



WHAT
WE HEARD

SEABIRD ISLAND BAND

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & HOUSING REPORT SUMMARY
2021

WHAT WE HEARD

SEABIRD ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLAN SURVEY SUMMARY



As part of Seabird Island's Comprehensive Sustainable Community Plan update conducted in Sept 2020-March of 2021, we asked for input on what makes members most proud about their community. We wanted to know where members see opportunity for growth and ask what the community sees as the next steps for Seabird Island Band. This is a summary of what we heard.

WHAT MAKES YOU MOST PROUD OF SEABIRD AS A COMMUNITY?

Community members had a lot to share about what they were proud of at Seabird. One of the most prevalent themes was a sense of togetherness and care for one another. Respondents shared that they feel supported by the members in their community and appreciate the unity and resiliency of Seabird.

Many respondents also shared their sense of pride over Seabird's programs and services, including the health centre and education services from daycare to post secondary. Members were excited by how much growth Seabird has seen and anticipate future development and opportunities.

There was also general sense of excitement to see Seabird taking steps to prioritize culture and language.



WHAT, IF ANYTHING ELSE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE COMMUNITY CORE?



OTHER IDEAS



- Elder Assisted Living Home
- Longhouse
- Turf field
- Water park
- Smokehouse
- Places to gather
- Transportation
- Fitness centre

HOW CAN WE INCREASE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO LIVE YOUR LANGUAGE & YOUR CULTURE?

Language and culture are valued by many respondents. Many expressed the importance of ensuring all members had access to courses and activities. Creating a time for parents and Elders to attend language classes was a reoccurring request. Adults are more likely to attend classes in the evenings after working hours. Online courses were also commonly suggested. Virtual classes are not only COVID-safe, but also allow members living off reserve to participate.

Some respondents noted the benefits of daily language and culture immersion, even in small ways. Multiple respondents suggested bringing back the short morning language sessions held for staff, seeking Elders to share their knowledge, and more frequently displaying language publicly.

Other ideas shared were ensuring funding for language and culture courses, increasing the number of cultural events, improving online engagement and information sharing (Facebook, YouTube, etc.), providing pronunciation booklets, and longhouse teachings.

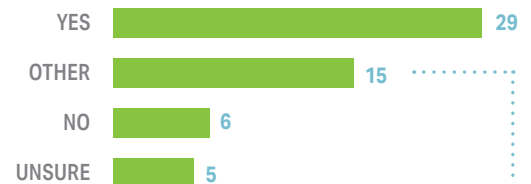
“*Make it a part of everyday life. Have all staff learn and greet guests and clients with our language. Have signage anywhere possible. Have lesson videos available for anyone who wants to learn*”

Our land and its health is our legacy to s'olh th'ép'ayeqw

WHERE SHOULD THE NEW CULTURE CENTRE BE LOCATED? DO YOU THINK THIS WOULD BE A FITTING CULTURAL LANDMARK FOR OUR COMMUNITY?

While a majority of respondent supported the first soccer field as a location for the new cultural centre, responses were varied with some sharing concerns and other location suggestions. While most of the respondents focused on the location of the cultural centre, those who commented on their overall feeling towards the landmark view it as a positive development for Seabird Island.

DO YOU THINK THE FIRST SOCCER FIELD IS AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION FOR A NEW CULTURAL CENTRE?



OTHER IDEAS



- Baseball Field (7)
- Old band office location (3)
- Near education buildings (2)
- In front of Slough (1)
- Across from Gas Bar (1)
- Trailer Site (1)



HOW CAN WE BETTER **DISCOVER** & **SHARE** OUR **HISTORY** AS A COMMUNITY?

Recording Elders' cultural knowledge and their stories is considered an important step in discovering and sharing the history of Seabird Island. Many respondents pointed to the importance of speaking to Elders and regularly sharing information with the greater community. There is a desire for more research, interviews, and storytelling. Members have also expressed the value of consistently using digital platforms to regularly update members via social media, the community website, YouTube, and online courses.

Several expressed a cultural centre and/or museum could be an important part of archiving and sharing Seabird Island history.

“ Interview everybody. Share our stories. Video of our Elders, life lesson and treasures. Share on website. ”

Natural analytical spaces. Gardens. Building workshops. Natural environments. Virtual libraries. Pictorial history walls.

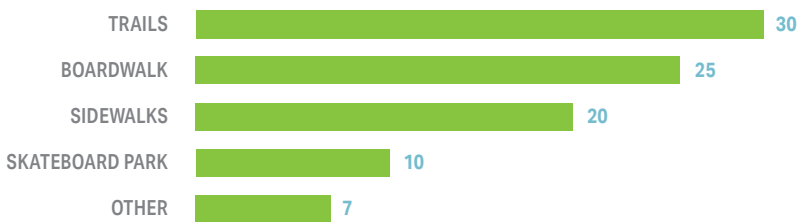
HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO KEEP SEABIRD **CLEAN** & **GREEN**?

Respondents seemed interested in most options listed in the survey. Members expressed a desire for ample opportunity for waste disposal, more information on disposal program, and assistance for Elders.

“ I believe in keeping natural spaces, the air as fresh as we can keep it, the water as clean as we can get it ”



HOW CAN WE SUPPORT YOUR **HEALTH** & **FITNESS** GOALS?



OTHER IDEAS



- Life skills coach
- Passes to Chilliwack pool or Hope pool
- Waterpark
- Group activities, walking, & low key exercise
- Turf field for multiple sports year round

WHAT DOES **FOOD SOVEREIGNTY** MEAN TO YOU?

Members have variations in what food sovereignty meant to them, but the common thread was a connection to nature, growing and sharing food locally, and providing through hunting and fishing. Many shared that sustainable community gardens were important to them, as well as ensuring access to healthy, nutritious foods.

Traditional knowledge of cultivation and sustainability was also considered an integral part of food sovereignty. Learning to preserve food, sharing knowledge, picking medicines, the ability to hunt as needed, and access to culturally appropriate food are all part of how Seabird Island First Nation members define food sovereignty.



TRADITIONAL
HARVESTING



HUNTING &
FISHING



SUSTAINABILITY



TEACHING
TRADITIONAL
KNOWLEDGE



COMMUNITY
GARDENS



WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE TOWARDS **COMMUNITY PLANNING & WELL-BEING?**

Seabird Island members had a variety of ideas on how to improve community well-being. Many shared the desire for more organized community activities and opportunities to learn more about their history and culture.

Some wanted to see more safety measures, like more street lights, sidewalks, a sound wall buffering the noise stemming from the highway and train tracks, and better flood protection. Others wanted to see more accountability among members – helping families, taking care of pets, and consequences for illegal behaviour.

An emphasis was placed on respecting Elders – learning from them, checking in on them, and providing spaces for them to gather.

As well, several respondents suggested more traditional harvesting, gardening, livestock, and education on sustainable practices.

And finally, a few respondents wanted to see more community engagement, opportunities to share input, and outreach to members living off reserve.

MORE IDEAS



- Coffee place for Elders
- Send surveys to mobile phones
- Cultural activities (sweat lodge, learning language, net hanging, tree cutting)
- Education on waste management, ecostation, composting, recycling
- More opportunities for feedback (place at band office)
- Craft nights
- More online learning
- Building that would house 1000+ people for large events
- Create more business opportunities
- Shore up the slough, widen and raise Seabird Island Road

NEXT STEPS?

Seabird members are proud of their community and the services offered. People are excited about future growth, the prioritization of language and culture, and coming together as a community. Investments in programs and infrastructure that contribute to a strong sense of community are likely to find support. Based on the feedback provided in the Seabird Island community survey, the follow areas should be considered for further action:

1. CONSTRUCT A CULTURAL CENTRE TO SUPPORT LANGUAGE & CULTURE

There is a strong desire for a cultural centre which could better connect Seabird members to their language and culture, help share and preserve their history, and give members a place to gather for cultural events. A new cultural centre would address many of the needs expressed in the survey.

While it was clear members support a new cultural centre, there was uncertainty around the best location. Further community engagement on where to locate the centre could be valuable in ensuring community support. Narrowing down location options and hosting a site walk with an architect could help identify and address the concerns that were raised in survey responses.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Significant community support for a new cultural centre
- The cultural centre addresses a lot of feedback points throughout the survey (language, culture, history, engagement, etc.)
- Further community engagement regarding the cultural centre location (site walk with architect)

2. PRESERVE & SHARE SEABIRD ISLAND HISTORY

Storytelling, research, and recording Seabird history are important to members. Requests for educational opportunities were made throughout the survey and are considered an important part of preserving and sharing Seabird history. Consistent cultural programming at the new cultural centre could meet community needs through cultural workshops, language classes, and events. The suggested pictorial history wall would go well in the new culture center.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Continue research and archiving history with knowledge holders
- Start and/or continue a language series
- Make history more accessible to members living on and off reserve (protected, online archival platform)
- Look for and create opportunity to share culture and language, where Elders are a resource and their stories are passed on. to help facilitate community engagement and learning opportunities (workshops, events, online content, etc.).

3. KEEP SEABIRD CLEAN & GREEN

Members want dumpster bins provide several times a year as well as one large clean-up day.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Provide dumpster bins 1 or 2 times a year
- Create volunteer-led spring clean-up day

4. PROMOTE HEALTH & WELLNESS

Members are very supportive of infrastructure investments that support health and wellness. Trails, sidewalks, and parks were all popular with respondents. Members also desire coordinated health and wellness activities to strengthen community bond.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Create an online calendar for community group events
- Establish walking group / activities groups
- Provide day passes to Chilliwack and Hope Pools
- Recreational infrastructure requests include: Trails, turf field, skate park, water park

5. SUPPORT FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Members are interested in learning more about food sovereignty and feel access to culturally appropriate food is important. There is support for more cultural programming, community gardens, cultural activities, and places to gather. Building a community garden could support food sovereignty while giving members a place to gather, as well as an opportunity to create a composting and recycle station.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Offer learning opportunities and cultural activities through cultural programming at the cultural centre
- Build an accessible community garden at each subdivision with benches and tables
- Create composting and recycling station at garden areas

6. INCREASE INFORMATION SHARING & FEEDBACK OUTREACH

Members expressed a desire for consistent updates on community news, educational opportunities, and activities. Members also suggested online engagement would better connect members living off-reserve with the local community. (social media, community website, YouTube, etc.)



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hold regular community open-house-style meetings over lunch/food
- Create and update events calendar
- Regularly update community website
- Consistent social media posts that share news and educational items (Word of the Day, photos, moments in history, etc.)
- Online surveys for regular feedback opportunities

7. CONSIDER FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

Based on the survey feedback, here is a list of infrastructure investment to consider and plan for:



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Improved Safety Measures

- Streetlights
- Sidewalks
- Managing stray dogs

Protective Infrastructure

- Flood protection
- Widen and raise Seabird Road

HOUSING SUMMARY

SEABIRD ISLAND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES PRELIMINARY LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

In March 2021, Seabird Island First Nation retained David Nairne + Associates Ltd to work with Seabird staff to identify development priorities for housing and community facilities in their community.

The following documents were reviewed as part of this summary:



Key members of the Seabird Island staff were consulted to help review and refine housing needs and community facility requirements and to identify available lots/areas for development in the community. The following is a summary of Seabird Island's community development priorities and the preliminary land availability assessment.

1. ADDRESS HOUSING NEEDS

There is a high demand for housing on-reserve and the community is working to keep up with demand.

As of August 2018, Seabird Island had sixty-six (66) families on their social housing waitlist. Additionally, there are seniors and people with disabilities who require accessible accommodations: 5 foster foster families, youth aging out of care requiring affordable rental housing and supports, and Seabird College students and single adults in need of low cost housing options.



ACTION ITEMS

- Seabird Island is partnering with BC Housing to develop up to 64 units of housing; 30 units will be constructed in the first phase of the project.

2. COMMUNITY FACILITY PRIORITIES

The Community Core Plan identifies an array of existing and future facilities within the community core area. The additional facilities that have been identified for the core area include:

- cultural centre
- birthing centre
- youth centre
- women's shelter
- long-term care
- hospice/palliative care
- mental health/wellness centre
- health wing expansion
- college
- band office expansion



3. RESIDENTIAL LOT ASSESSMENT

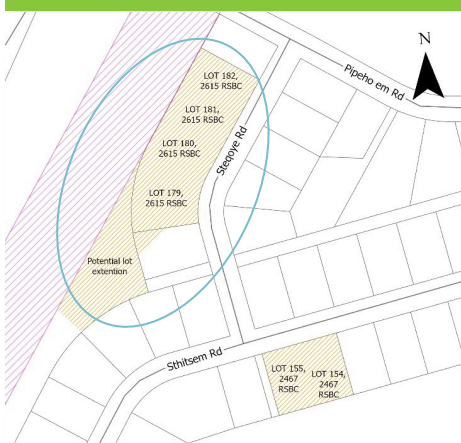
There are 14 available serviced residential lots in the Seabird Island Community, with 8 located within the community core and 6 are in the neighbourhood on Strawberry Island, approximately 2km north of the core.



ACTION ITEMS

- Seabird Island plans to amalgamate these lots to accommodate a number of new housing units.

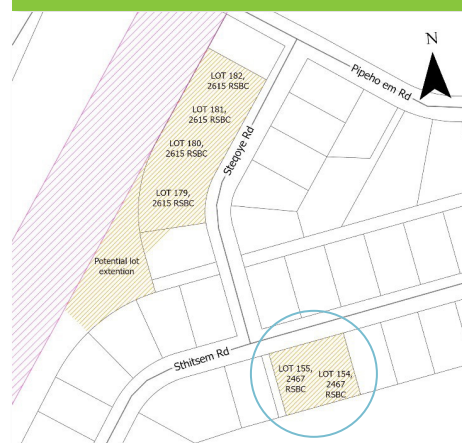
COMMUNITY CORE - CC - 1



UNIT TYPE: Mix of 2 & 3 BDRM multi-family units & 1 BDRM accessible units for elders & people with disabilities

UNIT YIELD: At an average density of 15 units per acre, this site will accommodate around 30 units.

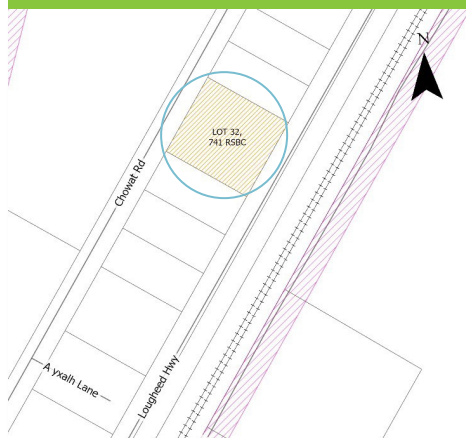
COMMUNITY CORE - CC - 2



UNIT TYPE: 1 BDRM units

UNIT YIELD: Assuming a 30% site coverage this site could accommodate approximately 18, 2-3 BDRM units in a 2-storey building with shared amenity space.

COMMUNITY CORE – CC - 3



UNIT TYPE: 1 BDRM units

UNIT YIELD: Assuming around 30% site coverage this parcel could accommodate approximately 36, 2-3 bedroom units in a 2-storey building with shared amenity space

STRAWBERRY ISLAND – AREA 2



