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PHONE ([REDACTED]) • E- [REDACTED]

Mayor and Council
Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

26 October 2020

RE: White Gold Undergrounding

Honourable Mayor and Council,

I am writing to request a reconsideration of the decision to proceed with undergrounding of utilities in White Gold.

There has been no transparency in the voting process or in a final cost to residents. Are the votes tallied by an independent person (not affected by the outcome)? How do we know which votes are included and not? What was the vote count at the petition deadline before the voting date was extended for international owners (as I was told by the project manager)?

How many of the voters are Canadians, living in White Gold full-time and thus contributing to the fabric of our city? Shouldn't Canadians living full-time in Whistler have more say over their neighbourhood than non-Canadians and people present only on weekends or a few months of the year? Currently, long-term Canadian members of my community of White Gold are fearful they will be forced out. Many like me are on a fixed income and now find themselves facing costs into the future they don't want and can't afford.

Many of us in White Gold have and continue to be, the core network of volunteers on the mountain, building trails, providing expertise to council, donating to school programs, and providing affordable housing for support workers across all sectors of our municipality. Visitors come to Whistler because of our community feel. We turn to you to keep White Gold sustainable for "old-timers" and residents on fixed incomes. We don't want or need this "beautification" of White Gold. I will have to choose between replacing old gear or this. I would rather have money to invest in Whistler's small business and community services.

The undergrounding will cause a significant disruption to our lives for an undefined number of years. The one-year noise and dust during the upgrading of the waterlines was unbearable for those of us living full-time in the community. Another estimated five years is not acceptable.

The unbounded extra costs to property owners are terrifying for "old-timers" on a fixed income. The project manager has confirmed costs will minimally include:

- 1) All work on private land such as connecting residences to the new underground system, trenching, running electric and communication lines from the main line to the dwelling, work on the meter, landscaping or added civil work.
- 2) Hiring of an electrician to define the work required on each property which will be submitted to BC Hydro and will result in a design and reconnection charge from BC Hydro to the landowner
- 3) For older cabins (as those of the "old-timers"), an upgrade of electricals which will again require the hiring of an electrician and unknown costs.
- 4) Reinstatement of internet and telecommunication services at an unknown cost
- 5) Amortization of the loan in taxes to be paid over a 30-year period, the interest rate of which is fixed only for the first 10 years; 20 years of interest is unbounded.

The solution offered by the project manager is to sell my home which "may have increased in value". This is not a solution for people like me who planned to spend their remaining years in this community.

RHONDA L. MILLIKIN

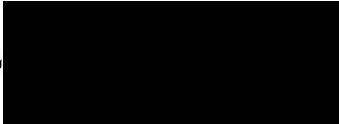
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Beyond the financial hardship this will impose, there is an environmental impact. The noise and air pollution unfairly impact residents (over international owners who are present only part of the year). If the ditches are filled, White Gold will require curbs, catch basins and street lighting. Light pollution impacts animals - attracting them to predators, repelling them from formerly suitable habitat, disorienting birds in migration (see Salt Lake city has embarked on "lights out" <https://www.tracyaviaryconservation.org/lightsoutsaltlake> to protect migrating birds), and impacting human circadian rhythms. Light pollution also impacts flowering or dormancy of plants. Trees closer to streetlights hold their leaves longer in fall which makes them more susceptible to damage from winter conditions. Trees closer to streetlights have more stomata (pores) in their leaves making them more susceptible to dehydration (climate change) and pollutants. Beyond these environmental costs are the unnecessary energy costs.

Will the Mayor and Council take this opportunity to support the sustainability of our community for "old-timers" and residents on fixed incomes ... the core of Whistler's volunteers?

Regards,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Rhonda L. Millikin