

Quadra Island Economic Diversification Workshop #2

“From Vision to Action”

Oct 4, 2025



Summary Report



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Summary

On October 4, 2025, the Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce hosted the second community workshop at Cape Mudge Hall. Forty-two community members participated, representing a range of local sectors. This session followed the June 3 visioning workshop and built on additional inputs gathered through a community-wide survey and key informant interviews. The focus was to move “from vision to action” by reviewing and prioritizing themes emerging from the consultation to date (e.g., first workshop on June 3, survey data, and interviews with community members) and beginning to develop concrete ideas and plans.

This project is a collaboration between the Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce and the We Wai Kai Nation. Funding is provided by the Province of British Columbia through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET).

Purpose of this Report

This brief report summarizes what was learned during the October 4 workshop and outlines how these insights will inform the Economic Diversification Plan, scheduled for completion by the end of 2025. It reflects the activities conducted on the day (small-group exercises with prioritization) and the results recorded in the workshop documentation.

Land Acknowledgement: The Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce gratefully acknowledges the We Wai Kai Nation that have been caring for the lands we operate on since time immemorial. We recognize that reconciliation is an ongoing process, and we are committed to advancing reconciliation in our work and are committed to the calls to action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as well as the implementation of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

Thank You: The Project Team would like to say thank you to our funder, the Province of British Columbia, through the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), for making this Project possible. Thank you to our partner, the We Wai Kai Nation, who graciously hosted this workshop at their Band Hall in Cape Mudge. Thank you to the Quadra Island Emergency Support Services for loaning us their sound system. And thank you to all participants for their time, ideas, and constructive discussion.

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Workshop Overview

Timeline of the Day (9:30 am – 1:30 pm)

9:30 – 9:45	Welcome and context for the project and the session
9:45 – 10:30	Activity 1: Gallery Walk – Validating Community Themes
10:30 – 11:30	Activity 2: Collaborative Action Planning – Turning Themes into Action
11:30 – 12:15	Priority Voting & Readiness Check on the action ideas
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch & Open-mic Reflection and feedback wall
1:00 – 1:30	Closing & Next Steps

What Happened

Participants worked through a structured sequence designed to confirm earlier findings and translate them into concrete next steps.

Activity 7: Gallery Walk - Validating Community Themes

Participants rotated through seven poster stations (see Appendix) summarizing themes identified through the June 3 workshop, the community survey, and key informant interviews:

1. Environment & Climate Resilience
2. Housing & Affordability
3. Mobility & Services
4. Wayfinding, Welcome & Community Information
5. Local Economy & Tourism
6. Strengths & Assets
7. Gaps & Challenges

At each station, participants added comments on sticky notes and then used dot stickers to signal priorities. The voting showed strongest interest around housing and affordability, local economy & tourism, and environment & climate resilience. The Gallery Walk confirmed existing themes and surfaced additions and cautions to carry forward.

Activity 8: Collaborative Action Planning - Turning Themes into Action

Participants remained in small groups and were assigned one of the seven themes. Each group drafted a “North Star” (5 to 10 year goal) and identified practical steps, potential partners, possible barriers, and signs of readiness. Groups then shared their discussion highlights through a large group report back. A subsequent priority voting exercise highlighted which ideas were the most important to the participants.

Activity 9: Reflection - Final Ideas and Takeaways

Over lunch and in a brief plenary, participants shared closing reflections and flagged enabling needs to move ideas forward (e.g., funding mechanisms, coordination capacity, and ways to sustain community participation). The session concluded with next steps and how input will feed into the Economic Diversification Plan.

Throughline

Across the day, participants worked from previously identified themes and developed specific ideas for projects and initiatives, adding clarity on partners, resources, and timelines to inform the plan.

What We Heard: Community Priorities¹

Environment & Climate Resilience (20 votes)

Summary: Participants emphasized protecting land and water while preparing for practical risks (wildfire, power outages, waste and sewage). Ideas leaned toward small-island solutions that build resilience at home, for small businesses, and along the shoreline.

What we heard

- Water security and aquifer understanding are recurring concerns; calls for monitoring and planning.
- Marine stewardship: boat pump-outs, cleanup, and monitoring of sewage dumping.
- Wildfire readiness at home and business level (e.g., grants for sprinkler systems).
- Reduce invasive species (broom) and consider limits to logging.
- Everyday infrastructure that supports stewardship: public toilets, showers, garbage/recycling, water fountains.
- Interest in local/renewable energy options and backup during outages (including community-level coordination).
- Active mobility links: safer bicycle paths and addresses for emergency response.
- Acknowledged cost barriers to upgrades; grants and guidance requested.

Top priority signal: 20 votes indicate steady support for practical resilience and stewardship actions.

¹ **Note on method.** The priorities above reflect the poster themes discussed during Activity 1 and the associated dot-voting totals. Comments were clustered by meaning (rather than by sticky-note colour) to reduce confusion and present a clearer synthesis of what participants said.

Community.voice

- “Water security & waste management are critical.”
- “Home & small business renewables essential.”

Housing & Affordability (27 votes)

Summary: Housing is the most urgent priority. Participants want year-round, attainable options that fit island character, with “gentle density,” tiny/modular/mobile homes, and clearer pathways through zoning and health regulations.

What.we.heard

- Strong support for increasing attainable options: secondary suites, tiny/modular/mobile homes, gentle density, intergenerational models, co-ops, community land trust approaches.
- Preference to focus density in village areas (Q Cove, H Bay) while protecting rural character.
- Practical constraints: Island Health septic/water requirements; OCP and zoning changes; mixed public opinion.
- Calls for secure rentals, landlord/renter protections, and “shovel-ready” pathways.
- Concern about competition from tourism accommodation and seasonal pressures.

Top priority signal: 27 votes (highest) underscore urgency for housing solutions aligned with local values.

Community.voice

- “Gentle density... expand infill opportunities.”
- “Secure rentals are necessary.”

Mobility & Services (7 votes)

Summary: People want safer, more reliable ways to get around and access core services. The focus is on bike/walk infrastructure, ferry line management, childcare aligned with work schedules, and health access.

What.we.heard

- Active mobility: bike lanes/paths, safer shoulders, walkable village connections, secure bike storage.
- Ferry alignment and line-up management; better links to Campbell River transit.

- Healthcare: walk-in access, expanded scopes for non-physician providers, continuity of local services.
- Childcare: more spaces and hours that match commuting patterns.
- Digital equity: reliable internet for all.
- Interest in ride-share/taxi options.

Top priority signal: 7 votes suggest targeted, near-term fixes (bike paths, childcare scheduling, clinic access) over large capital projects.

Community.voice

- “Concentrate new development in walkable, cyclable villages.”
- “We need safe bike trails.”

Wayfinding, Welcome & Community Information (10 votes)

Summary: A unified, easy-to-use information system is needed for residents and visitors.

Participants support a digital hub or app complemented by physical signage, event listings, and a staffed or volunteer-run info point without oversharing sensitive places.

What.we.heard

- Centralized digital hub/app with events calendar and local producer/visitor info; offline access valued.
- Complementary physical signage (wayfinding, crosswalk visibility) and a walk-in visitor space.
- Use existing assets (e.g., local societies’ info hubs) with funding to maintain them.
- Balance transparency with care: avoid “over-signage” and protect sensitive areas from over-promotion.

Top priority signal: 10 votes show moderate support; practicality and maintenance funding are key.

Community.voice

- “Combination app and signage, great.”
- “Keep local secrets safe from high-volume tourism.”

Local Economy & Tourism (26 votes)

Summary: People want year-round, right-sized prosperity that fits the island's character. Themes included shop-local, Indigenous-led experiences, value-added products, agri-tourism, skills and entrepreneurship, and avoiding high-impact mass tourism.

What.we.heard

- Encourage residents and visitors to “shop local”; support local producers and value-added goods.
- Interest in Indigenous-led experiences and better communication around them.
- Agri-tourism and studio/producer maps; more evening service options for locals.
- Caution about RV culture, chain businesses, and promotion of sensitive areas.
- Linkages to transport and housing (e.g., ferry congestion, wages, affordable accommodation for workers).

Top priority signal: 26 votes (second-highest) indicate strong appetite for an economy aligned with place and community values.

Community.voice

- “Balance local prosperity with sustainability.”
- “Sustainable tourism is linked with Indigenous-led experiences.”

Strengths & Assets (10 votes)

Summary: The island’s natural environment, volunteers, and depth of community skills are core assets. Protecting old growth, engaging youth, and enabling spaces for makers and trades are recurring ideas.

What.we.heard

- Natural environment as a differentiator and shared value.
- Volunteerism as a strength, paired with the need to sustain and value volunteers.
- Skills across generations: retirees’ expertise and youth energy; interest in apprenticeships/entrepreneurship.
- Indigenous cultural leadership and liaison roles highlighted.
- Maker/production spaces (arts, woodwork, outdoor products).
- Forestry concerns (old growth protection; local wood use).

Top priority signal: 10 votes reflect steady recognition of assets to build on.

Community.voice

- “Maker space for artists and trades.”
- “Lots of skills and knowledge, engage that.”

Gaps & Challenges (14 votes)

Summary: Structural issues, zoning, economic fragility, internet reliability, childcare and healthcare access, transportation, and seasonal pressures, limit year-round wellbeing. Views differ on zoning's role, but flexibility and collaboration are common threads.

What we heard

- Zoning is contested: seen as both constraint and protector of character; calls for targeted flexibility.
- Economic fragility and seasonality; need for living-wage pathways.
- Internet and digital access gaps; desire for free Wi-Fi in key areas.
- Childcare access and hours; health services for newcomers and families.
- Public/green transportation options and a small-island scale bus/taxi model.
- Need for more consultation with First Nations and stronger coordination across organizations.
- Mixed views on growth and change; importance of community dialogue.

Top priority signal: 14 votes point to cross-cutting barriers that intersect with housing, workforce, and tourism.

Community voice

- “Adopt a ‘possibilities’ attitude instead of ‘problems.’”
- “More opportunity for consultation and engagement with [First] Nations.”

Top Community Priorities



Emerging Action Ideas²

Table 1 - Environment & Climate Resilience (9 votes)

5-10 Year “North Star”: Power outage resilience for homes and small businesses.

- Issue: Power outages – lack of consistent internet, businesses can’t operate
- Opportunity: Grants to build resilience during power outages.
- Steps: Chamber coordinate/hire grant writing support; Create/distribute grant listing for home and small business upgrades (e.g. wildfire sprinklers, back-up power)
- Partners: Strathcona Regional District, MLA, Advocates; consult BC Hydro/Mascon
- Barriers: Access to funding and information; ability to consult service providers
- Readiness:
 - Community support – moderate
 - Resources – partial/limited
 - Timing – short: 1-2 year timeframe

Table 2 - Housing & Affordability (12 votes)

5-10 year “North Star”: “Homes that fit island life.”

- Issue/Opportunity: Community acceptance and support of increasing density
- Steps: Explore mobile/modular/tiny homes/houseboat options; Hold round table discussions; Prepare water/septic pathways with VIHA and SRD.
- Staged approach:
 - 1–2 years: Research and engagement; understand VIHA septic/water processes.
 - 3–5 years: Engage lawmakers (incl. Tenancy Act considerations).

² **How to read this section:** Each table was assigned a theme and asked to identify an issue and/or opportunity. They then developed a 5-10 year goal or “north star,” as well as action steps, potential partners, barriers, and signs of readiness. This summary reflects each table’s worksheet and large group report back. Votes reflect the prioritization exercise at the end of Activity 2 in which every participant had three votes to distribute across the seven ideas. It should be noted that two groups identified housing as their north star, so while each idea received votes, “housing” in general received a total of 27 combined votes, the highest score.

- 5+ years: Acquire funding and build.
- Partners: Community Land Trust, ICAN, DICC, QIF, We Wai Kai Nation, builders.
- Barriers: VIHA (water/septic), OCP in current form, zoning (Regional District), mixed public opinion.
- Readiness:
 - Community support – strong
 - Resources – partial/limited

Table 3 - Mobility & Services (5 votes)

5-10 year “North Star”: Reduce reliance on outside inputs by expanding on-island services e.g. Quadra Circle

- Opportunity: Provide equitable, inclusive, and affordable services on Quadra
- Steps: Expand Quadra Circle’s services to under-55’s; support community organizations to broaden mission and reach; advocate to Island Health for more services.
- Partners: Quadra Circle, Island Health.
- Barriers: Lack of staff/funding/capacity, succession planning for volunteers, bureaucracy, affordability, market size

Table 4 - Wayfinding, Welcome & Community Information (16 votes)

5-10 year “North Star”: Provide central welcome centre and community information in an App.

- Opportunity: Quadra app! Benefit is that it would be available offline. Would help promote community and local businesses, and provide wayfinding and welcome. App is a “keystone” integrating all workshop ideas.
- Steps: Hire a developer (cost range discussed); complete a feasibility study/plan; raise funds (sponsors/advertisers, ICE-T); deploy QR codes at businesses and at the ferry.
- Partners : SRD, ICET, Quadra [First] Nations, Quadra Island Foundation.
- Barriers: Funding/revenue model; coordination.
- Readiness:
 - Timing – 1-2 years to create the app plus ongoing maintenance.

Table 5 - Sustainable Tourism (26 votes)

5-10 year “North Star”: Community-value-aligned tourism.

- Issue: Perception of tourism as a net negative (take more than they give) due to crowded ferry lines/traffic. However, a big part of the economy is tourism.
- Opportunity: MRDT (Municipal & Regional District Tax) as a core funding tool. Potential uses include: Bike lanes, ferry line-up lane, bus loop, affordable housing, info centre, Quadra App, support for local non-profits.
- Steps: Create a plan (articulate and cost initiatives, etc).
- Partners: Tourism providers, accommodation sector, Chamber
- Barriers: Community perception of tourism as “net negative” to be addressed; alignment with capacity and funding.
- Readiness:
 - Community support – moderate.
 - Timeline – 6-12 months to scope costs/initiatives.

Table 6 - Strengths & Assets (25 votes)

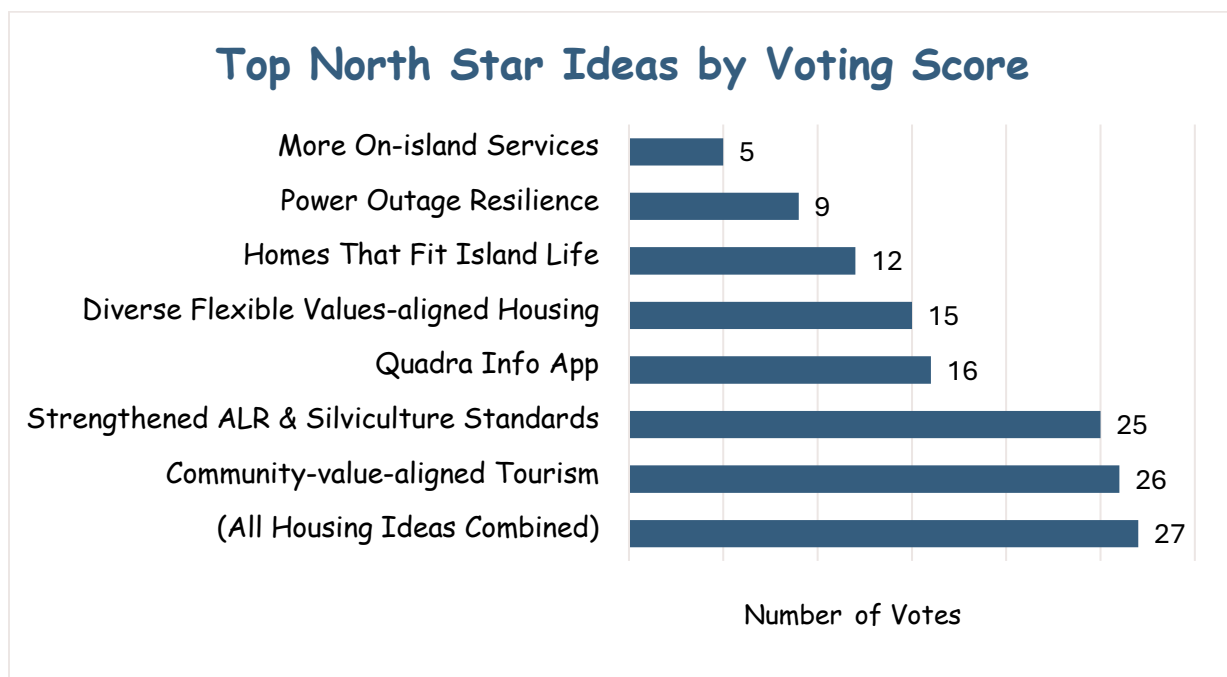
5-10 year “North Star”: Strengthen ALR (Agricultural Land Reserve) and silviculture standards on private and public lands.

- Issue: Maintaining public ownership of lands/forest; eroding rules.
- Opportunity: Encourage community engagement; bring back the Forest Services Committee.
- Steps: Keep strengthening fire mitigation; Increase community engagement in OCP/zoning (do not lose ALR/silviculture zoning in the new OCP); re-establish QIFRC (Quadra Island Forest Resource Committee)
- Partners: Quadra Fire Department, SRD, Forestry licensees, We Wai Kai Nation.
- Barriers: Volunteer time capacity.

Table 7 - Gaps & Challenges (15 votes)

5-10 year “North Star”: Diverse housing that is values-aligned (community, diversity, sustainability, intergenerational) and flexible.

- Issue: Lack of affordable housing
- Opportunity: Creates jobs/internal capacity/stability; creates housing for many; supports business in attracting quality employees; gives us a strong voice in its design; increased tax base; prevents getting lost in theory; define a specific project; able to assess projects that have already been created (and make it ours)
- Steps: Find funding; create roles; identify partners/resources; set measurable milestones for a pilot project; create dedicated paid roles (diverse representation) to build internal capacity to move housing projects forward.
- Barriers: funding and organizational capacity.



Cross-Cutting Themes

1) Funding and grant-writing capacity

Across themes and in final reflections, participants emphasized the need for funding and suggested that there be dedicated capacity to research grants, coordinate applications, and manage reporting. A recurring idea was to create (or hire) a role to support homeowners, small businesses, and community projects, with quick wins like a public grant-listing.

2) Collaboration and coordination

Many proposals relied on coordinated action among the Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce, the We Wai Kai Nation, the Strathcona Regional District, and community organizations (e.g., Quadra Circle). Participants repeatedly named specific partners in action plans and asked for better alignment during OCP/zoning work, tourism planning (MRDT), and information services.

3) Housing as a system constraint

Housing needs and policy pathways (OCP, zoning, Island Health septic/water) surfaced not only under “Housing & Affordability” but also as enablers for workforce, tourism, services, and intergenerational wellbeing. Gentle density and varied forms (tiny/modular/mobile, suites, co-ops) were viewed as compatible with island character when guided by clear rules and engagement.

4) Community self-sufficiency and resilience

Participants linked environmental resilience (water security, wildfire readiness, local energy/back-up for outages) with everyday economic and social resilience. Several tables proposed near-term, practical steps at household, business, and community scales, paired with education and coordination.

5) App-based communication with real-world complements

A Quadra-wide app (offline-capable) emerged as a keystone concept connecting wayfinding, events, producer/visitor info, and even tourism management messaging. Participants also stressed maintaining physical touchpoints (signage, walk-in info) and supporting existing community information hubs.

6) Enabling services and everyday infrastructure

Active mobility (bike lanes/paths, safer shoulders), childcare hours aligned to commuting, reliable internet, and accessible health services appeared in multiple stations as near-term, high-impact enablers that cut across housing, economy, and quality-of-life goals.

7) Volunteer and organizational capacity

The island’s volunteer culture is a strength, but several actions (fire mitigation, forest committee re-establishment, info hub maintenance) require sustained capacity. Participants noted the need to value volunteers while resourcing ongoing roles.

8) Tourism fit and funding

Sustainable, “right-sized” tourism tied to local values—along with MRDT as a funding tool—recurred in action ideas and final discussion. Education/communication and investment in shared infrastructure (e.g., bike lanes, info centre) were viewed as ways to align benefits with community priorities.

Next Steps

Continuing interviews and data analysis

We will complete a small number of additional key informant interviews and finish the analysis of the community-wide survey. The combined inputs from the June 3 workshop, the survey, interviews, and the October 4 workshop will be analyzed together to confirm priorities and near-term actions.

Drafting the Economic Diversification Plan

Using the validated themes and the action ideas developed on October 4, as well as all of the other data and analysis, the project team will draft the Economic Diversification Plan. The draft will organize initiatives by readiness and impact, reflect the partners named during group work, and note barriers and enabling needs that have been identified.

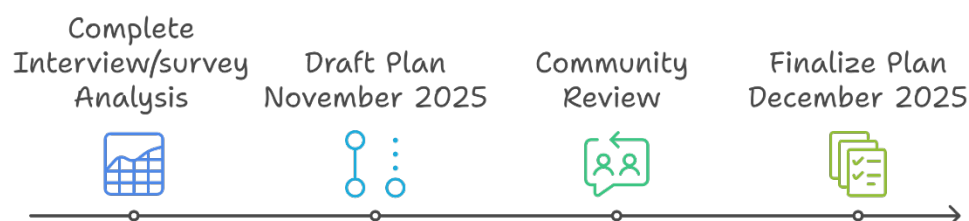
Opportunities for community feedback

A public-facing summary of the draft plan will be shared for community review. Community comments received during that review window will be logged and considered in the finalization of the plan.

Timeline

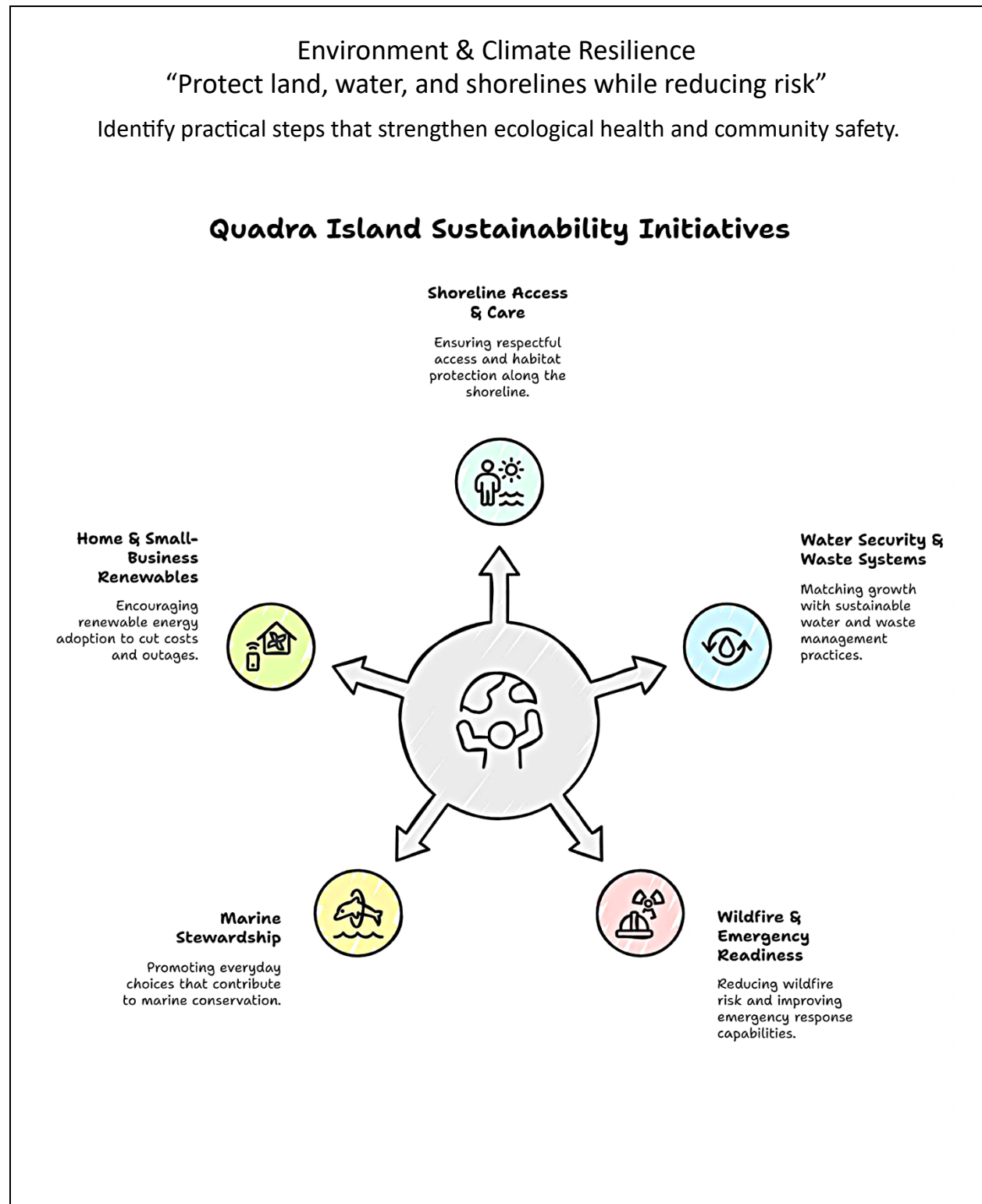
The Economic Diversification Plan is scheduled for completion by the end of 2025.

Economic Diversification Plan Timeline



Appendix: Gallery Walk Posters

Station #1: Environment & Climate Resilience

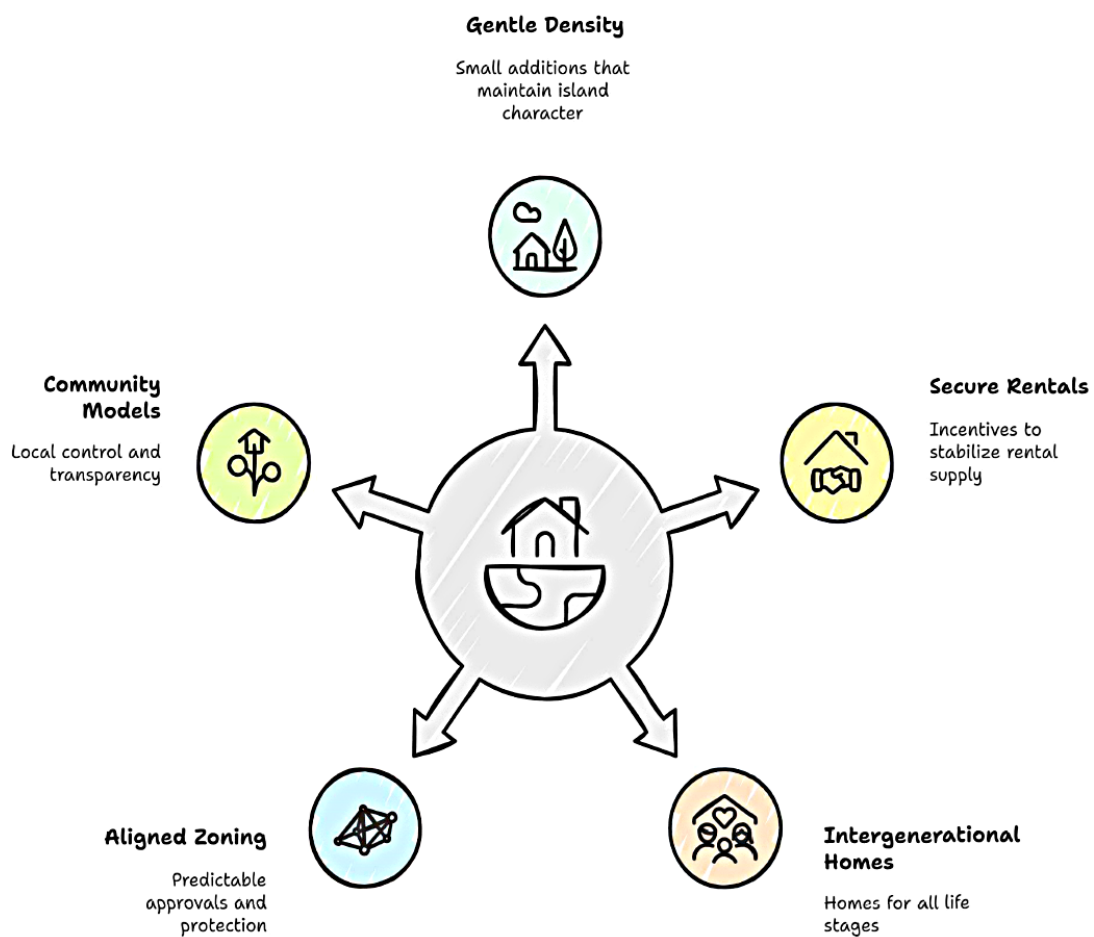


Station #2: Housing & Affordability

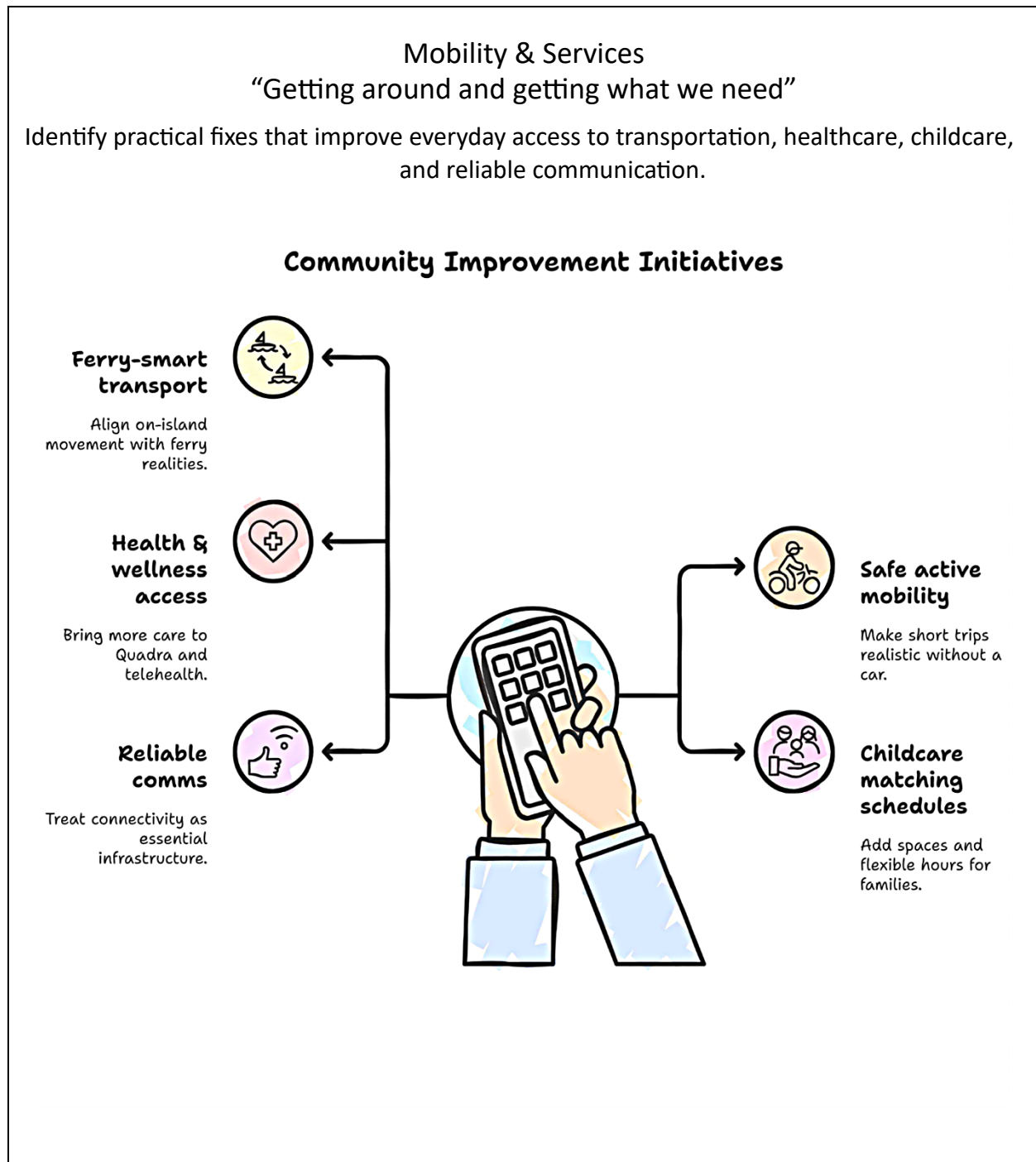
Housing & Affordability “Homes that fit island life”

Identify practical ways to secure year-round, attainable homes for residents, workers, and families.

Quadra Island Housing Solutions



Station #3: Mobility & Services



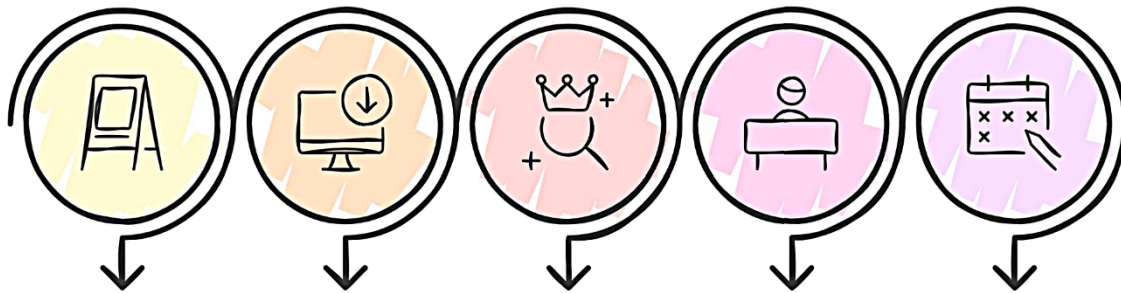
Station #4: Wayfinding, Welcome & Community Information

Wayfinding, Welcome & Community Information

“Find your way, Find what’s local”

Make it easier for residents and visitors to navigate places and find trusted local information.

Community Communication Methods



Physical Signage

A small, clean system for key sites and routes. Examples include village maps, beach access markers, and trailhead etiquette cards.

Digital Info Hub

A single URL providing access to current essential information. Examples include ferries, events, service directories, emergency notices, and telehealth updates.

Producer Findability

Helping residents prioritize buying local products. Examples include search filters for makers, growers, and printable mini-maps for counters.

Visitor Welcome

Setting expectations that align with the island's character. Examples include quiet hours, dog leash norms, waste disposal, and respect for shoreline and wildlife.

Events Calendar

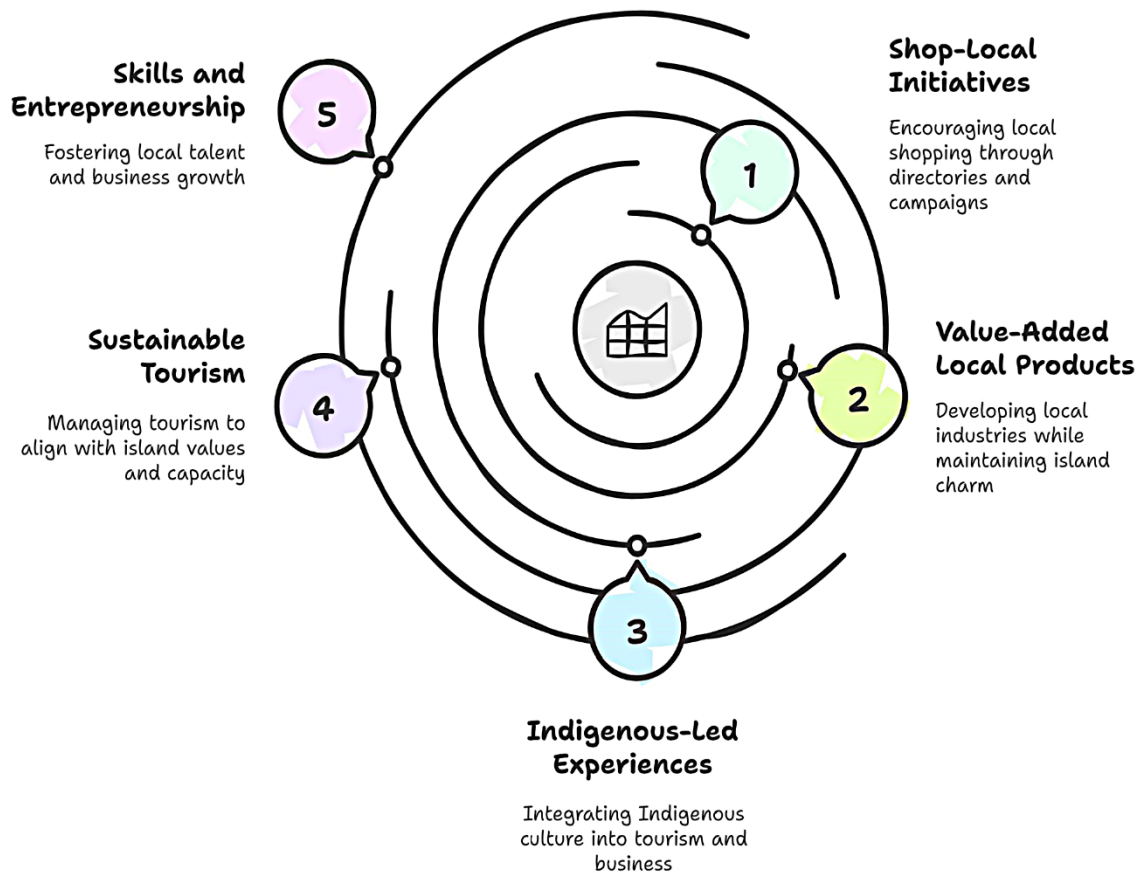
Simple submissions with weekly highlights of events. Examples include community center activities, clubs, markets, and youth/senior programs in one place.

Station #5: Local Economy & Tourism

Local Economy & Tourism “Year-round, right-sized prosperity”

Shape an economy that supports residents year-round, celebrates place, and fits Quadra’s scale and character.

Towards a circular Quadra economy

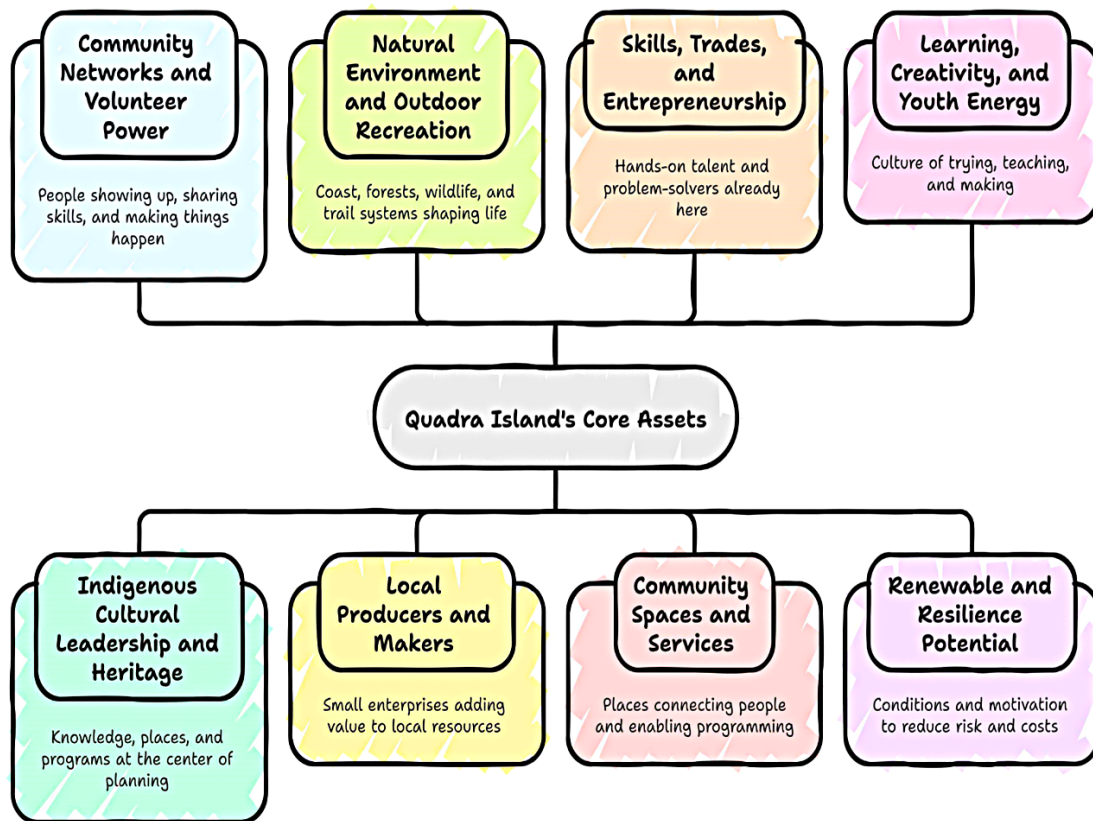


Station #6: Strengths & Assets

Strengths & Assets “What we can build on”

Surface the people, places, and capabilities that give Quadra an edge and can anchor near-term projects.

Quadra Island's Core Assets

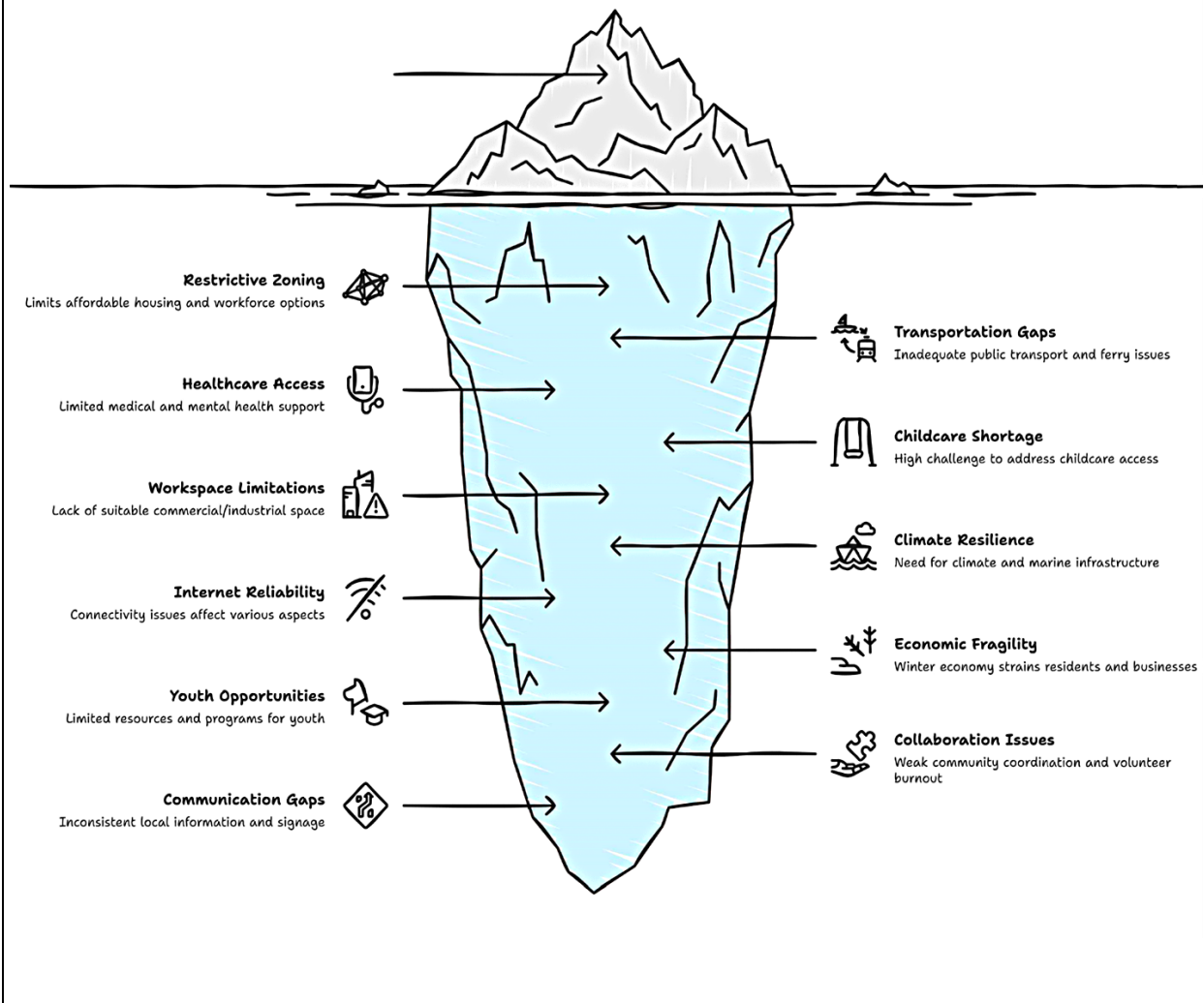


Station #7: Gaps & Challenges

Gaps & Challenges “What’s in the way right now”

Name the barriers that most limit year-round wellbeing and a resilient local economy.

Island Life Challenges: Unveiling the Hidden Depths



Bonus Station: Community Values

Community Values “What matters on Quadra”

Name the shared values that should guide decisions about projects, funding, and growth.

Quadra Island's Community Values

