



REPORT | INFORMATION REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: June 1, 2021
FROM: Resort Experience
SUBJECT: 4500 NORTHLANDS REZONING APPLICATION – PHASE 1 UPDATE –
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

REPORT: 21-059
FILE: 7912.02

COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive Information Report No. 21-059 regarding the 4500 Northlands enhanced rezoning process.

REFERENCES

Council Report Administrative Report to Council No. 21-027 March 16, 2021 4500 NORTHLANDS REZONING APPLICATION -- PROPOSED PLANNING, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND AMENITY ZONING PROCESS (Not attached)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Report is to update Council on the status of the enhanced rezoning process for the lands located at 4500 Northlands Boulevard, 4711 Settebello Drive and 4700 Blackcomb Way (collectively referred to as 4500 Northlands Blvd). Council endorsed the proposed planning, community engagement, and amenity zoning process at the March 16, 2021 Council meeting.

Since March, RMOW staff have progressed on the first phase of the rezoning process (to establish planning and development principles through community and stakeholder engagement). The planned community engagement activities are presented below for Council's information, and include an upcoming community online open house and 30-day community review and input period. The report also outlines engagement with Council Committees to date (Advisory Design Panel, Strategic Planning Committee), and presents an outline of the policy framework and draft guiding principles.

DISCUSSION

Background

Staff introduced this project to Council on March 16, 2021 (report 21-027), and outlined an enhanced rezoning process to guide consideration of a proposed rezoning for the lands located at 4500 Northlands Boulevard, 4711 Settebello Drive and 4700 Blackcomb Way (collectively referred to as 4500 Northlands Boulevard). This 5.2-hectare centrally-located site presents an opportunity to realize

established community aspirations as set out in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and other guiding community plans and policy, while reflecting stakeholder input gathered during the process. It is hoped that broad community input is gathered, which will be used to help inform project concept and site design.

The process entails three phases: 1) establish guiding principles, 2) identify and evaluate alternative concepts that address potential site development and associated community amenities, and 3) determine supported uses and community amenities with direction from Council to commence preparation and consideration of an associated zoning amendment bylaw.

The timeline and process are designed to engage Council and the public early and often.

The first phase is to conduct early community engagement to communicate expectations for the project timeline, develop a common understanding of the rezoning process and engagement and input opportunities, present information on site context and development constraints and opportunities, and to develop guiding principles and guidelines derived from key policies. Draft guiding principles are being presented to stakeholders and community members for consideration and feedback. The draft guiding principles have been established from existing municipal policy, and reflect high-level community interests related to growth and development in Whistler.

The following schedule outlines the events of phase 1:

ENHANCED REZONING PROCESS – PHASE 1 – SCHEDULE			
Status	Date	Event/Activity	Details
Done	April 21	Presentation to Advisory Design Panel (ADP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff introduced the project to ADP, covering the rezoning process overview and timeline, site location, context, and history.ADP will be engaged in future phases of the rezoning process, including again in the next phase of the enhanced rezoning process to seek feedback on site design concepts
Done	May 25	Presentation to Strategic Planning Committee (SPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff introduced the project to SPC, covering the rezoning process overview and timeline, site location and context, and opportunities for stakeholder input.Staff presented a policy overview and draft guiding principles for discussion and input by the SPC.SPC will be engaged in future phases of the rezoning process to provide feedback on alternate concepts

We are here	June 1	Presentation to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report and presentation to update Council on the enhanced rezoning process, and plans for stakeholder and community engagement.
Next steps	June 17	Community Open House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and applicant presentations outline the rezoning process and context, opportunities for public input, and draft guiding principles. • Moderated break-out sessions to discuss and gain input on draft guiding principles.
Next steps	June 17 – July 15	Community Review and Input Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project webpage maintained on RMOW website, including project information, FAQ, open house materials and recordings. • Questionnaire will be available online, introduced at the open house, and promoted through Whistler Today, social media channels, website, and committee and partner membership. • Dedicated email address for direct feedback, questions, and comments.
Next Steps	Late Summer	Council Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will present outcomes of public and stakeholder engagement including guiding principles and framework for evaluation of alternative design and amenity concepts. • Staff will also present process outline for Phase 2.

Strategic Planning Committee

Staff met with the RMOW Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) on May 25, presenting the policy context and public engagement process, and facilitating a discussion seeking input from SPC members on the policy context for the rezoning and draft guiding principles. Outcomes from this meeting will be included in the presentation to Council at the June 1 council meeting.

Public Open House and Input Period

Staff will hold a public open house online, tentatively scheduled for June 17, which will launch a one-month community review and input period. The purpose of the open house will be to provide the opportunity for staff and the applicant to engage with community members, to share information and to receive high level input about the draft guiding principles. The open house will comprise presentations from RMOW staff and from the applicant team, and a series of facilitated discussions designed to elicit input from community members on community values, priorities, and guiding principles to guide consideration of the rezoning application for this site, framed by the policy context and framing questions. Similar to other open house formats used during the past year such as the Community

Conversations, the meeting will be held using Zoom with features such as advance registration and questions, polls and break out rooms.

The open house will be promoted through municipal social media channels, on the municipal website, and with ads in the Pique. It will be supported by other communications and engagement activities including a questionnaire, website content, news release, advertising, social media, as well as this Council meeting information report and presentation regarding the project. The presentations will be recorded and made available through the municipal website for community members to view if they are unable to participate live.

A questionnaire will be launched the day of the open house and will be a primary tool for gathering input. It will include the draft guiding principles and other ranking, multiple choice and open-ended questions. Community members and other stakeholders will also have access to a dedicated email address to share feedback.

The 4500 Northlands project section on the whistler.ca website will be the primary location for all project information and links to input opportunities. Materials will be posted as they come available including recordings from the open house, key documents such as maps and a project FAQ.

Where possible information about the project will also be posted in public areas such as the Farmer's Market, and at popular municipal facilities such as Meadow Park Sports Centre and the Library.

First Nations Engagement

In this phase of the engagement process, staff will reach out to Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation to share information about the project. This is consistent with a commitment to advancing cooperative and mutually beneficial relations, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the OCP.

Policy Focussed Context

Stakeholder input is foundational to identifying the overall context to define a rezoning at this important site in Whistler Village. This project provides an exciting opportunity for the community to consider how this area may deliver new and progressive building and public spaces and experiences. Ideas and feedback will be sought within the framework of existing community priorities and aspirations. Draft guiding principles as well as other general questions will be posed during the open house and in the questionnaire.

Guiding Principles

Drawing from the municipality's key community planning and development policies, staff have developed draft guiding principles for this site to be presented for community and stakeholder input. Whistler's Official Community Plan (OCP), which was updated with extensive community input and adopted in June 2020, is the primary policy foundation for consideration of the proposed rezoning. Any proposed zoning amendment bylaw, or related bylaw, resulting from this rezoning process will be evaluated for consistency with the OCP. The OCP defines the land use designation for the development site, and outlines goals and objectives that reflect the community's collective aspirations for the future of Whistler, which will be implemented through the development of this site. The Climate Action Big Moves Strategy, Green Building Policy, Employee Housing Policy, and Community Engagement Policy are additional key policies that inform the development of guiding principles.

Further, Council Priorities including Balanced Resort and Community Capacity, Climate Action, and Housing are expressed in the draft guiding principles. A fourth Council Priority around Community and Tourism Recovery and Sustainability, and associated work to consider guidance for recovery, is also reflected. The enhanced planning process for this project demonstrates several themes around approaches to recovery such as collaborative decision making, a broad definition of success and sets the stage for a fertile environment for innovation.

The guiding principles and direction for this site represent a refinement of the high-level policy direction established in the OCP and create a framework for assessing site development concepts, with a clear focus on implementing established policies with clear and tangible outcomes.

Through a close reading and analysis of the key municipal policies, staff have proposed six high-level principles, and framing questions and ideas for each principle to encourage discussion and public and stakeholder input. Staff will seek public and stakeholder input on the proposed draft principles to ensure that they are realistic, comprehensive, and reflective of the OCP. Council, key stakeholders, and the public will be asked to review, discuss, comment on, and suggest additional and alternate principles during phase 1 of the rezoning process.

The draft principles are:

1. Balance resort and community capacity
 - Whistler's ongoing evolution as a balanced resort community includes commitments to supporting community-determined growth management measures while also recognizing that the development and improvement of resort recreation and visitation are major contributors to Whistler's success. Building on past successes and learnings, development in Whistler supports a progressive, sustainable tourism-based economy while protecting the natural environment and reinforcing Whistler's mountain community character. Innovation, renewal and reinvestment in Whistler's infrastructure and offerings support livelihoods, quality of life and the visitor experience collectively.
2. Address climate change and sustainability
 - In 2020 Whistler adopted the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy, confirming our desire to take bold actions on climate adaptation and mitigation. The Official Community Plan describes a shared future with lower energy use, fewer emissions, decreased auto dependence, and more efficient buildings.
3. Strengthen the community and sense of place
 - New development in Whistler will promote, encourage, and build sense of place and sense of belonging. Whistler's neighbourhoods are distinct and unique, and will weave together to form a resilient, cohesive community. It supports a quality of life for the whole community as well as connections within the community, and with visitors.
4. Prioritize walkability, connectivity, active transportation, and transit
 - Whistler's transportation system is integral to the livability and success of Whistler as a resort community. Whistler's transportation systems move people and products efficiently to, from and within Whistler, while minimizing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and negative impacts on natural areas and connecting neighbourhoods. Whistler residents and visitors walk, cycle and use public transit, supported by excellent transportation infrastructure oriented to these methods of travel. Walkable/rollable communities help keep people connected, contribute to healthy lifestyles, and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Integrate nature through site design

- Nature is a foundation of our community, and we endeavor to grow Whistler in a way that protects sensitive ecosystems, habitat, and biodiversity. Whistler's natural environment is one of the resort community's greatest assets and residents and visitors continue to understand the need to protect its inherent values.
6. Provide diverse housing opportunities
- Housing should accommodate a range of incomes and needs, including a mixture of market and employee housing, and space that is suitable for all ages and abilities. Whistler residents have access to a continuum of affordable housing types, which enables people to live and work in the community through a progression of life stages.

Framing questions

Guiding principles will be presented with framing questions and key topics, and a questionnaire will be launched at the Open House. Similar questions were used to frame discussion with the Strategic Planning Commission.

The framing questions are intended to encourage and guide conversation and draw out feedback on how this rezoning will support implementation of Whistler's policy objectives.

The questionnaire is in development. Some examples of the types of questions that will be posed include:

- How can this development best serve the needs of the community and the resort?
- What are essential features for great neighbourhoods in Whistler? What makes you feel like you belong in a place?
- How can this site serve community housing needs? What are appropriate built form and building scales for this site?
- What are barriers and opportunities to establish and strengthen connections to the Village?
- What should open space look like on this site? What mix of building forms would you like to see on this site?
- How can this development address community goals towards climate mitigation and GHG emissions reductions?
- How can habitat and biodiversity can be preserved or improved on this site?

Application of Input

Community and stakeholder feedback will identify community priorities for staff and the applicant team to consider in the project concept and site design, and will help to establish criteria for Council and staff to use when assessing design alternatives.

Outcomes from the June 17 open house and the community review and input period will be presented to Council later this summer.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed rezoning application will be subject to the complex site rezoning application and processing fees, representing cost recovery for staff processing and associated direct costs.

Through the development of the lands there will be further processing and application fees for development permits and building permits, as well as municipal works and services cost charges levied under existing municipal bylaws for water, sewer, transportation and recreation to fund Municipal infrastructure.

SUMMARY

This Information Report provides an update of the first phase of the rezoning process for 4500 Northlands Blvd, including upcoming presentations and community engagement events, and opportunities for input on the draft guiding principles that will be finalized for use in phase 2 of the enhanced rezoning process.

Frequent engagement with both Council and the public will ensure the project continues to evolve informed by community and stakeholder feedback, in alignment with overarching RMOW policy and project-specific guiding principles.

Respectfully submitted,

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For
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for
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