To the Mayor and Council
Resort Municipality of Whistler

**Re: Proposed Bed Unit Increases in Cheakamus and Creekside**

Dear Mayor and Council,

As a longtime Whistler resident, I am deeply concerned about the scale of additional bed units being proposed for Cheakamus and Creekside.

I support responsible employee housing. What I do not support is growth that exceeds the physical capacity of this valley and leaves future residents and taxpayers to deal with the consequences.

Whistler has very real limits: one primary highway, a constrained water supply, aging infrastructure, increasing wildfire exposure, limited evacuation capacity and a resort economy already struggling with congestion during peak periods. These constraints cannot simply be planned away.

**Cheakamus and Highway 99**

Of all the places to concentrate thousands of additional beds, Cheakamus makes remarkably little sense from a transportation perspective.

The Creekside–Function Junction–Cheakamus corridor already produces some of Whistler's worst traffic problems. Highway 99 is not only our commuter route; it is our supply route, our visitor corridor and, in an emergency, effectively our only evacuation route.

Adding thousands more residents and vehicles directly into this bottleneck without first solving the transportation problem is backwards planning. We should not approve the density and then hope infrastructure catches up afterward.

Before these beds are approved, Council should demonstrate exactly what this corridor will look like during peak winter weekends, weekday commuting periods, major accidents and, most importantly, a wildfire evacuation.

**Water and Watershed Capacity**

The same concern applies to water.

The 21 Mile Creek watershed is not an unlimited resource. Climate change, changing precipitation and declining or less predictable snowpack make long-term water security increasingly important.

Before committing Whistler to thousands of additional beds, the Municipality should demonstrate that our watershed can reliably support that population not just today, but through drought years and future climate conditions.

Growth should follow demonstrated water capacity—not the other way around.

**Wildfire and Evacuation**

This may be the most serious issue of all.

Whistler is a mountain community with essentially one highway in and out. Increasing our population by thousands means increasing the number of people and vehicles that may need to evacuate during a wildfire.

Regional fires, forest health issues, accidents or a closure anywhere on Highway 99 could dramatically reduce our ability to move people safely.

Council needs to answer a very simple question before approving significant additional density:

**How many people can Whistler actually evacuate safely?**

If we do not know the answer, we should not continue increasing the number of people who may need to be evacuated.

**Infrastructure and Property Taxes**

Thousands of additional beds also mean substantially greater demand on water mains, sewer systems, roads, transit and municipal services.

If existing systems require major expansion or replacement to accommodate this growth, who pays?

Existing residents should not be handed significant future property-tax increases because development was approved without accounting for its full infrastructure cost. Those costs should be identified publicly before approvals are granted and should be attributed appropriately to the growth creating them.

**Creekside and the Resort Economy**

Adding more than 3500 beds to an area already under significant peak-season pressure also risks damaging the resort experience itself.

Our visitors experience Whistler through its roads, parking, transit, restaurants, grocery stores, lifts and public spaces. More beds do not automatically create a better or more successful resort.

At some point, congestion begins to diminish the product.

Highway congestion also affects the resort supply chain, trades, deliveries and the mobility of our workforce. Every additional hour spent sitting in traffic has an economic cost.

Whistler's success depends on balancing tourism, housing and quality of life—not maximizing the number of people we can physically fit into the valley.

**Whistler Needs to Define Its Limit**

This is the larger issue Council needs to confront.

Whistler cannot grow indefinitely.

We are geographically constrained by mountains, water, infrastructure and a single highway. At some point, we must establish what the realistic carrying capacity of this valley actually is.

Before approving thousands of additional beds in Cheakamus and Creekside, Council should provide the public with a comprehensive assessment of the **combined impact of all proposed development** on traffic, water, sewer capacity, wildfire evacuation, municipal infrastructure, taxation and the resort guest experience.

Looking at developments individually while ignoring their cumulative impact is no longer adequate.

Once these beds are approved, the decision is effectively permanent.

Whistler has taken decades to build into one of the world's great mountain communities. We should be extremely careful not to undermine that success through growth that our geography and infrastructure simply cannot support.

I respectfully request that these concerns be placed on the public record and addressed before any further significant increase in bed capacity in Cheakamus and Creekside is approved.

Sincerely,

**A Concerned Longtime Whistler**

Don schwartz