

January 14, 2025

Dear Mayor and council,

The discussion regarding this report reminds me of the growth concerns expressed in our OCP and really since the beginning of Whistler a vision.

In a posting about the passing of Al Raine a video about the original development of Whistler was posted. Al and Nancy Raine were the guests on the Jack Webster program in October of 1978. Al explains in answer to a caller why there were at the time no plans for a four-lane highway to Whistler because "Whistler just can not handle that kind of traffic". Thank goodness there was an understanding of capacity by the original developers of Whistler which along with things like the bed cap are probably reasons Whistler became the wonderful place it is today. The four-lane highway was built. The bed cap was fudged upward and will likely be legislated out of existence. Al Raine's apparent concerns from so long ago are here for us to see. (see link to view the program segment)

Discussion of highway comments at 41:35 <https://youtu.be/oYNDG9si0ko?t=2494>

Beginning of full program segment <https://youtu.be/oYNDG9si0ko?t=1740>

I have asked this council and past councils over many years for defined capacities and plans that respect those capacities. When will enough be enough? My questions about overdevelopment have never been answered. I have not seen plans that I think are viable and the comments regarding the interim housing needs report confirm that there will probably now be no limit of development in Whistler because of Bill 44. The contemplated density and new development will domino into expanded community services and infrastructure which will in turn place ever more demand for housing ad infinitum. The visions of Whistler in our current OCP will not be achievable. As Al Raine stated so long-ago the Whistler as he envisioned can not handle it. I do not know how Al Raine felt about over development or if he could have answered my concerns but he did not appear to envision a city in Whistler yet here we "giddy up" go. He was a visionary indeed. We are thankful that, for now at least, we still enjoy what he helped create here.

If the density dictated by the province is to be primarily accommodated by the building of secondary units on private land I doubt if this will be accomplished. I can tell you that no secondary building will occur on our property. I don't think we are alone. Even if the proposed density is achieved by force or other means there still are no defined capacities nor any plans

beyond 20 years to ever achieve some form of balance in the community. A balanced model will never be achieved.

During council discussion there did not seem to be a clear definition of a "unit" nor an understanding of what population potential was being considered. How can housing or future infrastructure be planned without population projections? Councillor De Jong speculates that populations could double with the presented information.

I would ask why would our population double? Will there be double the visitors? Double the hotels and restaurants? Double the ski runs, biking and hiking trails, therefore double the workers to support the additional tourists and the doubling of community services? Would there ever be a point where Whistler just becomes so urban and congested that less permanent residents and visitors would not want to come here? We know there are some that already feel that way.

One would think that as the provincial government, RMOW and the local tourism corporations are the main beneficiaries of the lucrative tourism economy that Whistler provides there would be consideration of how this blind obsession with urbanization might degrade the tourist experience. Killing the golden goose, I think it is called. All concerned need to think carefully if this densification formula will work in Whistler. Maybe a better idea is that WHA and industry should just continue to try and catch up with a backlog of employee housing need taking a balance approach.

In my observation just about any infrastructure I can think of in Whistler is already tested by current resident and visitor volume. As it can take a decade or so to plan, budget for, zone land for and build many community assets such as medical clinics, schools, recreation centres, parks, roads, parking lots, transit services, water, sewer and solid waste systems for example there will presumably be a report soon on how Whistler will get started on these, how they will be funded and where they will be located. All this presumably happening at the same time we are building the almost six thousand "units" of housing. Will we want to maintain, even raise the standard on many of these expanded services and facilities to meet our environmental goals?

It was revealed in the council discussion that provincial legislation is now the operational document of our community. Our OCP must be revised to conform to provincial legislation. I question the need or the point of public consultation as regardless of what the community may want or say the decisions have already been made.

There seems to be the apparent assumption that climate change and its consequences will have no impact on the status quo over the next 20-40 years and beyond. The global reluctance to modify

high GHG customs and energy sources is due to create significant consequences within the time frame of this report. 2024 now declared the hottest year on record exceeding the previous record in 2023. We hear lots of evidence that RMOW understands the climate crisis but action to address it is still not a high enough priority. It is irresponsible to pretend that the growth contemplated in this report will not have a detrimental impact on our environmental and GHG reduction goals.

At this time of Whistler's development all efforts need to be put towards transitioning to a resilient, stable, viable and sustainable resort community. We still live in an interface forest location with growing danger of wildfire. How many examples of the devastation potential we face do we need to see? We can now add Los Angeles to the list. We may have adequate water today but some of our sources of water melt away every year. Services and infrastructure still cope but there does not appear to be much capacity left for the expansion and growth contemplated in this report.

I ask that the leadership in our community follow the example of our founders like Al Raine and that we think about the challenges and priorities of our future and that we "act bolder than we are comfortable" to achieve them. Acting bolder may now mean focusing on preserving and protecting what has already been accomplished rather than continued perhaps unsustainable and potentially destructive growth. All concerned should discuss the potential long term unintended consequences of over development in Whistler.

Please make an honest, realistic and defined vision for Whistler with measurable plans to achieve it as you ponder the language of the revised OCP.

Many of us have had and continue to enjoy the Whistler planned by the likes of Al and Nancy Raine. What is planned today will form the future Whistler experience our children and grandchildren live in.

Thank you all for your service to our community.

Yours truly

John Wood

