



RECREATION AND LEISURE MASTER PLAN REPORT

This strategic planning document and Master Plan Report outlines recreation and leisure priorities in Whistler.

The supporting Recreation And Leisure Master Plan Detailed Recommendations document contains detailed recommendations for each of the Resort Municipality of Whistler's parks and recreation amenities and programs.

2015



Executive Summary

For the first time since 1996, the Resort Municipality of Whistler has completed a comprehensive master planning process for its recreation and leisure assets. Recommended as a significant priority in both the 2012 Council Action Plan and the 2013 Economic Partnership Initiative report, the recreation and leisure master planning process took place over two years and involved consultation with hundreds of stakeholders from about 45 different interest groups.

The complete 2015 Recreation and Leisure Master Plan (RLMP) recognizes recreation and leisure as key contributors to the Whistler Brand and includes parks, trails, lakes and rivers, recreation facilities and programs. The RLMP comprises a complete inventory of these assets in Whistler: a first for the community. The master planning process has provided much-needed information and insight as to how these assets are managed and co-managed on behalf of residents and visitors.

The RLMP provides the community direction by:

- Identifying the guiding direction for the protection, enhancement, strategic development, and operational delivery of existing amenities, programming and related services;
- Classifying current and future needs;
- Providing strategic direction of economic value to the resort community; and
- Establishing priorities for Whistler's park, trail and recreation facilities over the next 10 years.

The focus of this document is to provide an overview of the phased approach to develop the RLMP, and various levels of community consultation that resulted in a number of recommended actions for each category of recreation and leisure asset. The RLMP also explains the thorough review and evaluation process used to prioritize projects and investments for the immediate, short, medium and longer terms. The supporting maps and data tables provide context and ancillary figures to back the recommended priorities. A companion document, the *RLMP Detailed Recommendations* report, outlines each strategic direction in greater detail, along with background information and the rationale for recommendations.

Recreation and leisure are integral components of the Whistler Brand; which is the visitor experience that sets Whistler apart from other places and resorts in North America. Given that Whistler's recreation system is intertwined with the resort's brand and that the system has consistently generated high user satisfaction levels, the RLMP process determined five main focus areas for the next 10 years:

- Maintain and monitor service and satisfaction levels;
- Improve experiences;
- Plan for new opportunities in response to resort and community needs and economic activities;
- Support the Whistler Brand; and
- Enhance administration, internal documents and processes.

The RLMP process involved various levels of stakeholder engagement, which produced about 90 recommendations with over 300 supporting actions in 20 categories for each of Whistler’s parks and recreation programs and amenities. Through the prioritization process for these many recommendations, seven issues were identified as a foundation for the master planning process:

- Service and satisfaction levels
- Areas of dissatisfaction or user conflict
- Aging infrastructure
- Capacity and crowding
- Lakes: havens for relaxation
- The Whistler Brand
- Collaboration for success.

These parameters, along with other criteria identified by resort stakeholders, helped to create the vision, goals, focus areas and priority strategies for the RLMP outlined in the table below:

RECREATION AND LEISURE MASTER PLAN PRIORITIES					
RLMP VISION	Recognizing our mountain landscape and natural beauty, Whistler is a leader in offering high quality innovative recreation, leisure and sport activities that reflect the values of the resort community, achieve a balance between infrastructure and the natural environment, and provide opportunities for tourism-based economic growth.				
RLMP GOALS	Add value to the resort over the short and long term Achieve greater efficiencies with limited resources Provide diverse, affordable recreational opportunities for Whistler residents of all ages Enrich resident and visitor experiences Respond to growth objectives and trends Address low satisfaction levels or gaps and reduce user conflicts Optimize existing assets Align or have synergies with other municipal or partner/stakeholder initiatives				
RLMP FOCUS AREAS	1. Maintain and Monitor	2. Improve Experiences	3. Plan	4. Support the Whistler Brand	5. Enhance Administration
RLMP KEY STRATEGIES	1.1 Continue to provide efficient delivery of municipal services to maintain high resident and visitor satisfaction levels. 1.2 Ensure a balance between recreational needs and the natural environment. 1.3 Protect the experiential qualities of valued natural assets.	2.1 Respond to proven negatives and areas of user conflict. 2.2 Address capacity and crowding issues 2.3 Support initiatives that enhance existing experiences.	3.1 Conduct needs assessment and/or other studies to expand, improve or build municipal facilities. 3.2 Ensure the provision of an appropriate amount of park and open space to meet long-term resort community needs. 3.3 Consider new assets to meet growing demands and retain resort differentiation. 3.4 Consider partnership and where appropriate sponsorship opportunities to help build, fund, maintain, promote and operate new and existing facilities.	4.1 Encourage the delivery of an enhanced and consistent quality of recreational experience across jurisdictions 4.2 Leverage and support existing and emerging recreation and leisure activities that are consistent with and further the Whistler Brand. 4.3 Acknowledge and foster Whistler’s growing high performance sport economy and sport tourism opportunities.	5.1 Maintain commitments to public engagement and collaborative efforts. 5.2 Align and update municipal regulatory documents. 5.3 Consider new bylaws and policies where necessary to achieve RLMP goals and strategies. 5.4 Update relevant internal municipal standards, policies and supporting documents.

The RLMP is designed to be consistent with the community priorities of *Whistler2020*, as well as the relevant policies of the 1993 *Official Community Plan (OCP)*. The RLMP also builds upon the 2013 Economic Partnership Initiative Report, the 2012/13 Community Cultural Plan, and the RMOW Corporate Plan. The RLMP Report and RLMP Detailed Recommendations are not necessarily a commitment for future investment, rather the directions outlined will help inform decisions that are made by senior staff and municipal council as part of annual work plan preparations and the budget process.

Whistler, with a population of about 10,500, has an incredible array of facilities and amenities when compared with other municipalities with less than 20,000 residents. Residents and visitors have the opportunity to experience a broad spectrum of recreation, and leisure and sport assets and activities year-round in our mountain playground. It is imperative that these assets are maintained, enhanced, developed and enriched for the long-term enjoyment of residents and visitors, and for the important connections to the Whistler Brand.