RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC Canada V8E 0X5
whistler.ca
TEL 604 932 5535
TF 1 866 932 5535
FAX 604 935 8109

# STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **PRESENTED:** | October 21, 2025 | **REPORT:** | 25-080 |
| **FROM:** | Planning Department | **FILE:** | 6520-20-0020 |
| **SUBJECT:** | WHISTLER CREEK WEST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY AND PROJECT UPDATE | | |

## RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**That** the recommendation of the General Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development Services be endorsed.

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

**That** Council receive the results of the Whistler Creek West Neighbourhood (WCW) Plan Phase 2 Community Engagement process, as presented in Administrative Report No. 25-080; and

**That** Council direct staff to bring the WCW Plan to the December 2, 2025, Regular Council Meeting for endorsement.

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents a summary of input on the Whistler Creek West Neighbourhood (WCW) Plan, gathered at the Resort Municipality of Whistler's Add Your Voice event on June 4, 2025, a second in-person open house event on June 7, 2025, an accompanying online questionnaire open between June 4 and July 6, 2025 and Advisory Design Panel (ADP) and Housing and Strategy Select Committee of Council (HASC) Meetings.

Staff shared the draft land use concept presented at the Committee of the Whole (COTW) on May 13, 2025 (Report No. W25-004) for community input inclusive of:

- Proposed heights, densities and types of development within each of the four sub-areas; and
- Draft implementation strategies for the 'Big Ideas' introduced early in the engagement process.

This report outlines how input was collected and how it will be used to refine of the land use concept to finalize the WCW Plan.

☐ Information Report ☒ Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

## DISCUSSION

### Background

On May 13, 2025, staff presented a draft land use concept and engagement strategy (Concept and Strategies) to the COTW (COTW Report No. W25-004). Subsequently, on May 27, 2025 Council endorsed the COTW recommendation:

> ***That*** *Council endorse the COTW recommendation to support the WCW Neighbourhood Plan Engagement Plan draft land use concept and implementation strategies attached as Appendix A to, and as described in, COTW Report No. W25-004.*

The Concept and Strategies were developed using community input from earlier public engagement that confirmed a set of Core Values and Big Ideas[1] along with direction from the Official Community Plan (OCP), relevant RMOW plans, bylaws and policies including but not limited to the Climate Action Big Moves Strategy and Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, and provincial Bill 44 as it relates to small scale multi-unit housing (SSMUH) in proximity to high frequency transit.

As outlined in COTW Report No. W25-004, the land use concept proposes four sub-areas defining different densities and forms of development and focuses the highest density along Lake Placid Road and framing the Highway 99 corridor. Land uses are predominantly residential with local-serving commercial at grade where it already exists as well as limited additional potential for some minor adjustments to commercial uses to be included along Lake Placid Road. The strategies build on and are organized by the Big Ideas, seeking opportunities to implement the transformative concepts they support for the area included within the WCW Plan.

The Concept and Strategies were presented to the community through engagement at the Add Your Voice event, at a stand-alone open house event and through an online questionnaire hosted on the project webpage. The Concept and Strategies were also presented for discussion and input at the ADP and the HASC Meetings. The engagement process focused on gathering input on:

- The overall concept outlining proposed land uses and the overall vision for redevelopment;
- The heights, densities and types of development that are being considered within each of the four sub-areas; and
- The draft strategies for how to implement the Big Ideas confirmed by earlier community engagement.

Table 1 below summarizes the engagement events undertaken to review the draft land use concept and draft implementation strategies.

*Table 1: Engagement Events*

| Event/Activity | Details | Participation |
|---|---|---|
| **Presentation to COTW:** May 13, 2025 | • Staff introduced the draft land use concept and draft implementation strategies. | Council |
| **Project Communications:** May 22 to July 6, 2025 | • The public engagement activities were promoted through:<br>○ RMOW social media channels<br>○ RMOW project page including the online questionnaire | Social media campaign #1 resulted in 12,727 views by 5,128 people and the link was clicked 152 times. |

[1] A complete description of the Core Values and Big Ideas are provided in the engagement summary (Administrative Report No. 25-022). The Big Ideas are high level objectives to guide development of the Plan and are based on known challenges and opportunities in the Plan Area and align with relevant Goals, Policies, and Objectives of the OCP.

| Event/Activity | Details | Participation |
|---|---|---|
| | ○ Print ads in *The Pique*<br>○ *Whistler Weekly* operations update and *Whistler This Week* e-newsletter<br>• Information posters located in Whistler Village and Whistler Creek. | Social media campaign #2 resulted in 13,632 views by 6,903 people and the link was clicked 370 times. |
| **Online questionnaire:** June 4 to July 6, 2025 | • An online questionnaire was launched to gather community input on the draft land use concept and strategies.<br>• As part of the survey, input was collected spatially on the draft land use concept, as well as general thoughts and feedback on the concept as well as each of the draft strategies. | A total of 102 questionnaires were completed by 90 contributors |
| **Add Your Voice in-person open house:** June 4, 2025 | • Staff hosted a booth at the RMOW engagement tradeshow to share project information, introduce the draft land use concept and implementation strategies and gather input from the public | Approximately 80 to 85 attendees |
| **WCW in-person open house:** June 7, 2025 | • Staff hosted a booth at the RMOW engagement tradeshow to share project information, introduce the draft land use concept and implementation strategies and gather input from the public | Approximately 30 to 35 attendees |
| **ADP:** June 18, 2025 | • Staff presented the draft land use concept and implementation strategies for discussion and input from the ADP | ADP – eight voting members |
| **HASC:** July 14, 2025 | • Staff presented the draft land use concept and implementation strategies for discussion and input from the HASC | HASC – 11 voting members |

### Open House and Add Your Voice Event

The Add Your Voice event and open house provided an opportunity for interested community members to review and provide input on the draft land use concept and associated strategies. A set of printed panels were displayed to share information about the WCW Plan. The materials outlined the proposed concept with different densities and development typologies proposed for the four sub-areas, and the strategies proposed to support implementation of the overall vision. Several activity stations including a scaled model were set up to collect input from participants. Staff were on hand to help guide participants through the panels and to help participants provide feedback by providing written input about the concept, as well as an opportunity to review and comment on the strategies. Appendix A includes a comprehensive engagement summary with engagement materials and verbatim input collected through these events.

### Online Questionnaire

The online questionnaire collected public feedback on the concept, development typologies and strategies for implementation. Supporting materials in the questionnaire provided an overview of the

concept and the four sub-areas, including details about the height, density and form, as well as the strategies. Participants were asked what they like or would change about the concept; what they thought about the potential type, form and density for the four sub-areas; to indicate their level of support for each strategy, and identify what strategies were missing or should be considered. Appendix A to this report provides a comprehensive engagement summary that analysed input collected through the questionnaire and includes the verbatim questionnaire input.

### Presentation to the ADP

Staff made a presentation to the ADP to introduce the project, provide an overview of the project work, and outline the public engagement completed or underway. Staff presented the concept with a detailed overview of the proposed sub-area densities and typologies as well as the strategies. The ADP was asked to review the concept with feedback sought on the concept layout and overall structure, building forms and development typologies proposed for each sub-area (scale, height and massing), the transitions between the sub-areas and adjacent uses, and the strategies. ADP minutes are not publicly available until approved at the subsequent meeting and therefore are not included in this report.

### Presentation to the HASC

Staff made a presentation to the HASC to introduce the Concept and Strategies. Staff shared an update on the project process, provided a detailed overview of the concept and the four sub-areas, and provided a preliminary engagement summary. The HASC provided input and passed a resolution in support of the Concept and Strategies. The HASC minutes are attached as Appendix B.

## Analysis

This section provides a summary of the key feedback and input we received through engagement. Please see the *What We Heard Concept Phase*, attached as Appendix A, for additional details and information.

Staff note that participation was somewhat lower in this period than in earlier engagement period with only 90 contributors completing 103 questionnaires in this engagement period versus 226 contributors completing 232 questionnaires in the first engagement period. Contributions from permanent residents who own their own market home as well as second homeowners represented a much higher share of the input collected during this engagement period, combined totalling 68 per cent of the questionnaire participants in this period, up from a total of 53 per cent in earlier engagement.

The results of the engagement analysis are intended to illustrate broad trends, preferences and themes to inform the final WCW Plan. Staff determined the key themes by identifying the sentiments shared most often. The data from the online questionnaire, in-person events and review by the ADP and the HASC have been combined to inform the overall engagement themes. Using the engagement analysis, staff propose refining the Concept and Strategies in the WCW Plan.

### Concept Input

The concept along with four sub-areas outlining different densities and development forms was presented through engagement materials with input sought on the overall concept as well as the development forms proposed in each of the four sub-areas.

Table 2 provides a summary of the input collected related to each of the four sub-areas. The total WCW Plan Area is outlined in the red dotted line.

*Table 2: Sub-area Input*

| Sub-area and Key Map | Description | Input Summary |
|---|---|---|
| **Sub-area A**  | Mid-rise (four to six storey) residential with some small-scale commercial uses and active residential lobbies. | • Diverging opinions with responses ranging from concerns about the proposed density to support for more density.<br>• Potential for mixed-use development with commercial including local serving amenities at ground floor.<br>• The built form should be considerate of the existing architectural identity, possibly stepping back at higher levels to encourage a pedestrian street scale.<br>• Consider including the gas station site as part of sub-area A given its critical location at the gateway to Whistler Creek. |
| **Sub-area B**  | Residential transition zone between mid-rise and low density. Three to four storey development with ground level orientation. | • Concerns about the density and building heights.<br>• It was suggested that the south side of Lake Placid Road should be included as sub-area A to provide a more balanced streetscape and potential for additional commercial uses on both sides of the street.<br>• Opportunity to extend sub-area B further south and north to match the extent of sub-area D. |
| **Sub-area C**  | Lower density residential.<br><br>Small-scale multi-unit housing up to six units per lot to align with frequent bus service. | • General support for the lower density of sub-area C.<br>• Concerns that six units per lot is too much density for this area. |
| **Sub-area D**  | Highway transition zone. Three to five storey residential. | • Concerns regarding the density and height of the proposed development.<br>• Concerns that the proposed five story buildings would create overshadowing issues and restrict the views to Whistler Mountain.<br>• Existing site-specific commercial uses should be maintained, particularly for Whistler Creek Lodge. |

### Strategies Input

The strategies were reviewed individually to understand community sentiment and support for how to best implement the vision for the WCW Plan and future development of the WCW Plan Area. Each of the strategies was presented through the engagement materials and participants were asked to provide input on the level of support for the proposed strategies as well as input on any strategies that may be missing or that should be considered. Staff have reviewed and analysed community input on the strategies and overall, the input from participants indicated a high level of support for the strategies.

Generally, community input on the strategies was positive with only two strategies receiving a higher level of opposition than support. Strategies that received the highest levels of support relate to improvements to neighbourhood connectivity and pedestrian infrastructure. The strategies related to diverse housing and increased density were the least supported strategies with the strongest opposition related to initiatives that support affordability like parking reductions and leveraging additional employee housing through market and/or tourist accommodation units.

### Key Themes

Staff also reviewed all input and comments received through the engagement period to develop key engagement themes. The following summarizes the general themes that emerged through the input collected.

- **Traffic and transportation concerns**
  Many participants expressed concerns about increased traffic congestion resulting from higher density development. Suggestions included roundabouts, improved transit connections, and an improved highway crossing to ease flow and support accessibility.
- **Housing density and building height**
  There were diverging opinions about housing density. While there was support for increasing housing density, there were also concerns about the area feeling too urban-like and that building heights would impact mountain views.
- **Affordable and employee-restricted housing**
  Affordability was a recurring concern, with many suggestions related to affordable rental and seasonal worker accommodation. There was a divide in opinions on employee housing - some advocated for it to be interwoven throughout neighborhoods, while others opposed its presence be limited to certain areas.
- **Commercial space and mixed-used development**
  Input emphasized the importance of the existing commercial hub at Creekside Village and highlighted an opportunity to integrate local-serving and small-scale commercial uses into the neighbourhood. Several comments suggest opportunities to support locally-owned small businesses.
- **Dedicated site and on-street parking**
  Input highlighted concerns about parking and questions about how it will be addressed through the Plan. Suggestions include underground parking in future development, more street-level parking options and better traffic flow.
- **Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure**
  Respondents shared strong support for improvements that serve pedestrians and cyclists. Support for sidewalks, stop signs, and protected bike lanes were emphasized to improve safety and accessibility.

- **Community amenities and social infrastructure**
  Input highlighted a desire for community-serving facilities to provide inclusive spaces and amenities that serve all age groups. There is a desire for the neighbourhood to foster a sense of community.
- **Design preferences and preserving neighbourhood identity**
  Many comments reflect a desire to maintain Whistler Creek's unique character, where future development retains elements of the architectural form and aesthetic of original residential development.
- **Natural landscaping and green spaces**
  Respondents shared a desire for more natural landscaping and integration with the surrounding environment. Input highlighted the use and connections to nearby parks and lakes.

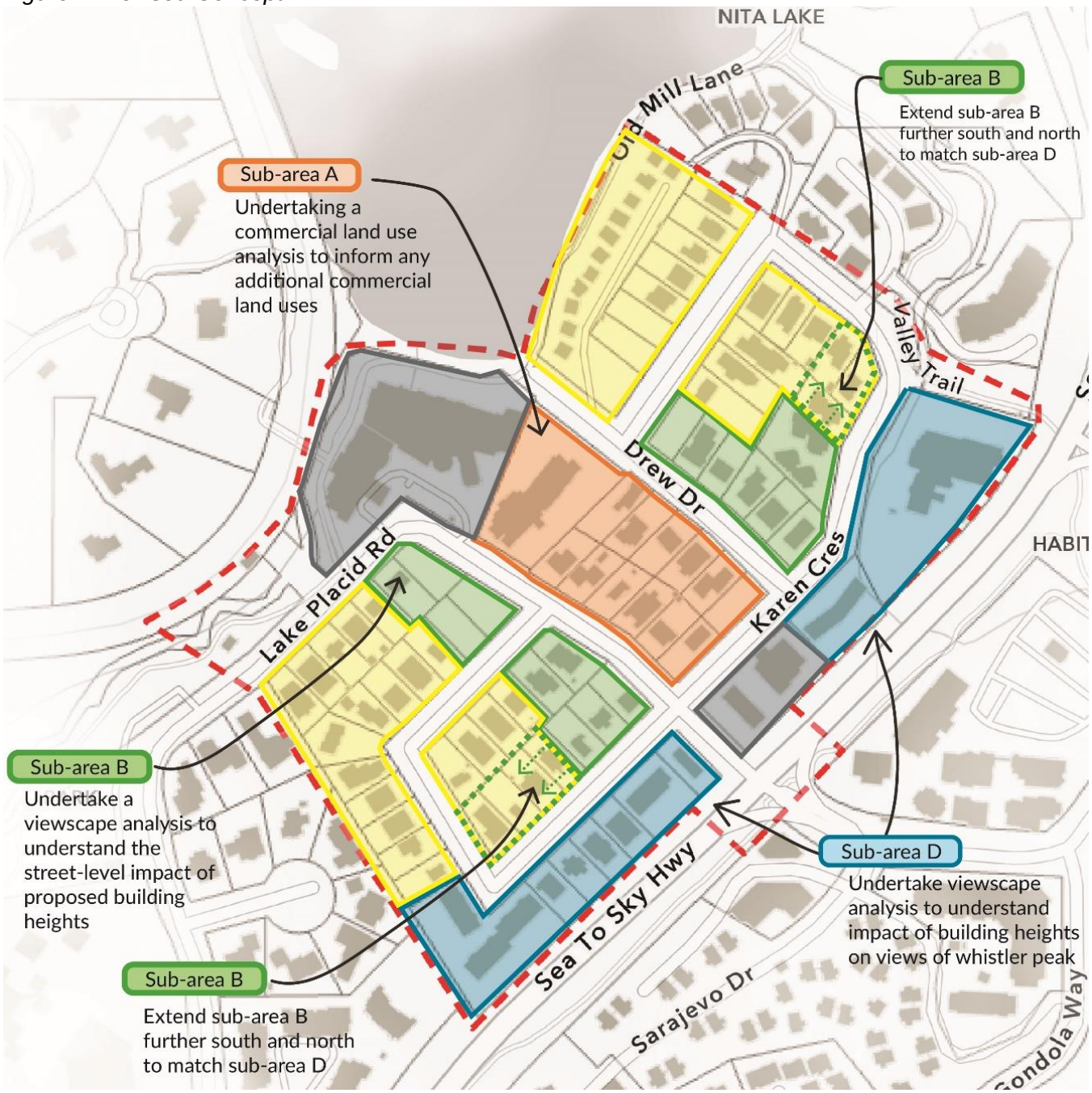
While many community members shared support for the concept and strategies, some shared concerns or questions about the project. Like earlier engagement, the most frequent concerns related to impacts to the vehicular network, increased density, levels of affordable and/or employee housing, and parking.

*Table 3: Response to Input*

| What we heard | How we are listening |
|---|---|
| New development with increased density will introduce more traffic and cars to the area. | A transportation study is underway to provide an informed analysis on the existing and future transportation conditions, determine potential impacts to the network and identify transportation needs, including a set of recommendations that seek to mitigate negative impacts to the transportation network. |
| Increasing height and density will introduce bigger and taller buildings which will affect the views and character of the neighbourhood. | As part of the urban design review, analysis will review the impacts of future development on the viewscape and solar access. The viewscape analysis will model eye-level visibility to demonstrate the potential impact to pedestrian-level views along Lake Placid Road. The solar analysis will evaluate and visualize the impact of natural light and shadow on Lake Placid Road. The modeling and analysis will be used to develop recommendations for heights and siting regulations. These recommendations in conjunction with other supporting studies will support the development of the WCW Plan and the related land use zoning. |
| The connection across Highway 99 from the Plan Area to Creekside Village/gondola base needs to be improved. | The transportation study will include a review of existing and future operations of the Highway 99 intersection with overall recommendations for the near, medium and long-term future. As part of this study, the transportation engineering consultant will undertake a high-level design review to inform feasibility and outline considerations for grade separated pedestrian crossing at Highway 99. |

In response to the feedback received and through further concept development, staff have made proposed adjustments to the concept and sub-areas as shown in Figure 1. Note that the gas station site has not been included as part of Sub-Area A, however staff will consider input and propose high-level suggestions for potential future redevelopment of this site as part of the WCW Plan document, to be presented to Council later in 2025. Future redevelopment of this site would be done through a site-specific rezoning given its critical location at the gateway to Whistler Creek.

*Figure 1. Revised Concept*




Some minor adjustments to the strategies have been proposed to better reflect the ideas and concerns shared by the community. Table 4 outlines the proposed changes to the strategies and reason for the change.

*Table 4: Proposed Strategy Revisions*

| Strategy Presented | Revised Strategy | Reason for Change |
|---|---|---|
| Leverage opportunities for developing employee restricted and rental housing. | Leverage opportunities for developing affordable housing options. | Affordable housing is broadly supported |
| Reduce parking requirements to provide options for more affordable development. | Support parking reductions for developments that provide employee restricted or affordable housing. | To indicate types of development where parking reductions could be supported |
| Encourage land assembly to allow for new employee restricted dwelling units. | Encourage land assembly to allow for new housing development. | The change supports land assembly for development of new housing in-general, not only for employee restricted housing. |
| Increase the presence of Squamish and Líl̓wat language, symbols and art into public spaces, signage and the broader streetscape. | Support opportunities to highlight the cultural landscape in the neighbourhood and broader streetscape. | To acknowledge the opportunity without making it a requirement. |

In addition to the refinement to the concept and strategies outlined above, input collected, and results of the engagement analysis will support the further refinement of the WCW Plan.

**Next Steps**

Staff are working with external consultants and partners on several different aspects, including:

- **Transportation Assessment and Impact Study (TAIS)**
  Currently underway, the study assesses the existing transportation network within the Plan Area as well as proposed changes to the land uses within the WCW Plan. The TAIS will consider ways to optimize the Lake Placid and Highway 99 intersection and mitigate any potential negative impacts to the intersection as well as to the Creekside parkade. The TAIS will support both the WCW Plan as well as Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) approvals for land use bylaw amendments that will follow.
- **MOTT review**
  The project team has met with staff from MOTT to present the concept for input. Once the TAIS is completed, it will be circulated to MOTT for review.
- **Urban design review and streetscape standards**
  An external urban design consultant is providing support to develop a set of streetscape standards for Lake Placid Road and Drew Drive. The work will also include a viewscape analysis and solar analysis to model the potential impacts of the proposed development typologies on the WCW Plan Area. Based on the analysis, the consultant will provide building height recommendations for specific parcels to preserve views from Lake Placid Rd east towards Whistler Mountain peak.
- **Land use feasibility analysis**
  A real estate development consultant has been contracted to undertake an analysis of the redevelopment viability, including feasibility of proposed housing types, densities and land uses proposed for the WCW Plan. The analysis will evaluate the redevelopment potential across the four sub-areas to determine the feasibility of future redevelopment within the WCW Plan Area.

- **Commercial land use study**
  A commercial real estate development specialist will review the existing and future conditions for commercial retail in and around the Plan Area, including Creekside Village. Recommendations from the study will inform development of the WCW Plan and any land use changes with commercial retail uses.

Following the completion of the remaining consultant work, staff will complete the development of the WCW Plan return to Council to present for approval in December 2025. Subsequently, proposed bylaw amendments will be presented to update the land use zoning for the WCW Plan Area and are expected to follow in the first quarter of 2026.

---

## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

### Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

May 13, 2025, Administrative Report W25:004: Whistler Creek West Plan – Draft Land Use Concept and Engagement Plan Strategies

April 8, 2025, Administrative Report 25-022: Whistler Creek West Neighbourhood Plan Phase 1 Engagement Summary and Phase 2 Update.

April 23, 2024, Committee of the Whole Presentation: Lake Placid Road Neighbourhood Study

### 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

**Strategic Priorities**

☒ Housing

*Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing*

☐ Climate Action

*Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan*

☒ Community Engagement

*Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW*

☐ Smart Tourism

*Preserve and protect Whistler's unique culture, natural assets and infrastructure*

☐ Not Applicable

*Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs*

### Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The OCP is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. The WCW Plan is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies included within the OCP as previously described in Administrative Report 25-022.

## BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The WCW Plan development and associated engagement is funded within the 2025 Planning and Development Department budget.

Note that the development of the WCW Plan is an initiative in the RMOW's approved $2.5Mm Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) action plan and its completion forms part of the HAF grant agreement. The HAF action plan targets completion of the WCW Plan by the end of 2025.

## LÍL̓WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Líl̓wat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for planning on unceded territories, as currently managed by the provincial government; achieve mutual objectives and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy.

There are no specific considerations to include in this report.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

☐ Inform ☒ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

The WCW Plan engagement process is aligned with the 'Consult' level of engagement under the International Association for Public Participation's spectrum of public participation. At this level, the goal is to seek feedback from the public on analysis, alternatives and decisions. The public will be kept informed, their aspirations and concerns will be listened to and acknowledged, and they will receive feedback on how their input influenced the process. Phase 2 engagement is summarized in the analysis section of this report and in Appendix A.

## REFERENCES

Appendix A –What We Heard Concept Phase
Appendix B – Excerpt from the HASC July 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

## SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the community engagement activities undertaken to refine the draft land use concept and draft strategies that will support the development of the WCW Plan and recommends that Council direct staff to proceed with the ongoing development of the WCW Plan.

## SIGN-OFFS

**Written by:**

Megan Mucignat,
Planner

**Reviewed by:**

John Chapman,
Manager of Projects Planning

Melissa Laidlaw,
Director of Planning

Dale Mikkelsen,
General Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development Services

Ted Battiston,
Acting Chief Administrative Officer