

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: June 7, 2022 **REPORT:** 22-081
FROM: Environmental Stewardship **FILE:** 5290
SUBJECT: WHISTLER ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY 2022

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council adopt the Whistler Electric Vehicle Strategy, attached as Appendix A to this Administrative Report to Council No. 22-081; to identify and implement the actions the Resort Municipality of Whistler can take to achieve the Whistler 2020 Climate Action Big Moves Strategy - Big Move 2 goal that by 2030, 50 per cent of all vehicle kilometres driven in Whistler are by zero emission vehicles.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to share the Whistler Electric Vehicle strategy (EV Strategy), to provide Council with background information on the strategy development and related community engagement activities, and to outline next steps towards achieving Whistler's 2020 Climate Action Big Moves Strategy (Big Moves Strategy) Big Move 2 goal that by 2030, 50 per cent of all vehicle kilometres (vkms) driven in Whistler are by zero emission vehicles (ZEVs).

Information Report Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

In December 2020, Council adopted the Big Moves Strategy and new Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction target of reducing Whistler's GHG emissions by 50 per cent below 2007 levels. Personal vehicle transport is Whistler's largest source of GHG emissions, accounting for 54 per cent of Whistler's community wide emissions in 2019 and 40 per cent in 2020, and is the main challenge to achieving our climate targets. Moving towards low carbon transportation is a key opportunity to reduce Whistler's emissions. The Big Moves Strategy highlights this opportunity through the goals for Big Move 1 and 2 of 50 per cent of trips done by active transport or public transit and 50 per cent of vkms driven by ZEVs by 2030.

Whistler's approach to personal transport as stated in the Official Community Plan (OCP) is to prioritize walking, cycling, transit and other preferred modes over the single occupant vehicle and private automobile (OCP goal 11.4). However, private vehicles will continue to be an integral part of Whistler's transportation network for the foreseeable future. A strategic and coordinated approach is necessary to

decarbonize and electrify these remaining passenger vehicles in the context of prioritizing active modes of transportation and transit.

On June 15, 2021 Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) Council endorsed a funding application to the Emotive Clean Transportation Targets and Planning Pilot Funding program that is funded by the Province of BC and administered by PlugIn BC to develop the Whistler EV Strategy. The funding application was successful and the RMOW received \$15,000 to support developing the EV Strategy. RMOW staff has developed the strategy in collaboration with the Community Energy Association (CEA), which has extensive expertise in e-mobility and strategy development including impact modelling and engagement.

Strategy Overview

The purpose of the Whistler EV Strategy is to identify actions the RMOW can take to achieve the Big Move 2 goal that 50 per cent of vkms are driven by ZEVs by 2030 with the long-term vision of decarbonizing passenger transportation in Whistler. The strategy includes actions for residents, commuters and visitors, since all three groups contribute to the kilometres driven on Whistler's roads, and associated emissions. The EV Strategy recognizes the unique needs and challenges faced by each group, and all three groups were included in the engagement process.

The final Whistler EV Strategy is based on best practice research, internal and external stakeholder engagement, as well as public and focus groups consultation. The actions identified in the EV Strategy aim to accelerate EV adoption for residents, the commuter workforce, and businesses; and are organized into the following four focus areas and goals:

- 1. Increase access to charging at home.** The lack of access to home charging is a main barrier to EV adoption. The actions to achieve this goal are designed to enable more residents to charge at home, in both existing homes and in new construction.
- 2. Expand the public charging network.** Whistler's visitors and commuters need access to public EV charging. In addition, Whistler residents without access to home charging rely on the available public charging network. Whistler is expecting an exponential growth in EV charging demand between now and 2030 based on modelling projections and the light-duty ZEV sales goals stated in the 2019 *Zero Emission Vehicle Act*. Therefore, the actions are designed to accelerate the expansion of the public EV charging network.
- 3. Accelerating electrification of municipal and commercial fleets.** The RMOW can demonstrate leadership by being an early adopter of fleet electrification, and encourage other fleet operators to do the same. The actions are designed to accelerate the electrification of the RMOW and other commercial fleets.
- 4. Accelerate individual adoption of EVs.** Increasing awareness through outreach and education, advocating for continued EV incentive programs, tracking, and reporting on relevant metrics will promote this goal.

In addition, the EV Strategy considers accessibility needs, with input from the RMOW Accessibility Coordinator, and best practice research for accessibility design of EV charging stations.

Implementation and Monitoring

Implementation and monitoring is fundamental to ensure that the Whistler EV Strategy becomes effective in achieving the Big Move 2 goal and decarbonizing passenger transportation in Whistler. Seven performance indicators will monitor the implementation progress of the four key focus areas, ranging from counting the number of publicly available EV chargers, utilization and availability of chargers and continued monitoring of annual GHG emissions from passenger vehicles.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

The Big Moves Strategy was adopted by Council on December 15, 2020 with the Big Move 2 target that by 2030, 50 per cent of all vkms driven within Whistler are by ZEVs. The Whistler EV Strategy directly supports this goal.

On June 15, 2021, Council endorsed a funding application to the Emotive Clean Transportation Targets and Planning Pilot Funding program to develop a Whistler e-mobility strategy. The funding application was successful and the final Whistler EV Strategy was developed with this funding.

Corporate Plan

The RMOW Corporate Plan is updated annually and articulates strategic direction for the organization. This section identifies how this report links to the plan.

Council Focus Areas

- Community Balance

*Effectively **balance resort and community needs** through deliberate planning, partnerships and investment*

- Climate Action

*Provide leadership to **accelerate climate action and environmental performance** across the community*

- Housing

*Advance strategic and innovative initiatives to enable and **deliver additional employee housing***

- Not Applicable

Corporate Goals

- Community character and mountain culture is reflected in municipal initiatives

- Municipal decision-making supports the effective stewardship of natural assets and ecological function

- Corporate policies and operations ensure continuous excellence in infrastructure, facility and program management

- A high level of accountability, transparency and community engagement is maintained

- Corporate financial health is optimized to ensure long-term community success

- A vibrant local economy and safe, resilient resort community is effectively reinforced by organizational activities

- Pandemic recovery

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

This ongoing work aims to reduce GHG emissions, remove the barriers for the community and guests to shift to lower carbon transportation, and help to achieve Whistler's climate goals. Therefore, this work is in alignment with Whistler's Vision.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The Whistler EV Strategy speaks to multiple goals, objectives and policies within the OCP.

10.2. Goal - Substantially reduce GHG emissions from vehicle and transportation

10.2.3. Objective – Increase integration of lower-impact technologies for community mobility

10.2.3.1. Policy – Integrate support for electric vehicle charging infrastructure into relevant municipal development policies, including electric vehicle-readiness requirements for parking areas and garages in new or significant redevelopment, projects.

11.3. Goal - Minimize GHG emissions created by the transportation system

11.3.1. Objective – Support new technologies that reduce GHG emissions.

11.3.1.1 Policy – Support innovative technological advances in transportation that reduce GHG emissions and are appropriate to Whistler’s climate.

11.3.1.3 Policy - Support technology that promotes more efficient transportation choices.

Other Relevant Policies

The Big Moves Strategy Big Move 2 - Decarbonize Passenger and Commercial Transport has set the target that by 2030, 50 per cent of all vkms in Whistler will be by ZEVs. The goal of this funding application and resulting strategy is to identify actions that the RMOW can take towards achieving this target.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

All costs for the development of the EV Strategy were covered by grant funding received from the Emotive Clean Transportation Targets and Planning Pilot program which is funded by the Province of BC and administered by PlugIn BC. The CEA was engaged to support the strategy development and all RMOW cost sharing was provided by RMOW staff time.

Implementation of the actions identified in the Whistler EV Strategy will be part of the Big Moves implementation planning and budgeting process. Funding made available by the Province of BC through the new Local Government Climate Action Program will support all cost related to implementing the Climate Action Big Moves and the Whistler EV Strategy.

LIL’WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lil’wat People, known in their language as *L’il’wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler’s resort economy. This section identifies areas where RMOW activities intersect with these relationships.

A draft of the final EV Strategy was presented to Squamish Nation in a regional climate action and resilience meeting hosted by the Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) in May 2022. Lil'wat Nation is a project partner in the planned Sea to Sky EV network expansion project for which funding was applied for under the second intake of the CleanBC Communities fund. Expanding the public charging network in the Sea to Sky region is identified in focus area 2 of the strategy.

Both the Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation will be informed about the final Whistler EV Strategy and will be invited to partner on relevant actions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

The engagement process for the development of the Whistler EV Strategy consisted of targeted interviews and surveys. Ten stakeholders were identified for interview, eight of which were available to participate:

- Tourism Whistler
- Whistler Blackcomb
- Whistler Housing Authority
- Whistler Hotel Association
- Whistler Chamber (unavailable)
- Nineteen Mile Creek Strata Council Representative
- WCS Engagement and Planning
- Spinal Cord Injury BC
- RMOW Accessibility department
- WRM Strata Management and Real Estate Services (unavailable)

A survey was launched by the RMOW and by Tourism Whistler and promoted via their usual channels to Whistler resident and visitors, respectively. The survey received 240 responses through the RMOW channels and 1200 responses through the Tourism Whistler channels. Survey respondents identified themselves as either a resident, commuter, or visitor, based on defined criteria, and were subsequently directed into the appropriate stream of the survey. Further details of the engagement process and a summary of survey results are included in Appendix A.

A final draft of the Whistler EV Strategy was presented to the Whistler Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) at its meeting in May 2022. TAG members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback and comments during the meeting and through an online platform thereafter. All of their feedback was incorporated in the final strategy.

A high-level overview of the final Whistler EV Strategy was presented at a regional climate action and resilience meeting at the SLRD in May 2022. There was an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions during the meeting.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – Whistler Electric Vehicle Strategy June 2022

SUMMARY

The Whistler EV Strategy will guide the overall prioritization and implementation of actions the RMOW can take to decarbonize passenger vehicle transportation and help move Whistler towards achieving the Big Move 2 goal that 50 per cent of vkms driven in Whistler will be by ZEVs by 2030.

SIGN-OFFS**Written by:**

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