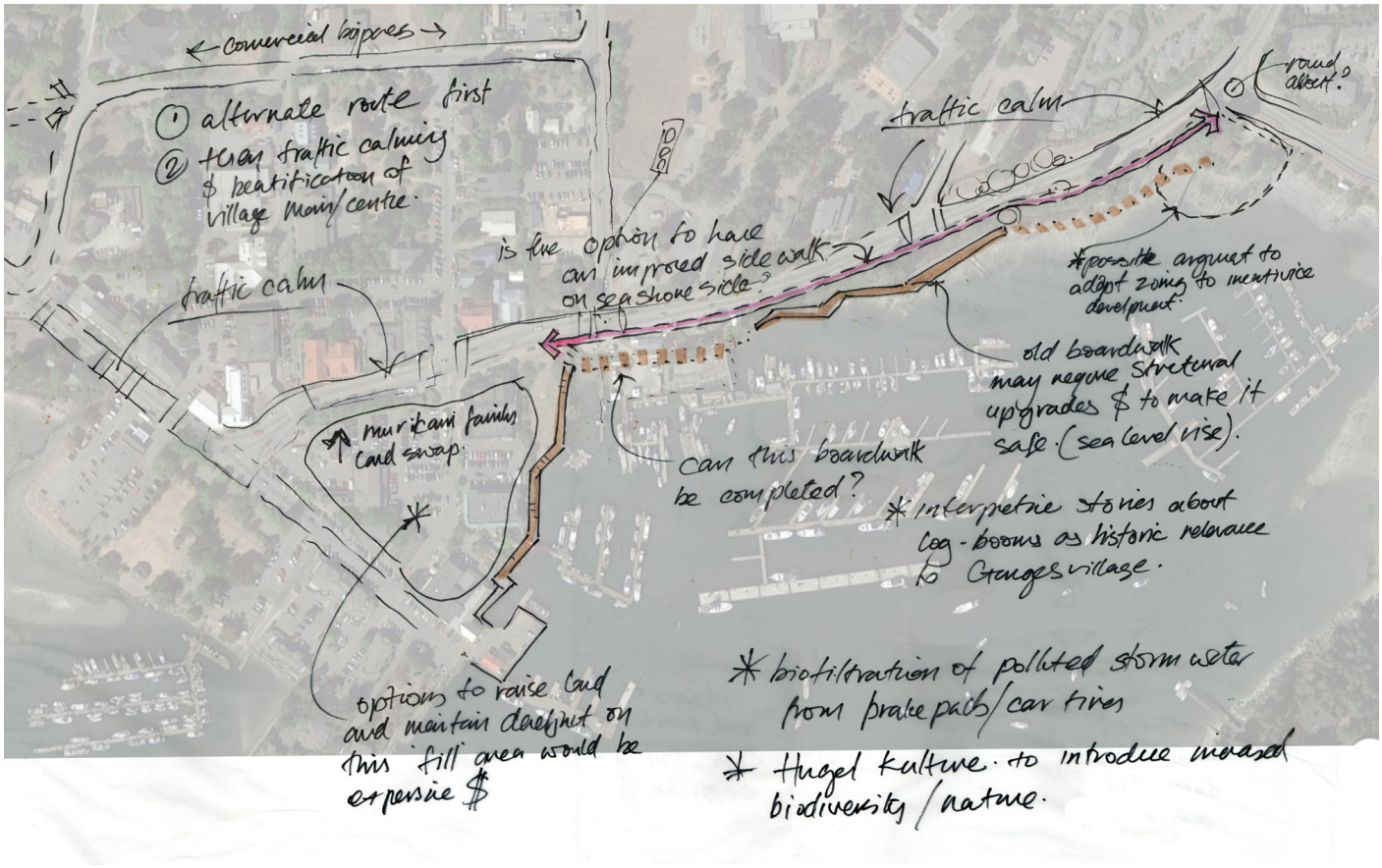
- Capture and store (sometimes it's dry for months)
- Increase capacity in lakes (affects many private land titles)
- Access more ground water (this is limited, should preserve for affordable housing sites)
- Desalinization (this is energy consumptive)
- Water treatment plant, recovery from sewage for irrigation

Participants suggested exploring pedestrian centred streets with limited car access.

- The space between Centennial Park and the Fire hall was identified as a strong local example that blends park space, public streets, and a potential redevelopment site.

Housing is currently limited in the village core. Some residential buildings are within walking distance.

- Opportunity to create a loop, linking potential BC housing-type developments, with live work studios and a makers mews connecting the various spaces.



The above graphic depicts some possible future interventions to improve the pedestrian experience within the village.





SYOWT
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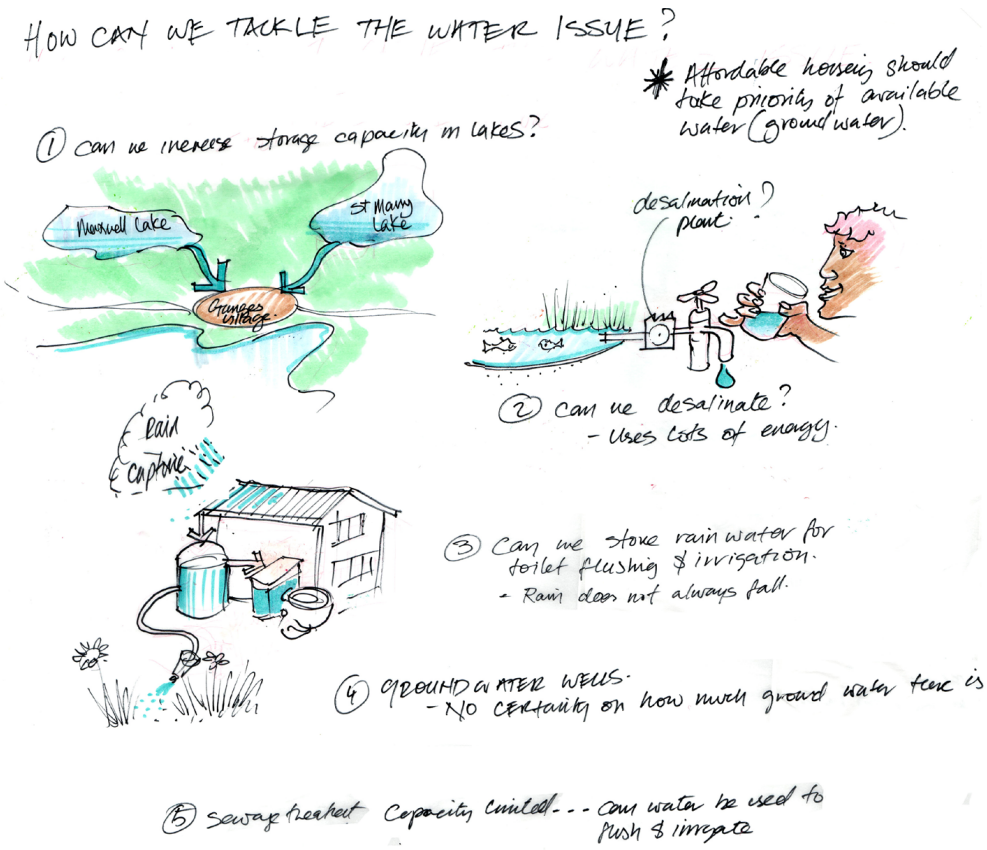


Possible interventions that address multiple village priorities, including an improved pedestrian network and art-based approaches to ecological challenges.

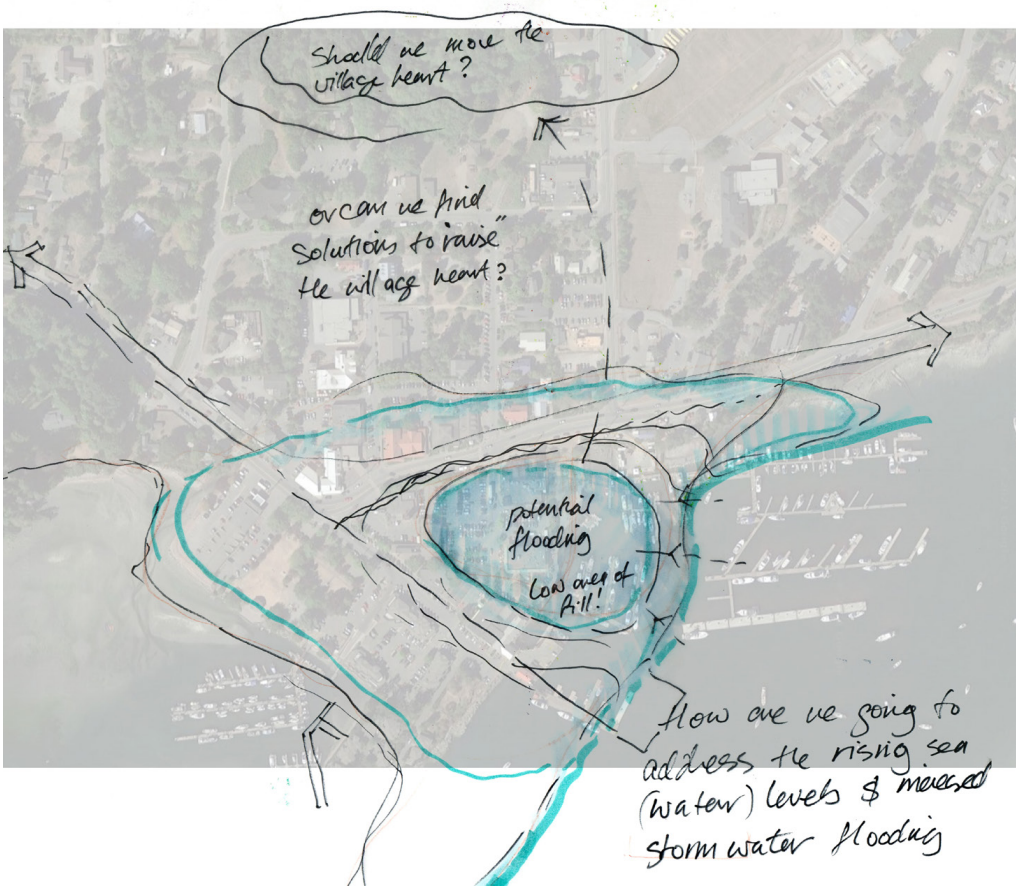


Explorations of possible future land use scenarios and built form opportunities that respond to flooding and sea level rise.

Gathers



Visual explorations of how to tackle the water issue - with prompting questions and some possible solutions.



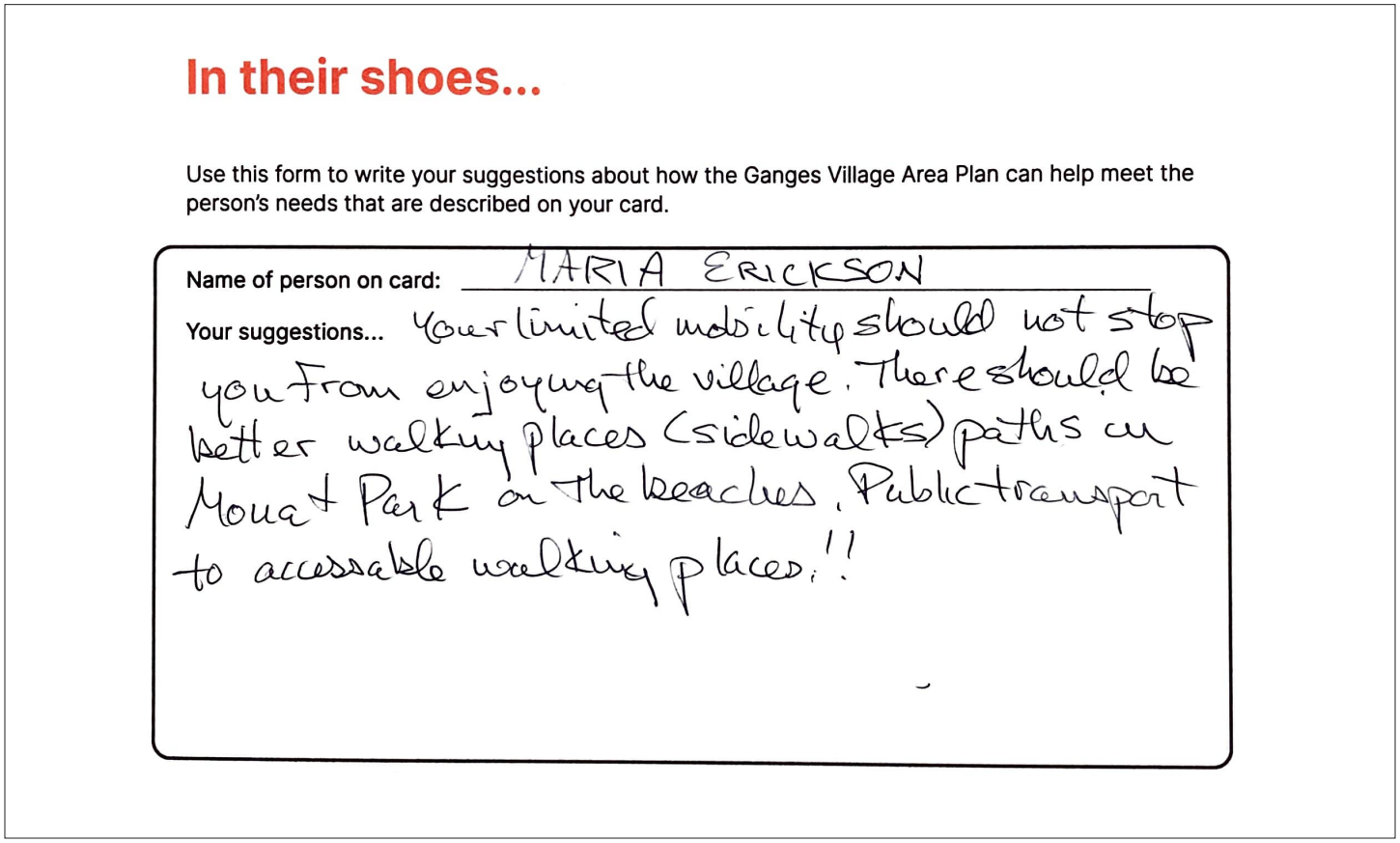
Sea level rise and increased stormwater flooding could impact future decisions related to the village core.

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In Their Shoes

This activity involved reading about an experience of a fictional character in Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt) Village. Participants were asked to step in to her/his/their shoes to create ideas for how the village could be a better place for that individual to thrive and meet their housing, transportation, and other needs.

Below is an example of how one participant responded to a prompt about someone with limited mobility in the village.



In their shoes...

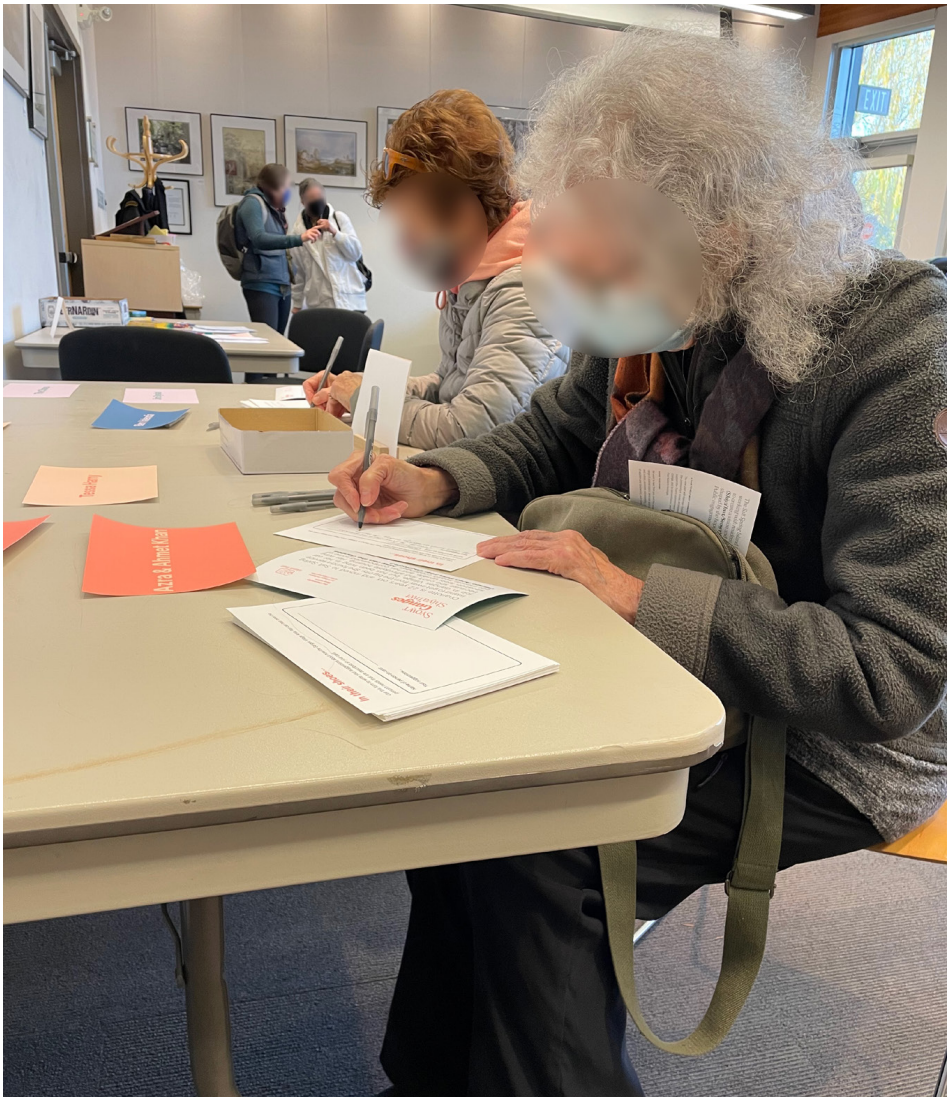
Use this form to write your suggestions about how the Ganges Village Area Plan can help meet the person's needs that are described on your card.

Name of person on card: MARIA ERICKSON

Your suggestions... Your limited mobility should not stop you from enjoying the village. There should be better walking places (sidewalks) paths on Mount Park on the beaches. Public transport to accessable walking places!!

Gathers

Ideas Fair participants taking the time to write a response to the situational prompts provided.



Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Ganges Shiya'hwt

Big Idea for Tackling the Climate Crisis Head-on

Participants were asked to write or draw their big idea for climate action on a paper dialogue bubble. The bubbles were then posted on a neighbouring wall to allow passersby to read and reflect on what others contributed.

A few example big ideas are highlighted on the opposing page.



MY BIG IDEA FOR TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS HEAD-ON IS...

- take steps to encourage ~~[illegible]~~ visitors to not bring their vehicles to Salt Spring.
- make ferries carbon-neutral

MY BIG IDEA FOR TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS HEAD-ON IS...

FEDERAL - END GAS/OIL SUBSIDIES
PROVINCIAL - END OLD GROWTH LOGGING & INTRODUCE BETTER/SUSTAINABLE LOGGING + REFORESTATION PRACTICES (SUZANNE SIMARD)
SSI - NEED A SMART LAND USE POLICY TO PROTECT FORESTS / COASTLINES & PROTECT MARINE SPECIES (GULF ISLANDS)
GANGES - ELECTRIFICATION, FREE BUS/SHUTTLES

MY BIG IDEA FOR TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS HEAD-ON IS...

FEWER CARS → MORE BIKES + WALKING PATHS.
THINK: AMSTERDAM

MY BIG IDEA FOR TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS HEAD-ON IS...

MITIGATION - NEEDS to be done at federal & provincial level, NOT LOCAL. NEED THINGS like ban on gas cars, electrical grid with green power

Adaptation - Development NEEDS to BE MOVED out of flood area. Protect healthy forest to cool and prevent fires.

SYOWT
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Shiya'hwt

Conversation Circle

This event involved working with Salt Spring Community Services to invite input from local residents who are living or have lived in the shelter or without housing, as well as those experiencing challenges related to addictions, mental health, and inadequate income and supports.

Seven participants sat with the project team in The Meadow for a one-hour discussion. They were compensated for their time and expertise.

The following input was provided.

- **We have a tight-knit community** – many of us care for and watch out for this Island.
- **Homeless people do not have a living room to enjoy their lives**, so we live out our lives in public spaces like parks. We don't want to be always watched and feel like we are under a microscope. **There is a lot of "othering" and stigma here**. "If you exclude people from a social contract, then you can't expect them to uphold that social contract."
- **We should have the right to sleep.** We aren't allowed to set up our tents before 11pm, and they need to be taken down by 7am. This means that we are setting up or taking down in the dark, and we aren't able to get enough sleep. This is exhausting and we often lose our belongings.
- **A dedicated campground is needed** for homeless folks, including high risk people, so that people don't get shuffled around all of the time and supports can be put in place.

- **Housing is needed that is affordable, rental, and supportive** (e.g. for seniors). More incentives are needed to encourage owners to rent their suites, especially for those who have had bad experiences with tenants previously. At the same time, renters in low-cost rental situations (e.g. room rentals) need to have more rights to privacy.
- **Public washrooms are needed** in the village. While they exist, they often close during the day because there aren't any staff to service them. This means that we can be forced to defecate/urinate in outdoor public spaces at night, even though this is something we don't want to do. This adds to stigma.
- There is **vigilantism and harassment that make life difficult for us**. Some Island residents smash the windows of parked vehicles in which people are sleeping. Others have placed fireworks under vehicles, awakening people in a terrifying way. We have had things thrown at us while we sleep.
- **Many of the people who are homeless or living rough have PTSD**, and police and security folks are often not sufficiently trained in a way that sensitively considers mental health. This can be triggering for people, and can unnecessarily escalate situations including in public spaces.
- **Storage spaces are needed**, where homeless folks can securely store their belongings.
- **Better transportation choices are needed**. Some of us work in the village and then have to travel along roads on foot, all year round and late at night. It can be unsafe and exhausting.
- **A public "wet area" is needed**, where drinking in public is not frowned down upon. This is something that is permitted in Europe and is being explore in some Canadian cities.
- **The library is a great public place to get warm and do things**, without having to spend money. One issue however is that people aren't allowed to fall asleep there, which is a challenge when we can be so sleep deprived.
- **It would be nice to explore some pilot projects that create welcoming spaces for people.** This could include places to "break bread" together and share meals, communal kitchens to make healthy food, and arts spaces and maker spaces. These places should send the message: "You are welcome. Thank you for coming." If we had the land and zoning for a space like this, it would make the fundraising process easier.

Syowt Ganges Shiya'hwt

Walkshops

To explore ideas for the future of the village, community members were encouraged to share their observations and insights through two walkshops hosted on December 4th, 2022. Conversations were centred on a range of diverse topics, including: land use and development, transportation, housing, arts and culture, economic sustainability, climate resiliency, infrastructure, protection of aquifers and biodiversity, and more.

The walkshop started in Mouat's parking lot, travelled along the boardwalk and Fulford-Ganges Road, and back along Jackson Avenue through the village core.

Approximately **ten participants joined the morning session and six participants in the afternoon**. Below is a brief summary of key takeways from these conversations.

Pedestrian experience

- The ratio of cars to people is 1:1 or close
- An improved parking strategy is needed in summer months for visitors
- Main traffic flow through the centre of town impacts the pedestrian experience
- Traffic calming required in the village
- Possible strategies to limit vehicular traffic include a bypass or parking lots/garages around village periphery

Access to the waterfront

- The boardwalk is intermittent, but has been fixed up in places where it fronts a business
- Opportunity to reconnect the entire waterside board/walkway
- Can be complemented by ecological remidiation and protection strategies
- Harbour should remain a working harbour

Development and Housing

- Limit the degree of development to align with village character and spirit
- Opportunity to achieve a higher density(for Ganges), with low height village centre
- Affordable, secure, and suitable housing needed for workers
- Co-housing as an opportunity that requires less land availability
- Examples of inovative typologies are being saught, including tiny homes etc.

Community economic development and other village opportunities

- Work-live should occur in the village to foster vibrancy and sustain retail activity in the evening
- Better uses for central locations. E.g. banks do not need to be in the centre.
- Fire hall site should be adapted or rebuilt as a community hall, connecting with Centennial Park and traffic calming the space inbetween

- The market could occupy the Fire hall space in the future, as it does not work where it currently is located
- Islanders need to network their resources better to support the local economy and strengthen the connection between the built environment and Ganges' identity
- Action plan needed as a ‘road map’ towards implementing these ideas

Environment

- High degree of asphalt coverage in village core limits infiltration
- New development needs to include water storage/harvesting to reduce water usage
- Sea level rise and flood mitigation/ adaptation are needed along the waterfront





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Gathers

Virtual Sessions and In-School Activities

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Community Organization Virtual Sessions

Agencies and community groups identified by the Islands Trust were invited to participate in virtual/Zoom sessions to share their input. These groups each have a specific interest, knowledge, and/or influence/jurisdictions over topics that relate to the planning process.

Participating community agencies with approximately 18 participants across the six sessions included:

- Salt Spring Island Library
- Salt Spring Island Community Services
- Islanders Working Against Violence
- Salt Spring Island Housing Council Society
- School District 64
- Island Pathways
- Cycling Saltspring
- Water Preservation Society
- Salt Spring Conservancy
- ArtSpring
- Harbour Authority
- Salt Spring Arts Council
- Salt Spring Island United Church
- Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church
- Salt Spring Island Community Economic Development Commission

The themes of the six sessions were:

- Social infrastructure
- Environment and conservation
- Arts, Culture, and Recreation
- Business and Economic Development (2)
- Places of Worship

All unique ideas are captured on the following pages, with **those in bold** being the ones that were most often referenced within and across sessions.

Gathers

What do you most cherish about Ganges Village today? What must be protected as the community changes?

- **Small town feeling – small locally owned business, friendliness**
- **Proximity to water – built around the harbour**
- **Walkable - diversity of shops with many services within a compact area**
- **“Lively humanity” / public life – a place for people to bump into people and have random conversations**
- **Common meeting spaces (e.g. Centennial Park)**
- Charm and strong identity – eclectic, random, folksy
- Unique stores and pride of local business owners
- Schools in the village, including seeing young people walk around town at lunch break
- Pathways and boardwalk
- Green spaces (e.g. Centennial Park, Meadow, Peace Park)
- Human-scale of buildings
- Access to ocean and the “natural feel” it helps create in the village
- Hub of the Island – it’s where we gather and interact regardless of where we live on the island
- Events (e.g. Farmers Markets, music events, special events like fireworks)
- The Fire Hall building
- Hospital
- Library, arts institutions, and associated infrastructure
- Farmland and food producers
- Commercial accessibility (e.g. loading of freight/goods)
- One of the highest concentrations of artists in Canada
- Connection to place and culture
- Diverse “cultural ecosystem” (e.g. artists, cultural/archeological events, groups that animate spaces, library, public art spaces like ArtSpring, private galleries, etc)
- The bringing together of people from a variety of walks of life, including those who are marginalized

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What needs to change? What issues must we tackle head on for the future of Ganges Village?

- **Lack of pedestrian and wheelchair safety and accessibility – discontinuous sidewalks, poor condition of pedestrian facilities**
- **Lack of housing including affordable and low income**
- **Need a diversity of economic stratospheres, so that this doesn't become a community that only the rich and retired can afford**
- **Lack of density (i.e. density would create more life in the village, more housing options including for staff employed in local businesses, and reduce sprawling pressures in natural areas)**
- **Congestion / high volumes of traffic, including poorly managed traffic and conflicts with pedestrians, undermining the "human feel" of the village – need for a bypass**
- **Lack of activity / destinations in the evenings (e.g. includes concerns by youth that there is not enough to do)**
- **Underhoused people**
- **Feelings of lack of safety due to some of the activity in Centennial Park (e.g. drinking, shouting, etc)**
- A harbour walk is needed for both locals and visitors – the boardwalk should be completed
- Litter and need for better garbage/ recycling services.
- Lack of housing and facilities for homeless people and those dealing with mental health
- Need for regulations that support more creative housing arrangements
- Improved transportation options to/from Ganges Village, including transit and for those with accessibility barriers
- So many pockets of beautiful things – could connect them more intentionally
- Lack of long term parking
- Overabundance of parking
- Conflicts with harbour access / activities
- Lack of safety due to lack of activity, poor lighting at night
- No spirit in the built environment – people add the spirit.

Gathers

- Address climate impacts such as rising sea levels, recognizing the fact that modelling shows that part of the village would be affected
- There is a need to tell place-based stories in the village, including First Nation stories
- Need for liveaboard community to safely access Ganges without creating demands on Harbour Authority's infrastructure and services, which are not set up or compensated for this use
- Art needs to be decolonized, and Indigenous people need to lead that process
- There are few places to include public art because most spaces are private
- There is a lack of spaces that bring people together safely and naturally, including for performances/events and necessary infrastructure
- There is not enough affordable live-work space and studio space for artists, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for artists to afford living on Salt Spring Island
- NIMBYism and unsupportable zoning/ regulations can make it difficult for entrepreneurial activities to flourish (e.g. Pitchfork)
- The concept of cultural land trust is needed, where cultural space is preserved in Ganges before it grows, just like we would do with sensitive ecosystems
- Lack of/ineligibility for business improvement association limits funding opportunities and ability to maintain the village look and feel.
- Need for improved infrastructure, strategic direction, and coordinated planning.

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What is your vision for the future of Ganges Village? Please describe it in 2-3 sentences.

"Twenty years from now, I would hope that is really friendly interactions of water and land and all the people using it."

"Safe, clean, colourful, with a healthy vibrant business community and outdoor events."

"[There] should be access for lots of different people of different abilities and education to create a healthy, vibrant, culturally interesting community."

"Small, functional, local, better infrastructure, and better traffic patterns. Lots of kids walking around."

"Would like to see Ganges as a more day and night – and even a 24 hours – village that is vibrant, where sidewalks don't roll up at 5pm".

"A safe friendly areas with an assortment of shops and services access mainly by foot. Mixed residential development for a variety of ages within walking distance of services."

"Recognition of First Nation culture and presence – elements of place and history."

"I would love to see Ganges be a gateway to the rest of the Island or even the other Southern Gulf Islands."

"A place that you can get to easily by most populated parts of the Island by frequent transit or safe cycling or walking."

"It looks like a place that demonstrates the natural environment it's in."

"[It shows] the Indigenous history. The settler history. Both the coastal and terrestrial elements."

"It tells a story to both residents and visitors of everything that is cool about the rest of the Island, but does it in a microcosm with a smaller footprint and denser community."

"It is full of locally owned businesses with lots of character providing a variety of goods and services, with employees who can live on Salt Spring Island instead of in crisis and precarity. This may mean multi-story buildings that are still charming and small town-ish."

"All designed in terms of climate resilience in terms of energy use, but also adaptation to sea rise and more. It should be a showcase of values that Salt Spring Island espouses but does not always demonstrate."

"What I see in the future is walkable, accessible, safe, many local businesses, and [a place] where people live."

"Safe, vibrant place – an assembly point for the whole community to feel safe and gather."

"To be able to stroll from one end of the community to the other. To be able to walk in and out of shops, and have people enjoying it all levels. People living in Ganges."

"People able to anchor safely and row up to visit from afar. Music playing. But it is still a functional working place, with commercial and emergency access to water. The whole harbour is integrated so that everyone can enjoy and safely use it."

"Could we re-imagine Ganges as an Arts Hub? Could it be better linked through place-making, gathering space, public art, wayfinding?"

"When we think of planning, we should think about shifting the focus from cars and parking and traffic, to making places for people. Public gathering spaces. Connecting pathways between gathering spaces, and having public art and events with... plugs for buskers, lighting, benches, and pop up performances and display."

"Centennial Park is the hub of Ganges and I would love to see it beautified. It would be interesting to see that walkway extended – a big loop."

"Arts and culture spring up when you create the spaces for it. It will drive tourism, social wellbeing, and economic development. It's a feedback loop. It's a sustainable industry and environmentally friendly."

"There are squares where cross generational gathering happens, with kids, seniors, families. Cute little restaurants, kids' hangout places, performance art pieces, roaming theatre, simple busking – 24 hours – always places for people to gather and have conversations."

"Would love to see walkability, with some streets cut off from traffic. Those spaces are animated, made beautiful through public art. If people have a sense of place and welcome... they respect it more."

"Café culture. Would just love to go for lunch and have a glass of wine. A bit of culture is having restaurants and cafes being more affordable and accessible for people younger than 40."

"To retain the village character, and to stay away from franchises and fast food chains."

"I see our village as being more happily inclusive of all sorts. I would hope that those who live a life not as blessed could still live with hope, safety, and purpose. In coming together, we will strengthen our bonds within and across the places that now divide us."

"Inclusiveness is definitely part of the vision. Open to everyone. All walks of life. All backgrounds."

"Thriving community that would be healthy and sustainable."

"Ganges is a jewel /butterfly that's waiting for metamorphosis."

"Great opportunity to make it a beautiful, vibrant, gathering place for the community."

"Will, cooperation, and good governance."

Other

Other comments shared by participants that did not fall within the pre-designed session topics included the following:

- The issue of the planning area boundaries should be settled. The broader the footprint of the village the better.
- Limits to growth including ecological carrying capacity should be considered. On the other hand, resources can be better managed and rather the focus should be on biodiversity protection in the forest, uplands, and elsewhere.
- Fragmentation is a real issue. Clustering homes in and outside of the village would help protect biodiversity. Density transfers and similar processes need to be created/ simplified in order to protect habitat and centralize the population.
- Water capture and storage should be further explored. This should include incentivizing and requiring it.
- Concurrent initiatives – including those focusing on Housing and Coastal Douglas Fir Ecosystems – should be integrated with the Ganges Village planning processes, as they all relate to one another and the solutions could intersect in many creative ways. (e.g. promotion of Ganges density and conservation-based both address housing issues and forest fragmentation)
- People need to trust this process. People are concerned about governance, or outside consultants, or spending money on planning processes that do not get implemented. The vision needs to come from the community – “We need it for ourselves and for our souls. We need to move forward and not just talk about it."


SYOWT
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Gathers
One Community.
Many voices.
Let's shape the future
of the village together.
Islands Trust
COMMUNITY HEART
Where is an important gathering place in Ganges (Shiyahwt/SYOWT) Village, where people come together and enjoy a sense of community?
CHERISHED PLACE
What place to do you cherish in the Ganges (Shiyahwt/SYOWT) Village?
PROBLEM AREA
What place would benefit from improvement in the future?
IDEAS
Do you have a great idea for the future of a particular place in Ganges (Shiyahwt/SYOWT) Village? If so, where?
To learn more about the process and stay up to date, scan the QR code using your phone camera to visit the project website.
1 - ARTSPRING PROGRAMS + ART SHOWS
7 - MOVE CROSSWALK FROM S TO NE CORNER
Completion of the pathway to walk to Ganges & from Mobys
5 GREATER CONNECTION B/W UPPER GANGES + VILLAGE
6 - ROUTE ON OCEAN SIDE
1 - COMMUNITY DROP IN CENTRE
2 - DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC STUDY (+ PARKING)
FINISH TINY PIECE OF SIDEWALK THAT IS A PUDDLE ALL WINTER
3 - BETTER FLOW/SAFETY DOWN TOWN
REPURPOSED GANGES FIRE HALL
3 - YEAR ROUND COVERED FARMERS MARKET
PROTECTION OF WATER BAY/ESTUARY
1 - NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED

Syowt
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Student Activities

Given the important role of youth in shaping the future of a community, a series of self-directed, student-focused engagement exercises were provided to Salt Spring Island Elementary and Middle Schools. **In total, approximately 90 students participated in this engagement activity.**

These worksheets centred around three questions to better understand the ideas, perspectives, and experiences of younger community members.

The following pages summarize some of the themes that emerged from these discussions, along with some representative comments from participants.

In advance of the community engagement activities described within this report, students at Salt Spring Centre School mapped their ideas for the future of village. This map is included in the appendix of this report.

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND IMAGINE WHAT YOUR IDEAL GANGES (SYOWT/ SHIYA'HWT/) VILLAGE WOULD BE LIKE. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Diverse, affordable, and efficient housing opportunities

- *"More affordable housing so more families can live here."*
- *"Small houses to provide more housing (but not condos)"*
- *"More housing/cheaper housing"*
- *"More housing that's eco-friendly and long lasting."*
- *"More for the homeless population (e.g. better homeless shelter"*

Improved community facilities and infrastructure

- *"I would want a kitchen at all the elementary schools [...], a town garden in the middle of town, local only (no chains allowed), ex: grocery stores [...], more good bike lanes, affordable housing so that people can actually afford to live here, homeless centre, traffic light at dangerous intersections, a local soft serve place all year long, and more Indigenous education workers for all the schools"*

- *"It would be pretty much the same but with better sidewalks and bike paths in and out of town. I also think local artists should paint murals on some of the concrete walls and boring buildings. More bike racks and a market going all year round in Centennial Park.*
- *"Bike path trails for eco friendly transportation"*
- *"More bike lanes because there's lots of bikers and for people that like biking it's quite dangeous biking on some roads"*
- *"More public transportation"*
- *"Community center (with arcade, ping pong, pool the game, etc.)"*
- *"Public bathrooms"*
- *"More off leash dog walks for freedom for your dog and fun times with the family"*
- *"Dog park in Centennial Park"*
- *"More street lights"*

Expanded retail opportunities

- *"We want our town to have more stores so we don't have to go off island to get things."*
- *"More thrift stores (for kids too) for non wasting ways to get rid of clothes."*

Strengthened village character and identity

- *"A sign saying Ganges and the First Nation names"*
- *"A beautiful non city place"*
- *"Not to turn Salt Spring Island into a city"*
- *"No fast food chains"*
- *"More for the LGBTQ+ community"*
- *"More art / culture"*
- *"We think there's lots of great culture already but there's also always room for more. Like more diverse foods and etc..."*

Syowt
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

REMEMBER A FAVOURITE TIME IN THE VILLAGE. WHERE WERE YOU AND WHAT MADE IT SPECIAL?

Village character and diverse public activities

- *"When my mom, my best friend, her mom, and me were Christmas shopping at night when all the lights on the trees were lit up it was so amazing!"*
- *"Going to the saturday market with my friends/family."*
- *"Movies in the park"*
- *"Watching the fireworks."*
- *"Went to get bubble tea with friends."*

Access to nature and green spaces

- *"An important moment in Ganges is playing in the park with friends and siblings"*
- *"Centennial Park (before it became center for smoking)"*
- *"I remember when I saw a seal and I was by Centennial Park it was a great time [...]"*
- *"Walking down the boardwalk looking at the sea"*
- *"I was walking with my mum and sister we were looking at the ships and having fun in the park."*
- *"Riding my bike in Ganges with my brothers"*

IF YOU COULD IMPROVE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

More things to do for young people

- *"Another skate park"*
- *"We need a bigger community pool. We need 2 pools for kids and parents."*
- *"More activities for ages 12-14 years"*
- *"Fall fair rides/attractions - they were taken away and they were super fun"*
- *"The Island is becoming more for the elderly and not as nice for young people"*

Environmental sustainability

- *"People taking more care of the planet and stop logging because the planet is dying."*
- *"Less garbage more clean air clean grass"*
- *"If we could change something in our community it would be the amount of garbage and waste left on the ground in community places."*
- *"Focusing on a non waste community life - reduce, reuse, recycle."*
- *"Plant way more trees. Stop killing the beautiful old growth."*
- *"The water is good but we need to protect it."*

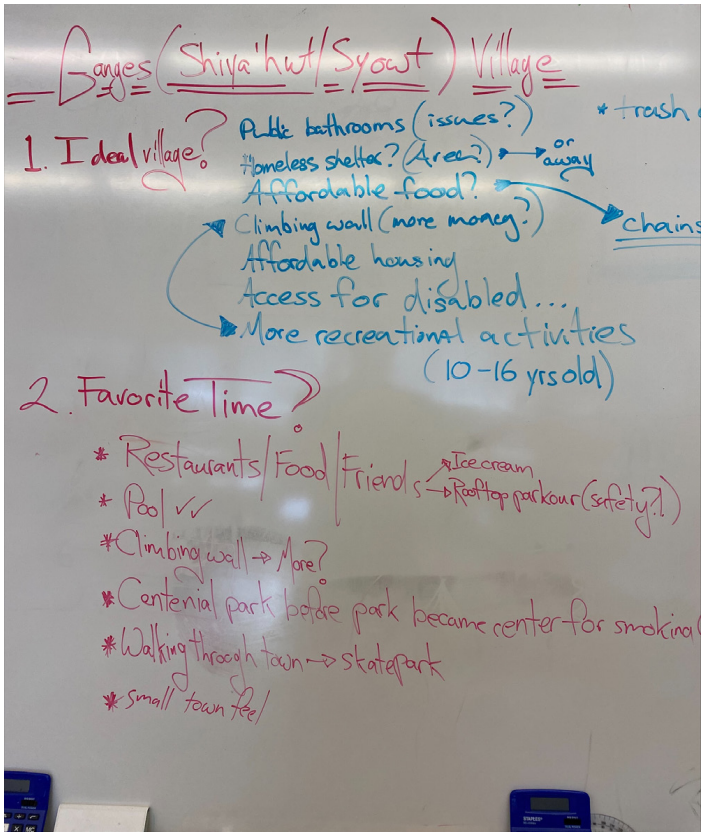
Enhanced village safety

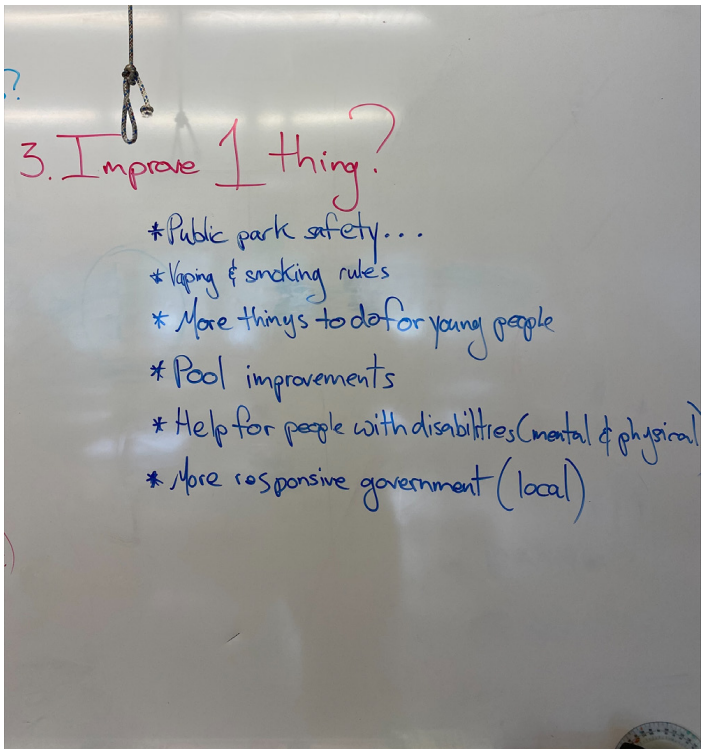
- *"Having it be safer at the market for kids"*
- *"Make it more kid friendly. Please, please."*
- *"A more kid safe park"*
- *"Better crosswalks"*
- *"Enforce smarter driving on roads"*
- *"Better drivers"*
- *"Streetlamps on the darker roads"*
- *"I would improve the bike lanes because they are unsafe"*

Commitment to all community members

- *"I would improve our community by supporting those who have inadequate housing, food, and employment. Our community needs to address these issues. The inequity issues need to be addressed in order for our community to thrive. Housing and food are human rights."*
- *"More housing for people"*
- *"Mini house neighbourhood for homeless people so they don't have to sleep outside"*
- *"Help for people with disabilities (mental and physical)"*
- *"If I could improve one thing about the community it would be more for the homeless people."*
- *"Elderly homes for an easier time to be happy"*
- *"Bike paths would be a great thing to have because if you don't have a car and you have a bike it should still work to transport you."*

Syowt
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One Middle School class opted to host a group discussion in response to the three exercise questions. The above images highlight some of the overarching themes the class explored.

Gathers

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One Community.
Many voices.
Let's shape the future
of the village together.

Islands Trust

A beautiful non city Place

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND IMAGINE WHAT YOUR IDEAL GANGES (SHIYA'HWT/SYOWT) VILLAGE WOULD BE LIKE.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?



REMEMBER A FAVOURITE TIME IN THE VILLAGE.

WHERE WERE YOU AND WHAT MADE IT SPECIAL?

fishing by the wate with my dad

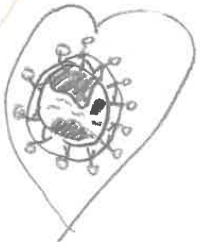


It was fun to be with family

IF YOU COULD IMPROVE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

People start dealing with their WASTE





Gathers

Shiya'hwt/SYOWT are the names of this place used by the Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOTEN speaking peoples.

PAGE 1

Syowt
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Gathers

Evaluation and Next Steps

SYOWT
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Evaluation

The appropriateness and effectiveness of engagement activities was gauged through: participation numbers; questions embedded in the online survey; an exit survey at the Ideas Fair; and informal feedback from participants.

Participation Quantity

With over 800 participants (representing almost 7% of the Island's population) providing input into the process, the quantity of people engaged was high. While inevitably some participants were involved in multiple activities and therefore could be double-counted, the majority of participants were counted only once. Likewise, a high volume of comments and input was received, much of it quite detailed.

Demographic Reach

The online survey provided the most detailed information in terms of who was reached. The survey was generally very effective at reaching diverse age groups, with gaps being addressed through other targeted engagement activities (e.g. in-school youth engagement).

As is often the case with surveys and engagement processes overall, a number of equity-denied groups – as well as renters – were under-represented in survey participation. Again, other engagement activities were designed to tap into these perspectives (e.g. pop-up engagement, community agency workshops, conversation circle).

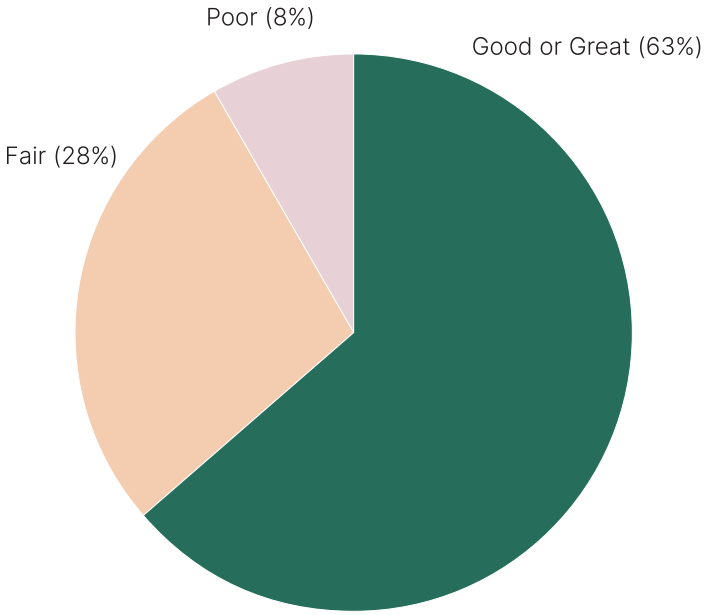
Participant Feedback on Engagement

Online Survey

Participants were asked: "How do you like this survey?".

Most participants (63%) who answered this question indicated "good" or "great". 28% indicated "fair" and 8% indicated "poor".

Seventeen participants responsed to the question: "What could have improved your experience?". Responses were varied and ranged from a desire for multiple choice answers to a desire for more open ended questions, to suggestions for improving the priority ranking question.



Ideas Fair

An exit survey panel was situated near the exit, so that participants could quickly share their experience of the event as they were departing. While only a handful of participants participated in the exit survey, all indicated either positive or very positive experiences. Comments were also left including the following: “Thank you for the chance to have input and for listening”; and “Thank you for the opportunity. Overall, you do a great job of engaging Islanders.”

Anecdotal / Verbal Feedback

The majority of informal feedback provided by participants at the walkshops, conversation circle, and pop-up stations was positive. At the same time, feedback was received that the requirement for proof of vaccination at the Ideas Fair might have been a participation barrier. (Though it is important to note that this was the only engagement activity requiring it). Likewise, registration for the walkshops closed 24 hours in advance of start time, which prevented at least one participant from joining.

One of the underhoused participants at the conversation circle indicated an interest to have ongoing engagement opportunities to share the unique perspectives of Islanders who are underhoused and experience other barriers. This participant found the conversation circle to be an effective format for sharing these perspectives.

Next Steps

The outcomes of the engagement will be used in the drafting of a vision, objectives, and policies of a Village Area Plan.

As an immediate next step, the community engagement outcomes were used as an input in a planning session with the Ganges Village Planning Task Force, an appointed advisory group to the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee. Engagement outcomes will likewise be used in a public design workshop expected to be undertaken in late spring 2022.

Further community engagement will also be undertaken on the draft Village Area Plan later in the process.

Syowt
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Gathers

Appendix: Centre School Student Ideas for the Village

SYOWT
Ganges
Shiya'hwt



Gathers

We put this map together to show all the great shops and spots around Ganges and to give some suggestions for improvments.

First, we talked about what we like about Ganges. We really like a lot of the shops there, especially some of the great restaurants and food carts! We like taking visitors to the market and to see some of the interesting stores. We think that the stores are painted well, and that there are some nice green spaces, like Centennial Park.

Then we talked about what could be improved. Sometimes its hard to find parking in Ganges. It can be difficult to cross the road safely and get to the Market, and sometimes the cars are too fast.

The two biggest problems we thought of are garbage, and the people who hang out in Ganges. There seems to be a lot of garbage, especially by Moaut's park, near the schools, and near the Co-op. It would be good if there were more garbage cans around.

We've seen some scary things happen in Ganges. We've seen people hitting and abusing their dogs. We've been attacked by dogs. We've heard lots of swearing and fighting, and we've seen people doing and selling drugs in the parks, and near the library. We've seen teenagers drinking and doing drugs at the skatepark. At the beach in Ganges, there's lots of broken bottles, cigarette butts, and garbage.

We know that it's a complicated problem. Could the police arrest people who are doing illegal things? Does there need to be more police? Maybe there should be different consequences? Maybe people need more help, such as counselling and drug treatment, to help them? Maybe there could be more affordable housing so that people aren't living in tents in the woods around Ganges?

Overall, we like how Ganges looks and we like the stores and services.

Owls Class, Grade 4,5,6 Saltspring Centre School
May 2021

SYOWT
Ganges
Shiya'hwt

Thank you
Huy tseep q'u
HÍ SWKE

Help create a vision and plan for the
future of Ganges (SYOWT/Shiya'hwt) Village.

For full details visit: **islandstrust.bc.ca/ganges**

Gathers

Islands Trust