

2021 SUMMER EXPERIENCE PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

NOVEMBER 2021





A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER OF RESORT EXPERIENCE

As the General Manager of Resort Experience, it is my role to ensure that the guest and resident experience is not only preserved, but enhanced, and that Whistler is able to accommodate a diverse group of users seeking to enjoy our destination assets.

In 2020 we saw a significant increase in visitors, creating an unprecedented demand on our parks infrastructure and resources, and as we planned for 2021, we expected even more visitors as some pandemic travel restrictions were removed. The additional planning and preparation was, as it turns out, necessary as visits to our four key destination parks climbed by 77% this summer as compared with summer 2019 before the pandemic.

The Summer Experience 2021 Plan was an important and proactive effort to mitigate the increased pressure on our infrastructure and resources, and helped to prevent negative impacts to our parks system and to the overall resort experience. The Plan aimed for progress, not perfection, and the results from summer 2021 have helped us learn what worked and how we can improve in future years.

The Summer Experience 2021 Plan was prepared with little advance knowledge of what conditions would be in the summer, and required considerable collaboration and coordination among RMOW departments and partner organizations. I am extremely proud of our team's expertise and effort in planning, executing and adapting throughout the summer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessie Jones".

Jessie Gresley-Jones
General Manager of Resort Experience

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SECTION 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In anticipation of a high number of visitors in summer 2021, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) developed and executed the Summer Experience 2021 Plan, encompassing a range of actions to ensure a positive resort experience for residents and visitors.

COVID-19 travel restrictions were incrementally lifted in late spring and again in the summer. Combined with hot weather early in the summer and wildfires elsewhere in the province, the result was more visitors to Whistler in summer 2021. There were ultimately 77% more visits to four key destination parks as compared with summer 2019.

This Summary Report presents the outcomes of the Plan, highlighting key findings and recommendations for summer 2022.

The Summer Experience 2021 Plan was endorsed by Council on March 16 2021.

Six objectives were established for the Plan:

1. Maintain public safety, including COVID-19 safety measures.
2. Educate visitors about Whistler.
3. Respond to capacity challenges.
4. Provide enhanced and diversified experiences.
5. Provide opportunities for local business.
6. Test local transit initiatives related to climate action objectives and capacity challenges.

The Summer Experience 2021 Plan included actions in five key areas:

- Increased parking management.
- Increased local transit and sustainable transportation offerings.
- Visitor dispersion and programming.
- Improved parks experiences.
- Local business opportunities.

The Plan anticipated and planned for three major construction projects during the summer months on Alta Lake Road (sanitary sewer installation by RMOW), in Alta Vista (services replacement by RMOW) and on Highway 99 (repaving by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure MOTI) between the River of Golden Dreams bridge and Emerald Estates).



Actions were implemented beginning in May and concluded in September. Conditions were monitored and actions adjusted as necessary in response to changing Public Health Officer (PHO) orders, pandemic travel restrictions, weather and other factors.

With many initiatives within the summer program, measures of success were tangible and easily demonstrated. However, as this was the first year for the Summer Experience Plan, data had not yet been collected to establish a baseline in many instances. In these circumstances this summer acted to form the benchmark and will be used to measure success in subsequent years.

This report serves as a public document to share the Plan's outcomes, key findings and recommendations for summer 2022. The intent for the Summer Experience Plan was for progress not perfection.

How decisions were made for the Summer Experience Plan

The actions within the Summer Experience Plan were guided by Council-adopted plans and policies, created through considerable community input. The below four plans were primarily used to inform decision making and set goals for implementing change.

Official Community Plan (OCP) – Adopted June 23, 2020

“A place where our community thrives, nature is protected, and guests are inspired.”

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the Resort Municipality of Whistler's most important guiding document that sets long-term community direction. The OCP establishes policies that guide decisions on community planning and land use management for the RMOW over the next five to 10 years and beyond. The OCP also contains a renewed Community Vision for Whistler that articulates the high level aspirations for our resort community, describing what we collectively seek to achieve now and over Whistler's long-term future.

Learn more at whistler.ca/OCP

Climate Action Big Moves Strategy - Adopted December 15, 2020

In response to the climate crisis, the RMOW has developed the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy that identifies top priority areas for action and builds on the work done through the 2016 Community Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP).

The Climate Action Big Moves Strategy focuses on transportation, buildings, and waste, and articulates the key strategies Whistler will need to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) to meet its new target; to reduce GHG emissions by 50% below 2007 levels by 2030.

Learn more at whistler.ca/BigMoves





Whistler Transportation Action Plan 2018-2028 - Adopted October 2, 2018

The Whistler Transportation Action Plan 2018–2028 was developed by the Transportation Advisory Group. It is based on over two and a half years of transportation studies, monitoring, and community input from five community forums, various online surveys, as well as lessons learned from the implementation of the short-term and medium-term transportation actions in 2017 and 2018.

The Whistler Transportation Action Plan 2018–2028 also aligns with the transportation goals, objectives and policies in Whistler’s updated Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy. The action plan outlines 105 recommended actions over the next 10 years that advance the community toward the vision of an efficient and affordable transportation system that creates less impact on our natural and built environment. Key themes include expanding active transportation options, better parking management and transit improvements.

Learn more at whistler.ca/transportation_action_plan

Recreation and Leisure Master Plan (2015)

The Recreation and Leisure Master Plan (RLMP) provides guiding direction for Whistler’s municipal parks, trails, lakes and rivers, and recreation programs and facilities. The RLMP recognizes growing capacity and crowding issues within municipal parks and identifies core values of balancing the needs of recreational users, the environment and neighbourhoods; enriched experiences; healthy living; quality service levels; and nurturing opportunities.

Learn more at whistler.ca/RecMasterPlan

Costs and Funding

The total cost to implement and operate the Summer Experience Plan was \$614,000.

Permanent one-time infrastructure initiatives account for approximately 66% of the total costs. This includes but is not limited to permanent parking lot and neighbourhood on-street parking signage improvements, parking meters, and other park infrastructure elements such as docks, waste bins, Stand-up Paddleboard (SUP) racks and more. The remaining 34% of expenditures were directed at seasonal programming and communication efforts including but not limited to the Bike Valet and Rainbow Park shuttle services, supporting signage, graphic design, communications and bylaw enforcement.

The Summer Experience Plan was funded through a combination of municipal general reserves (7%), new pay parking revenues at select parks (20%), and provincial programs including Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) Program (9%), and the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) (64%).

More specifically, transportation actions were funded from several sources:

- The Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service and Lost Lake/Rainbow Park Bike Valet Service was fully funded by new revenues from user pay parking at four parks.
- The free Lost Lake shuttle bus route, first launched in 1992, continues to be funded through the Whistler Transit System annual operating agreement with BC Transit
- The Olympic Plaza Bike Valet was funded from the Community Transportation Initiatives Fund, which has been funded by user pay parking fees from Day Lots 1 to 5 since 2017.

The Summer Experience Plan would not have been possible without the provincial funding partners who continue to support a high quality resort experience for our community and our guests.



1.1 Summer 2021 Conditions in Whistler

The COVID-19 pandemic continued through summer 2021. Travel restrictions were incrementally lifted in late spring and again in the summer. Recreational travel within provincial “travel regions” was allowed as of May 26, and unrestricted recreational travel was allowed within B.C. as of June 15. Travel to B.C. from elsewhere in Canada was permitted as of July 1. Fully-vaccinated American travellers were permitted to visit Canada as of August 9, and vaccinated international travellers were permitted to visit as of September 7. The Canada/U.S. land border remained closed. International travel remained restricted with international visitors making up a very small percentage of overall visitation.

Step 3 of BC’s Restart Plan began on July 1. Indoor organized gatherings were permitted up to 50 people or 50% capacity, and outdoor organized gatherings were permitted up to 5,000 people or 50% capacity. Fairs, festivals and trade shows were permitted to return to normal with a Communicable Disease Plan. There were no group limits for indoor and outdoor dining, events were allowed, and normal liquor service hours were reinstated.

Events that had been held in Whistler in previous years were cancelled in advance of summer 2021 because of the high level of uncertainty, including the annual concert series, Crankworx and GranFondo. Smaller in-person sporting events resumed in September, beginning with the Whistler X Triathlon at Lost Lake Park.

A record-setting heat wave engulfed western Canada at the beginning of the summer, and temperatures in Whistler reached 42 degrees Celsius. Warm weather continued through July, and wildfires in the B.C. interior had a limited impact on the coastal region with only a handful of smoky days in Whistler. The weather was cooler and wetter on many days in August and September. The hot weather earlier in the summer and the wildfires and associated poor air quality elsewhere in the province and Alberta likely resulted in an additional increase in regional visitation to Whistler in summer 2021 above and beyond what was originally anticipated.

Pandemic closures and or access restrictions at Whistler Blackcomb as well as provincial parks (Garibaldi, Nairn Falls and Joffre Lakes) placed additional visitor demands and pressures on Whistler’s parks and open spaces.





1.2 Visitation

There were more than 176,000 visits to the four destination parks (Lost Lake Park, Rainbow Park, Lakeside Park and Alpha Lake Park) in summer 2021, as summarized in Table 1. This represents a 35% increase from the 130,000 visits in summer 2020, and a 77% increase from the 99,000 visits in summer 2019.

Tourism Whistler prepared analysis of visitation to the destination parks and the Village Stroll, which is summarized in the table below.

Key Visitation Findings:

- The increase in parks visitation was due almost entirely to visitors from Greater Vancouver, BC and elsewhere in Canada, particularly Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.
- The number of park visitors from the U.S. and other countries decreased by 80% due to pandemic travel restrictions.
- Additional visits continued to increase during midweek rather than on weekends.

Detailed parks and Village visitation data, including visitor volume extrapolation methods can be found in the Appendices.

Visitor Volumes - RMOW Parks


 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	2019	2020	2021	vs 2019	vs 2020
Lost Lake Park	24,725	32,876	55,725	+125%	+70%
Resident	2,744	3,820	3,157	+15%	-17%
BC	9,818	26,234	40,199	+309%	+53%
Interprovincial	3,478	2,463	10,691	+207%	+334%
International/US	8,685	359	1,678	-81%	+367%
Lakeside Park	26,494	35,363	41,038	+55%	+16%
Resident	7,421	7,614	6,271	-15%	-18%
BC	12,557	25,353	27,854	+122%	+10%
Interprovincial	2,042	2,049	6,048	+196%	+195%
International/US	4,474	347	865	-81%	+149%
Rainbow Park	33,206	40,873	52,169	+57%	+28%
Resident	7,913	5,382	5,336	-33%	-1%
BC	15,655	31,974	38,617	+147%	+21%
Interprovincial	2,927	3,079	6,919	+136%	+125%
International/US	6,711	438	1,297	-81%	+196%
Alpha Lake Park	15,085	21,290	27,496	+82%	+29%
Resident	5,132	6,823	8,519	+66%	+25%
BC	6,458	13,642	15,158	+135%	+11%
Interprovincial	863	638	3,056	+254%	+379%
International/US	2,632	187	763	-71%	+308%
All Parks Combined	99,510	130,400	176,429	+77%	+35%
Resident	23,211	23,638	23,283	+0%	-2%
BC	44,488	97,202	121,829	+174%	+25%
Interprovincial	9,310	8,229	26,714	+187%	+225%
International/US	22,501	1,331	4,603	-80%	+246%



Table 1 – Visitors to RMOW Parks, Yearly Comparison

	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Change 2019-2021
Lost Lake Park	24,700	32,900	55,700	+125%
Lakeside Park	26,500	35,400	41,000	+55%
Rainbow Park	33,200	40,900	52,200	+57%
Alpha Lake Park	15,100	21,300	27,500	+82%
All 4 Parks	99,500	130,400	176,400	+77%
Resident	23,200	23,600	23,300	+0%
BC	44,500	97,200	121,800	+174%
Canada	9,300	8,200	26,700	+187%
US & International	22,500	1,300	4,600	-80%

Table 2 – Origin Breakdown - Avg. Visitors/Day including Residents



 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021
Resident	4,101	2,817	2,868
<i>Whistler</i>	3,247	2,427	2,276
<i>Pemberton</i>	854	390	592
BC	7,474	8,337	10,399
<i>Vancouver & Area</i>	3,686	4,207	5,388
<i>Fraser BC</i>	2,743	3,421	4,151
<i>Other BC</i>	1,046	709	860
Destination Canada	1,921	912	2,948
<i>Ontario</i>	949	339	1,642
<i>Quebec</i>	231	146	589
<i>Alberta</i>	551	357	604
<i>Other Canada</i>	190	70	113
USA	3,305	70	312
International	2,815	45	83
Total	19,616	12,181	16,609




Table 3 - Average Visitors Per Day

 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	Summer 2019		Summer 2020		Summer 2021	
	Midweek	Weekend	Midweek	Weekend	Midweek	Weekend
Resident	4,148	3,987	2,788	2,887	2,948	2,670
Visitor - BC	5,947	11,207	6,729	12,269	8,999	13,820
Visitor - Interprovincial	1,941	1,854	872	978	2,995	2,833
Visitor - International	5,790	6,945	109	131	374	448
Total	17,826	23,993	10,498	16,265	15,316	19,771

- Numbers of people on the Village Stroll decreased slightly in summer 2021 by 15% as compared to pre-pandemic levels in summer 2019, as indicated in Table 2.
- Anecdotal reports suggest the decrease in visitation was due to perceptions of congestion in the Village among residents, combined with lower numbers of international visitors.
- Local visitation to the Village Stroll continued to be 30% lower than pre pandemic levels.
- Services provided on the Village Stroll decreased as a result of store closures and staffing limitations.
- Village visitation demographic did not necessarily seek the same offerings as typical pre-pandemic international visitors.
- Anecdotally, guests reported feeling more comfortable in parks than the more spatially constrained Village Stroll.
- These factors continued to contribute to changes in Village stroll visitation.

Table 4 – Visitors to Village Stroll, Summer 2021

 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Change 2019-2021
Resident	4,100	2,800	2,900	-30%
Visitor	15,500	9,400	13,700	-11%
BC	7,500	8,300	10,400	+39%
Canada	1,900	900	2,900	+53%
US	3,300	< 100	300	-90%
International	2,800	< 100	< 100	-70%
Total	19,600	12,200	16,600	-15%



Employee and Staffing Challenges

All businesses within Whistler have felt the impacts of staffing challenges throughout the pandemic. Whistler relies heavily on international staff to support food, beverage, retail and hotel outlets. Many food and beverage establishments were not able to operate at full hours or all days of the week, and many hotels capped occupancy at levels lower than traditionally expected.

The RMOW faced similar challenges maintaining and operating Whistler's parks during the pandemic in particular with seasonal and casual staff. Events and functions that had previously relied on casual staff, no longer had access to a readily available pool of team members and therefore some events were not able to take place even if they were permitted under the PHO orders.

Implementation of new initiatives was a challenge with available municipal staff and supply chain challenges, and several regular maintenance items were delayed to ensure delivery of the Summer Experience Plan goals. Overall these challenges demonstrated the organization's flexibility and improved interdepartmental cooperation that will carry forward to future years and new challenges.



SECTION 2

PARKS EXPERIENCE



The Summer Experience Plan aimed to provide improved experiences for park users, in response to capacity challenges and provide opportunities for safe visitor dispersion.

2.1 New and Seasonal Amenities

New and seasonal infrastructure was implemented in parks throughout Whistler including:

- One new 15-metre swim dock at Rainbow Park;
- 35 new stand-up paddleboard (SUP) reservable storage spaces at Rainbow, Blueberry, Lost Lake, Pine Point and the Green Lake Spit;
- 10 new picnic tables and barbeque stands at Rainbow Park;
- 5 new bike racks in various locations;
- 5 new log benches at Rainbow Park and along the Valley Trail;
- An extension of the path at Rainbow Heritage Cabins to the Special Events Lawn;
- Implementation of three-stream waste collection (garbage, recycling and compost) at all major parks and cardboard collection at Rainbow and Lost Lake Parks; and
- Seasonal portable toilets at Lakeside, Alpha, Lost Lake and Rainbow Parks as well as at the Green Lake boat launch, the former Hostel site, the Trainwreck/Sea to Sky Trail south parking lot, along the River of Golden Dreams, and at the skate park.

Key Findings

- Washrooms continue to be in high demand in major parks. Portable toilets increase capacity but are not a long-term solution and are ultimately cost and labour prohibitive.
- Washrooms are often used for change room purposes adding to line ups.
- Having staggered reservations dates for SUP racks then canoe/kayak racks was successful and helped to spread the visits to the booking page which resulted in less loading errors for volumes on the site at time of booking.
- SUP storage racks were very popular. For most locations, storage rack reservations were gone in minutes:

Recommendations

1. Continue to provide seasonal washroom facilities in parks, and consider options that provide an improved user experience with reduced operational maintenance burdens.
2. Provide outdoor change rooms at lakefront parks similar to Lakeside Park.
3. Regarding SUP's consider additional reservable storage spaces, an improved storage reservation system, a paddleboard coop concept, and potentially other park locations.
4. Disperse the position of docks at key destinations to encourage dispersion in congested water areas.
5. Continue to monitor and expand the 3-stream waste collection to best support park use habits.
6. Continue to improve access and visibility of underutilized areas within the parks including the heritage cabins area at Rainbow Park.
7. Consider key findings and recommendations in the design for Rainbow and Meadow Park in future years.



“ Our team loves being at the park and we are so thankful to have been doing it.

- Whistler Cooks

2.2 New Park Programming Initiatives

Park Eats

As part of the Summer Experience 2021 Plan and the COVID-19 local recovery plan, food services offered in parks were expanded to include food trucks, pop-up vendors and delivery service. The Park Eats program operated from May 21 to September 12. These included:

- Food trucks: Folie Crêpes, Lucia Gelato, Sargent Poppers Kettle Corn, Whistler Cooks, and Whistler Wood Fired Pizza;
- Pop-ups: Kumo, Fix Café and Whistler Elixir;
- Food delivery to parks from Portobello
- In-park food and non-alcoholic beverage service was available at Alpha Lake Park, Lakeside Park, Lost Lake Park, Meadow Park and Rainbow Park.

Delivery of food and non-alcoholic beverages was available at Alpha Lake Park, Bayly Park, Lakeside Park, Lost Lake Park, Meadow Park, Rainbow Park, Spruce Grove Park and Wayside Park.

Elsewhere, the RMOW continued and expanded its Temporary Patios program, which enabled restaurants to use outdoor municipal or private property for patios, to enable businesses to operate at or near their typical capacities and provide safe outdoor facilities.

It was great. We feel fortunate to be a part of the Whistler food truck program. It’s an awesome location to work at and deal with many happy customers who are really appreciative.

- Lucia Gelato



Of the **548** unique scans of the Park Eats QR code, approximately **48%** resulted in sales in May and June, **20%** resulted in sales in July and August and **80%** sales in September.

“ Thank you for giving us the opportunity to do this almost every day during summer time. People were extremely happy we were here.

- Folie Crêpes

Thank you for giving us a good experience.

- Kumo



Park Eats





Key Findings

- Local businesses were keen to participate in programs, but some were challenged to provide services due to short lead times, weather and staffing issues.
- The expanded food opportunities in parks was well received by locals and guests.

Recommendations

1. Continue to offer food services in parks and consider expansion opportunities.
2. Continue to utilize a Request for Proposals process to identify and secure food service providers.
3. Work with food service providers to utilize food packaging products that align with municipal waste objectives and goals. Where possible embed requirements in Request for Proposals and contractual documents.
4. Continue to seek ongoing feedback from food service providers to make adjustments as the program evolves.
5. Consider multiyear contracts to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partners.
6. Continue to seek feedback from vendors to make adjustments as the program evolves.
7. Consider the provision of food services in the physical design and operation of parks.



Secured Attended Bicycle Parking and Gear Storage (Bike Valet Service)

The municipality offered free secure, attended bicycle parking and gear storage (Bike Valet Service) at Olympic Plaza in Whistler Village, Lost Lake Park and Rainbow Park. These were important amenities within the parks and are explored further in section 3.1.

Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service

In an effort to reduce the parking demand at Rainbow Park and provide improved access, a free shuttle bus service was provided using 14-passenger vans from Whistler Village on weekends and holidays. Further information can be found in section 3.2.

2.3 Parking and Safety Improvements

Several permanent initiatives related to vehicle parking and pedestrian safety were implemented including:

Rainbow Park and Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead Parking Lots

Improvements were undertaken to improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, wayfinding, shuttle accommodation and vehicle circulation while retaining or improving parking capacity wherever possible.

Alta Lake Road

Traffic calming measures were implemented along Alta Lake Road between Rainbow Park and the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead which served to improve pedestrian safety along and crossing Alta Lake Road and within the Rainbow Lake/Falls trailhead.

Cheakamus Lake Road

An informal parking area located along Cheakamus Lake Road serving the Whistler Interpretive Forest was organized and dedicated as an overflow parking area. These improvements modestly increased vehicle parking capacity without expanding the footprint and improved parking and pedestrian safety along the road.

Neighbourhood On-Street Parking

Over 250 parking regulation signs were installed in known “hot spot” areas adjacent to Lakeside, Rainbow and Alpha Lake Parks, as well as in Emerald Estates, at the Train Wreck/Sea to Sky Trailhead, and in various locations along Alta Lake Road.

Efforts were made to ensure that changes to parking resulted in a safer environment, clearer ability to understand signs and to limit impacts to neighbourhoods.

All parking and safety improvements were monitored throughout the summer to understand where remaining points of conflict exist, or where changes resulted in unintended consequences thus requiring further attention.





Key Findings

- Providing a separated pedestrian and cyclist access through Rainbow Park parking lot was an improvement from 2020 however it was not an optimal alignment nor a permanent solution.
- Traffic calming measures on Alta Lake Road at Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead reduced vehicle speeds and improved pedestrian safety.
- Parking prohibition signs on Alta Lake Road by Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead became more effective as education and enforcement increased over the summer.

Recommendations

1. Annually implement traffic calming and safety improvements on Alta Lake Road.
2. Building upon the separated pedestrian and cyclist connection adjacent to the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead driveway in 2021, design and implement an improved permanent solution that also celebrates the park arrival experience.
3. Continue to monitor parking behaviour in park-adjacent areas to identify any recurring areas of concern.



2.4 Waste Management

AWARE was contracted by the RMOW to provide public education and oversight of proper waste disposal etiquette in parks, to reduce contamination in each waste stream, and reduce waste sent to the landfill. The program operated on weekends at Rainbow Park and Lost Lake Park from June 12 to September 6 for a total of 22 days. The Zero Waste Stations were manned by local high school students.

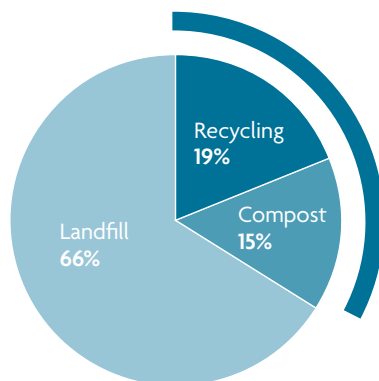
In total, waste stations in the two parks had a total of more than 6,800 users and 1,500 meaningful interactions with the public during the summer. The diversion rate for compostable items doubled, and increased more than 50% for recyclable materials.

	Lost Lake Park	Rainbow Park	Total Combined
Total # of users throughout summer	3,432	3,429	6,861
Total # of meaningful conversations throughout summer	801	711	1,512
Average # of users/day	156	156	312
Average # of meaningful conversations/day	36	32	68

34% DIVERSION

Diversion in Parks without ZWH Station

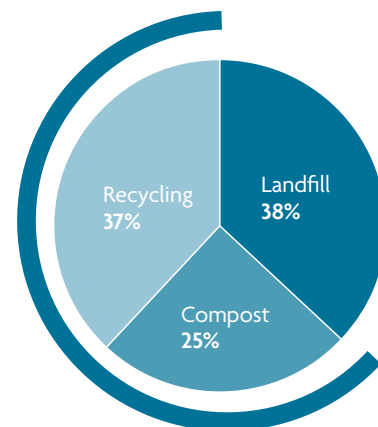
(based on source audit diversion from original data not including Saturday at LL & RP)



62% DIVERSION

Diversion in Parks with ZWH Station

(based on comprehensive audit diversion from original data at LL & RP)



Location	Average Waste Generated Per Week
1. Lost Lake Park	245kg
2. Rainbow Park	235kg
3. Meadow Park	164kg
4. Alpha Lake Park	97kg
5. Alta Lake Park	Unknown



Key Findings

- In person interactions is a significant opportunity to influence, inspire and educate visitors about preferred ways to manage waste not only in Whistler but in their home communities.
- Park waste management goals were most successful when AWARE was present.
- Despite the best effort of signage, proper waste sorting and disposal remains a challenge for many people.
- Many people indicated their waste was only sorted because AWARE was present.

Recommendations

1. Expand the AWARE program to more days and park locations as well as potential locations in the Village. Adjust AWARE operating times in parks from noon to 6 p.m. to better align with observed peak flows.
2. Work with park food service providers to best align products and services with municipal waste reduction goals.
3. Continue to provide cardboard waste bins at Rainbow and Lost Lake Parks.
4. Utilize commonly identified misconceptions from the summer to adjust signage for all waste stations within parks and the village.



SECTION 3

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING



In alignment with Whistler’s Climate Action Big Moves Strategy, and to help manage vehicle congestion throughout Whistler, the Summer Experience Plan bolstered local sustainable transportation options, including:

- Expanding free secure attended bike parking and gear storage (also known as Bike Valet service) to Lost Lake and Rainbow Parks and to include Fridays at Whistler Village at Olympic Plaza,
- Launching a Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service operating on weekends and statutory holidays between June 19 and September 12, 2021,
- Continuing to provide the free Lost Lake Shuttle which operates daily as part of the Whistler Transit System summer schedule, and
- Continuing to provide free local transit community-wide on weekends and statutory holidays.

3.1 Bike Valet Service

The municipality offered free secure attended bicycle parking and large item storage (Bike Valet Service) at Olympic Plaza in Whistler Village, Lost Lake Park, and Rainbow Park. The Bike Valet Service operates like a coat-check service and is in part a response to bicycle theft being a deterrent to cycling. A secure fenced area is provided for bicycle storage, and bicycles are always supervised by at least one attendant. Large items can also be checked in, such as bags, coolers, chairs, strollers, skateboards, scooters and small watercraft such as paddleboards and kayaks. The Bike Valet was available on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from June 18 to September 12.

Table 5 summarizes the numbers and types of bicycles checked in at the Bike Valet in summer 2021.

Table 5 – Bike Valet, Summer 2021

	Olympic Plaza	Lost Lake	Rainbow Park	Totals
Bicycles	2,130	1,998	1,963	6,091
Bicycles per day	52.0/day	48.7/day	47.9/day	49.5/day
e-Bikes	4.6%	3.8%	5.6%	4.7%
Fridays (12)	363	366	284	1,013
Saturdays (13)	772	818	843	2,433
Sundays (13)	805	643	686	2,134
Holidays (3)	190	171	150	511
Average Duration	2.1 hr	1.9 hr	2.1 hr	2.0 hr
Origins Whistler	25.8%	38.3%	36.7%	33.4%
Squamish, Pemberton	2.9%	2.5%	1.3%	2.2%
Metro Vancouver	56.5%	50.4%	53.0%	53.4%
Other BC	8.3%	3.1%	2.9%	4.8%
Other Canada	5.9%	4.2%	5.3%	5.2%
United States	0%	1.3%	0.5%	0.6%
Elsewhere in the world	0.6%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%



Table 6 compares numbers of bicycles at the Village location for summers 2017 through 2021.

Table 6 – Bike Valet in the Village, Summer 2017 to 2021

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Days (weekends & holidays)	26	21	28	25	16
Bicycles	1,767	1,396	2,610	1,556	1,385
Bicycles per day	68/day	67/day	93/day	62/day	87/day
e-Bikes	4.9%	5.6%	8.6%	n/a	n/a
Origins Whistler	24.5%	30.3%	49.4%	50.5%	38.6%
Squamish, Pemberton	2.9%	0.5%	2.6%	1.2%	1.6%
Metro Vancouver	58.9%	62.9%	27.2%	23.3%	39.6%
Other BC	7.9%	6.3%	4.4%	4.7%	2.6%
Other Canada	5.2%	0%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%
United States	0%	0%	9.8%	10.2%	8.4%
Elsewhere in the world	0.6%	0%	4.4%	7.8%	6.9%

COVID-19 pandemic years indicated in red.

A total of more than 6,000 bicycles were checked in, an average of 49.5 bicycles per day over 41 days during the summer of 2021. Usage of the Bike Valet Service is related to weather and temperature. Rain reduced demand, as expected. The Whistler Village location is busiest on cooler days. Once the temperatures exceed 25 degrees Celsius, the Lost Lake and Rainbow Park locations start experiencing capacity challenges.

The highest demand occurred on Saturday, July 3 on the weekend following Canada Day, when a total of 420 bicycles were checked in at the three locations. In the two previous years the Saturday of the Labour Day weekend was the busiest day of the summer, but this year the weather on the Labour Day weekend was cloudy and cool.

The Bike Valet operator reported that staff were asked if they offered bike and watercraft rentals.



Key Findings

- As a result of the Bike Valet Service, there were fewer bikes on the lawn areas in parks, increasing the practical capacity of the parks.
- The 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. operational hours worked well for most weekends. However, on hot days there was demand for the bike valet service both earlier and later in the day.
- The highest number of bicycles was at the Olympic Plaza location in Whistler Village where there was a total of 2,130 bicycles over the summer. There were almost as many bicycles at the Lost Lake and Rainbow Park locations (1,998 and 1,963 bicycles, respectively).
- Weekends and holidays were twice as busy as Fridays (164 to 187 bicycles per day total for the three locations on weekends as compared to 84 bicycles per day on Fridays).
- The average parking duration was 2.0 hours, which did not vary much by location or day of the week (from a low of 1.8 hours to a high of 2.2 hours).
- The Olympic Plaza location averaged 68 bicycles per day on weekends and holidays (not including Fridays). This is a similar result as summer 2020 when there was an average of 66.5 bicycles per day, but a significant reduction from two of the three pre-pandemic years (93 bicycles per day in 2019 and 87 bicycles per day in 2017) where the Bike Valet hours were extended to provide secure bike parking for the Whistler Presents summer concerts.
- Similar to last year, the majority of people using the Bike Valet were visitors from Metro Vancouver (almost 60%). Whistler residents accounted for almost 25% of users. In summer 2020 there were travel restrictions in effect and no users from outside BC, whereas this summer over 5% of users were from elsewhere in Canada, and 0.5% were international visitors.

Recommendations

1. Consider expanding the Bike Valet Service to other lakefront parks.
2. Consider adjusting the operating hours for the Bike Valet Services over the summer reflecting the changes in daylight hours.
3. Consider multiyear contracts for secure bike parking services in the parks to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partners.
4. Work with the secure bike parking services to evolve a contract that is adaptable throughout the year and can be responsive to weather impacts as it relates to demand.
5. Consider other related services that could further improve guest experiences and ensure business success.
6. Integrate the secure bike parking services with events associated with Whistler Presents or other event organizers.
7. Consider where improvements to permanent bike parking infrastructure could be made to self manage and reduce the need for secure attended bike parking.



3.2 Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service

In an effort to provide alternate modes of transportation for accessing destination parks, a free shuttle bus service was provided between Whistler Village and Rainbow Park on weekends and holidays from June 19 to September 12. The service was designed based on constraints in the community due to major construction projects as well as lessons learned from summer 2020 when a free shuttle bus operated on two weekends in August. However, the route differed as it was a loop and it included Creekside.

The 2021 shuttle service was provided by 14 seat-passenger vans which included rear cargo space for limited items such as deflated watercraft, up to two bicycles, wagons, and baby strollers. The shuttle operated every 15 to 20 minutes from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. Stops were located at Olympic Plaza in Whistler Village and in the parking lot at Rainbow Park, with intermediate stops at the Meadow Park waterpark and Rainbow Lake/Falls trailhead.

Passengers were required to wear masks on-board the Rainbow Park Shuttle vehicles both in 2020 and 2021. Complimentary masks were provided.

For the summer of 2021, the majority of rides on the Rainbow Park Shuttle were taken by visitors to Whistler. This may indicate that behaviour change amongst tourists can be influenced through effective promotion and intercepting guests at key points in their visit, like the Day Lots. It highlights the need for the RMOW to continue to provide options and communicate the benefits of using more sustainable modes of travel to access parks and open spaces. Table 7 summarizes ridership on the free Rainbow Park shuttle bus. There were over 5,000 rides, averaging 169 rides per day. The maximum was 392 rides on Saturday July 3.



Table 7 – Rainbow Park Shuttle Bus Ridership, Summer 2021

Direction	Boardings			
To Rainbow Park	Olympic Plaza	Meadow Park	Rainbow Lake Trail	Total
	1,398	399	612	2,409
	47/day	13/day	20/day	80/day
	58%	17%	25%	100%
To Village	Rainbow Park	Rainbow Lake Trail	Meadow Park	Total
	2,402	162	115	2,679
	80/day	5/day	4/day	89/day
	90%	6%	4%	100%
Total Ridership				5,088
Daily Average				169/day

Table 7 summarizes the significant feedback from interviews of shuttle bus passengers (a total of 60 interviews were conducted on three days in August after the River of Golden Dreams required a mandatory portage due to low water):

Table 8 – Rainbow Park Shuttle Bus Passenger Interviews, Summer 2021

Did you know in advance that the shuttle bus and transit buses are free today?	Yes	53%
	No	47%
How did you hear about the Rainbow Park shuttle bus?	Sign	45%
	Word of mouth	12%
	Internet search	10%
	Visitor centre	8%
Did you know that you would have to pay for parking at Rainbow Park? If yes, was pay parking a factor in your decision to take the shuttle bus today?	Yes	32%
	No	68%
	Yes	18%
	No	82%
Would you have taken the shuttle bus if it was not free?	Yes	68%
	Maybe	22%
	No	10%
Did you bring any oversize items?	Yes	23%
Where are you from?	Whistler resident	4%
	Greater Vancouver	65%
	B.C.	9%
	Canada	16%



Key Findings

- Ridership was significantly higher amongst resort guests than residents, especially in August once the River of Golden Dreams had a mandatory portage.
- Half the riders did not know in advance about the service, which suggests potential for improved ridership through improved advertising and communications.
- The direct shuttle route from Whistler Village to Rainbow Park parking lot using a 14-passenger van with cargo space was a more positive guest experience compared to the 2020 service as it was quicker with fewer stops and highway traffic volume and signal delays.
- Many people parked for free at the Rainbow Lake trailhead and at Meadow Park and rode the shuttle bus to and from Rainbow Park. As a result, 24% of rides were between Rainbow Park and the Rainbow Lake trailhead and 15% of rides were between Rainbow Park and Meadow Park.
- There was confusion amongst guests in the Village looking for the Lost Lake Shuttle (operating from the Gondola Transit Exchange) as opposed to the Rainbow Park shuttle (operating from Olympic Plaza).
- 45% of people learned about the free shuttle bus from signs, far more than from any other source (a couple of people reported that they drove to Rainbow Park, saw the sign, parked elsewhere and took the shuttle to the park).
- Several people commented that the free shuttle should be promoted more in hotels (one person reported that the hotel concierge was unaware of the shuttle bus and said they would have to walk to Rainbow Park).
- The majority of people did not know that they would have to pay for parking at Rainbow Park. For those who did know in advance, the pay parking was not a factor in their decision to take the shuttle bus.
- Most people (68%) said they would have taken the shuttle if it was not free. 22% said maybe, depending on the price.
- 23% of people brought oversize items.
- Almost all people were visitors (only 3 of the 60 interviews were local residents), almost two-thirds from Metro Vancouver.



Recommendations:

1. Maintain the Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service in future summers.
2. Expand promotion of the free shuttle service including hotels, resort partners and signage. This could include but not be limited to early and frequent service promotion thus establishing clear expectations.
3. Consider expanding the free park shuttle services to other parks recognizing infrastructure upgrades may be needed to accommodate the shuttle vehicle and passenger amenities as well as additional operating costs.
4. Consider co-locating the Lost Lake Shuttle and Rainbow Park shuttle Village departure locations.
5. Explore opportunities to accommodate larger recreational equipment as part of the shuttle service.
6. Evaluate how a loop shuttle service similar to 2020 could replace or compliment 2021's direct service and or improve resort connectivity.



3.3 Free Local Transit Service

Free transit service on all bus routes in Whistler continued to be offered in the summer weekends and statutory holidays from June 19 through to Labour Day on September 6, 2021.

Transit service is free at all times on Route 5 (the Upper Village shuttle) and Route 8 (the Lost Lake shuttle), so in practice the peak day free transit service only affects routes 6, 7 and 10 through 32. Free transit service was promoted using posters within the transit shelters and partial wraps on the exterior of the entire Whistler Transit System fleet.

The free Lost Lake Park shuttle, which operates between the Gondola Transit Exchange and the Lost Lake Park parking lot saw an increase in average daily ridership to 290 rides per day this summer compared to summer 2020 with of 180 rides per day from June 19 to Labour Day.

Table 9 summarizes average daily ridership in summer 2016 through 2021 (Canada Day through Labour Day), on Saturdays, Sundays and holiday Mondays when transit was free, and on weekdays when fares were paid. Ridership figures for 2019 and 2020 were recalculated using a new methodology based on data from automatic passenger counters, which provide more reliable ridership estimates than the previous methodology based on farebox data, and as a result are higher than ridership figures for 2019 and 2020 published in previous Monitoring Reports.

Ridership in summer 2021 was 20% higher than in summer 2020, the first summer of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this increase, summer ridership remains almost 50% below pre-pandemic levels. Although there were no capacity issues in 2021, transit vehicles were frequently delayed on Highway 99 due to construction from Nicklaus North to Emerald Estates, and anecdotal reports suggest that some transit passengers chose other modes of transportation instead.

Table 9 – Average Daily Summer Ridership on Transit Routes with Weekday Fares

	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016	
	Paid	Free	Paid	Free	Paid	Free	Paid	Free	Paid	Free	Paid	Free
Saturday		3,290		2,450		5,360		5,400		5,390		4,680
Sunday		3,020		2,280		4,840		4,780		4,650	2,970	
Holiday		n/a		n/a		3,960		3,580		3,930	2,060	
Weekday	3,090		2,090		3,970		3,610		3,390		3,110	

- Canada Day through Labour Day, COVID-19 pandemic years indicated in red
2019 and 2020 ridership recalculated using automatic passenger counter data



Key Findings

- The Park and Play public service messaging on the exterior of the Whistler Transit buses was a daily reminder of the program.
- Visitors new to Whistler were confused by having the Rainbow Park shuttle and the Lost Lake shuttles depart from different locations.
- Closure of the Lost Lake Road for toad migration impacted the reliability of free transit service and generated communications uncertainty.

Recommendations

1. Continue to provide the Lost Lake Park Shuttle service and the free weekend transit service through the Whistler Transit System partnership with BC Transit.
2. Continue to promote free weekend transit service and Park and Play public service messaging on the exterior of the Whistler Transit System buses.
3. Consider co-locating the Lost Lake Park Shuttle and Rainbow Park shuttle Village departure locations.
4. Explore adding a Whistler Transit System bus stop on Highway 99 at Wayside Park during the summer.
5. Implement toad migration measures on Lost Lake Road to ensure uninterrupted free Lost Lake Park Shuttle service.



3.4 User Pay Parking in Parks

Pay parking was introduced as a pilot project for summer 2021 at Rainbow, Lakeside, Wayside and Alpha Lake Parks to incentivize preferred modes of transportation, to encourage parking turnover and to offset costs for the free Bike Valet Service and Rainbow Park Shuttle Service. This initiative applied to approximately 170 parking spaces.

User pay parking was in effect in the municipal parking lots at each park, and for a short portion of Alta Lake Road adjacent to the Rainbow Park entrance, from June 15 through September 15. Parking was priced at \$2/hour from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Accessible parking was at no cost. As summarized in the following tables, parking occupancy was largely at capacity on most weekends.

Table 10 summarizes parking occupancies at peak and near peak times over ten days over the summer. Occupancies exceeding 85% of the nominal capacity of each facility are highlighted in orange, indicating conditions when the availability of parking was less than 15%. Days where occupancy exceeded 100% are highlighted in red.

Key observations

Rainbow Park

Parking capacity at Rainbow Park was reduced from 2020 levels to accommodate the shuttle bus, improve pedestrian circulation and safety, and improve vehicle circulation. Parking was further reduced due to construction on Alta Lake Road south of the park.

The park parking lot and the Alta Lake Road pay parking exceeded 85% occupancy on most days. On busy weekends the two accessible parking stalls were often occupied for long periods, and the traffic control attendant improvised to create additional accessible parking spaces in the shuttle drop off area.

Collectively these actions may have reduced the number of car visits to the park, and may have encouraged people to use preferred modes of transportation to travel to the park, however this is difficult to quantify.

Interviews with shuttle bus passengers indicate that some visitors to Rainbow Park parked at the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead to avoid paying for parking or because parking at the park was full.

Lakeside Park

Occupancy in the parking lot exceeded 85% occupancy on most days. The free parking on Hillcrest Drive exceeded 85% occupancy on weekends and holidays in the first half of the summer. Unlike previous years, free on-street neighbourhood parking in Alta Vista was not available for the summer due to construction, which increased parking demand in the parking lot at Lakeside Park and along Hillcrest Drive.

Wayside Park

The parking occupancy only exceeded 85% on two of the 10 days when parking surveys were conducted. Spillover parking on Highway 99 was frequently observed throughout the summer.

Alpha Lake Park

The parking lot and the free parking on Lake Placid Road exceeded 85% occupancy on most days in the first half of the summer.

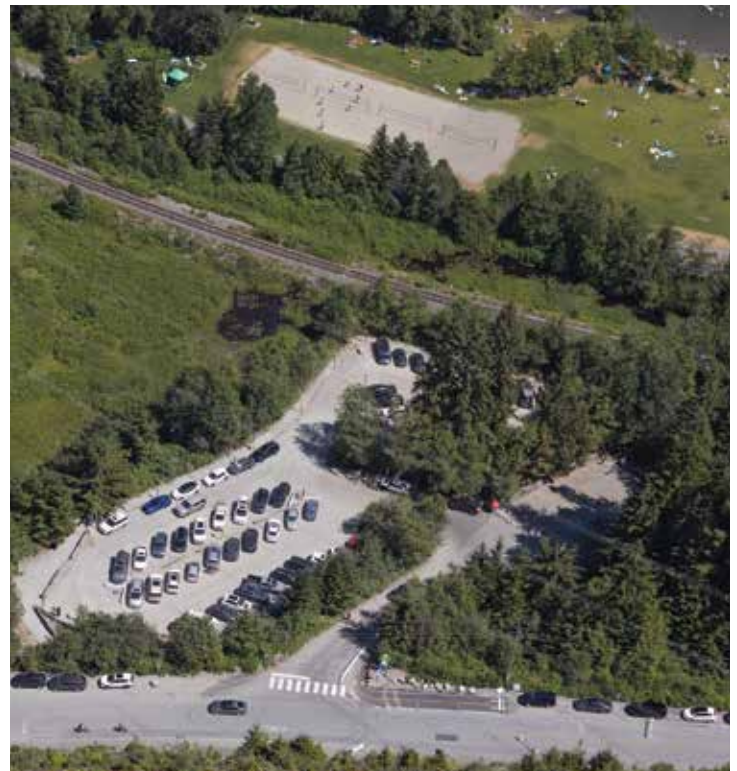




Table 10 – Parks and Trailhead Parking Occupancy, Summer 2021

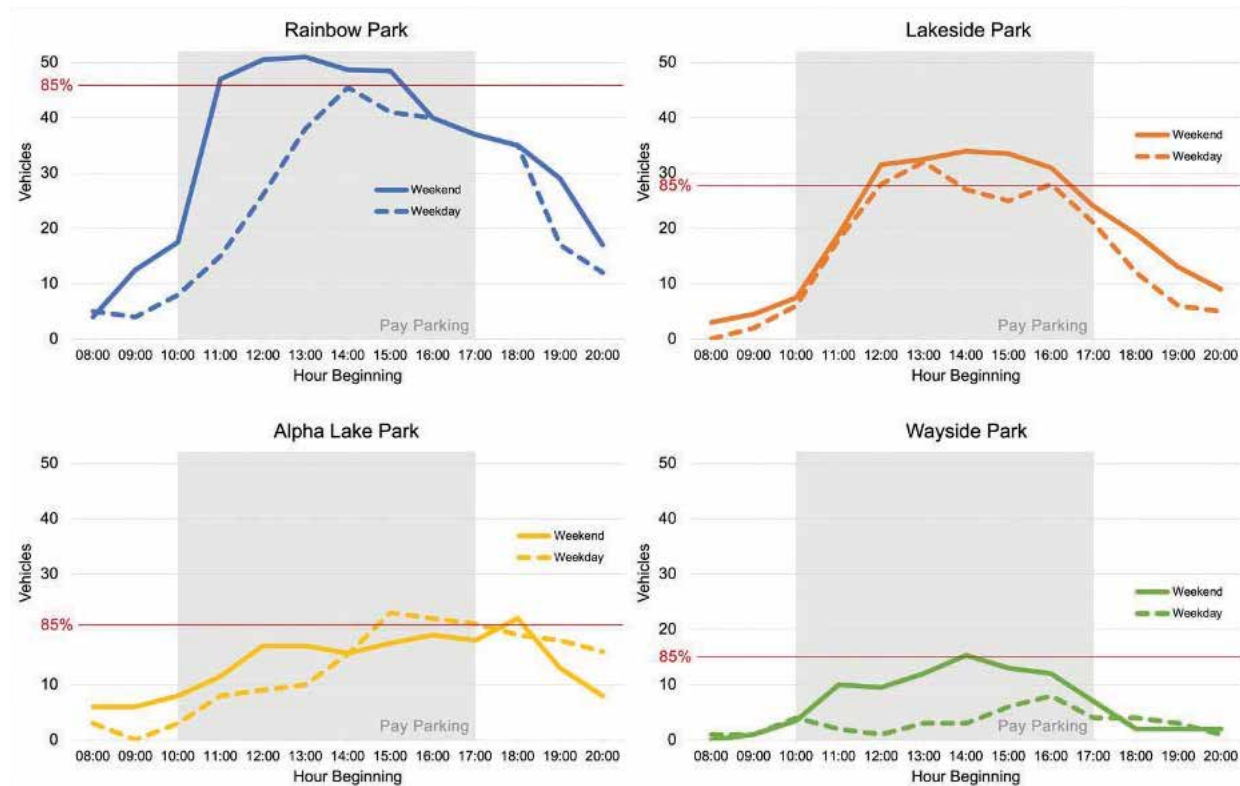
	Rainbow Park		Rainbow Lake Trailhead		Lakeside Park		Wayside Park	Alpha Lake Park	
	Lot	Road	Lot	Gravel	Lot	Road	Lot	Lot	Road
Capacity (vehicles)	55	36	21	25	35	50	18	28	21
Sat 26 Jun	69%	83%*	90%	84%	100%	90%	83%	93%	86%
Wed 7 Jul	80%	0%*	24%	0%	51%	32%	44%	43%	0%
Sat 10 Jul	104%	83%	100%	112%	100%	112%	100%	96%	86%
Sun 25 Jul	109%	92%	95%	100%	100%	80%	44%	93%	90%
Mon 2 Aug	96%	100%	90%	120%	103%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Wed 11 Aug	98%	89%	86%	96%	94%	60%	72%	96%	100%
Sat 21 Aug	107%	86%	90%	120%	91%	52%	39%	21%	81%
Sun 29 Aug	93%	67%	86%	116%	86%	12%	56%	32%	62%
Mon 6 Sep	89%	17%	57%	8%	49%	12%	61%	43%	57%
Sun 12 Sep	55%	0%	67%	8%	54%	4%	6%	18%	24%

*Parking capacities were reduced on July 8 for improved pedestrian safety.



Figure 1 summarizes the results of hourly counts undertaken on three days in August, including times before and after pay parking was in effect. The key finding is that parking occupancies were highest during times when pay parking was in effect, with peak occupancies in early afternoon. This result suggests that 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. is an appropriate time period for pay parking.

Figure 1 – Parks Daytime Pay Parking Occupancy by Time of Day, Summer 2021



Weekday = Thursday 19 August, weekend = Sunday 15 August and Sunday 29 August

Table 11 summarizes estimated average parking turnover and paid durations over the summer. These estimates are derived from pay parking transactions (via parking meters and smartphone apps) and consequently it is not possible to estimate actual parking durations. The average paid duration ranged from 2 to 2.5 hours of parking.

Table 11 – Parks Seasonal Average Parking Turnover and Duration, Summer 2021

				Paid Duration
	Capacity	Turnover		130 min
Rainbow Park*	91 veh	149 veh/day	1.6 veh/stall/day	149 min
Lakeside Park	35 veh	89 veh/day	2.5 veh/stall/day	129 min
Wayside Park	18 veh	51 veh/day	2.8 veh/stall/day	118 min
Alpha Lake Park	28 veh	58 veh/day	2.1 veh/stall/day	

* Includes pay parking on Alta Lake Road

Pay parking is intended to increase availability by reducing peak parking demand and possibly through increased turnover allowing more people to use each parking stall each day.



3.4.1 Public Feedback regarding User Pay Parking at Parks

Accessible parking

Concerns were raised that accessible parking stall users would also have to pay to park. Accessible parking stalls remained free throughout 2021.

It was observed that accessible parking stalls in Rainbow Park once occupied did not turn over frequently, thus preventing other accessible stall users from accessing the stall and/or park. This could possibly be because of personal mobility challenges with moving and or because the stalls were free and lacked a maximum length of stay limit like the paid parking stalls.

Local paid parking pass, and or free weekday parking

Considerable feedback was received regarding the desire for a local's only paid parking pass and or free weekday parking. Similar passes in other jurisdictions were pointed to as precedent examples.

The hours that pay parking is in effect is much less than in other jurisdictions, and therefore more opportunity for residents to park for free in the morning and evening. Whistler's parks have a relatively small number of pay parking spaces (approximately 170) when compared to the average daily summer resident population (2x resident population), other jurisdictions and park visitation numbers.

Summer monitoring confirmed these paid spaces are often above 85% capacity without a pass system and are nearly as busy on weekdays as weekends. A local's pass and or free weekday parking would not guarantee parking availability, could reduce parking availability at peak times impacting the guest experience and more importantly would not incentivize more sustainable transportation options as outlined in our OCP and Climate Action Big Moves Strategy. Expanding parking is not a desirable option for the reasons stated above and in most cases is not physically possible or a good return on investment.

Affordability

Concerns were raised that user pay parking makes access to parks unaffordable, and further adds to the high cost of living in our community. The price point was carefully considered. \$2/hour was chosen as it aligns with the Day Lot and Main Street fees, and is consistent with (and in some cases less than) pricing in other communities who have implemented user pay parking at parks. Parking is free at non-peak times, 10am and after 6pm daily. Monitoring indicates the average length of pay parking stay is just over 2 hours (131 minutes) which translates to a \$4 to \$6 cost. It is probable that without pay parking length of stay would be longer, however one intent of pay parking is to encourage turn over so a greater number of guests can visit a park.



Key Findings

- There is a relatively small number of parking spaces available at our parks especially when considering high visitation levels.
- Parking occupancies were highest during times when pay parking was in effect, with peak occupancies in early afternoon, indicating that 10 am to 6 pm is appropriate for user-pay parking.
- Parking occupancies were slightly less on weekdays than weekends.
- Availability of accessible parking stalls is an issue.
- On-street parking restrictions on Alta Lake Road enhanced safety and reduced congestion as well as conflicts between motorists, pedestrians and other road users.
- On-street neighbourhood parking appeared to be considerably less problematic based upon complaints and ticketing.
- Significant construction projects on Alta Lake Road and in the Alta Vista neighbourhood reduced available on-street neighbourhood parking.
- Pay parking revenue fully offset costs for the Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service and Bike Valet Service at Rainbow and Lost Lake Parks.

Recommendations

1. Continue the user pay parking program.
2. It is not recommended to implement a locals' pass or free weekday parking annually given the limited park parking capacity, the demonstrated parking demand levels, and most importantly the need to incentivize more sustainable transportation options in order to manage vehicle congestion long term and achieve climate objectives as outlined in our Official Community Plan, the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and the Whistler Transportation Action Plan.
3. Consider expanding user pay parking to areas with high tourist visitation levels including the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead.
4. Continue to monitor for any unintended parking consequences and make adjustments as necessary.
5. Continue to reinvest park parking revenues into preferred modes of park access including a free shuttle service and Bike Valet.
6. Continue to monitor parking trends and use levels at parks and trailheads.
7. Consider parking needs in the upcoming Recreation Trails Strategy and Parks Master Plan processes.



Trailhead Parking

Parking counts were undertaken at twelve other locations in Whistler throughout the summer, on a total of ten weekdays, weekends and statutory holidays. Highlights of these parking counts include:

Rainbow Lake/Falls

Interviews with shuttle bus passengers indicate that some visitors to Rainbow Park parked at the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead to avoid paying for parking or because parking at the park was full using it as an overflow lot. As a result, parking in the two lots at the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead exceeded 85% occupancy on most days.

Whistler Interpretive Forest

The parking lot at the Whistler Interpretive Forest was near or above capacity most days. In contrast, the nearby overflow parking area was typically well below capacity.

Train Wreck / Sea to Sky

The trailhead at the Train Wreck/Sea to Sky Trail was over capacity every day that a parking count was undertaken in July, August and September. The parking capacity was reduced in summer 2021 for pedestrian safety and traffic flow improvements along Janes Lakes Forest Service Road. As a result, spillover parking extended south from the parking area along the road to the quarry as well as the Forest Service Road.

Skywalk Network

On-street neighbourhood parking volumes for the Skywalk trail network were generally at moderate occupancy levels, including parking along Mountainview Drive, Valley Drive and Alpine Way. Complaints and tickets have decreased significantly since the installation and upgrade of on-street parking regulation signs in 2019.

Sproatt Network

Parking areas for the Sproatt trail network were generally at low to moderate occupancy levels with one exception: the area surrounding the Stonebridge Drive/Alta Lake Road intersection. This area was frequently at or near capacity in 2021 and volumes were higher than in 2019 or 2020. Parking restriction signs implemented along on Alta Lake Road in 2021 for safety reasons likely contributed to the 2021 increase.



Bylaw Services Parking Observations

The municipal Bylaw Services Department works to educate residents and visitors about Whistler's Bylaws with the goals of gaining voluntary compliance and ensuring a positive and safe experience for all. Bylaw Services staff are often the front line of visitor interaction and observations in our parks and trailheads, particularly as it relates to parking.

In the summer of 2021 Bylaw Services team was made up of parking officers, park and trail ambassadors and bylaw officers that conducted regular patrols and responded to complaints.

Key Findings

- Parking regulatory signage improvements across the municipality resulted in increased compliance of correct zone parking. This in turn resulted in reduced ticketing, and improved visitor and resident experiences.
- Pay parking increased vehicle turnover.
- Pay parking reduced the need for staffing at park entrances for traffic management.
- Park pay parking and improved parking regulatory signage improved staff efficiencies as many areas could now self manage, thus increasing officer availability elsewhere in the resort community.
- The implementation of 'no parking' zones on Alta Lake Road improved safety for all users including pedestrians and officers.
- The Train Wreck/Sea to Sky Trailhead was again observed as a day use "hot spot" resulting in officers being stationed at the site as a first point of contact to share park etiquette education.
- Bylaw officers observed received limited number of complaints from visitors with respect to pay parking.
- Resort wide parking complaints decreased from 69 in 2020 to 26 in 2021.

Recommendations

1. Continue to use pay parking at major lake front parks.
2. Continue to monitor parking patterns in high visitation areas and make adjustments as required.
3. Consider parking improvements and possibly pay parking at other high visitation locations including but not limited to the Train Wreck/Sea to Sky trailhead.



Valley Trail

Counts were conducted at seven locations on the Valley Trail network in summer 2021 (all locations were away from the Village). The counts are summarized in Table 12.

Key findings

- There were fewer users on the Valley Trail this summer than last summer, but more than in 2019 (an average of 131 users per hour in summer 2021, compared with 173/hr in 2020 and 116/hr in 2019).
- The peak number was 321 users per hour at Whistler Creek (last summer it was 366/hr in the same location).
- There were approximately 65% more people on the Valley Trail on weekends than on weekdays. Numbers of people were similar in the morning and the afternoon, on both weekends and weekdays.
- As in previous years, cyclists amounted to slightly more than 70% of users in summer 2021.
- The proportion of e-bikes increased significantly in summer 2021 (16.9%) as compared with previous years (11.8% in 2020 and 10.0% in 2019).

Table 12 – Valley Trail Users, Summer 2021

Location	Avg.	Max.	Classification	
Lorimer–Meadow Park	127/hr	227/hr	Pedestrian	27.0%
Mons Underpass	49/hr	106/hr	Person with disability	0.1%
Montebello	158/hr	282/hr	Conventional bicycle	62.5%
Golf Course North	119/hr	194/hr	E-bike	8.4%
Golf Course South	166/hr	250/hr	Skates	0.2%
Lakecrest	140/hr	220/hr	Skateboard, scooter	0.5%
Whistler Creek	160/hr	321/hr	E-skateboard, e-scooter	0.3%
All locations	131/hr	321/hr		
2020 comparison	173/hr	366/hr		
2019 comparison	116/hr	n/a		



SECTION 4

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS



Supporting local businesses is a pillar of the Summer Experience Plan. The services and goods purchased not only support businesses directly, but result in spinoff benefits such as local employment. Given the constraints and challenges businesses have experienced since March 2020, this Summer Experience Plan pillar was particularly important to support our local recovery.

Approximately \$614,000 was spent on new initiatives to deliver the Summer Experience Plan. Of that amount approximately 49% was spent on businesses possessing a Whistler based business license address. Another 7% was spent on businesses located outside of Whistler but within the Sea to Sky corridor (Lions Bay to D'arcy and including Lillooet), 29% was spent on Lower Mainland based businesses, and 15% went outside of these areas. Services included but are not limited to professional services, material and product suppliers, construction and communications.

Service and material procurement followed the Council Procurement Policy F-29 which establishes governing principles and practices for procurement activities at the Resort Municipality of Whistler.

Key Findings

- Local businesses were keen to participate but in some cases were challenged to provide services due to short lead time, supply chain issues, weather, RMOW cyber security communication issues, and pandemic staffing issues.

Recommendations

- Embed annually reoccurring summer operational plan elements into the municipal budget process.
- Consider offering multiyear as opposed to single year contracts to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partner organizations.



SECTION 5

FESTIVALS, EVENTS AND ANIMATION



The RMOW launched its Explore & Experience animation (FE&A) program on July 1, 2021, the same day we moved to Step 3 of BC’s Restart Plan. The FE&A team curated the summer animation program between Step 2 and 3 despite short notice and restrictions uncertainties.

The animation included live music, live artist displays, wellness classes, entertainment, self-guided tours and daily broadcasts of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

As of August 7, the FE&A Program hired 43 musicians, artists and wellness teachers and art facilitators. Overall the community continues to be challenged with staffing shortages. Adding value to the experience with engaging activities and entertainment is one way the RMOW supports businesses by supplementing the Village Stroll experience.

Animation and programming is funded by MRDT and helps support the guest experience, local arts & culture economy and community well-being.

5.1 Village and Park Hosts

The Village and Park Host program serves to support resort guests by providing directions, recommended activities, environmental education, and encouraging and supporting responsible park behaviour.

The RMOW recruited four Park Hosts and eight Village Hosts. Village host booths are strategically placed along the Village Stroll. Park Hosts roam between Whistler’s popular parks by bicycle.

On weekends and holidays from June 18 to September 6, hosts assisted almost 25,000 visitors:

- **Village Hosts – 22,019 visitors assisted**
- **Park Hosts – 2,639 visitors assisted**

5.2 GO Whistler

Tourism Whistler introduced the GO Whistler app in July 2021. From art galleries to nature walks, the curated tours guide the user to unique experiences and locations throughout the resort. As of September, there was 448 downloads of the app, and since marketing began in August, there was 5 to 15 downloaded tours each day, with a spike in downloads over the August long weekend. The popularity of each tour was:

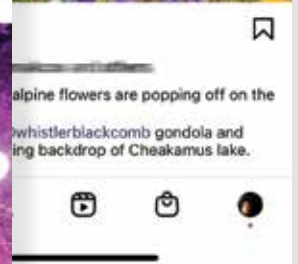
- Natural Wonders – 194 views
- Fitzsimmons Creek Accessible Nature Trail – 150 views
- LIFTing the Community – 140 views
- Cultural Connector – 65 views
- History & Heritage – 33 views

Key Findings

- Animation programming will not be successful as dispersion programming unless it is larger scale (type, genre, and budget).
- Animation is best suited in busier locations that can accommodate both spectators and walk-bys.
- Animation contributes to a positive visitor experience and sets a tone on the Village Stroll.
- Including educational, wellness and Indigenous programming should be key pillars of animation programming moving forward.
- In-resort marketing strategy and design is essential for the programs success.

Recommendations

1. Create a procedure for Village and Park Hosts to collect quantitative feedback, observations and recommendations.
2. Continue to work with Tourism Whistler to develop new content for the GO Whistler app.





SECTION 6

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY



Municipal communications focused on in-resort communications for residents and resort guests. The RMOW partnered with Tourism Whistler to reach in-market audiences. Key messages focused on “Know before you go” and “Park and Play”.

Communications included

- Creation of Park and Play / Know Before You Go brand;
- Summer Experience Plan residents guide;
- Summer Experience Business guide;
- Creation of ‘summer specific’ information at whistler.ca/summer;
- Print advertising in local newspaper;
- Radio advertising leading up to long weekends;
- Social media campaigns, including sponsored posts;
- Whistler Magazine full page ad;
- Partnered with Tourism Whistler on developing blog content and sponsored content; and
- Village and park hosts in strategic locations throughout the Village Stroll and busier parks.
- Table 13 summarizes the ten most popular webpages on the RMOW website in summer 2021.

Social Media Analytics

Facebook and Instagram, May to September 2021

- 32 Posts
- Overall Reach (Facebook and Instagram: 53,000 people)
- Most popular post subjects: SUP storage racks, Bike Valet, and Park Eats

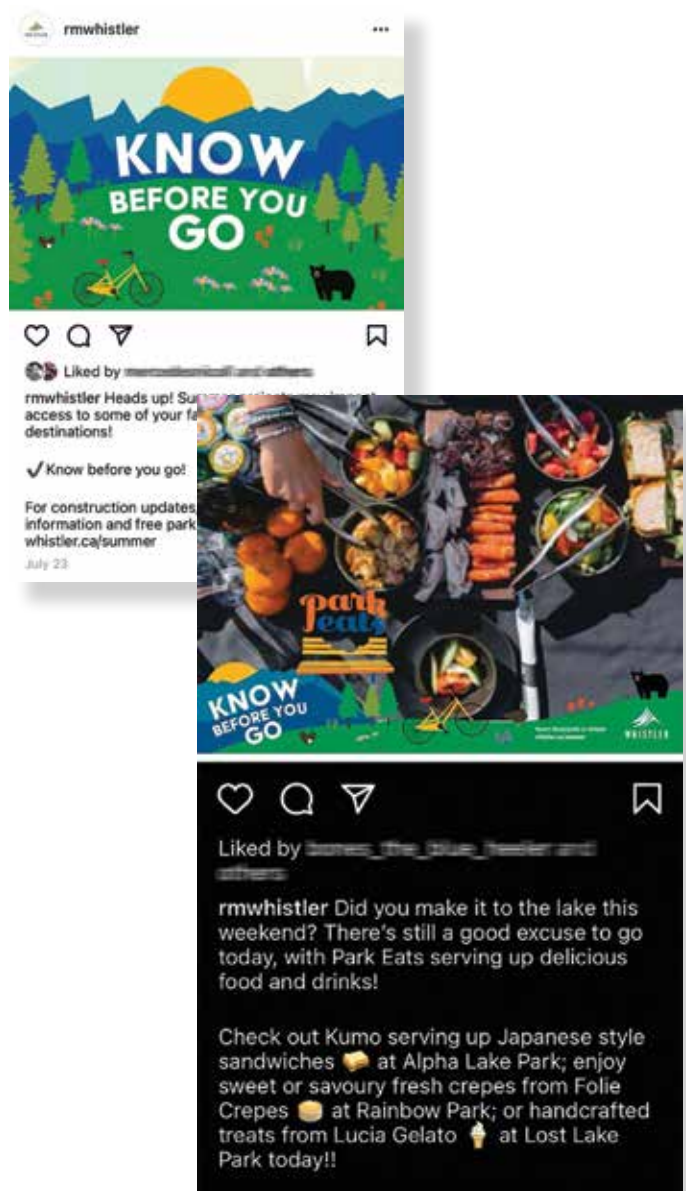


Table 13 – RMOW Website Analytics, Summer 2021

Page	Views	Rank
Rainbow Park	11,203	1
Park Eats	6,927	2
Lakeside Park	3,427	3
Summer	2,299	4
Alpha Lake Park	2,226	5
Getting to and around Whistler	2,080	6
Parks and beaches	1,971	7
Construction projects	1,432	8
Wayside Park	837	9
Transportation Frequently Asked Questions	635	10



Summer Experience Plan Signage

- Four sided kiosks placed at plazas throughout the Village Stroll, promoting local culinary offerings, COVID-19 information, local transportation options, and a map.
- Overhead banner on Ted Nebbeling Bridge with dispersion activities.
- Banners on the side of Ted Nebbeling Bridge and on Creekside Bridge.
- Rainbow Park Shuttle directional and shuttle stop signage.
- In-park and transit shelter signage for ParkEats.
- Decals for Rainbow Park Shuttle.



Kiosk Panels



Bridge Banners

Key Findings

- Partnering with Tourism Whistler was extremely successful in reaching in-market audiences. Whistler.com generated 2,096 page views of the Park Eats page alone.
- Signs in the Day Lots were the most effective means of promoting the free Rainbow Park shuttle bus followed by information on the whistler.ca/summer web page.
- Google was the top source for webpage traffic to whistler.ca/summer (21,011 visits), followed by Whistler.com (5,016) and direct traffic to whistler.ca/summer (5, 013).
- Whistler.ca/Summer had 33,171 page views, with views from Whistler (35.2%), Vancouver (14.8%), Surrey (12.2%).

Recommendations

1. Keep and grow the Park and Play / Know Before You Go branding and whistler.ca/summer page.
2. Consider expanding the Park and Play campaign into the winter.
3. Explore other partnerships, including hotels and activity providers to expand promotion of the program.
4. Send trail condition updates and closures to app developers such as All Trails and Trailforks.
5. Continue to grow Whistler summer experience photo library.
6. Develop and implement RMOW-specific messaging for in-market audiences.
7. Explore translation services for summer key messages.
8. Explore advertising in media distributed in Surrey and Richmond.



Tourism Whistler Blogs:

Blog	Views	Time On Page
www.whistler.com/blog/post/2021/05/27/know-before-you-go-whistlers-lakes-and-parks/	3611	2:54
www.whistler.com/blog/post/2021/05/25/know-before-you-go-what-to-expect-in-whistler-this-summer/	2394	2:43
www.whistler.com/blog/post/2021/06/15/know-before-you-go-dining-in-whistler/	2486	3:16
www.whistler.com/blog/post/2021/05/11/5-simple-responsible-travel-tips-for-whistler/	4082	3:32
Local's List – June (no link available)	629	3:07
Local's List – July (no link available)	855	3:16
Local's List – August (no link available)	1207	3:17
Local's List – September	900	N/A



Parks and Village Visitation Summer 2021

Tourism Whistler studied visitation to Whistler’s four primary lakefront parks and the Village Stroll. The study used mobility data from location-enabled mobile devices, from which volumes, frequency, and origin details were extrapolated for visitors from 1 July to 31 August in 2019, 2020 and 2021. The mobility data does not capture the duration of a visit, which means that a 1-hour visit is counted the same as a 4-hour visit.

- Lost Lake Park showed the greatest growth in volume as BC resident volumes were quadruple that of pre-pandemic levels.
- Lakeside Park continues to have the highest density of visitors, which helps to explain why visitor volumes showed the least significant year-over-year growth.
- Rainbow Park, the largest and typically most visited park, had the second most visits. Resident volumes are 33% below pre-pandemic levels – the lack of community events (i.e. volleyball leagues) bringing residents to the parks could help to explain the decline.
- Alpha Lake Park, while third largest in size, was smallest in visitor volume by a significant amount. Residents frequented Alpha Lake Park more than any of Whistler’s other parks.
- The frequency of visits to parks also declined. Residents frequented the same park an average of 3.0 days in summer 2019 and 2.3 days in summer 2021. Visitors frequented a park an average of 1.9 days in summer 2019 and 1.4 days in summer 2021.

All Parks - Combined July & August Visitation

 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	2019	2020	2021	2021 vs 2020	2021 vs 2019
Resident	23,211	23,639	23,283	-2%	+0%
Whistler	19,686	21,607	21,276	-2%	+8%
Pemberton/Squamish	3,524	2,032	2,010	-1%	-43%
BC	44,488	97,202	121,829	+25%	+174%
Vancouver & Area	24,293	54,290	78,266	+44%	+222%
Fraser Valley Region	15,967	37,146	37,527	+1%	+135%
Other BC	4,228	5,766	6,036	+5%	+43%
Interprovincial	9,310	8,229	26,714	+225%	+187%
Ontario	4,012	3,354	10,679	+218%	+166%
Alberta	2,575	3,153	7,494	+138%	+191%
Quebec	2,028	1,441	7,840	+444%	+287%
Other Canada	695	280	701	+150%	+1%
USA (est.)	11,701	692	4,411	+537%	-62%
International (est.)	10,800	639	192	-70%	-98%
Total Visitors	99,510	130,401	176,429	+35%	+77%


Canadian visitor volume extrapolations are provided through Environics Analytics MobileScapes product which provides visitor volumes at the postal code level. Environics MobileScapes data is sourced from opt-in location-enabled applications on mobile devices and ad exchange platforms. The data sample is extrapolated to represent a full population using Environics’ proprietary in-house algorithm. There are limitations with respect to international mobility data and the corresponding data extrapolations due to international privacy laws (i.e. GDPR). Tourism Whistler has augmented the Canadian visitor volume data provided by Environics with their internal US and international visitation estimates. The estimates are calculated using a combination of out-of-country mobility device data, room night origin data, and historical visitor survey data.

APPENDIX A



- Weekend volumes (+3%) were relatively flat year-over-year, however midweek volumes (+61%) increased by a significant amount. The midweek growth in park volumes coincides with the growth in resort-wide midweek occupancy (64%, +17 pts).
- Nearly half of the year-over-year growth in park visitation was attributable to those visiting from the Vancouver region. Vancouver downtown, Burnaby, Richmond and North & West Vancouver all showed growth in visitors.
- Interprovincial visitor growth to parks (+225% vs 2020) coincided with room night growth (+167% vs 2020). Park visits from Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta were more than double that of pre-pandemic levels.
- Visits to Whistler's parks by Whistler and Sea-to-Sky residents was even with 2019 and 2020. Fewer social programs, parks being "too busy", and a reduction in temporary foreign workers all contribute to park visits by residents not following the same trend as what is being seen from visitors.

Origin Breakdown - Avg Visitors/Day including Residents

 Analysis provided by Tourism Whistler	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021
Resident	4,101	2,817	2,868
Whistler	3,247	2,427	2,276
Pemberton/Squamish	854	390	592
BC	7,474	8,337	10,399
Vancouver & Area	3,686	4,207	5,386
Fraser BC	2,743	3,421	4,151
Other BC	1,046	709	860
Destination Canada	1,921	912	2,948
Ontario	949	339	1,642
Quebec	231	146	589
Alberta	551	357	604
Other Canada	190	70	113
USA	3,305	70	312
International	2,815	45	83
Total	19,616	12,181	16,609

- Overall volumes on the village stroll in 2021 were down -19% from a normal peak summer season. The perception of higher than usual congestion in the village was exacerbated through staffing shortages, a change in visitor behaviors, and the lapsed time since Whistler last experienced high visitor volumes.
- Visitation by Whistler residents to the stroll includes both leisure and work visits. In summer 2021 visits by residents were -34% below typical volumes. Part of the reason for the decline can be attributable to the absence of foreign workers in Whistler's general population, as well as lower staffing levels at Whistler businesses. With respect to residents visiting the stroll for leisure purposes, there may be a behavioral shift resulting in fewer leisure visits to the village stroll.
- Visitation from BC visitors was a record in summer 2021. The most significant growth came from those in the Vancouver Area. The most popular communities to visit the village stroll include Vancouver (18% of summer 2021 visitors), Surrey (12%), Burnaby (7%), North Vancouver (7%), Richmond (6%), and Coquitlam (5%).

APPENDIX B



Summary Recommendations

New and Seasonal Amenities

1. Continue to provide seasonal washroom facilities in parks, and consider options that provide an improved user experience with reduced operational maintenance burdens.
2. Provide outdoor change rooms at lakefront parks similar to Lakeside Park.
3. Regarding SUP's consider additional reservable storage spaces, an improved storage reservation system, a paddleboard coop concept, and potentially other park locations.
4. Disperse the position of docks at key destinations to encourage dispersion in congested water areas.
5. Continue to monitor and expand the 3-stream waste collection to best support park use habits.
6. Continue to improve access and visibility of underutilized areas within the parks including the heritage cabins area at Rainbow Park.
7. Consider key findings and recommendations in the design for Rainbow and Meadow Park in future years.

New Park Programming Initiatives

1. Continue to offer food services in parks and consider expansion opportunities.
2. Continue to utilize a Request for Proposals process to identify and secure food service providers.
3. Work with food service providers to utilize food packaging products that align with municipal waste objectives and goals. Where possible embed requirements in Request for Proposals and contractual documents.
4. Continue to seek ongoing feedback from food service providers to make adjustments as the program evolves.
5. Consider multiyear contracts to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partners.
6. Continue to seek feedback from vendors to make adjustments as the program evolves.
7. Consider the provision of food services in the physical design and operation of parks.

Parking Infrastructure and Safety Improvement

1. Annually implement traffic calming and safety improvements on Alta Lake Road
2. Building upon the separated pedestrian and cyclist connection adjacent to the Rainbow Park driveway in 2021, design and implement an improved permanent solution that also celebrates the park arrival experience.
3. Continue to monitor parking behaviour in park-adjacent areas to identify any recurring areas of concern.

APPENDIX B



Waste Management

1. Expand the AWARE program to more days and park locations as well as potential locations in the Village. Adjust AWARE operating times in parks from noon to 6 p.m. to better align with observed peak flows.
2. Work with park food service providers to best align products and services with municipal waste reduction goals.
3. Continue to provide cardboard waste bins at Rainbow and Lost Lake Parks.
4. Utilize commonly identified misconceptions from the summer to adjust signage for all waste stations within parks and the village.

Free Bike Valet Service

1. Consider expanding the Bike Valet Service to other lakefront parks.
2. Consider adjusting the operating hours for the Bike Valet Services over the summer reflecting the changes in daylight hours.
3. Consider multiyear contracts for secure bike parking services in the parks to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partners.
4. Work with the secure bike parking services to evolve a contract that is adaptable throughout the year and can be responsive to weather impacts as it relates to demand.
5. Consider other related services that could further improve guest experiences and ensure business success.
6. Integrate the secure bike parking services with events associated with Whistler Presents or other event organizers.
7. Consider where improvements to permanent bike parking infrastructure could be made to self manage and reduce the need for secure attended bike parking.

Free Rainbow Park Shuttle

1. Maintain the Rainbow Park Free Shuttle Service in future summers.
2. Expand promotion of the free shuttle service including hotels, resort partners and signage. This could include but not be limited to early and frequent service promotion thus establishing clear expectations.
3. Consider expanding the free park shuttle services to other parks recognizing infrastructure upgrades may be needed to accommodate the shuttle vehicle and passenger amenities as well as additional operating costs.
4. Consider co-locating the Lost Lake Shuttle and Rainbow Park shuttle Village departure locations.
5. Explore opportunities to accommodate larger recreational equipment as part of the shuttle service.
6. Evaluate how a loop shuttle service similar to 2020 could replace or compliment 2021's direct service and or improve resort connectivity.

APPENDIX B



Free Local Transit Service

1. Continue to provide the Lost Lake Park Shuttle service and the free weekend transit service through the Whistler Transit System partnership with BC Transit.
2. Continue to promote free weekend transit service and Park and Play public service messaging on the exterior of the Whistler Transit System buses.
3. Consider co-locating the Lost Lake Park Shuttle and Rainbow Park shuttle Village departure locations.
4. Explore adding a Whistler Transit System bus stop on Highway 99 at Wayside Park during the summer.
5. Implement toad migration measures on Lost Lake Road to ensure uninterrupted free Lost Lake Park Shuttle service.

User Pay Parking

1. Continue the user pay parking program.
2. It is not recommended to implement a locals' pass or free weekday parking annually given the limited park parking capacity, the demonstrated parking demand levels, and most importantly the need to incentivize more sustainable transportation options in order to manage vehicle congestion long term and achieve climate objectives as outlined in our Official Community Plan, the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and the Whistler Transportation Action Plan.
3. Consider expanding user pay parking to areas with high tourist visitation levels including the Rainbow Lake/Falls Trailhead.
4. Continue to monitor for any unintended parking consequences and make adjustments as necessary.
5. Continue to reinvest park parking revenues into preferred modes of park access including a free shuttle service and Bike Valet.
6. Continue to monitor parking trends and use levels at parks and trailheads.
7. Consider parking needs in the upcoming Recreation Trails Strategy and Parks Master Plan processes.

Bylaw Services

1. Continue to use pay parking at major lake front parks.
2. Continue to monitor parking patterns in high visitation areas and make adjustments as required.
3. Consider parking improvements and possibly pay parking at other high visitation locations including but not limited to the Train Wreck/Sea to Sky trailhead.

Supporting Local Businesses

1. Embed annually reoccurring summer operational plan elements into the municipal budget process.
2. Consider offering multiyear as opposed to single year contracts to provide greater certainty and efficiency for businesses, guests, the RMOW and partner organizations.

Festival, Arts and Events

1. Create a procedure for Village and Park Hosts to collect quantitative feedback, observations and recommendations.
2. Continue to provide content to Tourism Whistler for the GO Whistler app.

Communications

1. Keep and grow the Park and Play / Know Before You Go branding and whistler.ca/summer page.
2. Consider expanding the Park and Play campaign into the winter
3. Explore other partnerships, including hotels and activity providers to expand promotion of the program.
4. Send trail condition updates and closures to app developers such as All Trails and Trailforks.
5. Continue to grow Whistler summer experience photo library
6. Develop and implement RMOW-specific messaging for in-market audiences
7. Explore translation services for summer key messages
8. Explore advertising in media distributed in Lower Mainland, particularly Surrey and Richmond