

## White Gold Undergrounding – Improper Process

Chief Administrative Officer and Mayor and Council  
Resort Municipality of Whistler  
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Date

November 22 / 2020

RE: White Gold Undergrounding

Ms. Cullen and Honourable Mayor and Council,

I implore you to not proceed with undergrounding of utilities in White Gold.

There has been no transparency in the voting process or in a final cost to residents. Why was the vote extended 15 days to get "yes" votes but only 4 days given for people to rescind?

Residents were not properly informed of landowner expenses.

There was no community engagement where people could understand the impact on other members of our community e.g. "old-timers" on a fixed income, and older family cabins that are meant to be handed down through generations.

The option of "you could sell" is not an option – it feels like bullying and gentrification of the neighbourhood.

This is not the time to proceed with a project for "beautification" when people have lost their income (rental and/or employment) due to COVID and our tax money could be better spent supporting 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 three to five years is not acceptable.

Regards,

YOUR NAME

Your Address, White Gold, Whistler B.C.

PHONE (xxx) xxx-xxxx

E-MAIL xx@xx.xx

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7417 Ambassador Crest,  
White Gold

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### Considerations:

We would like you to know there is a growing group of White Gold residents concerned about the undergrounding project.

This is mainly due to the unbounded costs to the property owner that were not explained in the initial “pitch”, which will put many of our community into financial stress, and likely require them to sell a family or retirement home. People feel the process was flawed.

Whistler council voted to reconsider their initial vote to proceed with the undergrounding project, because people were rescinding their former “yes”.

Here are the key points cited by 45 residents in letters requesting the project not go forward:

- 1) Residents were not properly informed of landowner expenses or the final look of the project. All 55 transformers must sit on the right of way in front of people’s property, be surveyed and registered to that person’s land by the land title office. There will be sidewalks, curbs and light standards.
- 2) There was no community engagement where people could understand the impact on other members of our community.
- 3) The option of “you could sell” is not an option – it feels like bullying and gentrification of the neighbourhood.
- 4) The process was not transparent – why the vote was extended, and how non-voters and changes in vote were considered. The vote was extended 15 days for offshore owners, but previous yes voters were given only 4 days to rescind their vote. At least three “yes” voters did not receive this email and are now voting “no”.
- 5) The increase in estimate from \$3.7 million to \$5.6 million is substantial and supposedly due to additional costs of including the installation of Shaw cable, Telus and Project/Construction management (see Pique 17-Nov). However, no meetings have occurred between the service providers to confirm this.
- 6) The RMOW budget already proposes a 4.89% tax increase next year (see Pique 17-Nov).
- 7) People are told they can defer their taxes. However, if you defer your taxes, you would not be eligible for a mortgage or loan. This also applies to people under 55 in age and they would pay 3% on their deferral as apposed to 1% for 55 and older.
- 8) No information was provided on the development of a construction schedule other than “the overall duration was extended from 2 to 3 years.”
- 9) If the petition is approved, the detailed design completed, and the tenders come back higher than the approved budget, another petition would be required to approve the revised amount. However, the design fee of \$850K, which includes the cost of the RMOW-hired PM + 2 staff for them, would still be paid for by the landowners.

Please help us defeat this flawed process by writing [corporate@whistler.ca](mailto:corporate@whistler.ca) to rescind your vote. A template letter is provided on the other side.

In any case, thank you for your attention.

