



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
HOUSING AND STRATEGY
COMMITTEE MINUTES**

October 15, 2024, 3 p.m.- 5 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting via Teams Webinar

For information on how to view: <https://www.whistler.ca/municipal-gov/committees/housing-and-strategy-committee/>

	Mtgs: YTD (1)
PRESENT: Chair, Councilor Jeff Murl	1
Vice Chair, Councilor Jessie Morden	1
Mayor, Jack Crompton	1
RMOW CAO Virginia Cullen	1
RMOW GM of CAPD Dale Mikkelsen	1
Member at Large, David Brownlie	1
Member at Large, David Dale-Johnson	1
Member at Large, Dave Williamson	1
Member at Large, Beau Jarvis	1
Member at Large, Theresa McCaffrey	1
Member at Large, David Girard	1
Staff Liaison, RMOW Director of Planning M. Laidlaw	1
RMOW Recording Secretary, A. Bois	1

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Councilor Jeff Murl, recognized the Resort Municipality of Whistler is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Lílwat People, known in their language as Lílwat7úl, and the Squamish People, known in their language as Skwxwú7mesh. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship and voice.

2. Introduction & Welcome

The October 15, 2024, meeting is the inaugural Housing and Strategy Committee (HASC) meeting. The Chair requested each member briefly introduce themselves.

Action Item: The Chair also requested that each member prepare a one-page manifesto of what work she or he wants the HASC to undertake for the community: *what*

is important to each member of the committee (goals and objectives in the medium- long term).

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Moved By D. Girard
Seconded By J. Morden

4. **VERBAL REPORTS**

4.1 **Review of Committee Purpose and Desired Outcomes**

M. Laidlaw provided some context for the HASC. The RMOW is guided by the Official Community Plan (OCP). Each term Council establishes priorities to steward the community towards the OCP vision. For the 2022-2026 term, Council identified housing as a priority. To ensure housing advances as a priority, Council restructured Committees of Council in 2024 to align with the term's priorities and the Housing and Strategy Committee replaced the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC).

M. Laidlaw reviews the general purpose of the Committees of Council. Committees of Council are focused on high level policy and strategy, advancing Council's priorities, provides recommendations to staff and council, engage subject matter experts, and provide community perspectives. M. Laidlaw shared that the work of the SPC was also directed by the updated 2020 OCP and its policies around growth management, land use, and a balanced resort and community capacity. The SPC focused work on the 'Balanced Model' and scenario planning, the SPC also provided feedback on the rezoning application for 4500 Northlands Blvd., and the RMOW's Housing Action Plan.

M. Laidlaw reviews the HASC Terms of Reference (TOR) which can be found on the HASC webpage on the whistler.ca website. Members of the committee ask about the public viewing of committee meetings. V. Cullen explains that the accessibility of committee meetings to the public is an effort of the RMOW to be more open and transparent and while there may be topics closed to the public, only under specific regulations of the Community Charter, the public will have access to view all committee meetings. **Action Item:** staff to share Community Charter with committee members.

4.2 **Whistler Employee Housing overview and update**

M. Laidlaw presents an overview of Employee Housing in Whistler including a snapshot of the community over the last 5 years, an overview of recent policy initiatives, and new, and in progress, housing projects.

The municipality continues to focus on facilitating the expedient delivery of new employee housing by working with the WDC, WHA, senior levels of government, community partners and the private sector. M. Laidlaw shares that Whistler's population is growing. In 2023 the population of Whistler is 16,063. Whistler's

population has grown 52% since 2012. M. Laidlaw also shares that Whistler is ranked 6th among BC municipalities between 2015-2020. **Action Item:** M. Laidlaw to clarify if these statistics represent per capita.

Whistler's OCP's objective is to house at least 75% of Whistler's workforce within the resort community in livable, appropriate, and affordable housing. Whilst Whistler was developed as a resort municipality, the OCP recognizes the importance of having a strong community where local workers are able to live in the community and participate in the resort's offerings. Whistler continues to exceed the 75% goal of work force living locally; however, Whistler still has a critical employee housing shortage with a significant housing waitlist. M. Laidlaw also notes the census data that underscores the decline of commuters from 2020; albeit this statistic has remained static in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Affordable employee housing inventory, in terms of units, represents 12% of Whistler's total dwelling units. The national average is 2%. While there has been a lot of recent growth in employee housing over the last 6 years, the housing demand is growing faster than supply in large part due to the cost of market housing. This has a direct impact on affordability to construct, rent and support financing.

Recent RMOW policy initiatives: Municipality's Strategic Plan, completion of Cheakamus Crossing Phase 2 by 2026, advance the private sector employee housing initiative projects, implement the Housing Action Plan (monitor supply, identify needs, protect/ optimize employee housing, leverage municipal lands, using/ expanding financing tools, encourage private sector, and remove red tape barriers) and work with community partners on long term housing strategy.

Evolving regulatory landscape: in 2023 the province of BC released the *Homes for People Plan* and passed legislation to increase housing supply across the province. The new provincial rules and policy guidelines changed the land use planning framework for local governments including the RMOW. These changes support the municipality's strategic priority to increase housing in Whistler. New Provincial Housing Legislation: enable small scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH), facilitate more density near frequent transit, and shift to a more pro-active long-term planning approach. M. Laidlaw shares key dates: June 30, 2024 SSMUH Zoning Bylaw Update and designate a Transit Orientated Area (TOA)- Whistler Gondola Exchange; furthermore, by January 1, 2025, the RMOW is required to complete an Interim Housing Needs Report with 5 a year, and 20 year, projection; and, then by December 31, 2025, the RMOW must updated the OCP for the projections and update the zoning bylaw to provide for the 20 year housing needs. While provincial housing legislation may change as a result of the upcoming provincial election, the RMOW must still fulfill an Interim Housing Needs report and update the OCP.

Amenities Contribution and Development Cost Charges will be led by the RMOW Legislative Services Department and Finance Department in 2025.

M. Laidlaw notes that while there have been many enquiries regarding SSMUH, it is anticipated that the RMOW will issue the first SSMUH building permit by the end of October 2024.

D. Mikkelsen points out that the province's intent with SSMUH was not to deliver "affordable housing" and it is not expected to supplement the work of the WHA but rather support the needs of the "missing middle."

The Whistler Gondola Exchange (bus exchange in Whistler Village) has been identified as the TOA. The Whistler Gondola Exchange would have a catchment area of 400 meters (comprised of 2 tiers: properties within 200 meters of the Gondola Exchange and properties between 200- 400 meters from the Gondola Exchange). And while the encumbrance is on property owners to advance a rezoning application, local government cannot deny rezoning applications that propose density that is within the provincial allowable density for these two tiers.

The RMOW also brought forward a Residential Parking Amendment bylaw for the TOA (removes parking requirement for residential land uses in the TOA, parking standards for design and construction will continue to apply and parking requirements for non- residential land uses will continue to apply). M. Laidlaw shares that, to date, there has been no interest expressed by owners in the TOA to submit a rezoning for higher density to the RMOW Planning Department. M. Laidlaw also notes that the province only identified the Whistler Gondola Exchange (not the Creekside area) as a TOA.

V. Cullen clarifies that a TOA is not determined by population but by transit services (for example, if Creekside's transit service grows only then may it be identified in the future as a TOA).

M. Laidlaw shares that part of the Housing Action Plan is for the RMOW to complete a *Vulnerable Population Housing Needs Assessment*. This report was presented to Council in March 2024. It was identified that the community needs emergency, transitional support, and non-market rental housing. The report identified demographics in need of housing: women and children, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous households, recent immigrant households, and older adults. The *Vulnerable Populations Project* also underscored three lessons learned: housing issues are complex, partnerships are needed with community businesses and developers, and higher levels of government and continued collaboration is needed with Lil'wat Nation, and Squamish Nation, to provide housing opportunities for both nations. It was also identified that housing needs are in a constant state of change and there must be a commitment to continued monitoring and assessment.

Whistler is on track to exceed the OCP target of adding 1,000 new employee bed units over 5 years. Cheakamus Crossing Lot 3 (1600 Mount Fee Road) rezoning application is expected in November 2024.

Moving Forward

The RMOW *Complete Communities Project* is a work in progress with the assistance of consultants. The *Complete Communities Program* is supported by the BC Ministry of Housing and administered by UBCM. It is designed to assist local governments in advancing identified community goals to create more complete communities. This is characterized by diverse housing options, accessible amenities & services and increased transportation options to support walkability & connectivity. This project will be a geospatial land use assessment of current community completeness throughout three out of four lenses: housing, transportation, daily needs, and infrastructure. The final report will include key assessment findings, identified strengths, opportunities & challenges to increase community completeness and comprehensive implementation plan including a monitoring & reporting framework for each action.

Local governments are required to complete an *Interim Housing Needs Report* by January 1, 2025. The RMOW is required to use the provincial methodology to calculate the total number of housing units their communities will need over 5, and 20, years. The first regular Housing Needs Report must then be complete by December 31, 2028, and then every 5 years thereafter.

M. Laidlaw shares another project the RMOW is undertaking, the *Land Inventory & Housing Suitability Analysis*. A lot of work from the Complete Communities Assessment will feed into this project. This is a comprehensive land inventory of undeveloped and underdeveloped sites (RMOW, private, Crown, and First Nations).

OCP Update. This update is mandated and must meet Bill 44 legislation and must be complete by December 31, 2025.

The RMOW is also doing *bylaw testing* with the development community (including architectural, building, construction, and real estate evaluations) to seek insight into the practicality, economic viability and potential uptake of SSMUH . Any outcomes can be used to identify any suggested amendments to SSMUH regulations.

Whistler Creek West Neighborhood Plan is the incentivized development along Lake Placid Road. (While council was presented this concept at COTW earlier this year, it is currently a non-budgeted plan). D. Mikkelsen notes that as the RMOW goes through the budget process over the next few months, this is a piece in which project budget will be requested. Public engagement will begin next month.

4500 Northlands Blvd a 5.2 hecter area contiguous to Whistler Village. Significant community engagement occurred in 2021 and 2022. This is a current rezoning application. The RMOW is expecting community engagement in Q2- Q3 of 2025 around land uses and built form.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Meeting cadence for 2025

That the Housing and Strategy Committee meet at a minimum quarterly throughout the year and may add extra meetings as required.

Moved By Councilor, J. Morden
Seconded By Member at Large, D. Brownlie

CARRIED

5.2 Appointment of Vice Chair, Councilor J. Morden

That the Housing and Strategy Committee appoint Councilor Jessie Morden to Vice Chair of the Housing and Strategy Committee.

Moved By Mayor, J. Crompton
Seconded By Member at Large, T. McCaffrey

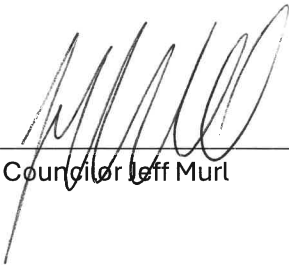
CARRIED

6. TERMINATION

That the Housing and Strategy Committee terminate the Regular Committee Meeting of October 15, 2024.

Moved By Vice Chair, Councilor J. Morden
Seconded By Member at Large, D. Williamson

CARRIED



Chair, Councilor Jeff Murt



RMOW Recording Secretary, A. Bois