

## **Imagining Gabriola's Land and Sea 2050**

*An Collaborative Environmental Vision event organized by the  
Gabriola Land and Trails Trust, GROWLS, Gabriola Island Memorial Society  
January 20, 2024*

### **Question 1: What is happening in Gabriola's environment today?**

- **What are the strengths/challenges of Gabriola's land and sea today**
- **Can you identify opportunities or threats?**
- **How are people interacting with Gabriola's environment in 2024**

#### Positives/Opportunities:

Large amount of unspoiled land  
Many environmental organizations  
Linking environment to human health  
Trails and beach access  
Variety of shopping  
Medical hall  
BioDiversity strength  
Smells cleaner  
E-bikes  
GaLTT – trails  
Shore access documented and available  
Clean shoreline  
Pretty self sufficient for a small island  
Quiet and dark and caring  
Strong community of people committed to environmental protection  
Semi remoteness is a strength  
GaLTT Nature Steward program and restoration projects encouraging native habitat retention

#### Challenges:

Finding balance of development and natural land  
Rural vs urban- suburb of Nanaimo?  
Population grown while retaining woodland – some land owners clear cutting lots  
Cemetery running out of room  
Changing demographic – ages, wealthy - young people struggling to find housing  
Lack of political control or discussion  
Newcomers don't know how to deal with water

Water storage and management – conserving a challenge  
Passive pollution  
Retention of vegetation  
Tourism – both positive and negative  
Invasive plants  
Carrying capacity for housing  
Growth on water supply  
Access to nature – make sure it's retained  
Busier, more costly, more regulations  
Growing conflict on trails  
Coastal Douglas fir ecosystem under threat- protecting forest – planting native plants  
Unhoused aren't at this event – they could be a fire risk  
Newcomers come expecting suburban amenities – need to learn Gabriola culture  
Farmland at risk due to generational change  
Impact of large private development  
Lowest percentage of park land in gulf islands  
unregulated freighter anchorages and five proposed for the north shore  
Non residents aren't aware of invasive plants on their properties and they become a hot spot for spread

## **Question 2: What do you envision for Gabriola's environment in 2050?**

- **What are the strengths/challenges of Gabriola's land and sea at 2050?**
- **What are the future opportunities and threats?**
- **Who is here? (people, animals, plants?)**
- **What do you see/smell/taste/touch in the environment?**
- **How are people interacting with Gabriola's environment at 2050?**

Responses grouped by theme (in no particular order):

### *Transportation:*

- Less focus on cars
- Electric cars with adequate infrastructure **xxx**
- Safe, separate bike lane around the island **xx**
- Fully electric ferries **xx**
- Expanded and electric public transport **xxx**
- Unmanned public electric bus
- No bridge to Gabriola
- Fleet of self driving cars
- Road system in 2050 same as in 202
- Zero or low carbon Transportation infrastructure: Both North and South Rds and Taylor Bay road to Berry Point, need to be wide enough to accommodate cycling. E bikes ,

cargo bikes and bikes with trailers need safe shoulders. Lochinvar Rd is an existing example of adequate width.

- Safe Road Initiatives ...where we have local politicians committing to the highest degree of ethics , understanding and public consultation and some mechanism to hold MOTI accountable would be required.
- Safe pull outs on hills and corners to allow cars to pass safely
- double solid lines on areas where drivers cross the centre line to pick up their mail would perhaps provide some more incentive for safer behavior.

#### *Food and farms:*

- Food security and cooperatives **xxx**
- Farmland better used
- Farmland protected and used by younger folks **xx**
- More food grown on Gabriola
- Independent grocery store
- More ethnic diversity
- local food security could be addressed with designing neighborhoods for food production. Food scaping could perhaps be achieved with zoning specifically for intentional communities, as exists on Denman Island. Consult Shawn Woods for details.

#### *Water:*

- Water supply from Nanaimo via pipeline
- Water security could be approached communally with large communal cisterns. Much the same as the small community parks that exist on the old killum development on Whalebone.( I believe this was accomplished by development permit) The idea here being to store the water...call it for fire fighting purposes if local health regulations are preventative and tech solutions for potable water have not yet been achieved.
- Community water storage in large volumes
- All new housing has rainwater collection
- Encourage water self sufficiency

#### *Shore and Sea:*

- No freighter anchorages in Gulf islands **xxx**
- Shoreline protection including environment and land erosion protection impact from climate change
- Marine regulation leading to eel grass protection
- No log booms on shoreline
- Reduce over fishing

- Reduce sound pollution
- Shut down Harmac
- Governments enforce marine regulations and moorage bylaws so all boaters in BC can access Gabriola
- Marine areas have been cleaned up of wrecks and debris

#### *Parks and Rec:*

- Tidal swimming pool created
- Public swimming pool on island **xx**
- More protected land (at least 30%) including parks **xxxxxx**
- Recreation centre for all ages
- Walking trails across treaty and non treaty lands
- Continuous cycling and walking path off main roads
- Hoggan lake becomes a public park **xx**
- Public spa
- Parkland increased and auspices of GaLTT
- Publicly owned marina
- More shore accesses where kayaks can be launched

#### *Education*

- Environmental high school similar to Saturna
- New community school and high school
- Environmental education thrives
- Full schooling: middle, high school as well as trade school, boat yard school

#### *Climate change*

- Residents share a strong commitment to environmental protection
- Wildfire threat addressed in a proactive way that sustains our forest ecosystems
- Rising sea level – shoreline greenscaping rather than hardscaping encouraged to address erosion

#### *Forests and ecosystems*

- Forest cover is not reduced from 2024 level
- Contiguous bands of coastal douglas forest ecosystems to allow sufficient habitat for creatures and biodiversity is high
- Native plants more available at island nurseries for residents – incentives for planting them
- Invasive plants under control with an on island drop off for yard waste and invasives, ideally with a composting or chipping centre – requires zoning
- Trees on public and private land protected with IT regulations **xxxxxx**
- Woodlands better used – revisit all old external land use designations: ALR, FLR, gravel pit....

- Deer population reduced by hunting or culling and native understory rebounding **xxx** (annual venison roast to replace salmon bbq)

#### *Housing:*

- Affordable housing for young and old **xxx**
- Affordable housing availability leads to youth staying on Gabriola
- Numerous cheap rentals
- Second dwellings allowed for long term rentals
- Diversity of housing options: multi family, mixed
- Affordable housing is spread around the island, not concentrated

#### *Community life:*

- Less single use plastic
- Dog heaven
- On island work for those that live here – not just computer jobs
- Arts, music vibrant and surf lodge and isle of the arts continue
- No animal injured by humans (hunting licenses excepted) especially by vehicles
- Vibrant Silva bay community
- Same density and zoning as today except have 30% parks
- More densely populated village core
- Limit on population density
- Allow more creativity in building and infrastructure
- Sustainable development
- Allow recycled building materials and techniques
- Rural nature maintained
- Accessible trails
- Well established natural burial site on island **xxx**
- Improved health care system

#### *Diversity:*

- Harmonious relationship with indigenous people **xxxx**
- Snuneymuxw take possession of the land set aside for treaty settlement and many live here **xxxx**
- Increased integration of First Nations and settler population and potential collaboration in land use and protection **xxxx**
- Rename Gabriola using indigenous names
- Island is less white **xxx**
- Families still live here
- Diversity of ages **xxx**
- More balanced year round population

### **Question 3: What are you doing or would you like to do, to support these hopes and dreams?**

#### **I already:**

- Am altering my lifestyle concerning what I purchase, how I travel and how I think about the natural environment **xx**
- Am a GaLTT Nature Steward (to preserve our ecosystem) **xxxxxx**
- try to naturalize our property and maintain its forest ecosystem **xxxxx**
- Shop on the island from farmers and local stores **xxxxxx**
- Volunteer with GaLTT, PHC, GROWLS, GISKA, GVFD and other community organizations to promote good environment, healthy living and a sense of community **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Volunteer with GAFA, advocating for the elimination of freighter anchorages and engaging with stakeholders, politicians and First Nations **xxx**
- Make donations to PHC, the Sounder and other community organizations **xxxxxx**
- Advocate for water self sufficiency and fire smart **xx**
- Am part of the recycling, upcycling movement **xxx**
- Manage invasive plants **xxxxxx**
- Encourage islanders to manage invasives on their own properties to prevent them from spreading
- Work on restoration projects with GaLTT **xxx**
- Manage well water and storage on my property and conserve water **xxxx**
- Grow vegetables for food security **xxx**
- Plant drought tolerant plants
- Have a small footprint: heat pump, electric car, efficient appliances **xx**
- Walk and cycling more, driving less **xxx**
- Support neighbours **xxx**
- Setting up rain water collection
- have one car and limit use
- Support trails and public land use **xxx**
- Donate to enhance the medical clinic
- Come to open houses and answer surveys **xxxxxx**
- Argue against trailers (mini-houses on wheels) that easily disturb the natural environment
- Am Involved with green burial society and its establishment **xxxxxx**
- Volunteer with museum archives to preserve island history
- Support diversity

- Support the joint GIMS and GaLTT initiative to bring the Barrett gravel quarry under community control **xxxxxxx**
- Volunteer with the affordable housing board **xx**
- Volunteer at community festivals including spirit fest
- Do public protests when needed to influence political decisions at all levels **xx**
- Help with shore clean up (**xxx**) and education on ocean and shore preservation
- Have reduced my travel especially by air
- Am fostering very local neighbourhood resource sharing (plants, grocery runs, rides, equipment, etc)
- Work on farmland conservation
- Support efforts to enable sustainable alternative to motor vehicles (public transportation, road shoulders for bikes/ebikes)
- Promote amalgamation of LTC and RDN functions
- Was on the LTC that took Gabriola from 2% protected to 12%

#### **I would like to:**

- Make personal choices consistent with this community vision **xxxxx**
- Identify a volunteer role where I could contribute to specific goals for the vision **xxx**
- Support a community of farmers who can make us completely sustainable for our food **xx**
- Hold government accountable in implementing marine regulations
- Learn more about environment initiatives and practice them **xxx**
- Leave money to support various island charities
- Support building cooperative housing on private land that only island workers can rent, built with co-op funding and owner legal agreements
- Help with feeding old people and disabled to assist with staying on the island **xx**
- Reach out to those not here today – unhoused, working people, farmers, individuals
- Help with education – water, inclusivity, environmental
- Help with implementation of a self driving, publicly owned fleet of cars
- Support efforts to create a safe food supply (**xx**), healthcare for all, sustainable and affordable housing for young families, affordable public transportation **xx**
- Encourage and participate in developing right relationships with First Nation and immigrant populations **xxxx**
- Work with initiative to diversify community housing ownership – look at changing zoning to allow tiny homes and multiple small houses on properties less than five acres
- Push for rezoning to allow us to chip or compost invasive plants and yard waste on our island and avoid having to burn them or transport them off island **xx**
- Be able to build bridges between people who disagree
- Have constructive talks with developers, loggers and quarry folks about the future
- Increase biodiversity beginning with planting native plants on our property **xx**
- Begin propagating and teaching about native plants **xx**

- Increase time and commitment to GaLTT **xxx**
- Engage in community dialogue, both formally and informally that focuses on the 'how' to achieve this vision
- Look into solar panel installation to provide alternate energy source for Gabe (sell to BC Hydro?)
- Educate well-to-do Gabriolans to support local community and leave bequests of land or money to the island
- Educate the children who grow up here and make it possible for them to live here as adults to encourage Intergenerational values
- Encourage people to consider our impact on the natural environment (not by how things affect our lifestyles or our dogs!)
- Substantially reduce ferry service to make it difficult to live here and only the resourceful could survive
- Encourage preservation of the natural environment with incentives (tax incentives and less cost for plants)
- Help transfer more land from private into public hands
- Stay curious, learn more, become active
- Volunteer more **xx**
- Engage with my neighbours for small scale goals as first steps- invasives removal then naturalize
- Volunteer my expertise but doing rather than managing
- See more affordable housing zoned for and built **xx**

#### **Question 4: How do you think the Gabriola Local Trust Committee can help?**

- Support an application for rezoning to designate a property for chipping or composting of yard waste and invasives
- Clarify what is under your control versus RDN
- Create development permit areas to control how development takes place within key ecosystems **xxx**
- Find incentives to soften the blow of regulations and promote eco protection **xxxx**
- Have a say in how individuals develop their properties to ensure no clear cutting or damaging ecosystem or beachfront **xxxx**
- Hold these kind of events allowing input from as many local residents as possible and the broader community **xxxxxxx**
  - Market, Nesters, elementary school, GIRO, Ground up, Tuck Shop
- Allow planning that does not have to depend on complex regulations
- Congeal the collective vision and goals and provide clear mission statements to guide political decisions, regulations, etc
- Ensure there are adjustments to adapt to current and evolving concerns
- Need to be much more vocal and facilitative of practical solutions for change **xx**



- Promote non hierarchical mediation with folks who are not compliant with environmental protection (current situation is compliant drive and confrontational)
- Prioritize support for initiatives that protect the natural environment and view all development through that lens **xxxx**
  - Increase taxes to fund planning resources and information reports
- Support efforts and advocate for granting IT with more regulatory authority over protection of the natural environment
- LTC must abide by Islands Trust mandate **xx**
  - Gabriola has a maximum population
- Champion mandatory rainwater collection and cisterns **xxx**
- Push other levels of government to address our needs to meet our hopes and dreams **xxx**
- Work towards having bylaws and zoning in place that will protect our biosphere/environment **xx**
- Prioritize community building
- Represent the wishes of the community to maintain parks, trails, seashore and have strong land use policies to maintain them **xxx**
- Better communicate and stronger advocate with other port and community stakeholders and levels of government to voice Gulf Island community concerns about anchorages to ensure their elimination **xxxxx**
- Proactive support for community friendly Silva Bay development
- Action on affordable housing especially for the young **xx**
- More focus on shoreline protection and mitigation **xxxxx**
- Greater consideration to people of all ages with physical and neuro challenges
- Actively represent every resident as equal, not only the outspoken and/or wealthy **xx**
- Islands Trust needs a restructuring/revamping/rebuilding in a very comprehensive way of the organizational setup, budgeting and legislative empowerment of IT to plan and proactively deliver programs, services and incentives that will fulfill its mission and mandate environmentally and socially
- From this and probably other public forums, the LTC has heard from islanders. The themes emerge (housing, transportation, recreation, etc). To form concrete (organized, considered realistic) proposals, the LTC should strike committees per theme to bring forth to the public for final consideration/eventual incorporation into the OCP.
- Engaging islanders in smaller gatherings (like this meeting) to bring together ideas and expertise (there is a lot of expertise on this and all the islands). Then regulate for changes that are asked for that protect the environment (eg tree falling), support a diverse population (not for profit housing enterprises) and protect the ocean (eg vessel management and barring freighter anchorages)
- Negotiating more control of land use/conservation from RDN. Giving opportunities in the future for the community to have a voice.
- Pushing for tiny homes, alternative ways of building houses, co-sharing models of land, reigning in slum landlords

- More collaboration with RDN to ease all the restrictions and delays for new builds, the roadblocks are getting out of hand
- Need new zoning and support for natural burial cemetery **xxxx**
- Consider funding a position with SFN that would be the liaison between Gabriola organizations and SFN, help build that relationship, smooth project info exchange, especially land based
- Not allow people to clear cut properties – require retaining a percentage (20%?) of trees unless they pose a danger **xxxx**
- Provide evidence based education on what can be done to be more eco friendly
- Support First Nations people who want to move to Gabriola or who want their land back
- Give funding to local farmer markets in times of need
- Support bike and EBike lanes or roads
- Continued bold, active support for the island with more teeth
- Provide a consistent message and vision
- We can spread out rather than increase density
- Taxes on tree cutting
- Tax cuts for co-op housing agreements to use private land to build affordable housing
- Provide bylaws/guidelines with enforceable teeth to prevent entrepreneurs from purchasing a lot, clear cutting it for timber and reselling it. The current plan ‘encourages’ owners to leave a fringe of trees on property edges to preserve the rural character – we need more than encouragement
- Develop more parks and nature reserves **xxxxxx**
- Encourage properties with long term rental houses
- Initiate a review of all ‘high-level’ land use designations which have remained unchanged over decades and overseen externally within BC : gravel pit, ALR, FLR plus others. These land use designations may no longer be applicable given modern technology ,land capability (see climate change) or community adjacent to the designations
- Upgrade the development permit rules process right away before damage is done. We don’t have time to finish the OCP review
- More round table discussions. Invite government representatives and local stakeholders
- Include more members in elected body
- Invite feedback from First Nations and youth
- Provide learning resources
- Establish carrying capacity (# people living full time) for Gabriola
- Establish a clear statement to represent what Gabriola will look like re development
- Be the liaison between the people and other levels of government. Governments often contradict themselves between different departments. For example, federal government declares protection for Orca but another depart allows freighter anchorages and another doesn’t have control of ocean pollution
- They can help by **always** working/voting for this island of ours, with a creative, thoughtful voice to help us all live in a sustainable, welcoming and inclusive community, long term growing literally and figuratively

- Be firm when dealing with other agencies like MOTI and Ministry of Forests in upholding the IT mandate
- Update Development Permit Areas for all of Gabriola
- Be more present both as an advisor and enforcer of steps to keep the island on its road to its unique vision and future and not as a suburb of Nanaimo en route to being bridged. LTC needs to overshadow the RDN presence that orders no island protection
- Continue to build connections with SFN **xx**
- Allow carefully thought out and regulated tiny or small (600 sq ft) homes built as clustered communities for local people to live in affordable
- Encourage development of senior housing such as Abbeyfield to encourage seniors to age in the community it's and sell their homes to younger local people
- Encourage responsible living and use of resources with the least amount of necessary regulation. Break regulation down to as small a region as possible so regulation fits and works best for that area. Move towards a mode of operation that makes it easier for young people to be involved with planning and decision making. Nothing too difficult, right!
- Limit the ability of big money to purchase ALR lands and any other large parcels
- Mandate to preserve and protect needs to reflect development/change that enhances services and sustainability of lifestyle on Gabriola. Can't be anti all the time. Streamline with RDN.
- Enable our local groups to contribute
- Encourage science based solutions
- Uphold bylaws
- Maintain density as defined currently
- OCP should be a living document that can be reviewed more often to satisfy constituents
- Cast off affordable housing to separate oversight entity
- Establish clear, measurable criteria for 'preserve and protect'

### **Question 5: What do you like about the Vision Statement in Gabriola's current OCP vision?**

- Emphasis on diverse, rural. Like that it's a positive statement. **xxx**
- First sentence. **xxxxx**
- Like focus on food security, Commons and PHC are amazing.
- Like the inclusion of "safe."
- A collective vision can be developed and changed as necessary and could include our families and off island/ neighbouring properties.
- Like that the statement makes the rural nature of the community a priority.
- Island isn't strictly "rural" as we have access to services like medical, fire protection, shops, more "peri-urban."
- Peaceful, safe, diverse, rural community, local food for all inhabitants. **xxxx**

- I like it, don't change it but restructure IT to achieve it.
- Inhabitants of the island are not just people. Respect for all life in our ocean and land environments is essential to maintaining Gabriola as the unique and special home it is.
- Island and marine wildlife and natural ecosystems...
- Emphasis on the natural environment.
- Simple, optimistic fairytale statement.
- The 1st sentence is a noble goal and other sentences are actions to create the vision.
- It sums up accurately how I feel about the island. **xx**

### Question 6: What would you like to change?

- The local economy supports the environment and local use.
- Want it short & concise.
- Restrict development that develops the environment and restricts natural rural areas.
- I don't think Gabriola is diverse at all, only white people in the room now and don't advertise "bountiful sea harvest" because fish populations have declined a lot.
- Link it to neighbouring communities' visions and challenges and link land use management to effects on human health. Make this a topic in local schools for our young population.
- Include more participation and cooperation with First Nations toward reconciliation.
- Delete the second sentence. Add responsibility of all residents to steward lands and practice responsible use and development that balances human and environmental needs. **x**
- Should include more legal language and recourse if targets are not attained. **x**
- I'd like better ferry service, its improved but needs to be more reliable.
- Education and support for sustainable and affordable use of resources, especially water.
- IT is not a structure that can deliver the vision, it's an administrative bureaucracy.
- Provide more opportunities to connect with the natural environment.
- Local economy is "sustainable" - need commitment to ensure island and marine wildlife have space to flourish. Vision is weak on human/ natural relationships; we are responsible to maintain and support the natural environment.
- Current statement is more wishful than fact. Our economy is less resilient and our forests, wildlife, marine environment face increasing threats. Make the statement more "action" based, something to work toward, monitor outcomes. **xx**
- Second sentence isn't grammatically correct, the awkward wording takes away the credibility of the idea/vision. **xxx**
- Add more about protection of the environment - sea, shoreline, land.
- "Environment" as a term is too subject to interpretation. Specify "land, sea, air and water, including groundwater." **xxx**

- Updates statement must include that the ocean is an integral part of Gabriola and must be protected (from freighter anchorages) and include Snuneymuxw as stewards of environment.
- Restrict moorages, protect eelgrass, make government decision making transparent.
- Add something about sharing of resources and stewardship; local based decision making.
- Change “rural” to “island.” Who is “protecting” the environment? Local economy isn’t accurate, the village is owned by Pattison. Add First Nations into the statement, that they are co-sharing with islanders. We also “swim” here. Need more emphasis on our ocean environment; we are surrounded by shore and sea.
- Is the local economy resilient? Where there are young families and farmers, we need an independent grocery and affordable housing. **xxx**
- Include something about ancestors - indigenous and pioneers that came before us and honouring them.
- Nothing.
- Use “adaptive” instead of “resilient.”

**x = number of people who expressed the same idea**

