

ATTACHMENT 1
– WHISTLER 2020 –
MOVING TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE
FUTURE

Comprehensive Sustainability Plan

Volume I
December 2004

Whistler holds a special place in the hearts of the people who live, work and play here, and a competitive position within the international destination resort market.

Together, we can continue our success as a mountain resort community and move toward a sustainable future.

Whistler community member, partner and stakeholder contributions are essential for achieving our vision as defined by Whistler 2020 – Moving Towards a Sustainable Future.

Please join us in Whistler's journey.

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Guide to Readers

Whistler 2020 is presented in three volumes:

- Volume I describes what Whistler aspires to be in the year 2020: our values, sustainability principles, vision, priorities and directions that define success and sustainability for the resort community. It also provides background on the Whistler 2020 strategic plan, explaining what it is, why and how it was developed, and who was involved in the planning process.
- Volume II outlines how Whistler will achieve the 2020 vision: the strategies and actions that move us in the right direction. It also contains targets and a monitoring program to help the resort community assess whether we are on the right track, and to correct our path if we are not.
- Volume III includes the appendices and background information necessary to fully understand the Whistler 2020 development process and to plan for implementation and moving forward.

Visit www.whistler.ca for Whistler 2020 updates and for Volume II and III.

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We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who participated in the process to develop Whistler 2020, through workshops, task force meetings, open houses, surveys, and in other capacities. Your contribution was invaluable and helped to shape this plan. Any errors or misinterpretations are ours, and we apologize should this have happened.

Renewing Whistler's Vision

Whistler was built by visionaries: from those who first settled here in the early 1900s and those who established the resort in the mid '70s, to those who brought us through the trying times of the early '80s and the growth and development of the '90s.

Today, Whistler holds a special place in the hearts of the people who live, work and play here, and a competitive position within the international destination resort* market. Together, we can continue our success as a mountain resort community and move toward a sustainable future.

Whistler's 2002 vision, created in 1997, first articulated our desire to be the premier mountain resort community and has helped to guide us into the millennium. Building on this, Whistler 2020 renews our values, vision for the future, priorities and directions, and includes the strategies and actions for moving forward. Extending to 2020, it sets a 15-year vision and emphasizes the need for a sustainable future.

The journey toward a successful and sustainable future will not be easy. It requires that we to set out on a bold course today, working collaboratively and innovatively with our partners. Ready for this challenge, we embrace the opportunity to create the future we choose.

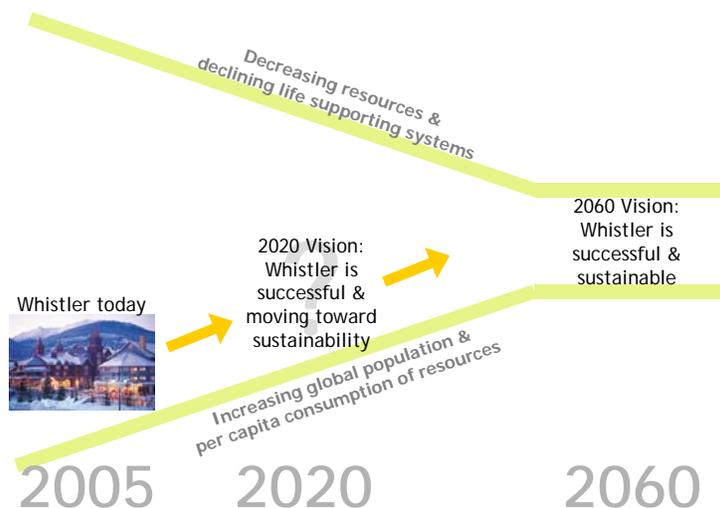
Looking Toward 2060

Whistler 2020 is the vision and strategic plan for Whistler’s continued success to the year 2020 – and an ambitious step on our longer journey to a sustainable future. We are committed to achieving sustainability, yet recognize that this will take time and cannot happen in isolation from the rest of the world. As part of a larger global effort, we believe that we can achieve sustainability by 2060 and that this timeline provides us with a realistic target.

Why sustainability by 2060? Most things in our world will change significantly within the next 50 or so years. In this period, technological advances, political shifts and increased pressures from global challenges, including those related to energy, water, food, and climate change*, will require society to adapt its social, economic and infrastructure systems accordingly. During this time, almost all of our infrastructure systems will have passed their useful life and will have been replaced or retrofitted. We must identify and act on opportunities to ensure that the new systems are integrated and sustainable. Recognizing that there is limited time to implement such fundamental societal changes, we will strive to achieve our sustainability objectives before 2060.

Why Worry About Sustainability?

Whistler does not function in isolation. It is part of a global network, ecologically, economically and socially. Sustainable living is important to Whistler in several ways. We value the natural environment and society and do not wish to contribute to global degradation. Also, unsustainable practices worldwide threaten Whistler’s financial, social and environmental well-being. For example, declining natural resources mean higher fuel costs—higher costs for all goods and services—and less inclination by visitors to travel long distances. Whistler must respond and adapt to meet the



Whistler 2020 – Moving Toward a Sustainable Future

What is Whistler 2020?

Whistler 2020 is our long-term, overarching, community-wide plan that is guided by our values and sustainability principles, and sets out a shared vision of what the resort community will look like in a successful and sustainable future. It also outlines how we will achieve this vision.

What Whistler is aiming to be in the future is defined by our vision, priorities and directions. How we plan to get there is determined by our strategies and actions. Progress toward success and sustainability is determined by the Whistler 2020 monitoring and reporting system, which helps us to learn and adapt as required.

How is Whistler 2020 being used?

Whistler 2020 replaces Whistler 2002 – Charting a Course for the Future in guiding community decision-making and activities. Amendments to Whistler’s Official Community Plan (OCP)* are being enacted to ensure that municipal policies are aligned. As a community-wide plan, relevant components of the Whistler 2020 framework and its overarching principles are being adopted by Whistler partners and incorporated into their policies and plans.

The Whistler 2020 Framework

Values: Our values represent what is important to us as a resort community and are the foundation for all we do.

Vision: Our vision is what we aspire to be. By describing Whistler in the year 2020, it helps guide our strategic planning and actions over time.

Priorities: Priorities are the key areas around which we focus our efforts in moving toward achieving Whistler’s vision of the future.

Directions: Our directions describe where Whistler aims to be with respect to each priority. They define what success and sustainability will look like. Moving toward meeting our Sustainability Objectives based on the Natural Step* is fundamental to all directions.

Strategies and Actions: The strategies and actions set out how Whistler will achieve success and sustainability, as defined by the directions (see

Why is *Whistler 2020* important?

The global and local challenges that currently face Whistler highlight the need for an overarching sustainability-based approach to long-term planning. Traditional planning processes tend to focus on isolated pieces rather than on interconnected systems, and are generally not able to solve complex problems in a proactive manner. *Whistler 2020* moves beyond traditional planning and has been developed to address social, economic and environmental challenges in an integrated and upstream way (see textbox). Local values and the Natural Step* sustainability principles*, guide visioning, planning, decisions and actions.

Why an upstream and systems-based approach?

An 'upstream' approach to planning anticipates and avoids problems before they occur, as opposed to a 'downstream' approach, where resources are used to deal with the results of the problems. For example, buying a product without packaging is an upstream action, whereas recycling the packaging is a downstream action. A system is made up of many different parts that work together and share a set of basic principles. Identifying and avoiding problems upstream requires an integrated 'systems' approach, which involves understanding the connections and

How was *Whistler 2020* developed?

Whistler 2020 was developed in four phases. During Phase 1, success factors were developed. In Phase 2, five alternative futures were explored and assessed with respect to sustainability. Phase 3 involved crafting a blended future and developing the draft strategic plan, guided by Whistler's values and sustainability principles*. In Phase 4, the blended future was transformed into Whistler's vision and the draft plan was completed and named *Whistler 2020 – Moving Toward a Sustainable Future*. Public engagement was key and shaped each phase of the planning process. Task forces of community members and experts participated in workshops to develop the long-term strategies and identify actions, and will continue to hold an important role in achieving our vision. (See *Whistler 2020 Volume III* for more background information.)

Who is responsible for *Whistler 2020*?

Whistler 2020 is the resort community's strategic plan. To effectively achieve our vision, it must be owned and actively supported by the individuals who live, work and play here, along with major stakeholder* groups and partners. There are a number of local partners who are key to the success of Whistler

2020 and will take lead roles on various strategies and actions. These include the Resort Municipality of Whistler, Tourism Whistler, Whistler Blackcomb, Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, the Whistler Housing Authority, Whistler Community Services Society, Vancouver Coastal Health and other health agencies, School District #48 and other education partners, One Whistler, Whistler Arts Council, Whistler Museum and Archives, Maurice Young Millennium Place, Whistler Public Library, Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (AWARE), Whistler Naturalists, Whistler Fisheries Stewardship Group, among others.

Monitoring Performance

By monitoring our performance and continually adjusting our strategies and actions over time, the resort community tests the assumptions used in developing the plan and ensures progress is made toward the Whistler 2020 vision. To be accountable and to encourage learning, annual performance and progress is publicly reported and the community is engaged in the process (see Whistler 2020 Volume II).

Global and Local Challenges Facing Whistler

Global trends set the context for influencing and shaping the futures of communities such as Whistler. General trends such as changing climate, declining resource availability and ecosystem* quality, increasing globalization and wealth gaps, changing population, demographics and technology will have increasing impacts on Whistler into the future, presenting both challenges and opportunities. For example, climate change* could affect the tourism industry in many ways. Changing weather patterns threaten current winter sports and vegetation, and global policies addressing climate change may increase fuel costs, which would affect travel patterns. Please refer to the text box for other trends.

Locally, some of these trends and Whistler's success as a destination resort* pose immediate and fundamental challenges to the sustainability of the community and surrounding natural areas. Since the OCP review in 1989, leaders have recognized that continued rapid growth would ultimately destroy Whistler's social fabric and the area's natural ecology, the very things that attracted people in the first place. As a result, a cap on development within the municipality was set at 55,500 bed units, including resident housing. Close to reaching this cap and facing continued pressures for growth, Whistler is also presented with new hurdles that require decisions and direction. Some local challenges faced by the resort community and addressed in this strategic plan include:

- Escalating living, housing and business costs, making Whistler unaffordable for many local people
- Increasing pressures to grow and expand the physical size of Whistler
- Changing travel patterns and fluctuating visitor numbers

Global Trends

Economic & Tourism

- Changing value of the Canadian dollar
- Globalization
- Growing competition among destination resorts
- Changing tourism patterns
- Increasing service demands by resort visitors

Social

- Growing wealth gap
- Changing demographics and population
- Global socio-political insecurity
- Rapid technological change

Environmental

- Changing climate
- Declining natural resources, ecosystem services, natural habitat and biodiversity
- Accumulating substances that affect

- Changing demand for resident and visitor products and services as a result of demographics and market trends
- Changing climate from greenhouse gas emissions that may result in the erosion of winter sports and snow-based activities
- Dependence on limited and increasingly costly natural resources such as energy for visitor travel and resort operations
- Health issues, currently known and unknown, from substances that build up in nature and pollute air, soils and water

A new way of planning is required that focuses on building a forward looking and adaptable resort community, integrating innovative solutions to address local and global challenges from a systems perspective. Recognizing external trends and understanding their potential impacts is a critical part of this strategic plan. Whistler 2020 strategies include actions that influence these trends where possible, as well as actions that position Whistler to adapt to impacts and take advantage of related opportunities. For example, the strategies take steps toward addressing climate change through actions such as use of greener energy sources, carbon offset programs and energy efficiency

Why do we need a Healthy Economy?

A strong, healthy economy is an essential component of a healthy community, today and into the future. While economic activity and sustainability are often seen as conflicting objectives, in reality, they can be complementary. They are linked and one cannot be achieved without the other. Maintaining economic health and vitality is a powerful strategy for achieving sustainability. The outcomes of economic activity help pay for meeting social needs and for implementing strategies that reduce and restore negative impacts on nature. On the other hand, without a healthy environment and a strong social fabric, ongoing economic activity cannot successfully take place. In this way, economic systems and sustainability principles reinforce and support one another. Whistler's economic health and continued renewal is

initiatives.

Whistler – Yesterday and Today

The story of Whistler is about place, people and an Olympic dream.

Whistler is a special place, nestled among the snow-capped Coast Mountains, surrounded by natural beauty and defined by forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Only 120 kilometers north of one of Canada's largest urban areas, and 40 kilometers inland from the Pacific Ocean, Whistler provides a west-coast mountain experience with snowy winters and moderate temperatures.

The Coast Salish First Nations first inhabited the land surrounding Whistler for thousands of years, hunting and gathering to support their nomadic lifestyles. The valley itself was an isolated wilderness, frequented by the Lil'wat Nation from the Mount Currie area and the Squamish Nation. In 1877, a trail was completed, linking the Pemberton Valley to the Pacific coast, drawing prospectors and trappers. One trapper, John Millar, enticed Myrtle and Alex Philip from Vancouver to the north shore of Alta Lake. There they built the successful Rainbow Lodge, which became the most popular honeymoon spot west of Jasper by the 1940s. The tiny community of Alta Lake was lively and sociable throughout the mid-century. In the 1960s, a group of Vancouver businessmen launched a bid to host the 1968 Olympic Winter Games. The bid failed, but the dream spurred one member, Franz Wilhelmsen, to open the Garibaldi Lift Company on the west side of Whistler Mountain in 1966. Avid skiers began the trek up the old hydro road, paved that same year, and built A-frame cabins around the Whistler Creek base.

By the mid '70s, local visionaries, again dreaming of the Olympics, began plans for an international mountain resort. The second bid failed, but Whistler Village, along with Blackcomb Mountain and the north side of Whistler Mountain opened for business in December 1980. Times were lean in the early '80s, but the economy picked up and by 1992 Whistler was named the Number One Ski Resort in North America by Snow Country Magazine.

The accolades continued, as locals strategized and planned their growing resort community, adding summer amenities and a mix of recreational pursuits. Whistler grew to almost 10,000 permanent residents and around two million annual visitors.

And today, the resort community, and its partners, including the Lil'Wat and Squamish First Nations, are working on their Olympic legacy. On July 2, 2003, the dream at last came true, as 5,000 cheering residents jammed Village Square to hear the International Olympic Committee select Vancouver/Whistler to host the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

OUR VALUES AND SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

What We Value

Our values are the foundation for all we do. They represent what is important to us as a resort community. Guided by our values, we are able to make difficult decisions about Whistler's future, and formulate the priorities and actions necessary to achieve our vision.

- A sustainable community – where social and ecological systems are sustainable and supported by a healthy economy, today and in the future.
- A strong, healthy community – where the needs of residents are met, where community life and individual well-being are fostered, where the diversity of people is celebrated, and where social interaction, recreation, culture, health services and life-long learning are accessible.
- A well-planned community – where growth and development are managed and controlled.
- Our natural environment – and our role as responsible stewards of it, respecting and protecting the health of natural systems today and for generations to come.
- A strong tourism economy – where a healthy, diversified tourism economy is sustainable through thoughtful, long-range planning, strategic marketing and business partnerships.
- A safe community – where diverse residents and guests are comfortable and secure.
- The people who live, work and play here – our families, children, neighbors, colleagues and friends.
- Our guests – and our desire to provide exceptional service in all we do.
- Our partners – and the positive, co-operative relationships that recognize the values of all the communities in the corridor.

Our Sustainability Principles

Whistler aspires to achieve environmental and social sustainability, and a healthy economy, locally and globally. What does sustainability actually mean for Whistler, and for society?

To strategically progress toward sustainability, Whistlerites need a shared understanding of what sustainability is, and a compass to frame and guide decision-making and planning.

In 2000, the resort community adopted the Natural Step framework (TNS framework) to guide its progress toward sustainability. The TNS framework is a 'systems perspective lens' for looking upstream to understand and plan for a sustainable society. It covers all aspects of sustainability, where the ultimate goals are social and ecological sustainability, and a vibrant economy is the means to ensure that we achieve these goals. The framework helps us to understand the state of our currently unsustainable community and society; provides us with basic principles that define minimum requirements for a sustainable society; and outlines a planning process for moving forward.

While there are many unknowns about Whistler's future, we do know the four basic TNS principles that we need to respect for this future to be sustainable. These were developed by identifying the ways that humans destroy natural and social systems. These mechanisms were then changed to principles that specify how to avoid this destruction. They are based on scientific consensus, are concrete and non-overlapping, define our sustainability goals, and guide our thinking and planning.

As with any goal, the best way to achieve it is to envision ultimate objectives and then take step-by-step actions to get there. This process is called backcasting*.

Sustainability Principles

In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing:

-  1. concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust;
-  2. concentrations of substances produced by society;
-  3. degradation by physical means, and in that society,
-  4. people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs.

Whistler will take steps to move toward four ultimate sustainability objectives, based on the TNS sustainability principles. These are to eliminate Whistler's contribution to:



Progressive build-up in concentrations of waste derived from the Earth's crust. For example, the resort community transitions to renewable energy* sources for transportation and heating.



Progressive build-up in concentrations of materials produced by society. For example, the resort community implements community-wide landscape management standards that eventually eliminate the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.



Ongoing physical degradation of nature. For instance, the resort community uses eco-certified building materials (e.g., sustainably harvested wood).



Undermining of other people's ability to meet their needs. For example, the resort community uses resources more efficiently and addresses resident affordability issues.

The non-prescriptive nature of Whistler's sustainability objectives should help to unleash the creativity of all Whistlerites in identifying opportunities for moving toward sustainability. The resort community has used these objectives to develop *Whistler 2020* and encourages their use in all decision-making.

Recognizing and Managing Tradeoffs

As we strive toward social and environmental sustainability and a healthy economy in the long-term, we recognize that there will be short-term tradeoffs along the way. Tradeoffs occur when a step toward one aspect of success and sustainability means a lack of progress toward, or even a short-term step away from another element of success and sustainability. Therefore, tradeoffs must be short-term and the initiatives that cause tradeoffs must be stepping-stones for future progress toward sustainability so that the tradeoff can eventually be avoided completely. These tradeoffs must also be managed to ensure that *critical* aspects are not compromised.

For example, sufficient and affordable housing for residents is fundamental to a healthy and socially sustainable community. However, building more housing to accommodate residents often requires the development of natural areas. This tradeoff is sometimes necessary to maintain the vibrancy and economic vitality of the resort community. At the same time, encroachment on critical natural areas must be

OUR VISION

This is what we aspire to be. It helps guide our actions and strategic planning over time.

Whistler will be the premier mountain resort community
– as we move toward sustainability

We are committed to achieving social and environmental sustainability and a healthy economy. We will continue to build a thriving resort community that houses 75 percent of the workforce in Whistler. We will continue to offer world-class recreational and cultural opportunities for our visitors and residents. We will foster sustained prosperity in our local tourism economy and retain our local businesses. We will continue to strive to protect the ecological integrity of our natural environment. We will meet the social, health and learning needs of residents and visitors. We will be a safe community that provides peaceful enjoyment of our activities and places. We will foster cooperation between regional communities and the provincial government on initiatives to expand prosperity and well-being for all. We will monitor our performance at achieving Whistler's vision and report back to the community on an ongoing basis.

Framed by our priorities, Whistler's vision steps us forward 15 years and we imagine Whistler as though we are living in the future. By 2020, the Whistler community has achieved a comfortable stability, in which a close-knit population of permanent, short-term, and part-time residents work and recreate, sharing their passion and life experience with visitors from the region and around the world. The rapid growth and change that took place as the resort achieved international prominence through the 1990s and early 2000s transitioned into a period of slower, managed development with a focus on economic viability, affordability and protection of the community character and surrounding environment. Every strategy, program, policy and partnership, indeed most day-to-day actions, is assessed and evaluated using the principles of sustainability as defined by the Natural Step framework. Whether it is delivering affordable housing and recreation and leisure activities or building and operating infrastructure to planning land uses, the

community is working together to ensure we preserve our natural and social capital, and to protect our economic engine as we move toward the year 2020.

OUR ENRICHING COMMUNITY LIFE

In the year 2020, the community is attractive and liveable with a strong social fabric, as the majority of the local workforce and many long-time members of the community make Whistler their home. Residents are able to access and enjoy Whistler's wide range of activities and amenities, the very reason they were drawn here. They mix with visitors in the village and on the mountain, sharing in the resort vibrancy and cosmopolitan atmosphere.

To ensure that locals can enjoy life in Whistler, a supply of resident employee housing was planned and built in phases as needs were demonstrated through the results of the Whistler 2020 annual monitoring program. This includes a mix of resident housing types with a range of prices offering affordable options to both short-term and long-term employees* over time. This new resident housing helped achieve the overall goal of maintaining 75 percent of Whistler's employees living in the resort community, and has remained within the 6,650 resident housing bed units allocated through Whistler 2020 as a maximum for new housing.

As preferred by the majority of the community in 2004, community vibrancy has been maintained by securing resident housing within the existing corridor between Function Junction and Emerald Estates. This type of relatively compact development has avoided excessive urban sprawl into natural areas, reduced commuter congestion on the highway, and helped to reduce Whistler's greenhouse gas emissions. New development locations preserve important open space and natural buffers that maintain the mountain character and ecological systems. Enhancements, upgrades and renovations have kept Whistler's neighbourhoods appealing and liveable.

To pay for resident housing, a variety of tools were developed. Each resident housing project was evaluated on its particular circumstances. The

A Diversity of 'Resident Employee Restricted Housing'* Types

Meeting the diverse housing needs of Whistler employees* will require both rental and ownership opportunities ranging from apartments and townhouses, to duplexes, single family dwellings and seniors housing. Within these types, there is a range of price-point and tenure options. Covenant options include occupancy, price and rent restrictions. The purpose of these restrictions is to ensure

appropriate range of financial tools was carefully considered and the public was consulted. The first resident housing beds were secured in existing subdivisions through expanded non-cost housing initiatives, such as duplexes, lot splits and multiple suites. At least 1,000 bed units have been secured through this initiative since 2004, meeting the resort community's non-cost initiative goals. As well, privately owned and Crown land sites were identified and analyzed using environmental assessments and smart land use planning principles*. A housing needs assessment was conducted and a strategy prepared. Housing development commenced as the needs were determined, which resulted in pockets of housing within and adjacent to established neighbourhoods, such as those between Alpine and Emerald as well as the new neighborhood in the Lower Cheakamus.

The new and expanded neighbourhoods were designed for liveability, with live-work* opportunities, common gardens, playgrounds, parks and access to nature that make Whistler a desirable place to live, and draw enthusiastic and community-oriented residents. The neighbourhoods are mixed-use*, compact and pedestrian friendly, offering easy access to convenience retail, community facilities, transit and connections to the Valley Trail. Creatively placed community spaces encourage personal interaction. The new neighbourhoods, built in phases, were buffered from any existing subdivisions and preserved trails and ecologically sensitive areas. The design of the transportation thoroughways, including roadways, pathways and trails connecting to the established neighbourhoods, reduces traffic volumes and speed, preserving the character and pace of life for both old and new. The Lower Cheakamus, planned as a complete neighbourhood, first served as the Athlete Village for the 2010 Winter Games and was later expanded based on the neighbourhood plan and the demand for additional housing. Building recreation amenities and playing fields on the reclaimed landfill site avoided development of another ecologically intact area. The neighbourhood's playfields, indoor community facilities, services and retail options reduce reliance on automobile travel for daily needs.

These new buildings and model communities are recognized demonstration areas for progressive urban design techniques and building best practices. They were built to high performance green building standards and established close to existing infrastructure, services and amenities to maximize convenience and minimize costs and environmental impacts. New and

innovative design standards have improved the efficiency of indoor and outdoor living spaces, and fostered ecologically sensitive and healthy dwellings. Whistler Green, Whistler's new green building standard, has been applied to new buildings and renovations.

Systems and infrastructure that support resort community services (e.g., water, energy, transportation) demonstrate best practice in sustainable design and technologies, mimicking natural systems as much as possible to protect ecosystem* integrity. The community is recognized for ambitious and innovative demand-side management programs that reduce the quantity of services required as much as possible, before investing in expensive infrastructure to provide more supply. Energy and transportation systems are reliable, affordable and use clean* and renewable* resources wherever possible. Water is supplied and treated efficiently and sustainably, and the effluent leaving the system is approaching fresh water quality as treatment techniques are advanced. As a result, Whistler enjoys excellent air and water quality, and residents and visitors have access to affordable municipal services.

The community has addressed other aspects of affordability in addition to housing. A variety of strategies pursued over the past 15 years by Whistler businesses and organizations have provided opportunities for residents to shop and recreate locally, within their means. Affordability initiatives also extend to the cost of recreation, childcare, food, learning, training and transportation. The Whistler Card* continues to be a popular choice for locals to access discounts at Whistler establishments.

Families are choosing Whistler so that their children may participate in the healthy school climate. The resort community's education system is designed to support students who are striving to achieve excellence in all aspects of education, including fine arts, athletics, academics, trades and technology, along with personal growth, self esteem and individuality. Lifelong learning* opportunities have expanded for both residents and visitors, and the Whistler Public Library, the Museum, MY Place and the Whistler Centre for Sustainability are hubs for these activities. Many creative learning opportunities are available, such as speaker series, conferences, post-secondary courses and community forums, providing opportunities for

interaction between the community and resort members, both online and at local facilities.

Our focus on health has evolved to treating the physical body, mind and spirit holistically, and the community made the connection between a healthy environment and healthy people long ago. Our programs promote healthy lives and communities – complete physical, mental and social well-being, not only to residents, but also to visitors. Whistler’s medical health system is viable and provides high-quality service that meets the diverse needs of residents and visitors. The community’s focus on general well-being is a natural extension from its roots in recreation and staying active. The resort community demonstrates its preference for recreation that, if motorized, is quiet and uses clean energy*.

Public safety and peaceful enjoyment of local activities and places are primary objectives, and a number of successful and innovative initiatives such as First Night, are in place in the village. Programs foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, through partnering with business and engaging short-term and permanent residents in village life. In the residential neighbourhoods, individuals and families support and know each other, maintaining a sense of security and well-being. Nightly rentals in residential neighbourhoods continue to be limited and guided by clear policy.

Residents’ spirit and pride, indeed Canadians’ pride, in Whistler grew as the 2010 Olympics approached. Post Olympics, Whistler was recognized for hosting the most successful sustainable winter Games and advancing the sustainability of Olympic events and venues, while preserving the community’s unique character and natural splendor. Years later, residents are proud of their community’s ongoing hosting of world-caliber sport, arts, culture and learning events, that draw locals and visitors alike. The volunteerism that was nurtured over the years continues as a Whistler legacy, contributing to the resort community’s strong social fabric and engaged community members.

Along with creating lasting legacies, the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games also brought accessibility to the forefront of Whistlerites’ consciousness. Emphasis has been placed on meeting the needs of all ages and abilities.

Our Directions

The community is vibrant and attractive; there is a sense of community pride and spirit

- A diverse resident base exists that is of sufficient size to maintain a vibrant resort community
- Cultural heritage and history are retained and celebrated
- Natural areas and features that are important to residents are protected
- The built environment is attractive and reflects the community's character and the natural environment
- Community spaces facilitate opportunities for personal interaction
- Local creativity, ideas and achievements are celebrated and communicated
- A variety of opportunities exist for residents to participate in community activities
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The resort community is affordable and liveable to both permanent and short-term residents and employees

- A sufficient quantity and range of affordable, convenient and accessible housing is available for permanent and short-term residents
- Residents have access to affordable goods and services that meet their needs
- Diverse and affordable opportunities for recreation, leisure, arts and culture exist
- Food is healthy and affordable, and production and distribution systems protect the natural environment.
- Working and living conditions support healthy, balanced lifestyles
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

Social, spiritual and physical health programs meet the diverse needs of groups and individuals within the resort community

- Diverse and affordable lifelong learning* opportunities exist
- Opportunities for religious and spiritual pursuits are available
- A viable health care system meets the needs of residents and visitors
- Social services and informal networks support the well-being of community members
- The community is safe for both residents and visitors

- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

Land use and infrastructure systems are integrated to protect biodiversity* and meet basic needs

- Infrastructure systems mimic natural processes and protect natural areas and biodiversity
- Developed areas are designed and managed to be sensitive to the surrounding environment and avoid continuous encroachment on nature
- Local air and water quality is above required standards
- The important link between land use and sustainable transportation patterns is respected and integrated into all land-use planning decisions
- Energy supply is affordable, reliable and sustainable
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

OUR Enhancing The Resort Experience

In the year 2020, the resort experience continues to exceed expectations. From the moment visitors communicate with the resort about their trip until their return home, they are impressed by the seamless services provided by Whistler. New visitors, drawn by the resort community's unique and authentic sense of place, and diverse and continually renewed offerings, return for many more visits. Services are provided at a range of price points and offer excellent value. These features, along with our world-class infrastructure and legacies from a successful Winter Olympic Games, have helped to build and preserve Whistler's international position and reputation in the marketplace.

The municipality, Tourism Whistler, the Chamber of Commerce, One Whistler, Whistler Blackcomb, First Nations and other local groups and organizations continue to work together to develop and implement innovative and effective economic strategies and partnerships. These strategies were developed by understanding external trends that influence the economy and Whistler's attractiveness as a destination resort*. Having a better understanding of these factors and working together to build an adaptive resort community, we have been able to continually position Whistler as the destination of choice. As a result, Whistler has remained at the leading edge of tourism trends and customer service.

The resort is appealing, lively and vibrant. The village, Creekside and other amenities continue to evolve, with enhancement projects, public art installments, reinvestment in properties and a high level of ongoing maintenance. Visitors are greeted and guided by volunteers with the Village Host program, and enjoy the Village Kiosks that provide an interactive information link to the Whistler web site. Centralized concierge services offer a convenient meeting place with one-stop problem solving and check-in services.

Whistler is an international leader in recreation. Lakes, trails, ski areas, golf courses and other amenities exhilarate all who use them. A variety of

recreation opportunities and amenities contribute to Whistler's appeal, bringing world-class sporting events to the resort on a regular basis. The resort community's array of facilities have been supplemented with Olympic legacies, such as the Whistler Sliding Centre, the Whistler Nordic Skiing and Biking Centre, as well as a second ice rink. The range of products and services, which are strategically and sensitively located throughout the resort community, contribute toward economic viability and an enhanced mountain resort experience. Numerous backcountry areas are easily accessible, where residents and visitors can enjoy a quiet walk, snowshoe or hike. The Sea to Sky trail provides non-motorized access to a corridor-wide network of attractions for mountain bikers, hikers and snow sport enthusiasts. End-of-trip stations provide welcomed shower and change facilities and places to store bikes for commuters and recreationists alike.

Internationally known for the arts along with recreation, residents and visitors alike enjoy the original and diverse expressions of culture unique to Whistler. Courses inspire young artists and continue to build and expand skills and ideas. Art has truly become part of the resort community's identity, and on any given day in the village, one may stroll through a local heritage festival, past entertainers and intricately designed buildings, to the Whistler Museum, MY Place and public galleries. First Nations culture is authentically shared in engaging ways, and our place in nature is celebrated to foster learning and caring for the environment. Organizations and people continue to work together to grow and communicate arts, culture and heritage opportunities in Whistler, which have become another economic engine for the resort. Departing visitors return home with an appreciation of these experiences and a greater understanding of sustainability.

Whistler's customer service exceeds expectations through initiatives such as the Village Host* and Whistler Spirit* programs and the Whistler Card*. Employee Welcome Week* activities have been expanded and help to connect new employees to the community and permanent residents, and to create engaged and responsible citizens and resort ambassadors. The resort experience is accessible to diverse visitors, including aging and physically disabled individuals.

Travel to, from and within Whistler is safe and seamless, and a highlight of the visitor experience. The Sea to Sky highway provides a spectacular journey, and road improvements contribute to this experience and increased safety. The variety of transportation alternatives and operators has been expanded, including rail service that has enabled Whistler to attract the cruise industry. Air carriers service the Whistler area and for those arriving from international destinations, the new and significant presence at the Vancouver airport ensures speedy transfers to Whistler-bound transportation. At the outskirts of Whistler, a new welcome center prepares visitors for their arrival at the resort. Fewer and fewer visitors rely on cars and those who do tend to park them for the duration of their stay, preferring the convenience and affordability of Whistler's public transit system and the scenery offered by the Valley Trail for travel within the resort community. The transportation systems are powered primarily by clean and renewable energy*, and Whistler encouraged and supported this transition from dependence on fossil fuel. While supporting technological progress toward more sustainable transportation, the resort recognizes the negative impacts of air travel, and has established a number of innovative initiatives to minimize impacts, including a carbon offset program that engages visitors and residents.

Our Directions

The sense of place that makes the resort community experience special and unique is respected and enhanced

- The built environment is attractive and reflects the community's character and the natural environment
- Cultural heritage and history are retained and celebrated
- The scenic quality of the natural landscape is protected
- The village center invokes a feeling of excitement and hosts a variety of activities for everyone to enjoy
- Visitors and community members interact and share experiences
- A vibrant and diverse resident base exists
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

Visitors are offered a resort experience that exceeds their expectations

- Visitors feel genuinely welcome

- The retail, hospitality and activity experience is unique, diverse, imaginative and continually renewed
- Visitors are offered good value and high quality services and products at a range of price points
- Visitors have many opportunities to actively learn about the resort community, the natural environment and First Nations culture
- Visitors can readily immerse themselves in nature, free from noise, light and air pollution
- A comfortable carrying capacity* of the resort, its amenities and the surrounding natural environment is defined and respected
- The resort is safe, clean and well-maintained
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The seamless journey to and within the resort is an important part of the visitor experience.

- Regional partnerships enhance the journey to the resort as part of the experience
- Virtual travel to and communication with the resort is seamless and convenient
- The journey to, from and within the resort community is safe, seamless, enjoyable and affordable
- Transportation alternatives are promoted and supported that minimize the impacts of visitor travel
- Walking, cycling and other non-motorized transportation options within Whistler are prioritized in policy planning and development
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

OUR Protecting the Environment

In 2020, Whistler residents continue to understand the importance of the natural environment to the success of the resort and to the health of current and future generations. Visitors adopt the stewardship ethic held by residents as they see it integrated into everything around them.

A sustainable ecosystem management* approach and the Precautionary Principle* were adopted to ultimately minimize Whistler's physical degradation of natural areas, and where possible, to restore and ultimately maintain ecological integrity and biodiversity*. An ecologically viable network of critical areas* and wildlife habitat with connecting corridors* is protected and remains healthy, along with exceptional scenic and recreation areas. Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping* in Whistler has identified critical areas for protection and further study, and the Protected Areas Network* protects these areas as part of a comprehensive regulatory framework.

The municipal boundaries were expanded to include the Whistler Interpretive Forest and other areas, enabling protection of the surrounding environment to the north and south. Resource, recreation and scenic interests in backcountry are effectively coordinated through planning processes such as land and resource management plans. Environmentally sustainable resource use and an integrated resource management* approach in Whistler's Community Forest are protecting ecological viability*, viewsheds, watersheds, and contributing to the local community through sustainable economic activity. Ongoing studies and monitoring of biodiversity*, habitat suitability, ecological health and user impacts have provided the necessary information and framework for effective environmental stewardship.

Natural features within recreation areas are retained and restored as much as possible, providing important connections between natural areas for wildlife. Native vegetation remains in Whistler's developed and recreation areas, helping to support wildlife suited to these areas while minimizing water use and the need for chemical pest management. Education programs promote a stewardship ethic among users of Whistler's natural areas, and include instructions for the proper use of trails and recreation areas, interpretive signs regarding critical areas*, wildlife and habitat, and natureescaping* information.

Whistler's land use goals are complemented by the integration of sustainable technologies and best practices into all infrastructure and systems that support the resort community. Whistler's water provision and discharge practices and infrastructure emulate natural systems, not drawing more water than nature is able to provide. Volumes of effluent discharged into the

Cheakamus River are lower than they were in the past, and the wastewater is clean and readily assimilated without disturbing aquatic habitat or downstream water uses.

The resort community is committed to its Zero Waste Goal, which was launched in the same year the landfill was closed to provide new resident housing. Visitors and new residents find it easy to recycle, aided by positive communication, education and convenient facilities. Most notice that this is simply “the Whistler way” – for instance, few people buy products without reading the ingredient list first. Whistler continues to be a leader in materials and solid waste management, with progressive pricing structures, educational programs, regulation and other programs such as comprehensive purchasing policies and the Environmental Legacy Fund that directs revenues to support local environmental initiatives. As a result, the resort community’s solid waste stream is continually reduced through purchasing decisions, recycling and composting options, and innovative ways of using waste as a resource. Demonstration projects in the resort community show how the output of one process can be a useful input for another, and have resulted in ideas for new economic development and cost savings. Substances and chemicals harmful to our health and the natural environment are being phased out or managed to continually reduce their emission into nature.

Strolling through town, one can see that Whistler is also an energy smart community. For example, homes and buildings are designed to capture maximum sunlight, some have solar water heaters, and the energy system is moving toward clean and renewable sources. Remote generation facilities are being replaced by on-site infrastructure systems that are integrated into the fabric of the built environment. Innovative energy technology and practices benefit residents and businesses and inspire visitors, who value the creative new ideas that they can apply at home.

Our neighbourhoods, particularly the former Athlete Village, are model communities. They display residential and commercial buildings with innovative technologies and high-performance standards that are healthy for occupants and attractions for learning vacationers, experts and other communities. In different neighbourhoods, one can see green roofs on commercial and residential buildings. Visitors enjoy learning about the simple

and effective methods used to capture and reuse rainwater. The Whistler Green standard is applied to new homes, and older structures have been retrofitted to meet Whistler sustainability objectives.

Whistler's focus on sustainability has resulted in a strong economic competitive advantage for the resort and individual businesses. Innovative businesses and individuals proactively seek opportunities that benefit nature as well as the economy, resulting in a strong health and wellness market, eco-tourism products and other ventures.

Transportation to, from and within Whistler enhances the resort experience for both residents and visitors, and protects the natural environment and air quality. Neighbourhoods are relatively compact and incorporate nodal design, avoiding sprawl and containing encroachment on nature with minimal roadways. They are easily accessed by transit and the Valley Trail. Keen to enjoy the convenience of Whistler's local transportation system, a decreasing number of visitors arrive in personal vehicles, and most that do leave them parked for the duration of their visit. Residents understand the importance of the natural environment and the impact that traffic congestion has on their quality of life and the success of the resort community. Fewer people have personal vehicles than in the past, and if they do, they use them rarely, instead enjoying the convenience and affordability of local alternatives.

The Whistler Centre for Sustainability establishes sustainability programs applicable to mountain resort communities and has positioned Whistler globally as a leader in sustainable practices, developing and sharing pilot projects, training and resources. It continues to build the awareness and capacity of residents and visitors alike to move toward a sustainable future.

Our Directions

The resort community recognizes and manages the natural environment as one of its most important assets

- An ecologically viable network of critical areas* are protected, and where possible, restored
- Use of critical natural areas is avoided and use of surrounding areas is limited to ensure ecosystem integrity*
- Parks and the Protected Areas Network are preserved and enhanced

- Community members and visitors act as stewards of the natural environment
- Resources are used sustainably and efficiently to meet current and future needs of society
- Ecologically harmful substances and practices are replaced with more sustainable alternatives
- Continual learning about natural areas and wildlife informs appropriate restoration and protection efforts
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The resort community protects its air quality, natural waterways, scenic and recreational areas.

- Local air and water quality is above required standards
- Backcountry areas are protected from overuse and degradation
- Developed and recreation areas are designed and managed to protect as much of the natural environment within and around them as possible
- Opportunities exist within developed and recreational areas for people to learn about the natural environment
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

OUR Ensuring Economic Viability

In 2020, Tourism remains the primary economic driver of Whistler's ongoing success. To build and stabilize customer visits, the resort has successfully expanded into ventures that complement tourism and that move the resort community toward sustainability. The resort community partners have tracked external trends such as changing demographics, climate change, globalization, emerging resorts and growing competition, along with other tourism trends that influence the economy and Whistler's attractiveness as a destination resort*. By looking forward and outward, we have been able to positively influence and adapt to these trends, and successfully retain existing markets while capturing new and emerging tourist markets, providing increased destination visits throughout the year. Whistler's resilience and ongoing success is supported by partnerships, leading technology and an educated workforce. Whistler positively affects the lives of visitors, promoting meaningful and vibrant experiences and offerings that are aligned with the resort community's values and commitment to sustainability.

Diverse recreation opportunities continue to be the heart of the resort experience. Whistler Blackcomb's long-term strategy has been successfully implemented, contributing significantly to the local economy and well-being of the community. The two mountains continue to be a mecca for skiing, snowboarding, hiking, and mountain biking.

There are a host of other reasons to come and visit Whistler year-round: from numerous festivals, events, and arts and cultural activities that keep Whistler vibrant and animated, to professional development programs, spa and wellness retreats, lifelong learning* opportunities, eco-tours, summer camps and cooking seminars. The Whistler Conference Centre, the Athlete Development Centre and the Whistler Centre for Sustainability have attracted new markets that return on a regular basis, complemented by a range of accommodations and top-of-the line communications technology. Longer-term learning vacations extend visitor stays and include immersion programs and experiential training opportunities connected to Whistler's areas of expertise, such as tourism, sustainability, and green building

construction and trades. Whistler also capitalized on opportunities presented by changes to the health care system as they emerged.

The Whistler Public Library, Museum, MY Place and the First Nations Cultural Centre are key attractions. Whistler's arts and culture scene has developed to complement and enhance the resort's recreation and leisure focus, contributing to the health of the economy and the vibrancy of the resort community.

Tourism Whistler, Whistler's marketing association, has been successful in targeting destination visitors and positioning through effective brand management including secondary messages about ease of access, the friendliness and safety of our culture, and the healthy lifestyle of the region. These messages have increased and stabilized visitation over the years, along with existing and new attractions, technology and facilities, that contribute to Whistler's year-round appeal.

The 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games provided a tremendous amount of energy and momentum towards Whistler's economic development objectives, with Tourism Whistler capturing new marketing opportunities and the Chamber of Commerce coordinating local business opportunities. Whistler 2020 strategies provided roadmaps for programs and facility development that complement our economy. The legacies from the Games, including the improved transportation network and new facilities, have elevated regional and international interest and activity in Whistler.

Locally owned and operated businesses are key to Whistler's innovation, character and success. They are supported through a variety of initiatives and share resources to reduce operating costs and improve visitor offerings. A range of businesses engage in retail, hospitality and leisure activities offering value at a variety of price points to residents and visitors (see text box). The resort community engages in business practices that contribute to the success and sustainability of Whistler as well as to the region, and has achieved a healthy balance between the number of businesses, recreation, and accommodation capacity

Whistler's Value Equation

$$\text{Value} = \text{price} + \text{service} + \text{product}$$

Maintaining Whistler's value across the full range of price points is critical to achieve economic viability. Resort visitors typically rate their experience by the value received for the money spent on goods and services during their stay. Value is a key consideration in choosing to visit and return to a destination, as well as in recommending the resort

for both residents and visitors.

At a time when many other resorts are struggling due to factors such as affordability challenges, increasing scarcity and costs of natural resources, Whistler is ahead of the curve. Leading in practices that supply affordable housing, and minimize resource needs and pollution, its economic system continues to be successful within ecological and social limits. Local businesses flourish and generate sustainable livelihoods for residents and dollars are spent and circulated within Whistler and the region as much as possible. Businesses purchase many of their goods and services from within the community and the corridor, fostering economic health and providing an authentic and unique tourism experience.

User pay continues to be a municipal financial policy for services such as recreation and utilities, so that the quality of service remains high and operational costs are borne by those who use the services. To ensure that true financial, environmental and social costs are considered in decisions, the resort community has worked toward a full-cost* and life-cycle accounting* system. These and other financial tools ensure that the burden of maintaining infrastructure to the standards of an international destination resort* is

Why a tourism economy?

Why is Whistler focusing on a tourism economy when traditional economic development principles promote diversification across sectors, and when certain global trends appear to be moving in a direction contrary to our tourism focus? There are fundamental reasons why a tourism economy is the right decision for Whistler. Whistler is very different from traditional communities because it was designed specifically as a destination resort and has many specialized tourism amenities. Economic diversification* that undermines the value of these amenities and natural surroundings could irreversibly destroy our tourism economic base. Our tourism focus provides us with strong incentives to protect the environment and community health and vibrancy that both residents and visitors enjoy.

How will Whistler address the challenges associated with a tourism economy?

Economic diversification* compatible with tourism and community values is actively encouraged, to help create year-round economic activity and better use existing facilities and infrastructure. Additionally, Whistler 2020 recognizes global trends such as climate change. As a result of this 15-year strategic plan, the resort community is acting to improve the direction of these trends and, where Whistler is not able to influence their direction, to help the community adapt to a changing environment. Finally, it is important to view economic and social development from a regional perspective and to identify synergies and

shared prudently and equitably among visitors and residents.

Our Directions

The resort community integrates its economic health with the economic viability of the resort

- Long-term investments made in the resort community are protected
- The resort community lives within its financial means
- The cost of maintaining the resort community as a destination resort* is equitably shared
- The core visitor accommodation base is maintained and protected
- A buy-local culture helps to circulate wealth within Whistler and the region
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The tourism economy is diversified and proactively adapts to the changing needs of the marketplace

- Tourism is the primary product of the resort community
- Businesses compatible with community values and the tourism economy are encouraged
- The tourism economy is diverse and continually renewed to attract new and returning visitors
- Continued training and skill development contributes to a stable and adaptable workforce
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The community recognizes recreation and leisure as cornerstone attractions

- A range of year-round recreational and experiential opportunities for all ages and abilities are offered
- High-value activities exist at a variety of price-points and of a quality that exceeds expectations
- The resort community is globally recognized as a leader in innovative recreation products and services
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

Entrepreneurial spirit is recognized as an important component of community vitality and is encouraged to flourish

- Locally owned and operated businesses are recognized as important to the economic viability of the community and are encouraged to reinvest
- Business taxation is fair and equitable
- Diverse and unique businesses engage in retail, personal service, education, entertainment, hospitality and leisure activities
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

OUR Partnering for Success

The spirit of cooperation and support among residents, business owners and other stakeholders* flourishes in Whistler from years of working together and encouraging each other to achieve the shared vision. Whistler partners, including Tourism Whistler, the RMOW, the Chamber of Commerce, Whistler Blackcomb, One Whistler, the Whistler Housing Authority, Whistler Community Services Society, School District #48 and other learning partners, health organizations, environmental groups, as well as arts, culture and heritage organizations work together, along with First Nations, Squamish, Pemberton, the Squamish Lillooet Regional District, and provincial and federal governments and agencies, toward shared goals and mutual benefit. The result is a stronger local resort community and a more sustainable society.

Partnerships are
Fundamental to Achieving
Whistler 2020

Whistler 2020 is a community-wide plan. For Whistler to effectively achieve the plan, it must be owned and actively supported by the individuals who live, work and play here, along with major stakeholder

Community members and interested individuals also work together, in formal and informal networks. Local non-profit organizations are critical to Whistler's success and are supported by an active and engaged volunteer population. Financial support is provided through Whistler's Community Enrichment Program, which funds local initiatives that contribute to achieving Whistler's vision of success and sustainability.

Guiding principles assist partners in decision-making and partnership agreements clearly communicate expectations. Transparent and regular communication promotes clear understanding of and alignment with stakeholder goals and interests, encourages broad public engagement, informed participation and decision-making, and builds trusting, cooperative and adaptable relationships. Whistler's support of grassroots community groups has helped to foster a spirit of reciprocity within and outside of the resort.

Whistler continues to contribute to the success of the region. Effective collaborations are especially noticeable between the corridor communities on initiatives such as the implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy and the Land and Resource Management Plan, as well as the shared commitment and learning related to sustainable community and regional development. A partnership was also established with an emerging resort community in a developing country to share knowledge and Whistler's resources.

The 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games also created a legacy of cooperation among regional partners and all levels of government. Remembered as a key contributor toward advancing sustainability within the Olympic movement, the 2010 Winter Games helped to develop a shared commitment to sustainability and ingrain these objectives in the strategies and plans of all partners.

Working together with neighbouring First Nations continues to build local solutions that strengthen the respective communities. The First Nations Cultural Center is a prime attraction, contributing to cultural pride, Whistler's vibrancy and mutual understanding between the two communities. Whistler also continues to work with other BC resort communities and the provincial government, sharing ideas and finding solutions to resort community issues.

The Whistler 2020 monitoring program tracks our performance at achieving Whistler's shared vision, and publicly reports the results on a regular basis. Every step we have taken was assessed against Whistler's vision of success and the TNS sustainability principles to ensure that we become a stronger and healthier community.

Our Directions

Residents, taxpayers, business and local government hold a shared vision for the resort community and work in partnership to achieve that vision

- Stakeholders* work together to compete in the destination resort* market
- Stakeholders work together on decisions that affect them and cooperate with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations
- Decision-making is transparent and decision-makers are accountable

- Leaders throughout the community have the skills and support systems to implement the vision
- Community members are engaged and have the capacity to support the vision
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

The community accepts responsibility for, and has the interest and capacity to work towards, social, economic and environmental sustainability

- Creative and innovative solutions are sought for issues and learning is shared with others
- There is a commitment to continuous improvement
- The long-term consequences of decisions are carefully considered
- Decision-making considers the community's values and the social, economic and environmental consequences
- Residents understand what sustainability means and accept shared responsibility for achieving progress in this direction
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

Regional, provincial and federal governments understand and support the tourism economy, and the role destination resorts* play

- Tools required to compete in the international marketplace are available and continuously improved
- The municipality participates in policy making and other decisions at various levels of government where relevant
- The resort community works collaboratively with First Nations to support the tourism economy and ensure that they share equitably in the benefits
- ★ The community moves continuously toward meeting the sustainability principles

OUR STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING THE VISION

Whistler's 2020 vision is an inspiring picture of the type of community we want to have in the future. How this vision is implemented is key to achieving success and sustainability, requiring thoughtful and

Our strategies and related actions are contained in Volume II of Whistler 2020, which can be found at www.whistler.ca.

innovative actions identified and delivered through the shared creativity and expertise of diverse individuals, stakeholders* and partners. Key strategy areas setting out how we will move toward our vision have been identified to focus our sustainability planning.

- 1) Resident Housing Strategy: How to meet the housing needs of diverse permanent residents and seasonal employees in an affordable and sustainable way, primarily through resident restricted housing* and including a variety of ownership and rental opportunities.
- 2) Resident Affordability Strategy: How to make living and playing in Whistler affordable for residents.
- 3) Health & Social Strategy: How to meet the health and social needs (including physical, mental, spiritual and emotional) of the resort community.
- 4) Recreation & Leisure Strategy: How recreation and leisure activities for both residents and visitors will be delivered to exceed expectations while protecting the environment.
- 5) Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy: How arts, culture, and heritage will be supported, enhanced and delivered.
- 6) Learning Strategy: How to meet resident and visitor needs for formal and informal lifelong learning*.
- 7) Built Environment Strategy: How to develop and renew buildings, neighbourhoods and facilities that will contribute to making the resort community unique, liveable and sustainable.
- 8) Transportation Strategy: How to move residents, employees, visitors, and materials to, from and within the resort community in a more sustainable manner.
- 9) Energy Strategy: How to meet Whistler's energy needs in an efficient, sustainable and reliable way, while managing greenhouse gas emissions and air quality.
- 10) Materials & Solid Waste Strategy: How to meet Whistler's need for material supply and disposal through the most efficient use and reuse of the most sustainable materials and keeping waste out of the natural environment.
- 11) Water Strategy: How to provide a dependable supply of high quality water in a way that maintains healthy aquatic environments and uses water efficiently.
- 12) Visitor Experience Strategy: How Whistler visitors are welcomed and serviced before their visit, upon arrival, during their stay, and through their departure.
- 13) Natural Areas Strategy: How ecosystem integrity* and biodiversity* will be protected and where possible restored in Whistler and the surrounding region.
- 14) Economic Strategy: How Whistler will create a strong, diversified tourism economy and develop and maintain successful, resilient businesses that help move the resort community toward success and sustainability.

- 15) Partnership Strategy: How Whistler stakeholders* collaborate to ultimately achieve Whistler's vision, as well as the complimentary objectives of partners.
- 16) Finance Strategy: How the resort community will finance the strategies and actions for moving Whistler toward meeting the vision for 2020.

Glossary of Terms

Backcasting: A basic planning approach where one begins with a vision of success in the future (i.e., a sustainable society) and then uses the question “what shall we do to move from where we are today toward our vision?” to identify strategic actions.

Biodiversity: The diversity of plants, animals, and other living organisms in all their forms and levels of organization, including genes, species, ecosystems, and the evolutionary and functional processes that link them. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Clean energy: Clean energy, also referred to as green energy, is defined here as non-polluting energy from renewable sources.

Comfortable carrying capacity: the optimum number of guests accommodated by a resort at any one time, which affords a high quality recreational experience.

Climate change: Warming of the Earth’s climate resulting from the buildup of greenhouse gases (e.g., carbon dioxide, methane) in our atmosphere due to human activities (primarily the combustion of fossil fuels). (Environment Canada)

Critical natural areas: These areas incorporate unique and sensitive habitats such as streams, lakes, wetlands, old growth forests, alluvial forests, riparian areas, and the corridors connecting them (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002). These areas are the focus for protection by the Protected Areas Network (defined below).

Destination resort: Self-contained development providing visitor-oriented accommodations and developed recreational facilities in a setting with high natural amenities. (Jackson County Land Development Ordinance)

Economic diversification: The characteristic of business variety in the economy both across and within individual business sectors.

Ecosystem: A functional unit of any size consisting of all the living organisms (i.e., plants, animals, and microbes) in a given area, and all the non-living physical and chemical factors of their environment, linked together through nutrient cycling and energy flow. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Ecosystem integrity/viability: The soundness or wholeness of the processes and organisms composing the ecosystem. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Ecosystem management: A holistic approach to managing our environment and making land-use decisions. It meshes human purposes with natural systems, always asserting the protection of ecological integrity as its foremost environmental priority. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Employee: In Whistler, this term includes both employees and retirees, where someone is considered an employee if they work a minimum average of 20 hours per week within Whistler. A retiree is someone who was employed in Whistler for five of the six years prior to ceasing employment. (Whistler Housing Authority)

Employee Restricted Housing: See ‘resident employee restricted housing’ below.

Employee Welcome Week: A week-long series of events each fall that welcome new residents to Whistler, connecting these people to each other and to the permanent population.

Full-cost accounting: A process where a project is assessed based on the best available understanding of its estimated social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. These may include quantitative and qualitative measures. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Integrated resource management (IRM): A planning and decision-making process that coordinates resource use so that long-term sustainable benefits are optimized and conflicts among users are minimized. IRM brings together resource groups (e.g., parks, forests, fisheries, wildlife) rather than each working in isolation.

Life-cycle accounting: Assessing the impacts of a product or project throughout its lifetime, from the extraction of material or fuel for power to production, transportation, marketing, use and disposal. (Whistler. It's Our Nature Community Sustainability Toolkit, 2001)

Lifelong learning: All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective. (European Commission definition)

Live-work space: Residential units that have space designed as an office or studio (Smart Growth BC)

Mixed-use: Developments that combine residential and commercial space in the same building or development. Residences above shops and live-work residences (defined above) are examples of mixed-use developments. Mixed-use developments enable people to live close to work and amenities. (Smart Growth BC)

Naturescaping: Landscaping to create ecologically sound, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing urban landscapes through the predominant use, but not exclusive use of plant species native to the region. (Naturescape British Columbia)

Official Community Plan: A bylaw adopted by Council that “a statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan, respecting the purposes of local government.” (Local Government Act)

Precautionary principle: The key element of this principle is avoidance of environmental risk in the face of uncertainty.

Protected Areas Network (PAN): A contiguous network of representative ecosystem types, delineated in a managed landscape. PANs emphasize retention and management of ‘critical natural areas’ (defined above) such as streams, lakes, wetlands, riparian areas, significant stands of old growth forests, a large percentage of alpine and sub-alpine areas, and connections between these ecosystems. (Whistler Environmental Strategy, 2002)

Renewable energy: Energy from sources that produce electricity or thermal energy without depleting resources. Renewable energy includes solar, wind, water, earth and biomass power, and energy from waste. (Natural Resources Canada)

Resident employee restricted housing: This housing is available only for Whistler employees (defined above), which includes family members and retirees. Covenant options include occupancy, price and rent restrictions. The purpose of these restrictions is to ensure that the housing remains affordable to employees over time.

Smart land use planning principles (i.e., Smart Growth principles): A collection of urban development strategies to reduce sprawl that are fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible. Smart growth is development that enhances our quality of life, protects our environment, and uses tax revenues wisely. (Smart Growth BC website)

Stakeholder: All individuals, groups, and interests that are affected by and/or affect Whistler and its activities. This includes the natural environment and future generations.

Sustainability principles: See 'Our Sustainability Principles' on page X.

Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping: This type of mapping stratifies the landscape into map units, according to a combination of ecological features and enables a biological and ecological framework for land management.

The Natural Step framework: A definition of sustainability and a long-term planning approach. See Our Sustainability Principles on page X.

Transportation alternatives: Refers to modes of transportation other than personal vehicles.

Corridors (wildlife habitat): Linear habitat embedded in unsuitable habitat, that connects two or more larger blocks of suitable habitat and which is proposed for conservation on the ground that it will enhance or maintain the viability of wildlife populations in the habitat blocks.

Whistler Card: Provides value and savings at local businesses for Whistler residents and employees.

Whistler Spirit Program: A resort general-knowledge and customer-service orientation workshop (and review) for resort employees, in exchange for a discounted Unlimited Whistler-Blackcomb Season Pass, or 15-day Spirit Pass.

Village Host Program (also known as iHost): A community-based volunteer service that provides way finding assistance and general information, demonstrates pride of our community and reflects a genuine interest in having a positive impact on all visitors to the resort.

References and Contributions

References

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Contributions

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Mike Purcell	Whistler Museum & Archives
One Whistler	Whistler Naturalists
School District #48	Whistler Public Library
Strategy Task Force members*	Whistler Secondary Students
	Whistler Off Road Cycling Association (WORCA)

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