



**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER**

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## STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

**PRESENTED:** June 20, 2023 **REPORT:** 23-067  
**FROM:** Planning Department – Policy **FILE:** 7729.04  
**SUBJECT:** UBCM 2023-2024 Complete Communities Program Grant Application

### RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**That** the recommendation of the General Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development Services be endorsed.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

**That** Council endorse and authorize staff to submit an application to the Union of B.C. Municipalities' (UBCM) 2023/24 Complete Communities Program for a grant to undertake a geospatial land use assessment of the lands within the Whistler Urban Development Containment Area; and if successful, direct staff to provide overall grant management in accordance with the UBCM's grant requirements as attached in Appendix A to this Administrative Report No. 23-067.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement for a grant application to the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) 2023-2024 Complete Communities Program (Complete Communities Program) and endorse staff's administration of the Whistler Complete Communities Assessment Project (the Project) if the grant is successfully obtained. Staff recommend pursuing this grant opportunity for its ability to provide information that will advance the Resort Municipality of Whistler's (RMOW) efforts related to employee housing including the Long-term Housing Strategy.

Information Report  Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

### DISCUSSION

#### Background

The Complete Communities Program aims to support communities to carry out assessments that will inform land use decision-making. The Ministry of Housing has provided \$10MM in funding and UBCM is administering the program. The program specifically supports assessments of current community completeness that consider at least three of the following four lenses: housing, transportation, daily needs and infrastructure. For the purposes of the program, complete communities are described as:

*communities – or areas within a community – which provide a diversity of housing to meet identified community needs and accommodate people at all stages of life, and provide a wider range of employment opportunities, amenities, and services within a 15-to-20-minute walk.*

Further information on the grant opportunity is provided in the program and application guide, which is attached to this report as Appendix A.

## **Analysis**

The focus of the RMOW's grant application is to undertake a geospatial land use assessment of the lands within the Whistler Urban Development Containment Area, through the lenses of housing, daily needs, and infrastructure. Key proposed Project activities have been informed by the application guide and include:

- Defining the Project approach and developing a communications and engagement strategy;
- Collecting, compiling and updating RMOW data, including understanding vacant and underutilized land in the community;
- Identifying strengths, opportunities, and challenges to increase community completeness, including considerations regarding employee housing and community amenities such as childcare and recreation facilities;
- Identifying potential actions and creating scenarios to test potential actions; and
- Developing an implementation plan.

The findings of the assessment will support the advancement of multiple initiatives identified in the 2023-2026 RMOW Strategic Plan and [RMOW Housing Action Plan](#). Specifically, the data and actions identified through the Project will be incorporated into the RMOW's Long-term Housing Strategy, including the exploration of suitable locations for new employee housing as well as amenity locations that may better serve our existing community. Additionally, this work would support the initiative to develop an infill housing program.

The maximum grant available is \$150,000; staff have prepared an application for \$117,900.00. If the grant is successfully obtained, RMOW staff will provide overall grant management.

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## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions**

[May 16, 2023: Administrative Report No. 23-059](#), *Resort Municipality of Whistler Housing Action Plan*

- An ongoing action within the action plan is to: *Apply for government grants and partnerships (i.e., Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), BC Housing)*. RMOW and Whistler Housing Authority staff actively pursue grant opportunities, such as this Complete Communities Program, as they arise and are offered by senior levels of government.

### **2023-2026 Strategic Plan**

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

Housing is a priority area within the Strategic Plan. The development of a Long-term Housing Strategy is one of the key initiatives within the housing priority area. The Project will produce data and actions that will be integrated directly into the Long-term Housing Strategy and support the implementation of the Housing Action Plan. The Project will also take into consideration, and work to address, the Climate Action and Community Engagement priorities.

### **Strategic Priorities**

Housing

*Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing*

Climate Action

*Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan*

Community Engagement

*Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW*

Smart Tourism

*Preserve and protect Whistler's unique culture, natural assets and infrastructure*

Not Applicable

*Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs*

### **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.

Furthering Whistler as an overall complete community, with complete neighbourhoods, directly supports the goals, objectives and policies within Chapter Four (Growth Management) and the Residential Accommodation section in Chapter Five (Land Use and Development). In particular, the Project directly supports the following policies:

- 4.1.2.11. Policy: Optimize the use and function of existing and approved development. Support flexibility, diversity, adaptability and efficiency in land use and development, so the resort community can derive the greatest benefit from existing development and minimize the conversion of natural areas to development.
- 4.1.4.6. Policy: Integrate compatible land uses where appropriate to enhance community livability and walkability.
- 5.1.2.5. Policy: Consider allowing development of employee housing on underdeveloped private lands in residential neighbourhoods with close proximity to jobs, sustainable transportation, amenities and services and consistent with policies and criteria established for evaluation.
- 5.4.1.2. Policy: Encourage flexibility in zoning and consider infill developments that take advantage of existing infrastructure, have close proximity to transit, commercial centres, amenities and services, and are compatible with the adjacent neighbourhood character.
- 5.4.1.3. Policy: Ensure all neighbourhoods are well-connected to local transit, trails, green space, amenities and services.

- The Project will directly support the development of the Long-term Housing Strategy. [Appendix B](#) to [Administrative Report No. 23-059](#) provides an overview of relevant OCP goals, objectives and policies related to housing action.

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## BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The Complete Communities Program can contribute a maximum of 100 per cent of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$150,000. As noted above, the RMOW is requesting a grant in the amount of \$117,900.00 to support the Project. If the grant application is successful, the Project will be 100 per cent funded through the Complete Communities Program. The existing Planning Department budget will provide for staff resources associated with overall grant management.

Regardless of the outcome of this grant application, the budgets for activities associated with advancing initiatives from the Housing Action Plan, including the Long-term Housing Strategy, will either be included within the annual operating and project budgets of the RMOW or will be identified for budget amendment or inclusion in future budgets, as necessary.

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## 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.

There are no specific considerations to include in this report. RMOW staff will invite Lílwat Nation and Squamish Nation to participate in the Project through the established referral processes.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

Inform     Consult     Involve     Collaborate     Empower

Preparation of the grant application did not involve community engagement or consultation. Community engagement will be an important aspect of the Project, and a communications and engagement strategy will be developed as part of the first phase of the Project. Should the grant application be successful, staff anticipate bringing forward a report to Council with the recommended Project approach, which will address the connection of the proposed Project to multiple initiatives outlined in the RMOW Housing Action Plan, including the Long-term Housing Strategy.

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## REFERENCES

Appendix A – UBCM 2023-2024 Complete Communities Program Application Guide

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## **SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with the background for the RMOW's grant application for the Complete Communities Program. It also requests that Council endorse the grant application and staff's administration of the Project, if the grant is successfully obtained.

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## **SIGN-OFFS**

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