



RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

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STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: February 21, 2023 **REPORT:** 23-023
FROM: Planning - Projects **FILE:** 3360-20-1173
SUBJECT: 4500 NORTHLANDS REZONING – PHASE 2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council receive the results of the 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 Community Engagement process presented in this Administrative Report to Council No. 23-023 for information; and

That Council direct staff to advance the 4500 Northlands enhanced rezoning process to Phase 3 with development of a Preferred rezoning development concept guided by the Key Directions recommended in the Analysis section of this report; and further

That Council direct the Phase 3 community engagement be conducted as outlined in the Community Engagement section of this report.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the community engagement activities undertaken in the second phase of the enhanced rezoning process for the lands located at 4500 Northlands Boulevard (Lot 1) and the adjacent 4711 Settebello Drive (Lot B) – for convenience, collectively referred to as 4500 Northlands. The report also recommends that Council direct staff to proceed with Phase 3 of the process, with development of a Preferred rezoning concept guided by the Key Directions that are recommended for Council consideration. The report also outlines the Phase 3 community engagement activities that are proposed consistent with the enhanced rezoning process.

Information Report

Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

Council endorsed an enhanced, three-phase rezoning process to guide the consideration of the proposed rezoning for 4500 Northlands on March 16, 2021 ([Administrative Report 21-027](#)).

As endorsed by Council, the enhanced rezoning process entails three phases summarized as:

- 1) establish guiding principles,
- 2) identify and evaluate alternative concepts that address potential site development and associated community amenities, and
- 3) develop a preferred development concept that addresses supported uses and community amenities, and, subject to Council direction commence preparation and consideration of an associated zoning amendment bylaw and related legal agreements.

Each of the three phases has a commitment to incorporate enhanced community engagement.

Phase 1

Phase 1 involved policy analysis and early community engagement to communicate the project timeline, develop a common understanding of the rezoning process and engagement and input opportunities, present information on site context and development constraints and opportunities, and develop guiding principles and guidelines derived from key policies.

The guiding principles were informed by key municipal policies, including the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy (Big Moves Strategy), and provide a clear framework from which to consider alternative development concepts and potential amenities associated with a rezoning of the lands. The guiding principles that were endorsed by Council on August 17, 2021 ([Administrative Report 21-093](#)) are listed as follows:

1. Balance resort and community needs
2. Strengthen sense of place and social connections
3. Provide diverse housing opportunities
4. Enhance connectivity and mobility
5. Accelerate climate action solutions and address resource use
6. Integrate and enhance nature

Phase 2

Phase 2 of the enhanced rezoning process was an iterative review and design stage. Using the framework created during Phase 1, the applicant submitted two alternative development concepts that describe their vision for development of the site and include site analysis, response to the guiding principles and key RMOW policies, and rezoning rationale. Illustrated sections provided a sense of how the site might look and feel, and were accompanied by precedent images that inspired the design. The two alternative concepts that were developed are presented in the Open House Engagement Panels in Appendix A.

In addition to the review and design work, Phase 2 included multiple engagement touchpoints with Council and the community. Phase 2 was specifically designed to elicit feedback on alignment of the alternative development concepts with the guiding principles. Activities included an open house, online questionnaire, information booths, and information displays. As well, staff undertook an internal review, including technical review by municipal departments and Council-appointed committees. Full details, including transcriptions of input is provided in the appendices to this report. The Analysis section of this report provides a synthesis of the engagement results that represent the key considerations and

recommends directions for development of a preferred concept. Materials describing the process and engagement activities are presented in the Community Engagement section of this report.

Next Steps: Direction to Proceed to Phase 3

The applicant will prepare and deliver a preferred concept through a negotiated process that seeks to create a successful development that supports the Phase 1 Guiding Principles and is guided by the key directions that are recommended in the Analysis section of this report. This will include third party review of the project development economics as well as submissions of technical studies that address traffic impact and management, sustainability, green building, and energy, economic impact of the project including job creation and employee requirements, and on- and off-site infrastructure and servicing. The Phase 2 engagement will continue to serve as a critical reference for the applicant team and staff in the development of the preferred concept. Alternatives will be considered and evaluated.

The preferred concept will be presented to Council for direction to proceed with further consideration of the preferred concept, and Phase 3 will include thorough community engagement to seek community and stakeholder input to consider and refine the preferred development concept. With Council endorsement, the rezoning would proceed through the statutory process of bylaw consideration, including preparation of associated legal agreements. This process involves bylaw readings and a public hearing for members of the public to make submissions on bylaws that may be brought forward for consideration.

Community engagement in Phase 3 will be continuous with Phases 1 and 2 of the enhanced rezoning process, and will satisfy legislative requirements for rezonings. Staff propose a mix of online and in-person events, including an in-person open house to share the proposal with the community and receive feedback, online opportunities to view the proposal and provide feedback, and online and in-person opportunities for community members to review the proposal and ask questions and provide feedback directly to RMOW staff. In addition, a public hearing will be held before third reading of the zoning bylaw, providing residents and other interested parties an opportunity to share their views with elected officials.

Further details on the proposed Phase 3 engagement are included below in the Engagement section of this report.

ANALYSIS

Staff have completed a careful review of the Phase 2 community engagement results and have considered these results in relation to the Guiding Principles established in Phase 1 of the enhanced rezoning process. Based on this analysis, staff recommend the following key directions be used as the basis for development of a “Preferred” rezoning development concept which is to be undertaken with further community engagement in Phase 3 of the rezoning process.

Key Directions for Preferred Rezoning Concept

The recommended key directions are organized by Guiding Principle as follows:

Balance Resort and Community Needs

- 1. Support the rezoning request for a change in the market accommodation component of the development from Hotel to Phase 1 covenanted residential and tourist accommodation use.**

The RMOW has significant dedicated hotel capacity that is secured through existing zoning regulations and Phase 2 rental pool covenants. The proposed change in use will provide increased flexibility for the use of market accommodation units, providing for both residential use as well as visitor use. There is an expected significant increase in value associated with this change in use with expected potential for an associated Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) that will be utilized towards addressing resort and community needs. A comment was noted by the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) regarding the municipality's inventory of dedicated "warm beds" for visitor use, expressing a potential concern over decreased availability of Phase 1 covenanted properties for visitor use over time. Staff recommend that this should be monitored, however, do not recommend that there is a need for additional hotel accommodation capacity required from this development. The engagement elicited many comments from members of the public that Whistler is not in need of additional visitor accommodation capacity, and that the community struggles to adequately serve the existing capacity due to a shortage of employees and employee housing. The proposed conversion from hotel to residential use with covenanted tourist accommodation provides the opportunity to better balance community and resort needs.

2. Support a range of targeted employee housing on site and pursue an increase in the amount of employee housing beyond that proposed in the Phase 2 development concept alternatives.

The community has a critical need for employee housing, to attract and retain employees and community members that are instrumental to sustaining community life and the resort economy. The walkable central location of the site adjacent to Whistler Village, with proximity to services, amenities and places of employment, is well suited for employee housing, minimizing the need for vehicle travel within the community.

There is strong support for prioritizing/maximizing the amount of employee housing that can be achieved on site. Various targeted groups were identified through the community engagement, including for seasonal hourly workers, seniors, families, and Indigenous community members, with an aim to create a socially diverse, inclusive and accessible neighbourhood. The amount of housing to be achieved should also take into consideration the incremental housing needs generated by the proposed development, balancing community needs and the potential Community Amenity Contribution.

3. As part of the Community Amenity Contribution potential, support further investigation of a "right-sized" destination indoor/outdoor recreation facility with tennis and pickleball that also serves as a social hub for the local community and visitors.

An engaged segment of community members voiced strong support for the wide range of community, recreation and social offerings that is provided by the existing facility for various age groups and demographics including children, youth, families, adults and seniors. Individual comments described why they feel the existing facility, or such a facility, is important to the community including social and health aspects, as well as for a weather-independent recreation alternative for residents and visitors. Pickleball was identified as a fast growing sport that is especially popular with an older demographic and seniors in the community. Courts can be configured for both tennis and pickleball, with potential for four pickleball courts per tennis court.

The results of the community engagement did not indicate a strong preference or need for a "world class" championship tennis facility that would act as a tourism economic generator as was envisioned in the original development concept for this property. A right-sized facility could add a weather

independent offering that is complementary to community needs and desires of identified user groups, serving both residents and visitors. The nature of the facility should be a public-oriented facility, open to all members of the public, as opposed to a “private” or exclusive member’s only facility. An important consideration would be the operating model and assessment of on-going operating costs and revenues and sources of funding.

While there was support for incorporating the existing facility within the development plans for the site, with some suggesting more creative design solutions and innovative uses of space, including reductions in the amount of open space on site, the input from community members also showed support for locating a similar facility elsewhere in the community, including on municipal lands at Meadow Park or Spruce Grove Park.

Comments were also received suggesting that a racquet sports facility serves select user groups and should not be prioritized over other more pressing community needs, emphasizing employee housing as the priority need. This desired amenity will be considered in combination with other community needs, including employee housing.

4. Other potential uses and programming on site should complement the new neighbourhood development and not replicate the offerings of the adjacent Whistler Village.

The input received from Council advisory committees (SPC and Advisory Design Panel (ADP)) as well as from community members, identified concerns that the Phase 2 alternative development concepts duplicate existing offerings in the Village, including Whistler Olympic Plaza programming and visitor-oriented retail offerings. Supported complementary community and commercial uses should be scaled appropriately to the neighbourhood, with daycare, seniors space, café/restaurant and smaller format flexible spaces that could serve various needs identified. There was support for the concept of a mixed-use community hub on the site as was presented in the alternative development concepts.

Strengthen Sense of Place and Social Connections

5. Explore a bold, innovative and forward-thinking design character that evolves Whistler’s sense of place, in a way that embodies the community’s values and respects Whistler’s mountain context, culture and heritage.

The site has a prominent location within the community and is of a scale that has the ability to influence impressions of Whistler and its sense of place. Advisory committees of Council and community members expressed that development of this site is an exciting opportunity to push the envelope of Village design and what has been done in the past. The urban design and architectural character along with the character of the landscape and public spaces, and the mix of residential and complementary uses, will dictate the look and feel of this neighbourhood. At the same time that there is opportunity for design evolution, there is also the potential to create something that is dissonant and does not fit, detracting from Whistler’s sense of place. It is recommended that there is a careful exploration of design precedents, design models, imagery and visualizations, along with community engagement, as development concepts and designs are further developed and refined.

6. The overall character should predominantly reflect the residential nature of the proposed development, as an inclusive, liveable neighbourhood, with complementary community uses, that is also welcome to visitors and passersby.

The Phase 3 preferred concept should seek to emphasize an inclusive liveable and lived in neighbourhood that has a community feel with a significant portion of full time Whistler residents and

employees. The detailing and connections of proposed buildings to the ground plane and public realm, along with adjacent public green spaces and open spaces, should reflect a people-oriented human scale. People oriented spaces with opportunities for social interaction and connection, and connections to the outdoors, need to be integrated. The spaces should be welcoming and not feel private or exclusive; however, as described above they should not be designed to feature programming that purposefully draws visitors to the site and replicates existing Whistler Village features.

There were extensive comments that the existing racquets club facility provides for a strong sense of place and social connection and that it should be retained or redeveloped either on-site or off-site. Further exploration of a potential facility is recommended.

7. Support the overall density of development with a diversity of building forms, types and heights, with further investigation of the scale of the tallest buildings and distribution of density across the site.

The SPC and ADP both generally supported the proposed density and scale of development, while there were members of the public that commented that the buildings were too tall, specifically citing a building of 11-13 storeys. The concern expressed was that these buildings did not contribute to the sense of place that is Whistler. Staff recommends support for taller well-located buildings adjacent to the highway corridor in scale with the existing forest buffer and retained tree canopy, with further design investigation. A variety of building heights, forms and types of housing units, will add to diversity and visual interest, and enable opportunities for maintaining adequate green spaces on site. It is noted that the density of development shown in the Phase 2 development concepts reflects the maximum total gross floor area permitted under the existing zoning for the site and the maximum number of bed units permitted by covenant for the property. The current zoning of the property permits a building up to nine storeys in height.

Provide Diverse Housing Opportunities

8. Explore the range of opportunities for market and employee-restricted housing on site, and develop a targeted mix and program that maximizes housing opportunities best-suited to the site location and context.

As described above there is strong support for incorporating a diversity of housing opportunities on site. The ability to deliver this diversity will rely on the value of the development that will be generated through the rezoning process, and it is recognized that the resort community has a wide range of diverse needs that can't possibly all be met through the development of this site. Phase 3 of the rezoning process should further explore the range of needs and target allocations of housing to various segments based on priority needs, location suitability and the economics of the development and potential value of Community Amenity Contribution associated with the rezoning. Consideration should be given to unique arrangements and unit types, and could include owner-occupied employee restricted units with no price restriction as part of the market housing component, affordable shared living units for seasonal workers, dedicated accessible units and seniors housing. Rental housing is currently the greatest priority housing need for Whistler and the Northlands site is a well-suited location for housing that minimizes additional vehicle use within the community.

Enhance Connectivity and Mobility

9. The Phase 3 Preferred development concept should continue to emphasize active transportation and prioritize walkability and cycling with enhanced connections to the Valley Trail, Whistler Village and surrounding natural areas.

The Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) and community members expressed support for the concepts presented prioritizing active modes of transportation, minimizing vehicle trips and de-emphasizing vehicle traffic on site. Pedestrian walkways and the Valley Trail were considered to be well integrated. Suggestions included improvements to the Lorimer Road and Northlands Boulevard intersection to enhance connectivity to Whistler Village and the base of the mountain; consideration of transit infrastructure and a bus route integrated within the design; provide for shuttle pick-up and drop-off for access to the base of the mountain, and secure bike parking and infrastructure for e-bikes. Given the walkable location there is opportunity to support reduced parking requirements for the development, in particular for employee housing segments and full-time residents. Parking requirements, including demand associated with market accommodation units, and vehicular connections through the site to access building frontages along with convenience parking and associated circulation should be further explored in the development of the preferred concept.

Accelerate Climate Action Solutions and Address Resource Use

10. The Phase 3 Preferred development concept should showcase and demonstrate design solutions that advance Whistler’s Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and Green Building Policy.

Community and Committee input included strong support for sustainable design. The preferred concept must address Whistler’s Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and Green Building Policy, which include goals and requirements related to transportation, buildings, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions.

The alternative development concepts identified proposed approaches to low carbon energy-efficient building design, including exploration of a geothermal exchange for heating and cooling, and prioritized low-carbon building materials. Active transportation and walkability are emphasized in the site plans and electric vehicle charging infrastructure is provided.

Respondents felt that the alternative development concepts were generally well-aligned with Whistler’s climate action and sustainability goals. Employing passive design strategies and reducing reliance of fossil fuels by using low carbon energy systems and depending on renewal energy were considered the most important opportunities. Respondents also suggested that the central, walkable location of the site offers an opportunity to lower carbon emissions with a dense, walkable community with minimal reliance on personal automobiles.

TAG expressed support for the efforts to de-emphasize vehicle traffic, and supported the concept of a car-free central open space. TAG suggested that the project should be well integrated into Whistler’s transit system, and could investigate incorporating a car share to further reduce residents’ reliance on personal automobiles. In addition, designs promote active transportation, reducing the need for car trips, and contributing towards lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Committees expressed support for electric vehicle and bicycle charging facilities.

Integrate and Enhance Nature

11. Site development should reflect and incorporate Whistler’s natural character preserving and enhancing existing and natural features of the site, integrating open space areas and being responsive to views and solar access.

The preferred development must continue to recognize the predominance of the surrounding mountain environment. Preserving existing natural areas and converting existing portions of the site from

brownfield to green space create a regenerative landscape in the centre of the neighbourhood development. The forest canopy and amenity stream provides for local biodiversity on site and contributes to the Whistler sense of place. These areas should be blended with the buildings to be located on site. The ADP and community members voiced support for naturalizing the existing amenity stream, as an opportunity to integrate and enhance nature on-site. Larger format, programmable open space was not seen as necessary, with respondents preferring a mix of spaces that could accommodate different user groups and activities should be the priority for open space on the site.

Phase 2 Community Engagement Overview

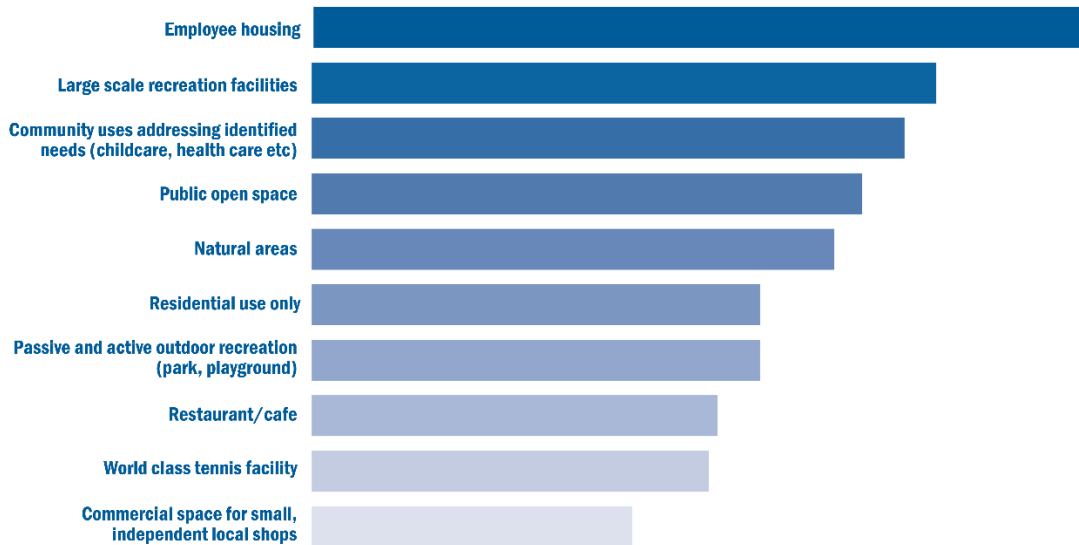
Staff have undertaken a comprehensive engagement process with the public and targeted stakeholders during Phase 2 of the 4500 Northlands enhanced rezoning process. The principal methods for sharing and receiving feedback from the community were an in-person community open house and an online questionnaire hosted on the Northlands Phase 2 digital engagement page. Staff and the applicant made presentations and sought input from Council-appointed Committees (SPC, ADP, TAG, Accessibility and Inclusion Committee (AIC), and Recreation and Leisure Committee (RLAC)). Other community outreach included pop-up poster board stations at the Whistler Public Library and Meadow Park Sports Centre, a staffed booth at the Whistler Farmer's Market, 'lunch chat' sessions for community members to speak directly with the project planners. Information was shared via RMOW's website, dedicated project email account and through social media channels.

There was a high level of engagement through the Phase 2 community engagement activities. The detailed results show thoughtful, passionate and considered input concerning the future of the site and the Whistler resort community. Staff acknowledge the time, energy, thoughts, suggestions and ideas community members and stakeholders have contributed and that will help shape the Phase 3 Preferred Concept.

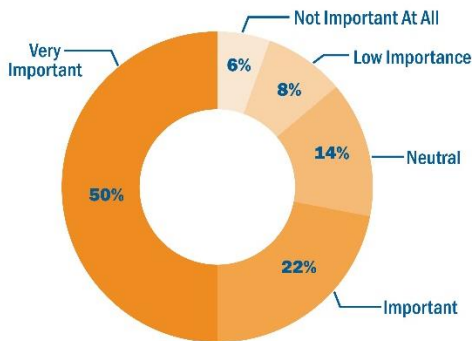
The Open House presentation materials are provided in Appendix A. A summary of the Phase 2 community engagement results has been prepared and is provided in Appendix B. Appendix C presents meeting minutes from Committee meetings. Appendix D provides a full compilation of the results for the Community Questionnaire that was available from June 13 to July 18 and was completed by 365 respondents and Appendix E contains all the comment form submissions that were received through the Open House.

The following word clouds and charts present an overview of the results.

Priority land uses for 4500 Northlands



Importance of the Northlands site in addressing the community's housing needs



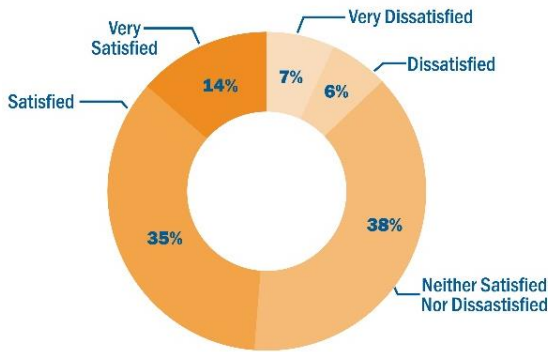
Factors that make this site ideal for delivering housing



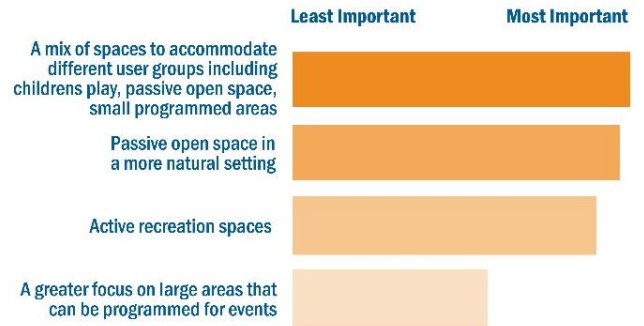
What building forms and sizes should be prioritized?



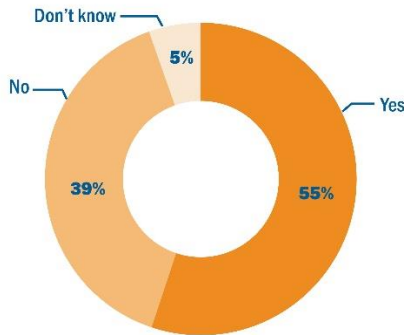
How the concepts integrate and enhance nature



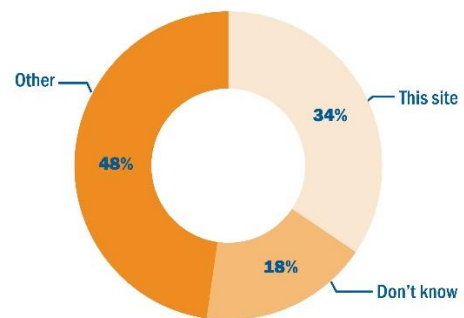
What should the focus of the open space be?



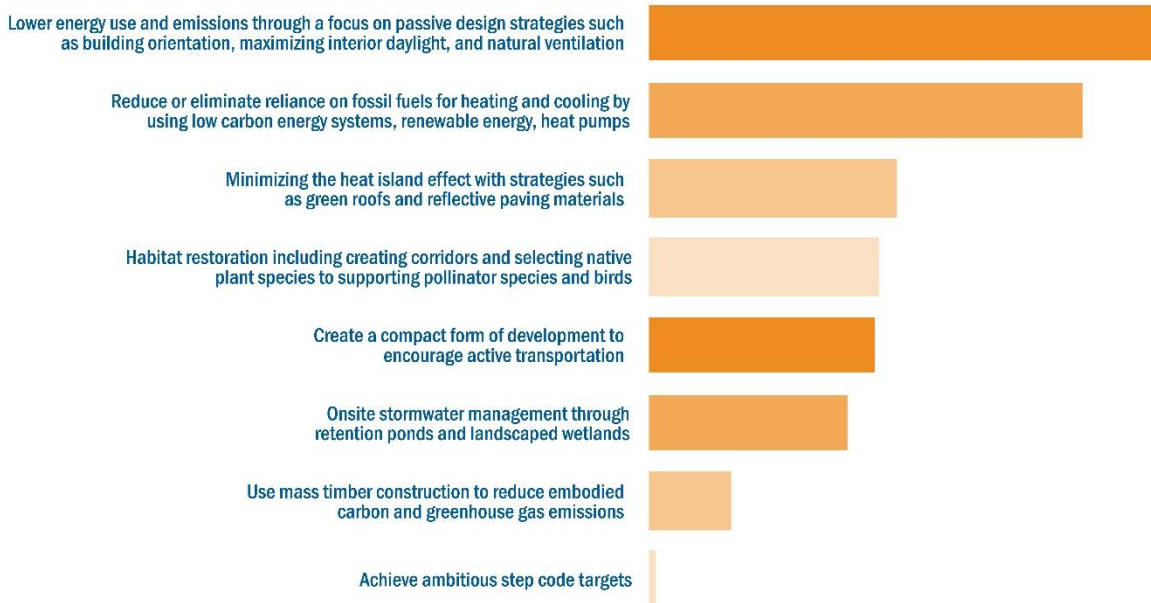
Should a dedicated tennis/pickleball facility, like what currently exists, be a priority inclusion for the site?



Should a dedicated tennis/pickleball facility be a priority for the resort community above other community needs?



Priorities for sustainable development



Overall impression of the alternative development concepts



Any final thoughts not captured through the questionnaire



Council Advisory Bodies/Committees Feedback

As part of the Phase 2 engagement process, staff and the applicant made presentations to five Council committees (SPC, ADP, TAG, RLAC and AIC). Committee membership is comprised of appointed community representatives and assist Council in an advisory capacity sharing their local knowledge, experience, and subject matter expertise.

At each of the Committees, staff presented an update on the enhanced rezoning process and timeline, a summary of the feedback received during Phase 1, and the Phase 2 development concepts seeking feedback on the overall site design, community amenity priorities and any gaps/needs that have not yet been identified. The applicant team introduced and provided an overview on the Phase 2 alternate development concepts, highlighting conceptual planning, public space and recreation, connections to the site and within the site, and design opportunities for the site. The following provides a summary of feedback provided by each Committee.

Strategic Planning Committee

- Community space on the site should not duplicate existing Village amenities and features
- Preference to see the emphasis on employee housing and social services (e.g. health and childcare) instead of green and open space
- Employee housing should be a significantly higher portion of built space than currently proposed, and should outline the types of employee-restricted housing (mix of rental to non-market to support permanent and seasonal workforce needs)
- General support for proposed heights and density of buildings
- The amenity stream feature is not essential but provides an opportunity to enhance greenspace and tie together that existing Village feature through design, an element of wayfinding and visual connections

- If Tourist Accommodation is included in the proposal, consider the longevity of ‘warm beds’ with a preference to be secured by Phase 2 covenants (rather than Phase 1)
- The community amenity contribution should reflect the increased value of the property
- The site design should consider how the open and community space will serve community members who do not live in the Northlands development

Advisory Design Panel

- ADP felt both concepts were on the right track and appreciated efforts to reduce paved surfaces and maximize green space. The ADP suggested that proposed heights and density are appropriate for the site and context.
- Supported bold and forward-thinking design that is an evolution of the existing Village design
- Commercial uses on the site should be scaled appropriately and serve residents
- Employee housing is a driving need in the community, and employee housing should be maximized on this site
- The site design and land uses should be driven by climate change and changes in future tourism
- Site design could further explore integration of the amenity stream and how it can be used to protect wetlands, include pedestrian links, and create a sense connection and direction
- The application should address the future of the racquet club facilities in Whistler and amenities proposed for the site.

Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee

- RLAC liked the concepts, in particular how they address connectivity, integration of nature, and continuity of the amenity stream, and inclusion of arts and culture.
- RLAC suggested that a transportation plan should be required, and requested that the applicant prepare a report on options for replacing the existing racquet sports facility.

Transportation Advisory Group

- TAG appreciated that the concepts prioritize active modes of transportation and de-emphasize vehicle traffic on the site.
- Pedestrian walkways and the Valley Trail are well integrated in the concepts
- Improvements to the Lorimer Road and Northlands Boulevard intersection should be considered to enhance the connectivity to the existing Village
- Transit infrastructure and routes should be considered in the design of the site, including covered bus shelters
- The site design should consider how visitors and residents will access to the mountain (shuttle bus, foot paths etc.)
- Secure bike parking and infrastructure for e-bikes should be included in the site design

Accessibility and Inclusion Committee

- Community and open space should be designed to be universally accessible and welcoming for all ages and abilities.
- Community uses and programming should consider and integrate community needs (i.e. day care, seniors programming, rental space, employee housing).
- The connection to the existing Village for all ages and abilities is an important consideration for the site design.
- Charging and storage for bikes, and e-bike infrastructure needs to be integrated on site.

- The AIC requested additional detail about the wellness component and potential relocation of the existing racquet club facilities was requested.

Alternative Development Concepts

The alternative development concepts were presented for evaluation by the community, stakeholders, and Council. These concepts were not intended as final proposals for the site, but rather as preliminary concepts to provoke discussion and elicit feedback. The Phase 2 consultation elicited input to identify the preferred elements in the alternative development concepts, features and land uses that are missing and should be considered for inclusion, as well as community amenity and benefit priorities for development of the site. Input will contribute to the development of the preferred concept, to be advanced to Council in Phase 3. The following provides a summary of more detailed input regarding the two concepts noting preferences and concerns related to each concept.

Village Green



Northlands Village Green emphasizes a generous car-free, public open space for residents, visitors and the Whistler community. The space combines a meadow, knoll, pond, activity nodes and riparian planting. It is a green “bridge” between surrounding natural spaces and the system of man made waterways moving through the heart of Whistler.

“Organically shaped” shared streets/ mews around the periphery of the site are shaped to optimize tree retention, provide access to underground parking and ensure the centre of the site is car free.

A community hub and plaza mixing employee housing, commercial/retail and community uses complete this neighbourhood.



The Boulevard



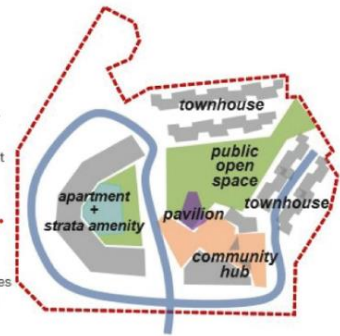
The Boulevard arranges building enclaves and uses around a central open space with a landmark community amenity building.

This concept provides a variety of public and semi-public open spaces as townhouse courtyards, a Granville Island inspired hub, apartment/amenity courtyard and a generous public green open space.

A shared street / mews along the west edge of the site introduces a “formal” geometry along the forest edge and defines the apartment / strata amenity enclave.

The mixed use community hub combines employee housing, commercial/retail and community uses completes the public realm.

A Boulevard with a centre median of trees introduces vehicles into the centre of the site - separating and defining the enclaves and increasing the exposure and visibility of this new neighbourhood.



Village Greene

The Boulevard

What People Like

- Integrating the use of the natural topography and features, including the water feature;
- The focus on open and green space
- The mix of buildings and uses
- Inclusion of employee housing

- The proposed variety and scale of buildings works well for the site;
- Including employee housing was encouraging but that more is still needed for the site;
- Public open and green space in the development concept is desirable; and

	Village Greene	The Boulevard
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing people who walk and roll over cars, similar to the existing Village • Community space that is welcoming for locals and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space between buildings in the development concepts was complimentary for community activity and site design.
Concerns Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The racquet facility is missing and some respondents do not like that • The buildings are too tall • The green and open space included is oversized or is more than is needed • Amenities should not duplicate spaces/uses that Whistler already has • The amenity channel/water feature is too big or not necessary on the site • Housing and particularly employee housing should be the focus of the site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan does not include the current racquet facilities on site • Road through the centre of the site is too vehicle centric • Traffic for pedestrians and vehicles should be separated • Uses the community uses or spaces similar to existing in the Village • Not optimizing use of the space – potential for further density • Employee housing shown is not enough • Smaller greenspace • Building height and/or scale

Community Amenity Contribution

The Phase 2 engagement results and the key directions presented above will inform the development of the community amenity package. Consistent with enabling policies, community amenity benefits from rezoning the site are expected in relation to the proposed rezoning and site history. Such a community benefit is typically made through the provision of on-site or off-site amenities and/or a contribution towards public benefits in, near, or in relation to the site and community needs.

CACs are negotiated with the property owner and evaluated by staff and third-party financial consultants, and are a function of historic expectations and the increased land value of the future development that is generated through the rezoning process.

Proposed CAC packages will be reported to Council as part of the rezoning application. Further investigation and negotiation of the proposed development and potential Community Amenities will be guided by the key directions presented above. CACs must be approved by Council and agreed to by the property owner. The aim is to negotiate a suitable contribution that provides lasting and meaningful benefit to the Whistler resort community, in addition to creating a successful new neighbourhood in this central location.

The guiding principles established in Phase 1 were a starting point for determining amenity priorities, and are now augmented with the community input received in the second phase. Phase 1 identified several priority categories of potential on- and off-site amenities. Employee-restricted housing, park space, childcare space, and office/medical space were identified as potential on-site/in-kind amenities, while contributions towards additional non-market housing and recreation facilities were identified as potential off-site amenities that could be generated through the 4500 Northlands rezoning. In Phase 2,

the community and stakeholders have helped to refine and understand amenity priorities in relation to the overall scale of amenity contribution enabled by the site plans being presented.

Phase 3 will include further engagement with the community, stakeholders, and Council to refine the amenity offering and fully integrate on-site/in-kind elements with the preferred development concept. The list below presents a summary of comments related to the CAC that were received during the Phase 2 engagement:

- Housing emerged as the top amenity priority. Responses identified the Northlands rezoning as an important opportunity to address Whistler’s housing crisis, through local-serving housing, including affordable ownership and rental options, and housing targeted towards specific demographic populations including seniors, families, singles, and seasonal workers.
- Many responses recognized the longstanding unfulfilled promise of a racquet sports facility related to the development rights for this site, and advocated that redevelopment of the site should ensure that the community is not left without a viable facility for tennis and pickleball. Suggestions included maintaining the existing facility, building a new on-site facility, or contributing towards construction of a new facility off-site.
- Feedback also highlighted the broader value to the community of the existing facility, and requested that this be accounted for in the preparation of the preferred concept and in the amenity package. It has become a social hub for the community and a place to host events, and the sports camps and provides an important venue for Whistler youth, families and seniors.
- Other suggestions for community-serving amenities that the CAC could contribute to include day care space or social space for seniors.
- Input also highlighted the community’s desire for ongoing transparency in the CAC process, and opportunities for frequent and meaningful engagement and input on how the community amenity will be allocated.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Council has previously considered this proposal, including:

[March 16, 2021: Administrative Report No. 21-027](#), 4500 Northlands Rezoning Application – Proposed Planning, Community Engagement and Amenity Zoning Process

[June 1, 2021: Information Report No. 21-059](#), 4500 Northlands Rezoning Application – Phase 1 Update – Community Engagement Activities and Draft Guiding Principles

[August 17, 2021: Administrative Report No. 21-093](#), 4500 Northlands Rezoning Application – Phase 1 Community Engagement Summary

[June 7, 2022: Information Report No 22-080](#), 4500 Northlands Rezoning – Phase 2 Introduction

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***

Pandemic Recovery

*Leadership and support for **community and tourism recovery and sustainability** – priority focuses are where recovery needs intersect with other Council focus areas*

Not Applicable

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

The guiding principles for 4500 Northlands reflect policy goals and objectives of the OCP. A full OCP rezoning evaluation will be completed for the preferred concept.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Costs associated with this rezoning application are recovered through the complex site rezoning application fee.

LÍLWAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lílwat 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.

Staff referred the project to the Squamish Nation and Lílwat Nation during Phase 1, and made presentations to representatives on the draft Guiding Principles. Staff referred Phase 2 materials to the Squamish Nation and Lílwat Nation through their referral portals. Staff will seek to meet with the Squamish Nation and Lílwat Nation to obtain further input during Phase 3.

This is consistent with a commitment to advancing cooperative and mutually beneficial relations, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the OCP.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Comment(s):

This section of the report documents the engagement process and activities that were conducted. The detailed input received from community, stakeholders, and Council-appointed committees is presented in the appendices to this report. The activities conducted are summarized in Table 1 below.

The Northlands Phase 2 engagement process aligned with the Consult level of engagement under the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). At this level, the goal is to seek feedback from the public on analysis, alternatives and decisions. The promise to the public is that they will be kept informed, their concerns will be listened to and acknowledged, and they will be receive feedback on how their input influenced the process. While overall the level of engagement for various activities would be inform or consult, some of the activities would be at the level of involve, such as committees including the ADP and SPC, where the subject matter is directly applicable to the purpose of the committee.

Phase 2 of the enhanced rezoning process for 4500 Northlands is supplementary to legislated requirements for rezoning. Phase 3 will satisfy requirements of engagement and notification.

There has been a very high level of community engagement for this project. Through the various communications and engagement activities, there were approximately 2,600 direct engagement touchpoints with this project (open house, questionnaire, committee and stakeholder meetings, direct inquiries and page views of the project website page). Additional engagement touchpoints that are difficult to measure specifically but have the potential to reach a large number of people include RMOW social media channels (Facebook has 8800 followers) and the Whistler Today e-newsletter (2374 subscribers); and the Whistler Public Library and Meadow Park Sports Centre displays, as well as the Farmer’s Market display (the market attracts more than 1500 people).

Also not included are those exposed to the project through extensive local media outlet coverage, and other organizations, including property owner and Whistler organizations, who have shared information through their newsletters, memberships and other communication activities.

Table 1. Summary of Phase 2 Engagement Activities

Activity	Summary	Results
<p>Social Media and Advertising</p> <p><i>Level of engagement: Inform</i></p>	<p>Information announcing the project and methods to participate in community engagement were shared on RMOW social media streams and through other media channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News release and stories in multiple additions of Whistler Today • Social media promotion • Project featured on RMOW website • Outreach from Mayor to committees and partner representatives to encourage participation in, and sharing of, survey amongst their organizations and memberships • Staff availability to receive and respond to email, telephone, and written questions

Activity	Summary	Results
Phase 2 Engagement Page & Questionnaire <i>Level of engagement: Consult</i>	A dedicated Northlands Phase 2 engagement page was developed to share about the project development concepts and public engagement activities. The questionnaire asked for participant input to consider the concepts in the context of the guiding principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online questionnaire was available from June 13 to July 18 on the Phase 2 engagement page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1,061 total page visits ○ 934 unique page visits ○ 365 questionnaires submitted
Community Open House <i>Level of engagement: Consult</i>	Posters presented information about the rezoning process and the alternative development concepts. RMOW staff and the applicant project team were present to speak directly with attendees. Attendees were invited to submit hand-written comments and follow QR codes to the online questionnaire.	In-person open house was held at the Myrtle Philip Community School on June 13, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Thirteen municipal staff and the applicant team were in attendance. 180 members of the public attended the event and 65 comment forms were submitted.
Pop-Ups <i>Level of engagement: Consult</i>	Staff from the RMOW set up a booth at the Whistler’s Farmers Market to answer questions and speak directly with interested community members. Project information was posted in the lobby of the Library and Meadow Park.	June 19: Farmers Market June 1 – 30, 2022: Meadow Park and Whistler Public Library
Digital Lunch Chats <i>Level of engagement: Consult</i>	Staff were available to answer questions, hear feedback on 10-minute Zoom sessions that could be reserved online.	Six 10-minute sessions were held on each of the following days between on June 13, 22, 27 and 29, 2022. Out of the 24 available timeslots, 16 conversations took place.
Committee Presentations <i>Level of engagement: Consult</i>	Staff provided an overview and update on the engagement process. The applicant team presented the alternative development concepts and sought feedback on topics relevant to each Committee’s terms of reference.	June 1: Accessibility and Inclusion Committee June 9: Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee June 15: Advisory Design Panel June 27: Strategic Planning Committee June 29: Transportation Advisory Group

Community Open House

The community open house provided the opportunity for stakeholders and interested members of the public to review the alternative development concepts and pose questions to members of the applicants design team and RMOW staff. A set of printed panels were displayed to share information about the development concepts and rezoning process (see Appendix A). Applicants were directed to complete the online questionnaire or to share their thoughts on the comment forms provided at the event. The comment forms that were received are included as Appendix E.

Questionnaire

The Phase 2 questionnaire presented the alternative development concepts and asked participants high-level questions about the concepts considering how each guiding principle applies to touch on the different elements that make up the proposed land uses, site design, community amenities, and about what was missing or could improve the proposed concepts. A total of 42 questions were posed, including ranking, open ended and multiple choice to collect input from the community about the alternative development concepts. Appendix C includes the complete record of questionnaire input. Staff analyzed the input from each question and coded each individual open ended answer input to create a comprehensive engagement summary, included as Appendix B.

Presentation to Select Committees of Council

Staff made a presentation to Council and Council committees to introduce the alternative development concepts, provide background information, policy framework, overview of the guiding principles, rezoning process and timelines, including the engagement process and input opportunities. Using the guiding principles confirmed in Phase 1 of project engagement, the alternative development concepts were presented and feedback was received from each of the committees, primarily related to the mandates of each. See Appendix C for the minutes associated with each committee. Minutes are publicly available when approved, therefore not all minutes will be available at the time of this publication.

Staff have introduced and reviewed the alternative development concepts to the ADP, the SPC, the TAG, RLAC and the AIC.

Pop-Up Stations (Library/Meadow Park/Farmer's Market)

Posters were placed at the Whistler Public Library and Meadow Park Sports Complex sharing project information and background, the draft guiding principles and information about the Phase 2 alternative development concepts for the duration of the community input period. Staff setup a station at the Sunday farmers market on the stroll in the upper village with posters and were available to discuss comments and questions with interested members of the public. The posters included the website address for the project webpage and QR codes to link directly to the website and to the questionnaire.

Lunch Chats

“Lunch-chats” consisted of 10 minute sessions on Zoom for a conversation directly with staff that could be reserved on the Northlands website. In the sessions, staff were available to answer questions about the process and alternative development concepts, hear direct feedback from participants, and direct the public to the online questionnaire to directly share their feedback.

Phase 3 Proposed Engagement

Community engagement in Phase 3 will establish continuity with the enhanced rezoning process undertaken in Phase 1 and Phase 2, and will satisfy legislative requirements for rezonings.

Staff propose a mix of in-person and virtual events, including an in-person open house with visual presentation of information from the RMOW (rezoning process, site history and context, relevant policy, and the guiding principles established for the site during Phase 1) and from the applicant team (rezoning rationale and intent, response to guiding principles, and preferred development concept).

Staff propose to offer additional on-line and in-person drop-in opportunities for community members who are unable to attend the in-person events, as well as ‘pop-up’ engagement opportunities at community events, such as the Whistler Farmers’ Market. Staff will also prepare and promote a questionnaire and comment form to elicit specific feedback on the preferred concept. These events will be supplemented with the project-specific webpage and dedicated project email address.

Project information and the preferred development concept will be available to the public on the project webpage after Council has provided direction to proceed. Engagement events and opportunities will be promoted through municipal social media, website, and newspaper ads. The community will be invited to provide written submissions during a public input period via email, at in-person events, and through the online questionnaire and comment form.

The engagement process will also include review, feedback and recommendations from the committees of Council on the Phase 3 preferred concept.

Subsequent to Council direction on a preferred concept, Phase 3 will also include an opportunity for residents and other interested parties to share their views on the proposed rezoning through a statutory public hearing process. A public hearing will be held prior to third reading of the zoning bylaw, at which all persons who believe that their interest in property is affected by the proposed bylaw must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard by Council. This involves an opportunity to make a speech or presentation or to present a written submission.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 Open House Engagement Panels
Appendix B – 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 Engagement Summary
Appendix C – 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 Committee Meeting Minutes
Appendix D – 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 Questionnaire Results
Appendix E – 4500 Northlands Rezoning Phase 2 In-Person Comment Forms

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the community engagement activities undertaken in the second phase of the enhanced rezoning process for the 4500 Northlands rezoning, recommends that Council direct staff to proceed with Phase 3 of the process, and outlines the Phase 3 community engagement activities that are proposed consistent with the enhanced rezoning process.

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