



WHISTLER

REPORT | INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: April 6, 2021

REPORT: 21-029

FROM: Resort Experience

FILE: 7083

SUBJECT: PROJECT UPDATE – WHISTLER AGE-FRIENDLY ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive Information Report No. 21-029 regarding the Whistler Age-friendly Assessment and Action Plan project being carried out under the Union of B.C. Municipalities' 2020 Age-friendly Communities Program.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – Official Community Plan References

Administrative Report to Council No. 20-006 – Grant Application for 2020 Age-friendly Communities Program, dated January 21, 2020 (Not attached).

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to update Council that the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) awarded the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) a grant under Stream 1 of the 2020 Age-friendly Communities Program to undertake the Whistler Age-friendly Assessment and Action Plan project (the project). Secondly, the purpose of this Report is to update Council on the project's deliverables, approach, timeline, selected consultant and planned community engagement.

DISCUSSION

Background

The UBCM 2020 Age-friendly Communities Program helps B.C. communities support aging populations by: developing and implementing policies and plans; undertaking projects that enable seniors and Elders to age in place; and facilitating the creation of age-friendly communities. Local governments may apply for funding under two streams: Stream 1: Age-friendly Assessments, Action Plans & Planning; and Stream 2: Age-friendly Projects.

The RMOW submitted a grant application for Stream 1 in January 2020. Consistent with the UBCM program, the focus of the RMOW's grant application was to undertake an assessment of Whistler's

current age-friendliness and then develop a plan to support local seniors to age-in-place and to further make Whistler an age-friendly community.

UBCM awarded the RMOW a \$24,418.00 grant under Stream 1 on March 10, 2020 with all project activities to be undertaken within 12 months. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project did not advance in 2020. UBCM granted the RMOW a six month extension to complete the project by October 10, 2021. The project is now included in the Planning Department's 2021 work plan and the project approach outlined below will complete the project within the time provided.

Project Purpose, Deliverables and Approach

The project's purpose is to assess the current situation in Whistler and then develop a plan identifying priorities and actions to advance identified needs and opportunities. This will be achieved through the project's two main deliverables, the Whistler Age-friendly Assessment Report and the Whistler Age-friendly Action Plan. These documents will make recommendations for the Whistler community within each of B.C.'s following eight age-friendly community components: 1) outdoor spaces and buildings; 2) transportation (including traffic safety); 3) housing; 4) respect, social inclusion, or cultural safety; 5) social well-being and participation; 6) communications and information; 7) community engagement and employment; and 8) community support and health and wellness services.

The project's specific objectives are to:

1. Create a multi-stakeholder working group to become a catalyst for action, ensure a coordinated and efficient approach to improving age-friendliness in Whistler, and establish a common understanding of roles and responsibilities in age-friendly initiatives;
2. Consult with the community in an inclusive manner to inform the assessment of age-friendliness in Whistler, identifying any gaps/needs and potential solutions;
3. Provide an Age-friendly Assessment Report that summarizes the results and main priorities, and which can be used to form the Age-friendly Action Plan; and
4. Provide an Age-friendly Action Plan which addresses all of B.C.'s eight age-friendly components, identifies and refines strategic priorities and best potential actions for making Whistler more age-friendly, and allows for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The process of conducting the assessment and creating the action plan will have specific impacts even before the action plan is complete. In particular, the process will: 1) bring Whistler seniors and stakeholders together to share their knowledge; 2) build common understanding of the current situation; 3) strengthen relationships; and 4) identify strategies.

The project will also apply the following guiding principles set out by UBCM:

1. Community Driven and Flexible – solutions are based on local priorities and plans;
2. Catalyst for Action and Sustainability – activities enable local governments and Indigenous peoples to enhance and improve services for older adults and over time;
3. Focus on Age-friendly Components – activities are focused on one or more of the eight age-friendly community components with clear outcomes;

4. Coordinated – activities of different levels of government and community partners, including health authorities, are coordinated to support community-based outcomes and avoid duplication among programs and projects; and
5. Inclusive – activities consider equity and inclusion for all populations, including Indigenous peoples.

Timing and Phases

The proposed activities will follow three phases: project planning; a community age-friendly assessment; and then action planning to determine the most strategic priorities and potential actions for implementation. Information on each phase is as follows:

Phase 1 – Project Planning – April 2021

Phase 1 is focused on setting-up the project and collecting background information. Phase 1 tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Project kick-off activities;
- Background document review, data gathering, planning framework development and process development;
- Development of the working group Terms of Reference and member recruitment; and
- Development of the Engagement and Communication Strategy.

Phase 2 – Age-friendly Assessment and Community Engagement – May-July 2021

Phase 2 of the project is aimed at assessing gaps/needs and identifying potential solutions.

Phase 2 tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Working group workshops;
- A community survey;
- Focused conversations and one-on-one interviews; and
- Drafting, reviewing and finalizing the Whistler Age-friendly Assessment.

Phase 3 – Age-friendly Action Planning – August-September 2021

Phase 3 of the project is aimed at identifying and refining priorities and the best potential actions for making Whistler more age-friendly. Phase 3 tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Working group workshops;
- Developing actions; and
- Drafting, reviewing and finalizing the Whistler Age-friendly Action Plan.

Consultant Selection

The RMOW sought quotes from qualified consultants to assist the Planning Department with the project, with proposals due on February 19, 2021. Cardea Health Consulting Inc. was awarded the contract to undertake the project under the direction of RMOW staff. Cardea is a firm that works exclusively on older person health promotion and healthy living projects. They have completed a number of Age-friendly projects for a variety of communities across the province.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Official Community Plan

By involving stakeholders and looking to enhance Whistler’s age-friendliness, the project directly supports the vision characteristics related to inclusion and participation within the RMOW’s Official Community Plan (OCP). These vision characteristics are as follows:

- **INCLUSIVE:** Residents and visitors of all ages, identities, abilities and incomes are welcome, included, and share our love for nature, active recreation, human connections and innovation.
- **PARTICIPATION:** We are able to meaningfully participate in community decisions, collaborating to achieve our Community Vision.

The project is also aligned with the policy direction in the OCP aimed at supporting the health and well-being of Whistler’s seniors. In particular, the project supports Policy 8.10.2.1., which states: “Encourage services, programs and facilities that support the health and social needs of seniors, with a focus on cultural and recreational opportunities and social programs tailored to the needs of Whistler’s seniors.” Appendix “A” lists this policy along with other applicable goals, objectives and policies from the OCP.

Other Relevant Policies

Existing RMOW policies, procedures, bylaws and programs may be affected by the project and potentially require revisions depending on the recommended actions in the final Whistler Age-friendly Action Plan. It is also anticipated that the project will inform detailed planning and policy processes underway in Whistler related to housing, transportation and parks planning.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The development of the project is included within the Planning Department’s budget and 2021 work plan. Consultant costs are to be 100% covered by the UBCM grant.

The action plan that will be developed will also identify associated resource requirements and potential funding opportunities. Ongoing collaboration among stakeholders will be important moving forward as the final plan is expected to guide action by the various community partner organizations in Whistler, including the RMOW, the Whistler Mature Action Community (MAC), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), social service agencies, local foundations, and more.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

With the assistance of the RMOW, the consultant will create and lead a multi-stakeholder working group to bring information and experiences to the process. The working group will inform the assessment of the current situation in Whistler, and will identify the best priorities and potential actions for making Whistler more age-friendly. It will also be the catalyst for action and ensure a coordinated and efficient approach, including a consideration of roles and responsibilities for the multiple stakeholders to advance the various potential actions.

The working group will include seniors themselves, senior service providers, community partners, RMOW staff and a RMOW Councillor. The UBCM program encourages grant recipients to work with their regional Health Authority office and/or the First Nations Health Authority; the Population Health Policy and Projects Lead with VCH has indicated support for the RMOW’s project and will be invited to be part of the working group. The following partners have also confirmed their support for the project

and will be invited to be part of the working group: Whistler MAC; Whistler Community Services Society; Whistler Community Foundation; and Whistler Cycling Club. The Lil'wat Nation and Squamish Nation will also be invited to be part of the working group.

Beyond the working group, seniors and other interested community members will be engaged in the assessment and action planning process. With a focus on seniors, this community engagement will occur through a number of methods, including a survey and focused conversations. The engagement activities will be appropriate to the COVID-19 situation and designed to adhere to public health requirements.

SUMMARY

This Report provides Council with an update that the RMOW was successful in receiving a grant under Stream 1 of the UBCM 2020 Age-friendly Communities Program. Additionally, this Report provides an update on the planned work, timeline and community engagement for the project and the selection of a consultant to help complete the work.

Respectfully submitted,

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