



# WHISTLER

## REPORT | INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

**PRESENTED:** February 16, 2021

**REPORT:** 21-115

**FROM:** Environmental Stewardship

**FILE:** A05001

**SUBJECT:** COMMUNITY ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN REPORT – Q4, 2020

### COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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

### RECOMMENDATION

**That** Information Report No. 21-115 regarding quarterly progress on implementing the 2016 Community Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) be received.

### REFERENCES

Appendix “A” – CECAP Performance Tracking – Q4 2020

### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the RMOW’s progress implementing the CECAP from October through December 2020. (See Appendix A).

### DISCUSSION

#### Background

As a resort community dependent on outdoor activities for its economic success and quality of life, Whistler is deeply invested in addressing the impacts of climate change. The RMOW tracks emissions and monitors its progress on actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In 2016, the RMOW developed the Community Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) as a guide for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

As directed by Council, staff prepares quarterly [CECAP](#) reports to provide regular progress updates on climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts across the organization and community. This quarterly report summarizes implementation progress during the period October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The complete checklist of actions and their respective status is based on input provided by every department in the organization.

RMOW staff engage in broad, ongoing efforts to advance all CECAP actions. Below is a list of highlights to give an overview of the RMOW’s main achievements on climate change mitigation and

adaptation efforts in Q4, 2020. A comprehensive list of all actions, their current status and progress can be found in Appendix A.

#### Transportation:

With passenger vehicle transport being Whistler's largest source of GHG emissions, reductions in this sector continue to be a priority item. In Q4 2020, the RMOW promoted active transport with a fall 'GoByBike' week in September and by planning for more secure bike parking through the Bike Valet program or a new bike cage in the Library underground.

Public transit actions included:

- The promotion of local transit within Whistler with a free mask give-a-way to passengers.
- Transit fares were not increased in 2020 and the 6 and 12-month Spirit Transit passes were further reduced in price. RMOW staff is working with Whistler Chamber of Commerce staff to evaluate how the Spirit Transit Pass program can be expanded to a one month pass.
- RMOW staff have been working with BC Transit staff to launch phase 2 of the Transit Future Plan with the goal to strategically expand the transit system in Whistler.
- On December 15, 2020, the Day Lot Operating Committee implemented the TAG-recommended day rate parking fee. Revenues from parking fees in the Day Lots subsidize transit fares through the Community Transportation Initiative Fund.

To further encourage EV adoption and the installation of home charging options, the RMOW continued to provide top-ups for provincial rebates on home EV chargers. Top-ups were accessed by 7 single family homes and one multi-unit residential building.

#### Buildings:

With the goal to lower GHG emissions from existing buildings in Whistler, the building department hired a contractor to assist in obtaining a more complete picture of Whistler's building energy usage based on building type and era of construction. In addition, budget was approved to hire a consultant in 2021 to assist with the Green Building Policy update.

#### Waste:

The RMOW continues to move toward its Zero Waste goal to reduce upstream emissions. Reducing the amount of waste also reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions related to receiving, storing, managing and transporting the material out for recycling and landfill disposal. The Zero Waste Committee stakeholder engagement continued to better understand existing reduction and diversion challenges.

#### Climate change adaptation:

Climate change adaptation measures include actions around wildfire and flood protection, invasive species management as well as efforts to enhance weather independent tourism opportunities. The community FireSmart program supported a total of 16 neighborhood FireSmart projects in 2020 with 348 homes that used the FireSmart Community Chipper Service and 12 new neighborhoods and 60 single family dwellings being assessed. RMOW staff continually enhances collaborative efforts with regional partners to prevent and respond to wildfires. Additionally, the RMOW budgeted for invasive species management and will be engaging SSISC again in 2021. Floodplain mapping updates were received in Q4 2020 and recommendations from the accompanying report are being reviewed.

#### Grant applications:

To optimize the impact of the RMOW budget, staff made a significant effort to take advantage of grant funding by preparing and submitting the following grant applications:

- A grant application to UBCM for a \$10,000 Active Transportation Planning grant was submitted to further advance active transportation efforts
- A grant application to the CleanBC Communities Fund was submitted to install 16 Level 2 and 8 DCFC (fast) chargers.
- A grant proposal to Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) was submitted to increase the uptake on heat pump incentives through a 'one stop shop' concierge approach. If successful, this project will be a collaboration with the Community Energy Association, the District of Squamish, and the City of New Westminster.

On December 15, Council adopted the 2020 Climate Action Big Moves strategy. This strategy allows the RMOW and the Whistler community to prioritize the climate change mitigation measures that have the most impact to reduce GHG emissions and to work towards reductions in a more focused way. CECAP mitigation actions that were identified to have a high GHG emission reduction impact are now incorporated into the Big Moves strategy. To streamline climate action efforts and reporting, future update reports will shift the focus towards progress on the Big Moves implementation and achievements. A formal recommendation to request a change in reporting to discontinue quarterly CECAP reporting and instead deliver twice annual reports on the Big Moves strategy will be made at the next update to Council.

One goal of the 2020 Climate Action Big Moves strategy is to embed climate action into the decision making process of every RMOW department. As a first step towards this goal, all staff engagement workshops were held in Q4 2020 to identify the small steps that each working group can take to demonstrate RMOW leadership towards achieving Whistler's climate target. In addition, a staff Climate Innovation Working Group (CIWG) was formed with volunteer members representing departments across the RMOW. The group will meet monthly with the first meeting scheduled for February 11. The purpose of the group is to provide a vehicle of communication between departments on actions that strategically support the implementation of the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and its specific objectives and key initiatives.

Although work is progressing, many lower priority CECAP actions or actions that are outside municipal control remain unchanged or yet to be initiated. The adoption of the 2020 Climate Action Big Moves strategy on December 15, 2020 prioritizes high impact initiatives, and with continued hard work from existing staff and community members, increased progress is, and will continue to be made towards our overarching goals of energy and emission reduction.

See Appendix A for a complete listing of all actions, current status and comments.

### **Official Community Plan**

Whistler's vision is to be a place where the community thrives, nature is protected, and guests are inspired. This ongoing work aims to reduce GHG emissions, remove the barriers for the community and guests to shift to lower carbon transportation, and help to achieve Whistler's climate goals. Therefore, this work is in alignment with Whistler's vision.

### **Goals, Objectives and Policies**

The Community Energy and Climate Action Plan speaks to many goals, objectives and policies within Whistler's Official Community Plan (OCP).

**10.1. Goal** – Municipal decision-making is well-structured to achieve energy efficiency goals and GHG reduction targets

**10.1.1. Objective** – Leverage community-wide GHG reduction targets to track and motivate action.

10.1.1.6. Policy – Advance the implementation of the CECAP and ensure it is updated regularly.

**10.5. Goal** – Increase the resilience of Whistler’s infrastructure, natural environment and socio-economic assets from the potential impacts of a changing climate.

**10.5.1. Objective** – Ensure that climate adaptation planning is integrated in community decision-making.

10.5.1.3. Policy – Ensure that strategic directions related to climate change risk management and climate change adaption objectives are routinely considered in decision-making processes and well-integrated with the CECAP

### **Other Relevant Policies**

Whistler CECAP commits to regular public reporting on progress, and quarterly reporting is a directive of Council.

### **BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

The tracking and reporting of CECAP actions on a quarterly basis does not have direct budget implications beyond the dedication of staff time.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

CECAP quarterly reports will be posted on whistler.ca for public access and review, and may be used in community open houses and other engagement as appropriate. Community engagement has been occurring on other related climate work, the Big Moves Strategy, which informed the 2020 Climate Action Big Moves strategy and related key initiatives.

### **SUMMARY**

The RMOW continues to advance many of the actions and to liaise with other community and provincial stakeholders involved in emissions reduction and climate change adaptation. As highlighted in recent international reports and global meetings, it is imperative that we all take action to reduce our impacts on climate. The CECAP action list is broad and extensive, and priority actions are being incorporated into the Climate Action Big Moves strategy to streamline strategies and reporting efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

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CLIMATE ACTION COORDINATOR

For  
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For  
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