



# WHISTLER

## REPORT | ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL

**PRESENTED:** September 1, 2020  
**FROM:** Resort Experience  
**SUBJECT:** NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA ZERO EMISSIONS VEHICLE AWARENESS INITIATIVE APPLICATION

**REPORT:** 20-079  
**FILE:** 5290

### COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**That** the recommendation of the General Manager of Resort Experience be endorsed.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That** Council direct staff to submit an application to Natural Resources Canada for the Zero-Emission Vehicle Awareness Initiative to qualify for up to 50 per cent matching funding to design and roll out a series of awareness initiatives that identify and remove barriers for residents, commuters, businesses, and visitors to switching to zero emission vehicles; and further

**That** Council approve the use of existing municipal funding as the RMOW's share of matching funds.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with insight into the proposed Zero-Emission Vehicle Awareness Initiatives (ZEVAI) project, to describe the grant application to Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan) ZEVAI fund, to explain the funding source for RMOW's required matching funding, and to seek Council's support in advancing this application.

### DISCUSSION

Personal vehicle transport is Whistler's largest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, accounting for 70,827 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) in 2019 (54 per cent of Whistler's community wide emissions) and is the main reason the community is off-track to its climate targets. Whistler's ability to meet its medium- and long-term GHG reduction targets is thus very much dependent on achieving reductions in the mobile fuel sector from passenger and fleet vehicles. Large-scale shifts to Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) in Whistler as well as reducing the total number of vehicle-kilometers travelled are both essential to meeting these targets.

The Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) project, [Zero-Emission Vehicle Awareness Initiative \(ZEVAI\)](#), will fund up to \$50,000 to support projects that aim to increase awareness of zero emissions vehicles (ZEVs), and public charging and refueling infrastructure, through education and capacity-building activities to ultimately support a greater adoption of ZEVs by Canadians. The RMOW is preparing a proposal to deliver awareness initiatives and identify barriers to ZEV uptake for Whistler. The deadline for the grant proposal submission is September 8, 2020.

Whistler's Climate Action Big Moves Strategy focuses on climate change mitigation priorities that will accelerate climate action in Whistler and get the community back on track to achieving its climate targets. Big Move #2 has the goal to achieve that 50 per cent of all vehicle kilometer travelled (vkt) are

by ZEVs, which means that nearly all new light duty vehicles will need to be zero emission by the end of the decade. It will also require that highly used vehicles (such as taxis, ride hailing and business fleets) lead the adoption of zero emission vehicles, with almost all vehicles zero emissions by 2030.

The ZEVAL project will help to inform the community's initiatives related to the public charging network, parking spaces and costs, residential strategy and electrification of fleets. This project can also effectively influence GHG emissions outside the RMOW's borders. A main barrier to broad EV adoption is for drivers to know they can find reliable and convenient charging at the places they visit. With over three million annual visitors, 70 per cent of whom arrive by car, Whistler can have an outsized impact by enabling electric transport beyond the municipal borders which makes this project a key opportunity to reduce tourism-related GHG emissions. The proposed ZEVAL project will stimulate discussion and engagement and allow for learning and research to inform stronger next steps to tackle passenger and commercial vehicle travel emissions.

### Project Objectives

In collaboration with project partners, a series of Zero Emission Vehicle Awareness Initiatives are being proposed to meet three objectives:

1. Understand the barriers to switching to zero emission vehicles for residents, commuters, business owners, and visitors.
2. Create customized awareness initiatives to address the identified barriers and close knowledge gaps of the key traveller groups
3. Leverage the data obtained from various awareness initiatives to build the business case for next steps/ further investment in ZEV infrastructure for Whistler and the Sea to Sky corridor.

To achieve these goals, surveys will be designed and rolled out in collaboration with project partners such as the Whistler Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Whistler, the Whistler Housing Association, and Emotive BC, to target residents, commuters, business owners, and visitors. The RMOW has engaged with these partners and is currently finalizing each partner's participation in the ZEVAL project.

The data and engagement findings will be used to design customized awareness initiatives and to identify priority projects related to the Climate Action Big Moves strategy. The results may show evidence to help secure additional sources of funding and investment in ZEV charging infrastructure, both in Whistler and in the Sea to Sky corridor.

### ZEVAL Awareness Initiatives and Timelines

The proposed ZEVAL project includes six project activities being carried out from October 2020 to March 2021 (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Proposed initiatives and timeline for ZEVAL project**

Task	2020			2021		
	O	N	D	J	F	M
Whistler online awareness toolkit - continuously being updated						
Develop, conduct customized online surveys						
Analyze data from Surveys to clearly identify barriers and awareness gaps						
Design an ambassador program to address gaps, barriers to switching to ZEVs						
Design and host webinars and focus group meetings						
ZEVAL showcase of various brands/models						

### POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The NRCan ZEVAL grant opportunity aligns with priority actions in Whistler's Big Moves Climate Strategy, CECAP, the Official Community Plan (especially the Transportation and Energy chapters, goals 10.2 and 11.3), and priority actions from the Transportation Advisory Group.

## OCP POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Whistler's vision is to be a place where the community thrives, nature is protected, and guests are inspired. This project aims to understand the needs and barriers for the community and guests to shift to lower carbon transportation and help to achieve Whistler's climate goals. Therefore, this project is in alignment with Whistler's vision.
- B. Increasing awareness around ZEVs to increase their share on Whistler roads is aligned with Whistler's Official Community Plan's (OCP's) climate action and energy Goal 10.2. to "Substantially reduce GHG emissions from vehicle and transportation", with its policy 10.1.2.1 to "Actively promote awareness of climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the importance of energy efficiency through community outreach and programs that target personal energy and emission reduction opportunities" and policy 10.2.3.1. to "Integrate support for electric vehicle charging infrastructure into municipal development policies...". In addition, the proposed ZEVAL project is strongly aligned with the OCP Goal 11.3 to "Minimize GHG emissions created by the transportation system" with its policy 11.3.1.3. to "Encourage increased use of more fuel-efficient private and public vehicles."

## BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

RMOW staff engaged Seeds Consulting to provide support in preparing the grant proposal including a detailed cost estimate for the project. Table 2 outlines the estimated cost ranges for the specific key initiatives including staff time, consultancy services, and outreach material.

**Table 2: Overview of estimated project cost**

	In-kind contributions and RMOW Salaries	Expenses for contractors, advertising, venue rentals, prices	Total project cost
Project management	\$11,000 - \$12,000		\$11,000 - \$12,000
Awareness toolkit, portal, campaign content	\$1,500	\$5,000 - \$7,000	\$6,500 - \$8,500
Surveys and data evaluation	\$3,000	\$8,000 - \$10,000	\$11,000 - \$13,000
Ambassador Program		\$7,000 - \$8,000	\$7,000 - \$8,000
Webinars	\$1,500	\$3,000 - \$4,000	\$4,500 - \$5,500
Focus Groups		\$7,000 - \$8,000	\$7,000 - \$8,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,000 -18,000</b>	<b>\$30,000 - \$37,000</b>	<b>\$47,000 - \$55,000</b>
<b>RMOW's budget contribution (50% project cost minus in kind contribution)</b>			<b>\$6,500 - \$9,500</b>

The project total is estimated to range between \$47,000 and \$55,000. At a 50 per cent funding maximum from NRCan, the RMOW contribution ranges between \$23,500 and \$27,500 given the NRCan application from \$23,500 to \$27,500. The RMOW funding portion is sourced from existing RMOW staff salaries (\$11,000 - \$12,000), confirmed in-kind contributions from project partners, and the remaining funds (\$6,500 to \$9,500) would be secured with available funds through the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program deferred contributions. Opportunities for further cost sharing with confirmed project partners are currently being explored.

NRCan is expected to select successful projects and notify applicants by October 2020. If successful, the RMOW would deliver the project following the timeline in Table 1. If not successful, RMOW staff will identify and apply to other funding opportunities to effectively leverage RMOW investments and achieve the goals outlined above.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

If the application is successful, RMOW staff will work with the Communications department and key project partners to carry out the communication and engagement initiatives as outlined above.

## **SUMMARY**

The NRCan ZEVAI grant is an important opportunity to leverage federal funding to increase awareness and identify barriers to ZEVs and related infrastructure for Whistler's residents, commuters, business owners, and visitors. Understanding the barriers of these key traveller groups to shift towards ZEVs and increasing their awareness is necessary to inform stronger next steps in tackling passenger and commercial vehicle travel emissions, and to get back on track to achieving Whistler's climate targets.

Respectfully submitted,

Luisa Burhenne  
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