



WHISTLER

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE (AIC)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2024, STARTING AT 9:00 A.M.

Meeting held via Teams

PRESENT	*Mtgs. YTD (3)
Accommodation Sector, J. Cottier	3
Member-at-Large, O. Rey	2
Member-at-Large, S. Lawther	3
Tourism Whistler (TW), J. Pedersen	3
Vail Resorts, B. Warren	2
Whistler Adaptive Sports Program (WA), S. Milstein	3
Whistler Chamber of Commerce, A. Feuz	3
Whistler Mature Action Community (MAC), D. Ashton	3
Whistler MAC, S. Johnson	2
Whistler MAC, L. Stroshin	
Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) Councillor, J. Morden	3
RMOW Manager of Planning - Policy and AIC Secretary, C. Beaubien	3
RMOW Library Director, M. Fenton	3
RMOW Planning Services Supervisor and Acting AIC Recording Secretary, M. Urbani	1
REGRETS	
Whistler Community Services Society (WCSS)	1
Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre (SLCC)	0
RMOW Accessibility Coordinator, S. Tipler	2
RMOW Planning Coordinator and AIC Recording Secretary, L. Bourdon	1
*For organizations, the number reflects the number of meetings attended by the organizations' representatives within the calendar year	

GUESTS	
RMOW Manager of Parks Planning, M. Pardoe	
RMOW Transportation Demand Management Coordinator, E. DalSanto	

CALL TO ORDER

AIC recognized the Resort Municipality of Whistler is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Líl'wat People, known in their language as Líl'wat7úl, and the Squamish People, known in their language as Skw̓xwú7mesh.

We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship, and voice.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by D. Ashton
Seconded by S. Johnson

That AIC adopt the Regular Committee Agenda of Wednesday, October 2, 2024.
CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by S. Johnson
Seconded by A. Feuz

That AIC adopt the Regular Committee Minutes of June 5, 2024, as circulated.
CARRIED

COUNCIL UPDATE

Councillor Morden discussed the following regarding recent Council business:

1. Provincial funding was received for Lot 5 in Cheakamus Crossing.
2. Council members attended the 2024 UBCM Convention from September 16-20 and meetings included: a) a meeting with the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to discuss encampments at Wedge and Cheakamus; b) a meeting with the Minister of Education and Child Care to discuss topics including \$10 a day daycare, daycares in schools, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) from different jurisdictions and ECE hourly rates; and c) a meeting with the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the Attorney General to discuss illegal rentals and fines.
3. The RMOW implemented "Borrow a Councillor" at the Whistler Public Library (WPL). People can "check out" a Councillor for 30 minutes.
4. The RMOW budget process started. "Coffee with Council" will take place October 10 at Blenz in the morning and Alpine Café in the afternoon. There will also be a budget trivia night.
5. The RMOW launched the following new select committees of Council this fall: Climate Action and Environment Committee; Housing and Strategy Committee; and Smart Tourism Committee. There is also the Community Engagement Working Group.

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

E. DalSanto presented on active transportation and transit:

1. Parking rates for Day Lots 1 to 5 were revised. Some of the revenue goes into community transportation initiative funds that help pay for active transportation, transit and pilot projects.
2. The Active Transportation Plan was brought forward to Council and staff are currently implementing the plan. A key focus is creating an environment to help people choose 50% of their trips by non-single occupant vehicle.
3. This year, Highway 99 traffic has been lower than the 2016-2018 peaks. COVID times were lower. We are currently at a steady state.
4. Moving forward, more will be done on the e-bike share program, such as increasing secure bike parking and bike valet service.

Transportation
Update

5. There was a demonstration project on Village Gate Boulevard to connect the gap between Blackcomb Way and Northlands Boulevard for active transportation. This was mostly for families and commuter cyclists.
6. Transit is at a higher ridership rate due to the expansion of service. In the last five years, service has been reallocated to more express routes. People are using these routes more and not staying on the bus as long.
7. The Community Life Survey asked: 'how do you get around?'. There was a large jump in responses showing that in both winter and summer, people are driving more alone to get to and from work and school.
8. The Pemberton Commuter will be seeing expansion this winter.
9. UMO was implemented and can be paid via phone.
10. Next Ride was upgraded, which tracks buses in real time.
11. The Rainbow Park shuttle was brought back on weekends and the Lost Lake shuttle was daily with expanded ridership.
12. The app for bike parking has been in place for the last couple of months.
13. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) is an important partner. The RMOW had many conversations with them about improving highway crossings. Last year, improvements were made to snow clearing.

The AIC and RMOW staff discussed:

1. The increase in Pemberton Commuter service will be well-received.
2. The additional Route 32 in Whistler will continue the system expansion.
3. Using the train line for commuters from Squamish and Pemberton has been looked at many times and was seriously considered pre-Olympics. It is set up for cargo and not for high-speed train access. Using the rail for commuting is highly unlikely to happen in the short-term.
4. Regarding highway crossings, the Bayshores, Nicklaus North and Nesters intersections are still challenging.
 - a. Consideration of crossing improvements are still under development.
 - b. Brio appears to be an unusual place to collect crossing data. Historically, this was where the counter was and the RMOW purchased this from MOTI when they discontinued it. The RMOW recognizes the Brio counting location has challenges, including many people cross at Creekside instead.
5. Paying by phone has increased system accessibility for individuals who have difficulty handling coins. There were some concerns with the 10x pass going away.
 - a. BC Transit is creating 20x tickets with a QR code, which will be provided to WCSS for free to give to people in need.
6. Regarding transportation links to other communities, RMOW staff are advising Council. Also, councils in the region are lobbying to MOTI. There are private providers that service certain user groups as well.

Parks Planning
Update

M. Pardoe presented on the Park and Valley Trail Strategy:

1. RMOW Parks Planning looked at all Whistler parks and the Valley Trail system and is producing a 10-year strategy. The strategy will define the direction, philosophy, policies and actions for future decisions.
2. Much of our infrastructure is older and needs updating. Also need to reinvest into existing parks.

3. The strategy focuses on: climate adaption measures; environmental protection and repair; access, equality and reconciliation; accommodating increasing user demand; and resilience.
4. The project commenced last summer with Urban Systems as the consultant. The project timeline is June 2024 to June 2025.
5. Staff will return to the AIC with an updated draft next year.
6. Regarding equity, diversity and inclusion, there are draft summaries, recognizing there are opportunities to expand the content. Specifically, a draft vision statement and guiding principles have been created.
7. Three questions for the AIC today are: 1) how has equity, diversity and inclusion been represented in our parks and Valley Trail system in the last 10 and 20 years; 2) what are the steps necessary to get to an improved point; and 3) are there examples of places and policies where equity, diversity and inclusivity have been well-represented?

The AIC and RMOW staff discussed:

1. Consideration could be given to work being done on adaptive mountain bike trails.
 - a. The ability to use e-bikes on mountain bike trails is very important for people with disabilities.
 - b. It is necessary to look at successful examples where e-bike and scooter use for people with disabilities has been allowed.
 - c. Currently, the alpine trails on Sproatt Mountain have e-bike restrictions and someone could request an exemption.
 - d. The Province updated its e-bike classification system and RMOW staff are in the process of updating the Parks Use Bylaw to reflect the changes.
2. The steps on the Lakeside and Wayside Parks' docks are difficult to climb.
 - a. The RMOW is aware of this challenge and has a pilot at Rainbow Park. If the pilot is favourable, it could be applied elsewhere.
3. Consideration could be given to separating the Valley Trail for pedestrian and bike use.
 - a. This is difficult and expensive in Whistler and the RMOW is not looking to widen the Valley Trail and separate users. For example, there are deep slopes and right of way considerations.
 - b. The RMOW strategy is to increase signage and stenciling on the trails. This includes warning signage about slow zones and new language for e-bikes.
 - c. The RMOW is also encouraging e-bike users to use municipal roads, especially where they are adjacent to the Valley Trail. The RMOW aims to work with MOTI to create better accommodations for cyclists on Highway 99.
4. Consideration could be given to having more benches on the Valley Trail, such as at every kilometer.
5. Consideration could be given to how different cultural groups use parks, such as big barbecues and family picnics.
 - a. The RMOW has given this consideration. For example, at Rainbow Park, the length of picnic tables was increased and this may be applied to other parks.
6. Consideration could be given to having areas in parks where neurodivergent children would be comfortable.

- a. The RMOW has given this consideration and wants to create a standard for Whistler parks.

M. Pardoe presented on the Rainbow Park rejuvenation:

1. Efforts have been made to improve accessibility. For instance, accessible parking stalls were increased. Also, there are a lake chairlift on the dock, accessible picnic tables, and accessible showers and drinking fountains. Beach mats will be installed next year.
2. Today, the RMOW is seeking post-construction feedback from the AIC.

The AIC and RMOW staff discussed:

1. The accessible parking was well-thought out given the site limitations. There is a bit of a slant, which is difficult for some people if they have to transfer from their seat to their chair.
2. The picnic table is amazing. However, the Adirondack chairs are not accessible. Also, as the picnic tables and benches are bolted down and cannot be moved, some people are not able to sit at them.
3. The park's separation from the volleyball court and the Valley Trail are appreciated.
4. There is no playground.
5. Regarding transportation issues, there is no shuttle during the week and it is really just used by tourists on the weekend. Also, Alta Lake Road residents complain that people park in front of their homes as visitors do not want to pay to park.
 - a. The transit system does not want to use Alta Lake Road as the traffic calming interferes with large vehicles.
6. Consideration could be given to more promotion of the park's accessibility features.
 - a. There are RMOW accessibility webpages that discuss features.
 - b. The RMOW could create a feedback form to create transparency regarding the park's design.
 - c. The RMOW could create a sign that states the park is accessible.

Library Update

M. Fenton presented on the WPL's new Strategic Plan and accompanying accessibility audits:

1. Library month started October 1 to create awareness of library services.
2. The project involved several steps.
 - a. In late 2023, the WPL created the research project that focused on trends across the library sector.
 - b. Pre-engagement took place in February 2024. This involved interviews with staff and leaders from across the community.
 - c. Engagement with the community occurred in April 2024.
 - d. The WPL Board adopted the final draft in September 2024.
 - e. The plan was launched to the community in October 2024.
3. This plan is heavily influenced by the feedback we received from the community, and the structure of the plan is comprehensive to ensure accountability to our community.
 - a. There was a multi-prong community engagement framework.
 - b. 600 community members were engaged within one month.
 - c. Interviews took place with various individuals and organizations, including the SLCC, RMOW Accessibility Coordinator, MAC, Whistler Youth Centre, Whistler Pemberton Newcomer Services

and Whistler Multicultural Society. An interview with Vail Resorts related to seasonal staff.

4. The top cited WPL strengths were: staff and service; the facility as it continues to adapt and change; the manner in which the WPL conducts community engagement and pilots programs from people's ideas; and the WPL's responsiveness.
5. Areas identified for improvement were: offering different operating hours; having specific programs to target certain audiences; making library access more convenient; and creating awareness about library services and resources.
6. The WPL is currently open 56 hours a week. 3,000 people visit per week and the WPL is continuing to see growth. On a weekly basis, 15 people are registered and 1,000 digital items are lent out.
7. Big changes revolve around the WPL's vision, mission, values and principles.
 - a. The new vision statement is: An inspired, informed, and engaged community.
 - b. There is a new section on principles that represents the core foundations of the library sector as a whole. These are presented by the American Library Association and are: access, collaboration, inclusion, intellectual freedom, privacy and sustainability.
8. The five strategic priorities over the next five years are to: inspire learning and discovery; cultivate connection; expand access; amplify impact; and strengthen our organization.
 - a. Expanding access includes being barrier free. A SPARC accessibility audit sponsored by Interlink will take place. Additionally, facility renovation through provincial enhancement grant funding will create more opportunity for the community to come together.
9. A digital audit is also planned.

The AIC and RMOW staff discussed:

1. The WPL provides MAC with needed meeting spaces and is very accessible for seniors. MAC wishes there were more senior-oriented programs and notes the WPL and MAC have joint programs.
2. Library hours are difficult for some users. Consideration could be given to having earlier and later hours.
3. The WPL is a great resource for seasonal and hourly staff as well as for families with young children.

Washrooms and
Neurodiversity

C. Beaubien discussed an email provided to Council about washrooms and neurodiversity:

1. On July 9, 2024, Council received a letter from a member of the public regarding washrooms and neurodiversity.

The AIC discussed:

1. Automated toilets and hand dryers are noisy.
2. Consideration could be given to having paper towels in accessible washrooms. It is also noted that hand towels are difficult to grab if you do not have hand function.

3. Consideration could be given to lighting options and flush toilets during renovations as well as a washroom option that has less noise.

OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBER UPDATES

The AIC discussed wheelchair accessible taxis:

1. The RMOW met with Resort Cabs.
 2. Resort Cabs has accessible taxis and AIC members are encouraged to share information that these taxis are available. Resort Cabs requests that bigger groups that require accessible taxis communicate with Resort Cabs in advance so they can meet the anticipated needs.
 3. Resort Cabs is willing to share accessible taxi usage data with the RMOW.
 4. Other companies are also seeking licences to operate in Whistler.
- A. Feuz provided an update on behalf of the Whistler Chamber of Commerce:
1. The Chamber held a Truth and Reconciliation program for learning at the SLCC with 100 participants. The Chamber also held an orange heart campaign.
 2. Regarding transit, the Chamber offers a discounted spirit transit pass in partnership with the RMOW. Additionally, the Chamber continues to advocate for regional transit.
 3. The Invictus Games are coming and the Chamber is circulating resources to members to make businesses more accessible.
- B. Warren provided an update on behalf of Vail Resorts:
1. Vail Resorts is actively installing an accessible ramp at the Roundhouse Lodge as well as a possible hearing loop.
 2. Guest relations in the main village location have accessible countertops.
 3. There is a lot of planning and operational work underway for the Invictus Games.
- L. Stroshin provided an update on behalf of MAC:
1. An education and wellness session is starting in October at the WPL. This will be held once a month.
 2. In the summer, MAC hosted a bike ride every week, held coffee and connect hours, and used the Spruce Grove facility.
 3. The dementia connection group is continuing.
 4. MAC reinstated a membership fee.
 5. MAC has a new website to promote awareness of what is happening in Whistler for seniors.
- J. Pedersen provided an update on behalf of TW:
1. TW received a grant on Indigenous learning and products. The visitor services team attended an SLCC feast. There are also funds to purchase Indigenous art.
 2. TW received a grant for visitor services enhancement. This will focus on a junior ranger program and creating an immersive experience.
 3. TW received a BC Tourism grant for climate resiliency. This will focus on encouraging people to drink tap water rather than water in plastic bottles.
- S. Milstein provided an update on behalf of WA:
1. WA is recruiting board members, especially with expertise in insurance.

2. WA is preparing for the Invictus Games. This included welcoming Team Canada and Team Ukraine, who are training before the games.
3. WA is hiring new adaptive ski coaches and received a grant to host higher level adaptive coaching opportunities.

J. Cottier provided an update on behalf of the Accommodation Sector:

1. An evacuation workshop was held with the RMOW. Work will continue over the year to prepare for the next fire season.

MOTION TO TERMINATE

Moved by O. Rey

Seconded by J. Cottier

That the AIC meeting of Wednesday, October 2, 2024 be terminated at 10:56 a.m.

CARRIED



S. Lawther
Chair

C. Beaubien

C. Beaubien
Secretary