



WHISTLER

REPORT | INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: March 3, 2019
FROM: Chief Administrator's Office
SUBJECT: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE UPDATE AND 2020 WORK PLAN

REPORT: 20-030
FILE: 0540

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the Chief Administrative Officer be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive Information Report No. 20-030 regarding the Strategic Planning Committee 2020 Update and Work Plan.

REFERENCES

None

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report to provide council with an update on the 2020 work plan for the Strategic Planning Committee including deliverables identified by the committee, and the processes planned to achieve these.

DISCUSSION

Since its incorporation in 1975, the municipality has had a clear community vision and has managed growth and development through its Official Community Plan (OCP) policies, zoning and land use regulations and other senior policy documents.

The current OCP pending adoption builds on Whistler's enduring vision as a destination resort community, seeks to protect and reinforce what makes Whistler a special place to live and visit, and guides Whistler's ongoing evolution within limits to growth. It identifies the need to balance the resort community such that sustainable visitation levels are targeted to provide a strong and stable economy within a comfortable carrying capacity, taking into consideration the qualitative aspects of the Whistler experience (for residents and guests) and the protection of our natural environment which is inherently unique to Whistler, and quantitative aspects such as infrastructure capacities and housing needs.

Whistler has experienced tremendous growth in recent years, both in community development as well as with strong economic growth, and it is time to review the overall performance in detail, recognizing the implications of growth and the limitations to Whistler's capacity. Consideration is to be given to the successes and learnings experienced, to ensure our journey for the next generation and beyond, reflects opportunities to overcome the current challenges being experienced, such as affordability for residents and ensuring ongoing protection of the natural environment and Whistler's mountain culture.

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was established as a Select Committee of Council with Terms of Reference adopted in May 2019, with focus on long term scenario planning to support Council decision making related to community and land use planning and growth management. The Committee members were appointed in July 2019 and is composed of the Whistler Mayor and two Councillors, three senior staff representatives from the Resort Municipality of Whistler, and five engaged members of the community.

The guiding principles of the SPC are to encourage progressive long-term thinking for the benefit of the resort community as a whole; manage growth and development to achieve the goals of the community vision and OCP; consider risks and effective adaptation to changing and potential future external conditions; ensure balanced and effective use of limited financial, social and natural resources; and include the community at large in community planning, while developing effective and collaborative partnerships that support community goals.

The SPC seeks to provide input to long term strategy development for community and land use planning activities within the municipal boundaries and provide strategic input for major development projects; and establish guiding metrics and targets for Council's consideration, to effectively manage and balance Whistler's resort and community capacity while protecting Whistler's unique sense of place and meeting the community's long term needs.

The committee has met three times since the members were appointed, have expressed the desire to take a comprehensive and measured approach, and have agreed on the following priority deliverables:

- *Define a base set of metrics including social, environmental and economic factors to support decision making*

The base of the SPC's work is to establish a clear understanding of the relevant metrics that drive the resort's growth, and to articulate those in such a way that facilitates meaningful discussion of how they are intrinsically related.

- *Establish a definition of the resort community's carrying capacity*

Having an articulated definition of the carrying capacity of the various infrastructure and amenities across the resort enables measurement against those capacities in a more holistic and integrated way, addressing both quantitative as well as qualitative aspects, such as sense of community.

- *Develop a framework for balancing economic growth with business and community needs*

Using the resort's carrying capacity and understanding the interrelationships between the growth in the economy and resort community, will provide focus on the potential trade-offs that must be considered over time, to support achievement of the resort community's vision.

- *Develop a range of possible future scenarios to understand the breadth of their implications on various parameters of the resort community*

Determine a range of scenarios and analyze their impacts on the resort community, including housing, land use, population, economy and services, with defined opportunities and risks of each.

- *Define tangible metrics and strategic actions in alignment with the Community's vision and OCP policies*

The committee will strategically assess the potential scenarios identified above, and conduct impact assessments of each of those scenarios against the Official Community Plan Vision and Shared Futures as described by the community. This will enable establishment of targets to

drive towards over a 20 year horizon, with thresholds such that movement towards any of those will trigger review of strategy and actions to continue to align towards the collective vision.

The above deliverables will be facilitated by the development of a 'Community Growth Management Model' which will build upon the existing body of community monitoring currently available and will deepen the understanding of key trends and drivers of growth across the resort community over the last 10 to 20 years. By assessing how the level of Whistler population, by visitor group or resident type, and by season, influences the demand on services and amenities, and how this translates into land requirements, impacts on the natural environment, quality of life and resort experience, the SPC will conduct strategic impact assessments of multiple scenarios and provide advice to Council in support of achieving the community's preferred future, as set out in Whistler's Official Community Plan.

The committee will be publishing a Request for Proposal (RFP) in the coming weeks to seek a consultant to develop a Community Growth Management Model framework. The objectives of the model are as follows:

1. Provide an overview of the various drivers of community growth in Whistler, and reviewing and identifying indicators to measure, and capacities to consider, to ensure a deeper understanding of influences on the community's recent evolution to be used as a basis for better understanding of the possible future evolution of the community;
2. Understand possible future scenarios and their impacts on the community, with defined risks and strategies to work towards the implementation of its Official Community Plan, ensuring a balance between the resort economy and the community overall;
3. Provide measures as targets for each of the base metrics that will support the committee in the determination of strategic opportunities or policy directions for Council consideration;
4. Have an integrated modelling tool for use by the Resort Municipality of Whistler, beyond the project timeframe, that enables evaluation of future major projects/developments in the community.

The committee anticipates that the community will be engaged at various points throughout 2020, to enable review and alignment with the conclusions made from the first phase being the overview of drivers of growth and indicators/measures to identify and evaluate impacts on infrastructure, quality of life etc., within the community. This will then lead into the second phase being scenario planning, and understanding of the implications of those various scenarios taking into consideration carrying capacity and balancing of the resort's needs, followed by the final phase with a comprehensive report.

WHISTLER 2020 ANALYSIS

W2020 Strategy	Descriptions of success that resolution moves us toward	Comments
Built Environment	Limits to growth are understood and respected	<p>The SPC will establish a base set of metrics that will provide clarity on Whistler's current position and what considerations need to be made for a sustainable future.</p> <p>Land use is a consideration throughout the SPC with regard to residential, tourist accommodation, commercial and industrial needs and ensuring preservation of natural areas in line with the OCP.</p>

Built Environment	Smart growth policies and initiatives contribute to the financial health of the community	By considering strategic community planning issues, the SPC will be able to provide advice to Council to review initiatives that ensure the financial and environmental health of the community.
	Whistler is globally recognized as a center of excellence in sustainable community development	
Economic	Whistler's tourism economy is progressive and ensures the highest and best use of limited financial, social and natural resources in the long-term	With defined metrics and a longer term planning horizon, SPC will be contribute to enabling a more balanced and effective use of Whistler's available resources.
	Physical and social infrastructure attract and support work and investment	
Natural Areas	An ecologically functioning and viable network of critical natural areas is protected and, where possible restored. Developed and recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment within and around them as possible.	The natural environment and preservation of natural areas, ecosystems and biodiversity, is important to maintaining community character and sustainability, and will be key considerations throughout the work of the SPC.

Strategic Planning Committee 2020 Update and Work Plan does not move our community away from any of the adopted Whistler2020 Descriptions of Success.

OTHER POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The Strategic Planning Committee operates consistent with processes and procedures for select committees of Council.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

There are no direct budget implications of this report, however, a budget has been allocated for the work of the SPC in 2020 to support growth management modelling, scenario planning and community engagement. All internal costs are accommodated within the annual operating budget of the municipality.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The SPC anticipates engaging with the community throughout the duration of its work in 2020, and specifically to share the analysis on growth impacts and possible scenarios and impacts on the breadth of the community's needs including social, environmental and economic factors.

SUMMARY

This report requests that Council receive the information regarding the Strategic Planning Committee's update and 2020 Work Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Metcalf
 MANAGER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

for
 Mike Furey
 CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER