



Board of Directors' Report for 2022

Highlights of Board activities in 2022

1. Rezoning the Paisley Place property for affordable housing

In June, completing a 30-month process, the Local Trust Committee (LTC) established amendments to the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) to rezone Lots 1 and 2 on the north and east sides of Paisley Place. Some of the main amendments are as follows:

- The Multi-dwelling Affordable Housing zone permits a maximum of 24 homes on the property, with an average maximum size of 900 square feet.
- A Housing Agreement between the Gabriola Housing Society (GHS) and the LTC is required.
- A new Development Permit Area, Environmental Protection, has several objectives including management of development in environmentally sensitive areas.

2. Establishing a Housing Agreement between GHS and the LTC

In June, completing an 18-month process, the Housing Agreement for the Paisley Place affordable housing project was approved by both parties. The agreement has several requirements including:

- Financial eligibility – The project is for people whose gross household incomes are less than the maximum Low and Moderate Incomes as published by BC Housing.
- Residential eligibility – The top priority category for tenants includes people who:
 - Have lived on Gabriola for at least one year, or
 - Have commuted to work Gabriola (minimum half-time) for at least one year, or
 - Are registered members of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.
- Rental rates – The rates are maintained below the open market in the following ways:
 - Rents are set at 30% of gross household income (except for the “Affordable Market Units” with rents at the average market rates (not open market) for Nanaimo area).
 - Only 7 of the 24 homes (30%) are permitted to be Affordable Market Units.

3. Developing relations with Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN)

- In March, two Board members met with the Housing Committee of the SFN Council to introduce GHS and its work, and in particular the Paisley Place housing project.
- In June, the Board contacted SFN with information regarding the newly approved amendments to the OCP and LUB, and the newly approved Housing Agreement.
- Since June, the Board was unsuccessful in further connections with SFN.

4. Creating a Strategic Plan for 2023-2027

In October 2021, the Board decided to create a first Strategic Plan for the Society that would articulate a broad vision, guiding values, and some goals for the next few years. A professionally



facilitated process took place during 2022 and included a planning session for members and then Board discussions and decisions. The Board completed the Strategic Plan in late 2022.

- Vision: Affordable, comfortable, secure housing for every member of the Gabriola community.
- Purpose: “The purpose for which the Society is incorporated is to relieve poverty by supporting and/or developing and/or operating housing projects that provide housing to people with low to modest incomes on Gabriola Island.” (*GHS Constitution*, 2019)
- Values: Accountability, Caring, Environmental Responsibility, Equity, Innovation, Right to Housing
- Definition of Affordable Housing: GHS uses the following definition of affordable housing, which describes a specific income category and rental rate:
“Generally, affordable housing refers to housing units that are affordable by that section of society whose income is below the median household income.... Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and British Columbia define affordable housing as housing that does not cost more than 30% of a household’s annual income, which includes utilities”.
(Northern Islands Housing Needs Assessment Report, Islands Trust, June 2018, p.2.)
- Goals
 - Increase access to affordable housing on Gabriola through three strategies: housing creation and retention; support services; and advocacy.
 - Build the capacity of the GHS Board and Committees to meet the goals of Strategic Priority #1 through activities in the following area (order not prioritized): Governance, Relationship with the SFN, Communication, and Financial Resources.

5. Continuing development of the Paisley Place project:

Throughout the year, various contractors continued their design work for the homes, water supply, wastewater system, electrical plan, landscaping, etc. GHS was very fortunate to receive a large anonymous donation to cover the costs of this ongoing work. Significant progress was made toward having the design at the “shovel-ready” stage (complete except for funding) by mid-2023 when the BC government is expected to issue their next call for applications to the Community Housing Fund.

6. Receiving financial support from the Gabriola community

The Board deeply appreciates the ongoing donations from Gabriolans. This money has helped immensely in financing the development of the Paisley Place housing project. From 2019 to 2022 the community has donated about \$436,000, and the Board is very grateful for this support.

Board of Directors: Jenni Gehlbach, Carol Hemrich, Nancy Hetherington Peirce, Jennefer Laidley, Barry Loescher, Leslie Sanderson, Kristina Wray

December 31, 2022