

Council seeks input on OCP

Land use, Whistler's future success among topics up for discussion

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Do you want to have a say in the Whistler's future?

Many opportunities to provide input are coming as the municipality launches a yearlong process of updating the Official Community Plan. Options for public engagement will include everything from surveys and online forums to open houses and other gatherings.

Those who want to get really involved can put their names forward to be considered for a community advisory group, which will be formed by Whistler council over the next month.

"The ultimate outcome is to have the community as involved as possible in this update," said Kevin Damaskie, sustainability coordinator for the municipality.

Though new policies are often made and incorporated into Whistler's existing Official Community Plan (OCP), it has been 17 years since the plan underwent a comprehensive update. The Province suggests that local governments update their OCPs every five years.

But it's not as though Whistler has been stagnant since 1993. In addition to the constant updating of the OCP, the municipality and community has developed Whistler2020 – the overarching vision for Whistler's future. Plus, hosting the 2010 Winter Games was a big local responsibility and the decision was made to put off an OCP review until after the Games were complete, Damaskie said.

The first stage of community engagement in the OCP update process will be a survey and the Après in Action annual event – both set to take place in May. The goal is to get community members to share their ideas and identify areas they want to review in the OCP, Damaskie said.

Though the B.C. government mandates that local councils have the final say on OCPs, the community will have the chance to collaborate and specify what it thinks needs to be in place to achieve the vision set out in Whistler2020, he said.

Topics will likely include such issues as how to protect the environment while ensuring Whistler's economic success as a resort, how to sustain Whistler without the rapid growth of the past, and land-use issues such as where industrial operations should be located in the municipality, Damaskie said.

"This place is filled with people who have vision and idea," he said. "Take your idea and turn it into something that can make Whistler better, more successful and ultimately sustainable."

Over the next year, both Whistler's OCP and the Whistler2020 descriptions of success will be reviewed and updated. The process will bring both documents into alignment and help refocus the tools that will help Whistler achieve its goal "to be the premiere mountain resort community as we move toward sustainability."

Damaskie explained the difference between the two documents as Whistler2020 in the sky as the highest-level, overarching guide, while the OCP is on the ground with the practical steps to achieve the vision. Whistler2020 is policy, while the OCP is regulatory. The goals and values set out in Whistler2020 will guide

WHISTLER cont'd on page 9

> GOVERNANCE

Facebook group protests post-Games party decision

Council's move to spend \$96K called 'asinine'

Whistler lawmakers appear to have had their final say on spending municipal money on a post-Games party. But some locals aren't ready to let it go.

Whistlerite David Buzzard on Thursday (April 8) started a Facebook group to protest Whistler council's decision to spend \$96,000 on an enhanced Canada Day celebration to mark Whistler's success in hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

"Ninety-six thousand dollars for a part is an asinine use of Whistler taxpayers' money," Buzzard, who ran unsuccessfully for council in 2008, wrote in the first post on the page. "I'm so pissed about this I'm at a loss for words, so I started a Facebook page instead.

"At a time when local business is



DAVID BUZZARD

struggling, and taxes are rising, this is an egregious waste of public funds. Write a letter to council, talk to your friends and neighbours, and let the RMOW know how you feel about this."

Another post on the page's first day stated, "You'd think that after a

month of parties for the Games, the people of Whistler would be partied out and ready to get back to their 'real' lives."

As of Tuesday (April 13), 26 people had signed onto the page as fans.

The link to the page is <http://www.facebook.com/pages/96000-for-a-party-is-an-asinine-use-of-Whistler-taxpayers-money/107064029333165?created&v=wall>.

Whistler OCP review launched

Cont'd from page 8

the OCP update.

Whistler2020 and the OCP will be further connected, as 15 members of Whistler2020 Task Forces will be selected to serve on the OCP community advisory group along with five members of the public.

While a year might seem like a long timeline, many communities take far longer to complete and review their OCPs. Damaskie said achieving a draft by spring 2011 will take a lot

of commitment from municipal staff, council and the public.

With many existing policy documents having been created since the last OCP update and the existing Whistler2020 vision, a year should be a reasonable timeframe, he said.

Examples of existing policies that will be integrated into the OCP include the Protected Areas Network, Long Term Financial Plan, Retail Strategy, Whistler Green and other Damaskie said.

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I Priced to Move

2009 Jeep Patriot
4x4 Sport

Black, auto, pwr group, heated seats, warranty,
CAA inspected. P54N1

2008 Chrysler Sebring Convertible



Red, V6, only
15,000kms,
alloys, pwr top,
pwr group,

MO'S PICKS OF THE WEEK

11 Woodbridge, Pemberton

