

Whistler: The Bad, The Good, The Ugly, and the Possibility!

It took me a week to calm down and write this. Last Sunday, 9 Jan. 2022, I caught the early morning Nanaimo ferry and arrived at the Creekside Parkade in 3 hours at 10:30 AM and discovered all 3 levels full and about 50 cars driving around in an underground traffic jam looking for a parking spot. There were no 'LOT FULL' signs outside at the entrances! It took about an hour to get out of there. **The Bad.**

I went to the main parking lots in the Village and all had LOT FULL signs. I drove up to the Blackcomb Base II parking lot, and it too was 'LOT FULL'. I waited idling by the Gondola path and eventually was greeted by a departing skier who said she worked in the Village and if I followed her, I could have her parking spot. **The Good.**

It was a bluebird day and great snow so I waited in the Rendezvous until late in the afternoon and when it closed I skied down to my vehicle. At 4 PM I was surprised at the line-up to get out of Base II. Thereafter, the cars stuttered forward, one car length at a time, for 3+ hours! I went through the Village lights at a crawl at hour 2+ hours, and returned to Creekside in exactly 3 hours and 10 minutes! That trip was longer than it took to get to Whistler from Nanaimo! **The Ugly.**

There must be a better ways of managing the growing traffic futures destined for Whistler?

The Possibility. Think bigger...open the southern flank of Whistler. If a large Parkade facility was situated at the Olympic Village/ Function Junction area, and a new Gondola constructed with a terminal mid-mountain (intercepting Hwy. 86 or higher), in so doing skier/biker's vehicles would not have to drive into Creekside or Whistler and employees/staff could ski or bike down to work in the Village. Consider removing the useless Franz Chair and replace it with a lift in the same general alignment so as to intercept this new Gondola ski traffic at the junction of Highway 86 and Upper Franz. Everyone wins, and Whistler would grow with thoughtful enterprise and a new ski zone.

How! Bring together the great thinkers of the past still above grass (Hugh Smythe for example) and any effective visionaries in a 'Futures Round Table' and generate a new game plan.

All the new Creekside replacement lifts at Creekside planned by Vail in 2022 will not solve this growing elephant in Whistler's future. Vail's 2022 efforts may not help, and may, in fact, make things worse!

Bottom Line... beware of skiing at Whistler Blackcomb on most weekends.

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