

Meeting One Summary

The following is a summary of the Village Vision project's first public workshop.

The theme of Meeting One was "Framing the Discussion". The focus was to solicit topics and ideas the community wants to explore through the anticipated 2 year process. It began with an overall presentation by members of the Village Vision Planning Committee (VVPC), introducing the project, our Process Principles, the role of the VVPC, and the proposed process.

After inviting everyone in the room to introduce themselves, the facilitator asked two questions to the group. The following is a summary of the responses:

1_What roles does the Village Core currently play?

- Community gathering and meeting place
- Place to live
- Place of work and commerce
- Public and institutional services
- Recreation
- It is "Main Street" Gabriola, the center of the community.

2_What other roles could the village Core play?

- A more defined place for non-commercial community gathering (ie:Town Square)
- More housing, in a diversity of types
- Expanded recreation
- Creating a center to showcase local small businesses, that fosters synergy and networking.
- Landscape and open space
- Enhance the Gabriola identity

We then gathered into smaller groups, with a facilitator at each table. Ideas were explored in response to the following three questions, and common themes are summarized below.

3_What do you like about the Village Core?

- Local small businesses
- Meeting people, a social centre
- Clustering of civic and commercial uses, a service centre
- Within walking distance for some residents
- Small community scale and character

4_What needs improvement?

- Pedestrian safety and a more pedestrian friendly environment
- Thoughtful approach to size and location of parking areas

- Traffic calming
- Better support for entrepreneurs
- Improved attractiveness and a stronger sense of identity
- More flexibility in zoning
- Integration of Gabriola's agricultural culture
- Other needed services such as laundromat and public washrooms.
- No comprehensive approach to provision of infrastructure services (eg: water, sanitary).
- No central public gathering place

5_What ideas should the Village Vision workshops explore?

- More housing options, within Village Core area
- Public open space such as town square or playground
- How to improve aesthetics of buildings, landscape, and streets
- Enhanced recreational and cultural facilities
- Would we benefit from a comprehensive approach to provision of infrastructure services?
- Pop-up temporary business location opportunities
- Covered market area for year-round use
- What size of community are we planning for? How much growth can be expected or sustained?
- Improvements in transportation, connectivity and circulation, especially for transit, bikes and pedestrians
- Improved pedestrian environment
- Becoming a showcase of sustainable practices (ie: rainwater harvesting, solar energy, waste water treatment)

Finally, the facilitators asked each table to group these ideas into topics that could be a focus for following workshops. The suggested topic ideas were:

- Business
- Culture
- Environment
- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Economy
- Character/aesthetics
- Zoning and land use
- Public open space
- Traffic, circulation, and parking
- Housing

The meeting concluded with each table reporting back highlights of their discussions.