

Vital Conversations

Report on The Vital Conversation

Appendix 3: Quotations from Participants

Many memorable comments were made during the Vital Conversation and recorded by scribes at each table. Here are a quotable few, edited from scribes' notes.

Sense of Community

- Bowen's rich tapestry is what I've been drawn to and hope to sustain. As a Mum, I have found there's an amazing amount of wisdom on this island.
- A strong sense of community survives on this Island, even with the growth to nearly 4000 people.
- We care about each other because we know each other.
- Kids grow up here with a strong sense of community, one they will take with them and try to re-create.

Public Dialogue

- There needs to be much more inclusive and open dialogue, more than just Council discussing things.
- We need more tolerance than we have now.
- We are reluctant to let trust our leaders and let them do things.
- We are outrageously passionate.
- Don't accept our deficiencies. Don't let polarization stop us from action.
- There's no forum to discuss conflicting ideas and concepts. People talk to friends, but not to those they disagree with.
- We are difficult to lead. We come to an island because we are independent minded."

Youth

- Things are very limited for youth. The Teen Centre on weekends, not much else. In summer, you have the beach but in the winter, it's bad.
- The youth a voice was missing, including those in their 20s who grew up here and are now trying to make a life on Bowen.

Snug Cove

- We must balance our love of nature and the idea of Bowen as a refuge... with pride in our built environment in Snug Cove.
- We lack spaces in village for unplanned interaction, performances, and markets. It is all vehicle-scaled, not human scaled.
- We are doing this for ourselves, but tourism is equally important.”

Transportation

- People have been pulled into using cars, which erodes our healthy vibrant capacity.
- There are no kids on bikes on the road anymore, or mothers pushing babies— it’s too dangerous.

Gathering Place

- Things will happen in that building that will bring the community together.
- There should be a choice – if people want to be more isolated, they can be. If they want more connectedness, that is also possible.
- We need a space for people to gather like the piazzas in Italy... This is where we weave the fabric of community.
- We have become apathetic and hopeless about this. We need a leader who is not afraid of a tax increase to help finance it.
- The community is old-school on this, scared of what the next decade will bring. A lot of people on Bowen don’t need change.
- Can we learn from other communities like Port Moody [for its highly flexible community space that converts from Council chamber to other uses].”

Housing/Diversity

- We have too many single family homes.
- We need to repeat the Belterra model.
- Whatever happened to Abbeyfield House?

Environment

- The children at BICS get an education about local ecology, but what about the adults?
- We don’t do a great job with protection, or access.
- We are not self-sufficient enough in food, power and waste.
- It should not be Us versus the Environment. We are part of it.

Healthcare

- ER care would improve with online diagnostic support during transfer to a primary care facility. This will save lives. This level of care should be accessible to our community.

Volunteerism

- Many of the good things on the Island are being done by volunteers who are getting tired.
- In Tofino, the Ambassador program asks community members to volunteer two hours to attend a session on building the community message.”