

To the Mayor and Council,

The adage "time is money" is well understood, particularly by the Mayor, who diligently ensures public speakers do not exceed their three-minute mark during council meetings by even 45 seconds.

This principle begs the question: why does the RMOW invest heavily in promoting active transportation through the Valley Trail enhancements, a slow and time-consuming route compared to direct highway cycling? For instance, riding an e-bike from Municipal Hall to Forecast Coffee in Function Junction takes a mere 14 minutes via the highway, as opposed to 30+ minutes on the Valley Trail, adhering to speed limits.

The Valley Trail presents numerous other challenges to commuting, including obstructions by tourists, children at play, and unleashed pets. As both a parent and an entrepreneur, my time is precious, making the scenic but inefficient Valley Trail impractical for daily commutes and time sensitive engagements.

Despite a long list of "climate action" measures, there is a notable absence of initiatives aimed at enhancing cyclist safety on the highway, a route far more efficient for navigating Whistler. This oversight effectively marginalizes cyclists, presuming to deprive them of time which could be more productively spent on work, family, or leisure activities.

The highway is a billion dollar asset, the valley trail is in the millions (though of course, priceless). The lack of safe, equitable highway access for cyclists disadvantages those with lower incomes, those committed to sustainable practices, and future generations.

There appears to be a disconnect between the policymakers and the policies implemented. It is evident that few at RMOW rely on cycling or public transportation for their official duties. The choices made by Council and staff, using a variety of single occupant fossil fueled vehicles, sets a precedent for the community and undermines efforts to promote sustainable alternatives.

E-bikes are a highly efficient and near zero emission transportation option:

- an electric bike uses 50x less energy than an electric car, and 100x less material resources to construct,
- an electric bike produces a whopping 1000x less emissions per kilometer than a fossil truck like those in the RMOW fleet and,
- the price of one of RMOW's Ford Ranger fossil trucks could fund 35 e-bikes like mine (VoltBike Yukon 750 with Dillinger 4 studded tires), offering an immediate, impactful shift towards sustainability.

I had presumed that both the Municipality and the Province, given their commitments to sustainability and safety, would prioritize enhancing cyclist safety and rights. Yet, the consistent response from the RMOW has been "follow up with MOTI directly, here are their contact details." This is a neglect of responsibility.

While the Local Government Act of British Columbia outlines the jurisdictional boundaries, it also grants municipalities wide authority to act in the best interests of their communities. This includes being proactive in discussions that affect local infrastructure and the well-being of residents.

Cyclists are entitled to use most roads in British Columbia, Highway 99 included. The apparent lack of focus on this issue by both the Province and, seemingly, our Municipality, is creating a highly unsafe environment. The failure to maintain clean highway shoulders forces cyclists onto the road, where they

are legally allowed to be, which in turn leads to dangerous and illegal overtaking maneuvers by some drivers of large fossil cars and trucks, further compromising safety.



A law-abiding cyclist on an e-bike being forced off the road by a speeding, oversized fossil-fueled truck

The RMOW should champion initiatives to improve cyclists' safety on Highway 99, rather than leaving residents to fend for themselves. Straightforward steps such as maintaining clear shoulders, improving signage, and enforcing road rules transform the highway from a daunting journey into a delightful, sunny and scenic experience.

Extending this effort by converting the "emergency lanes, where cycling is permitted," into dedicated bike lanes, tailored specifically for cyclists' safety, would revolutionize the convenience of opting for low-carbon transportation in Whistler.

If RMOW council and staff were mandated to adhere to their own climate policies such as using e-bikes for official purposes, the importance of time, and by extension cyclists' highway safety, would quickly become apparent. I eagerly anticipate this change.

Kind Regards,



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