

RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM REPORT



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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In December 2010, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) initiated a *Service Review Program* as an exercise for senior staff to systematically and critically examine the services provided by RMOW's various departments. The central purpose of the *Program* was to identify ways to reduce net operating costs in the organization (Council's desire to reduce the size of the resort municipality's overall operating budget was the main impetus for the *Program*). Additional reasons for undertaking the *Program* included a desire to:

- sharpen the organization's focus on its "core services" — that is, the services that are deemed to be integral to Whistler's mission as a resort municipality
- give managers and supervisors a tool they can use in future years to periodically assess and make changes to the organization's various operations
- demonstrate to taxpayers, partner organizations and others that RMOW understands, and is taking the steps required to excel within, the post-growth phase in Whistler's evolution — a phase that requires the organization to function at its customary high level, but within new financial realities¹

The *Service Review Program* focused on the *Community Life* department, the *Environmental Services* department, and the *Parks Operations* division of *Resort Experience*. Together, *Community Life*, *Environmental Services* and *Parks Operations* account for just over 70% of RMOW's annual operating budget, and the bulk of the municipality's workforce.

In October 2011, Whistler's Senior Management Team, headed by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), presented the final results of the *Service Review Program* to Council.² On the same day, the CAO briefed staff and local media on the *Program* and its findings. Council, staff and the media were informed during the various presentations that a formal *Report* on the *Program* and its findings would be provided in the coming weeks. This document constitutes the *Report*.

REPORT

The remainder of the *Report* is divided into five chapters. Chapter 2 outlines the approach that was taken to the *Service Review*, and identifies the key elements of the methodology that was followed. Chapters 3 through 5 profile the changes to services, service levels and service delivery methods that were identified for each

¹ The post-growth financial realities are outlined in RMOW's *Long Term Financial Plan*.

² Council received briefings over the course of the exercise.



department through the *Program*. Chapter 6 ends the *Report* with a summary of total cost reductions.

CHAPTER 2 APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the approach taken to the *Service Review Program*, and explains the key elements of the methodology that was followed.

APPROACH

There are two general approaches to conducting a *Service Review Program*.³ One approach relies heavily on outside consultants to examine areas of service and to recommend changes. Under this approach the consultants interview staff and spend time in the department, but ultimately work apart from the department to review service levels and service delivery. The consultants apply their own understanding of the services being examined, as well as their own views and biases with respect to the relative importance of different services and activities in the organization. They make their own recommendations to senior management and Council.

The other approach relies on groups of managers to review areas of service and to make recommendations for change. Under this approach, service review teams of managers and supervisors are formed to conduct the review. An outside consultant is assigned to the teams to guide the process, facilitate team discussions, put forward suggestions, challenge the team with questions, and encourage the group to identify and examine a wide range of opportunities. The approach features collaboration both among team members, and between each team and the consultant. The consultant works *with* the team, not apart from it.

This collaborative, team approach recognizes that the organization's managers and supervisors are the individuals with the greatest expertise in, and knowledge of, the services. The approach recognizes that it is the team that is best positioned to identify changes and make recommendations — recommendations that can be implemented in ways that minimize stress to the organization, the community and the resort.

RMOW's *Service Review Program* was conducted using the collaborative, team approach.

METHODOLOGY

The three departments that undertook the *Service Review Program* followed a common methodology that featured a number of key elements:

³ These types of exercises are often referred to as "core service reviews" in other municipalities.

- *Fundamental Questions* — The *Review*, as noted, set out to systematically and critically assess the services provided by RMOW. For each service, the *Review* put forward three fundamental questions to explore:
 - Should RMOW be providing the service?
 - Is the current level of service necessary?
 - Is the current method of service delivery the most cost-effective?

- *Teams* — Separate *Service Review Teams* were established to undertake the *Review* in each of the departments. Each *Team* included the department's General Manager (team leader), Managers and Supervisors. The Chief Administrative Officer was attached to all teams, as was RMOW's Director of Human Resources and the municipality's consultant. The consultant facilitated all *Team* discussions, oversaw and assisted with research, compiled the *Teams'* findings, and managed the overall process.

- *Fact Sheets* — The first step taken for each department involved the development of a *Fact Sheet* — that is, a document that outlines what exists today in the department. Each *Fact Sheet* set out to identify:
 - the divisions and service areas that make up the department
 - what each division does (i.e., what services it provides)
 - the customers for each service (e.g., community, resort, visitors, others)
 - the main activities that are undertaken by staff in providing the services
 - the number of FTEs in each division, and how this number has changed (or not) in recent years
 - the cost to operate each division, and how this number has changed (or not) in recent years
 - any industry or other best practices that are followed
 - any issues or concerns that complicate service delivery
 - the factors that determine levels of service provided

The *Fact Sheets* that were developed for the departments are attached in *Appendix I*.⁴

- *Workshop 1* — Each *Team* participated in three, half-day workshops over a period of three months (nine months for all teams combined) to explore the fundamental questions put forward under the *Review*. During their opening

⁴ *Fact Sheets* are provided for *Parks Operations* and *Environmental Services*. The research for a *Community Services Fact Sheet* was undertaken and was shared with the *Community Services Team*. The *Fact Sheet* itself, however, was not able to be finalized during the study period because of tight timelines. Thus, no *Fact Sheet* for *Community Services* is included in the *Appendix*.

workshops the *Teams* examined the departments' services against the first two central questions, namely:⁵

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service necessary?

The first question was posed to help *Teams* distinguish between core and non-core services. A core service is one that is critical to RMOW's mission. It is a service, put differently, that must be provided by RMOW in order to fulfill what it believes to be its fundamental role. RMOW's mission, or fundamental role, consists of two key elements:

- to provide basic municipal services — including services that RMOW must, by law, provide — that are required by the local community
- to provide a range of resort-related services that strengthen the appeal of Whistler to prospective visitors, and that enhance the visitor experience (i.e., the *Whistler Experience*)

This two-pronged mission sets Whistler apart from most other municipalities and results in a range of core services that is broader than that in other places. Not all services being provided by RMOW, however, were presumed by the *Teams* to be core services. The challenge for each *Team* during its first workshop was to identify which specific services might not be core, and, as such, might be considered for elimination in an effort to reduce costs.

The second question was posed to challenge the *Teams* to examine the link between service level and cost. In most cases, a reduction in service level leads to a reduction in the cost of providing the service. Also in most cases, however, a reduction in service level impacts the community and/or the resort. For some services, anticipated impacts will be acceptable, and levels can be lowered to produce cost reductions. For other services, however, anticipated impacts will be too threatening to the community and/or the resort. In these cases, service level reductions may not be possible.

- *Workshop 2* — The primary focus of each *Team's* second workshop was service delivery — that is, how services are delivered, and whether the existing methods of delivery are the most cost effective. In preparation for the workshop, *Team* members completed detailed worksheets to identify potential service changes to examine and, if warranted, pursue.⁶ Each *Team*, as a collective, scrutinized the ideas put forward by individuals and identified

⁵ *Environmental Services'* agenda document for Workshop 1 is presented in *Appendix II*. All departments used a similar agenda.

⁶ The *Community Life* worksheet is presented in *Appendix III*. All departments used the same worksheet.

additional ones to add to the list. Each *Team* then categorized its full slate of ideas as follows:

- *First priority changes* — potential changes that appear especially promising and that can be implemented in the immediate future with little additional work
- *Second priority changes* — potential changes that appear to have strong merit and that can likely be implemented in the medium term, but only after some further study and refinement
- *Third priority changes* — potential changes that will take some time to examine properly and, if warranted, implement

In the weeks following each *Team's* second workshop, *Team* members conducted preliminary research on the first priority and, in certain cases, second priority changes. Where possible, cost reduction estimates were developed. The research and estimates were then examined by each *Team* as a whole at its third workshop. Emerging from the final workshops were proposed lists of changes to pursue.

- *Council Briefing* — The proposed lists of changes to pursue were presented to Council in briefing sessions.
- *Presentations* — The final lists of changes for each of the departments was presented to Council at an open (public) Council meeting, to RMOW staff, and to the media at a special media briefing.
- *Report* — The preparation of this *Report* constitutes the final element of the methodology.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

The *Service Review Program* was conducted by RMOW on a department-by-department basis. This approach makes sense since it is within the individual departments that all of the organization's services are housed, and through the individual departments that the services are provided. Inherent in the *intra*-departmental focus, however, is the risk that *inter*-departmental issues and opportunities may be overlooked. Steps were taken to minimize this risk, such as:

- ensuring that each *Service Review Team* included key individuals from outside of the department, including the CAO, the Director of Human Resources and the consultant

- explicitly raising the risk with each *Team* and encouraging *Team* members to identify opportunities that exist outside of, or extend beyond, the department under study

Each *Team* did identify some important inter-departmental opportunities and issues. Examples of these opportunities and issues include:

- the division of planning responsibilities among three departments (*Community Life, Resort Experience and Policy & Program Development*)
- the separation of parks and recreation
- accountability associated with inter-departmental charges that are applied for services provided

These challenges and others will be examined further as part of the planned organizational structure review in 2012.

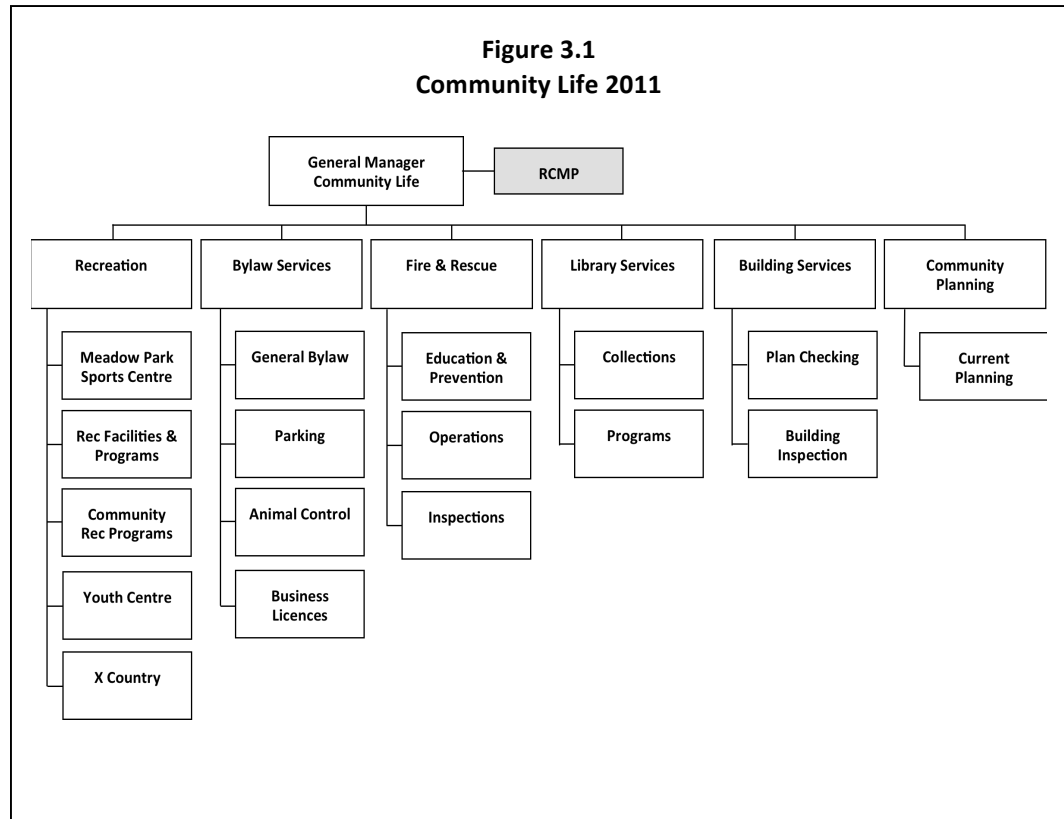
The *Service Review Teams* were not given specific cost reduction targets to achieve, nor were they prescribed any specific changes to make. The purpose of the exercise was to identify, through a critical assessment of all services, potential cost reduction measures that could be pursued by the organization. The *Service Review Teams* clearly understood, supported and were guided by Council's imperative to lower RMOW's net operating costs. The *Teams* also, however, clearly understood, supported and were guided by the need to minimize any negative impacts associated with cost reduction changes on the community and Whistler's visitor experience. The need to proceed with caution precluded an approach driven by set targets, prescribed changes and arbitrary measures.

Finally, it is important to note that the *Service Review Program* represents neither the beginning nor the end of efforts by RMOW to examine municipal expenditures and promote increased efficiency in municipal operations. For many years, managers across the organization have made changes on an ongoing basis to reduce net operating costs. Best practices have been introduced and reviewed, vacant positions have been left vacant pending workload assessments, and staffing levels have been adjusted in an effort to keep costs under control. For many years, as well, all departments have operated within the constraints of the organization's *Annual Adjustment Formula* by finding new and innovative ways to deliver their services. The changes that are being proposed through the *Service Review Program* build on the ongoing efforts of staff to manage costs.

In the coming months, the organization will move forward to implement the changes identified in this *Report*. The CAO also intends to launch a review of RMOW's organizational structure. This new review will include all departments. It will set out to identify the optimum management structure for the organization, and to streamline the organization and its departments, wherever possible.

CHAPTER 3 COMMUNITY LIFE

This chapter outlines the changes identified, developed and put forward by the *Service Review Team* for *Community Life*. The 2011 organization chart for *Community Life* is presented in Figure 3.1



The majority of changes put forward in this chapter can be implemented for the 2012 budget year. These changes are summarized in Figure 3.2 and are described in detail in the text that follows the figure. Other changes, not included in Figure 3.2, will require additional work in the months ahead before action, if warranted, can be taken. These changes, which would take effect after 2012, are profiled later in the chapter.

As its name suggests, *Community Life* provides services that are important to the community and the high quality of life that characterizes Whistler. Changes to these services do have the potential to negatively impact the community or particular elements of it. The *Service Review Team* was sensitive to this potential and considered ways to mitigate anticipated impacts that are associated with the individual changes. In any exercise that aims to reduce overall spending on services,

however, some impacts should be expected. Post-implementation, RMOW will monitor closely the impacts of changes on the community. Where possible, efforts will be made to mitigate impacts and/or help the community adjust.

**Figure 3.2
Summary of Changes to Implement for 2012**

Service Area	Change Considered	Annual Cost Reduction
Recreation	Adjust Cross Country Service & Staffing	\$35,000
Recreation	Change Special Event Offerings	\$6,000
Recreation	Relocate Programmers in Fitness Centre	\$18,000
Recreation	Relocate Programmer from WSS	\$4,500
Recreation	Place Programmers in Other Facilities	\$11,400
Recreation	Bring <i>Recreation Assistance</i> In-House	n/a
Recreation	Utilize Space at Spring Creek CS	\$25,000
Recreation	Lease 1519 Spring Creek to WCSS	\$14,000
Recreation	Amalgamate Recreation Facility Snow Clearing	\$5,000
Recreation	Consolidate Indoor-Outdoor Bookings	TBD
Recreation	Reduce Youth Services (Youth Centre & LUNA)	\$127,500
Recreation	Reduce Sister City Expenditure	\$11,000
Bylaw Service	Eliminate One Bylaw Vehicle	\$5,000
Bylaw Service	Charge Fee for Planning Notice Delivery	\$4,600
Bylaw Service	Revise Fee Schedule for Parking Offence	\$70,000
Library Service	Coordinate Library Programs with Recreation	n/a
Building Service	Update Inspection Fee Schedule	\$180,000
Total Annual Reduction		\$517,000

Total Staff Impact: - 5 FTE

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES FOR 2012

➤ Adjust Cross Country Service Level & Staffing Recreation

RMOW owns and operates 30 km of cross country ski trails in and around Lost Lake Park, northeast of Whistler Village.⁷ In 2010, the municipality's net operating cost to provide the cross country service was just over \$100,000. The net cost in 2011 is expected to be lower; however, the municipality will not reach its goal of breaking even on the service, despite the excellent snow year that was experienced.

The *Service Review Team for Community Life* has identified a number of changes that will help to reduce or eliminate the annual net cost to taxpayers for the cross country trails:

- Reduce the total staffing complement by one seasonal trail groomer position by eliminating the day grooming shift from Sunday through Thursday. The impact of this service reduction to trail users will be mitigated by retaining the Sunday to Thursday night grooming shift so that all trails can be groomed before daily opening times, with patrol staff providing supporting day snowmobile grooming as required.⁸
- Eliminate one seasonal cross country supervisory position by adjusting the supervision of patrol staff. The option of creating a Head Patrol position in the existing staff pool to provide the necessary coverage is being explored.
- Assign responsibility for cross country marketing and administration to Guest Relations staff at the Meadow Park Sports Centre.
- Centralize grooming and patrol services at Lost Lake Park by converting the former ticket booth to a patrol hut and by storing the grooming equipment adjacent to the Lost Lake parking lot.
- Slightly reduce grooming of the trails at Nicklaus North, and change the method of grooming on the multi-purpose sections of trails on the northwest side of Fitzsimmons Creek.

These changes are expected to reduce the annual net operating expenditures by \$35,000. Changes to the service level provided are expected to be minimal.

⁷ The cross country service also includes 10 km of snowshoe and Nordic hiking trails in the park.

⁸ Staff will monitor this change.

➤ **Change Special Event Offerings
Recreation**

Recreation staff plan and host a number of special events each year, such as the Teddy Bear Picnic, Santa Skate, Easter Skate and Toonie Ride Nights. Events that take place within the municipality's facilities are operated on a full cost-recovery basis. Attendees at these events appear willing to pay a modest event fee to cover event costs, including staff time. Conversely, events that are not facility-based do not break even. Attendees at these events are not charged to participate.

The *Service Review Team* recommends that the municipality change special event offerings either by replacing non-facility-based events with new facility-based ones, or by charging an event fee for all events, including those that occur outside of facilities. The total annual savings anticipated are relatively modest: \$6,000.

➤ **Relocate Programmers in Fitness Centre
Recreation**

For a good part of the year the department schedules casual staff to provide a presence at the Fitness Centre, and to assist patrons of the Centre. In total, casual staff are used to provide 24 hours of coverage per week for 34 weeks of the year.

The *Service Review Team* proposes to relocate existing programmers to the Fitness Centre to provide the desired coverage and assistance. This change would allow the division to eliminate or substantially reduce the use of casual staff at the Centre. The change would also benefit the programmers by giving them a higher level of customer contact. Total annual savings associated with this change are anticipated at \$18,000.

It should be noted that there is no legal or insurance requirement to have personnel on site at the Fitness Centre. Maintaining a staffing presence, however, is considered desirable and would be assured through the proposed change.

➤ **Relocate Programmer from Whistler Secondary School
Recreation**

There is currently a recreation programmer located in an office that RMOW rents from the School District at Whistler Secondary School. There is a need for the programmer to be onsite at the School one night per week to run programs.

Apart from this one shift, however, there is no need for the programmer to be at the School.

The *Service Review Team* suggests that the programmer be moved from Whistler Secondary School to office space that the municipality owns. The savings to the department is estimated at \$4,500.

➤ **Place Programmers in Other Facilities
Recreation**

At present, most of the department's programmers work centrally from the Meadow Park Sports Centre. At the various community facilities, facility attendants must be hired to provide the onsite presence that is required when the facilities are in use by individuals and groups. Dedicated facility attendants would not be needed, however, if a change were made to have each programmer do his or her work from one of the facilities one day per week.

The annual net savings associated with this change is anticipated at \$11,400.

➤ **Bring *Recreation Assistance Program* In-House
Recreation**

RMOW's *Recreation Assistance Program* is an initiative through which the municipality provides residents in financial need with credits that can be applied to the cost of recreation admissions and programs. At present, the *Program* is administered on behalf of the municipality by Community Social Services. The *Team* advocates bringing administration in-house under the Program Services Supervisor.

This change, it is anticipated, would enable staff to exercise greater control over expenditures, and would streamline the existing administrative process which has credits for use with *Community Life* being issued by *Economic Viability*. It is also suggested that the change would give staff greater flexibility to accommodate users in existing program slots that have excess capacity, rather than having to schedule new classes that would not be full.

The advantages of this change would be administrative more than financial. Cost savings, if any, would be minor.

➤ **Lease RMOW Space at Spring Creek Community School
Recreation**

RMOW participated with School District #48 in developing Spring Creek

Community School. Under the existing agreement with the School District, the municipality owns a portion of the facility and is able to use its space for community purposes. As co-owner, RMOW must share in the maintenance cost of the School. RMOW's annual share of this cost is \$80,000. For some time, the community space at the School has been significantly under-utilized in large part because of the facility's location. The municipality, as a consequence, has not been able to recover much of its annual \$80,000 expenditure.

At its first workshop, the *Service Review Team* identified the need to identify and explore possibilities for dealing with the under-utilized space. Opportunities to pursue could include:

- developing new program offerings that would attract users to the facility
- transferring the municipality's ownership share (and associated maintenance costs) to the School District at no cost
- re-negotiating the maintenance and usage contract with the School District in a way that lowers the municipality's annual costs
- assigning the management and maintenance of the municipality's portion of the facility to a community group, or consortium of groups, that is able to provide its own programming

At the *Team's* third workshop, an additional opportunity was identified — namely, the opportunity to lease some of the municipality's space to *Ecole la Passerelle*. This opportunity, at time of writing, appears to be most promising, and should allow the municipality to recover a good portion of its costs.

➤ **Lease 1519 Spring Creek Drive to Whistler Community Services Society**

By leasing the former Spring Creek Daycare facility to the Whistler Community Services Society, RMOW would realize a “mothball” operating savings of \$14,000.

➤ **Amalgamate Snow Clearing Recreation**

At present, the clearing of snow from parking and pedestrian areas around Meadow Park Sports Centre, Spruce Grove Field House and some smaller facilities is handled separately, using separate contracts and/or companies, for each facility. The costs are not insignificant: \$20,000 is spent annually on snow clearing at Spruce Grove alone. The *Team* proposes to amalgamate snow clearing duties under one contract, which would be awarded through a competitive request-for-proposal process.

Annual savings anticipated by this change is \$5,000.

➤ **Eliminate One Vehicle
Bylaw Services**

Bylaw Services currently has four vehicles at its disposal. The division could operate at current service levels with three vehicles, provided that officers could have access to one building inspection vehicle on weekends. Building inspection has no concerns with this change. The total annual savings are projected at \$5,000.

It is worth noting that the *Service Review Team* expressed the hope that additional vehicles attached to service groups across the organization could be eliminated through the creation of a vehicle pool. The idea of a vehicle pool specifically for *Environmental Services'* divisions was raised and ultimately dismissed by the *Service Review Team* for the *Environmental Services* review; however, the possibility of an organization-wide vehicle pool was not researched. The *Community Life* General Manager intends to explore the idea further with the Senior Management Team.

➤ **Charge Fee for Notice Delivery
Bylaw Services**

Under sections 892(4)(b), 901(4) and 922(4) of the *Local Government Act*, the municipality is required to notify owners and tenants in close proximity to subject sites (determined by bylaw) of public hearings for rezonings/OCP amendments, Board of Variance hearings, and proposed development variance permit issuances. In order to reach tenants — and, thus, to comply with the legislation — the municipality must hand deliver all notices in the affected areas. Bylaw Officers are used to make the deliveries.

The direct cost to the municipality of using Bylaw Officers includes staff time and vehicle costs. Given an average of 100 notices per notification, direct costs are estimated at close to \$65. Indirect (opportunity) costs consist, primarily, of the net revenue from tickets that would be issued by the Bylaw Officers if they were available during the notice delivery times. Staff estimate these net revenues at \$60 per instance.

RMOW is entitled to recover all of its planning application costs through fees charged to applicants. The *Service Review Team* recommended that Whistler add a new fee specifically to cover the notification portion of the municipality's costs. The fee would be based on the costs noted earlier — that is, \$125 per application for rezoning/OCP amendment, Board of Variance approval, and development variance permit.

The total annual revenue expected to be generated by the new fee would be a function of both the fee level (\$125) and the number of applications in any one

year. Figure 1.2 shows applications for each type of approval over the past three years, and for all types combined.

**Figure 1.2
Numbers of Applications**

Year	RZ/OCP	BV	DVP	Total
2008	12	20	15	47
2009	13	17	15	45
2010	15	18	4	37
Average				43

Using the low 2010 figure of 37, the annual revenues can be anticipated at \$4,625.⁹

➤ **Revise Bylaw Fees for Parking Offences
Bylaw Services**

The *Service Review Team* endorses the view that the existing fee schedule for parking offences is not high enough to act as an effective deterrent to persons who are intent on violating Whistler's parking regulations. Research undertaken by Bylaw Services suggests that the municipality could improve both the efficacy of its parking regulations and its financial return from parking offences by revising its offence fee schedule upwards. The improved annual financial return is estimated at \$70,000.

It should be made clear that this change does not propose increases to parking rates. The change is specifically concerned with the fees that are charged to persons who violate Whistler's parking regulations.

➤ **Coordinate Programs with Recreation
Library**

Both the Library and Recreation provide a variety of programs to children and families in Whistler. Some of the programs provided by the Library are very similar in content to certain programs offered through Recreation. For example:

- *Baby Time* and *Music Together*, offered through Recreation, are very similar in content to *Singing with the Babies*, *Toddler Rhyme* and *Music Mondays*, provided by the Library

⁹ 2010 is believed to be most representative of future years.

The programs are different in terms of cost structure and pricing, and as such tend to serve different constituencies. The Library programs are funded largely through outside grants and are provided a no-cost to patrons, whereas the Recreation programs are provided on a cost-recovery basis.

Differences in cost structure and constituency notwithstanding, the *Service Review Team* feels that there may be opportunities for Library and Recreation to coordinate their program offerings. Savings may not result from coordination; however, coordination may free-up capacity for new programs to be developed and delivered within existing budgets. Improved service could be the result. The *Team* also notes that the Library building has space available that could be used periodically to accommodate Recreation programs.

Library and Recreation staff will work together to identify opportunities for coordination. Any changes would be implemented for the Spring 2012 program season.¹⁰

► **Update Inspection Fee Schedule Building**

Building Services handles all plan checking and building inspection for the municipality. In 2010, the division recovered approximately 55% of its costs. This finding places the division at odds with its counterparts in several other municipalities where building services are structured to achieve 100% cost recovery. The finding also means that Whistler's taxpayers are providing a substantial subsidy to the construction industry.

In its review, the *Service Review Team* explored changes to service levels, costs and revenues in Building Services.

- On the cost side, opportunities to streamline staffing levels will be considered further and, if warranted, pursued.
- With respect to service levels, the *Team* questioned the number of inspections and the inspection turn-around time provided by the division. The *Team* asked staff to undertake comparative research of inspection service levels in other municipalities (e.g., West Vancouver, North Vancouver District, North Vancouver City, etc.). The research revealed that the number of inspections and turn-around time provided

¹⁰ The Whistler Public Library is a municipal library under Part 2 of the *Library Act* and is governed by the Whistler Public Library Board. The *Service Review Team* and RMOW recognize the Library Board's authority over matters of service delivery. Changes proposed for the Library should be viewed as suggestions to the Board, for discussion between the Board and its Chief Librarian (the Chief Librarian participated in the *Review* as a member of the *Community Life Team*).

by RMOW are very comparable to those in other municipalities. Almost all of the municipalities surveyed, including Whistler, provide the same level of service.

- The *Team* asked staff to examine the existing building permit fee structure for revenue opportunities. Staff determined that the existing structure for new construction projects (as opposed to renovations) is considerably out-dated and in need of change.

The issue concerning building permit fees relates to the construction costs that are used by the division to calculate the total construction value on which the fees are based. RMOW is at present using a construction cost of $\$760 / \text{m}^2$, or $\$71 / \text{ft}^2$. The District of West Vancouver, by comparison, uses $\$2,158 / \text{m}^2$, or $\$200 / \text{ft}^2$. The West Vancouver figure is considered to be a much better reflection of actual construction costs.

In West Vancouver today, the total building permit fee for a 2,000 ft^2 new detached home is $\$3,575$. In Whistler, the fee for the same home is $\$1,625$. If Whistler were to update its construction cost figure from $\$71 / \text{ft}^2$ to West Vancouver's more realistic figure of $\$200 / \text{ft}^2$, Whistler's building permit fee for a new 2,000 ft^2 detached home would be $\$4,145$.¹¹

In 2010, RMOW collected a total of $\$99,045$ in building permit fee revenues from new single family construction. If Whistler had used a construction cost value of $\$200 / \text{ft}^2$, the municipality would have brought in $\$281,230$ from this construction. Staff believe that the 2010 construction levels are a good indicator of activity in future years. As such, it is believed that Whistler could achieve these higher annual revenues moving forward.¹²

The *Service Review Team* recommends that the building permit fee schedule be changed for the 2012 building season to include a construction cost figure of $\$200 / \text{ft}^2$ for new single family construction.

The building permit fee issue, it is worth noting, is most relevant with respect to new single family detached construction. Revenue opportunities are less apparent with single family renovations and with other types of construction. It should be mentioned, as well, that the recommended change would improve the division's cost recovery percentage, but would not bring it to 100%. Cost-recovery would stand at 82% under the new fee regime, even with the change proposed to staffing levels. Taxpayers would continue to subsidize the construction industry, albeit at a lower level than at present.

¹¹ Whistler's fee would be higher than West Vancouver's fee, using the same construction cost figure, because of differences in the amount charged per \$1,000 of construction value.

¹² If construction levels were to fall, (further) adjustments to staff levels would be required in an effort to bring the division closer to 100% cost recovery.

➤ **Consolidate Indoor & Outdoor Facility Bookings
Recreation**

At present, Recreation handles all bookings for the municipality's indoor facilities. Bookings for outdoor facilities, however, are booked by staff from *Resort Experience*. This division of responsibilities emerged from the organizational restructuring in 2006 that saw the creation of *Community Life* and *Resort Experience*.

The *Service Review Team* suggests that the existing division is cumbersome and creates confusion to facility users. The *Team* suggests that responsibility for booking both indoor and outdoor facilities should be consolidated and assigned to booking staff who are located at Spring Grove Field House.

To further explore and (if warranted) pursue this proposed change, managers in Recreation will approach their counterparts in *Resort Experience*. It is unclear at this point if net savings to the organization would result from the change. It is felt at a minimum, however, that service improvements would.

➤ **Reduce Youth Services
Recreation**

At present, RMOW supports the provision of youth services through the Youth Centre and LUNA:

- *Whistler Youth Centre* — The Youth Centre is a drop-in facility for youth, ages 13 to 17. The Centre offers users a place to congregate and socialize, and also provides a wide range of information and programs on topics that range from self-esteem to life skills development. The *Service Review Team* acknowledges that the staff at the Centre, and the programs and services they provide, are excellent. The *Team* notes, however, that the number of youth in Whistler who actually use the Centre is not high. The *Team* questions, as well, the notion that the Youth Centre is a core service for the municipality.
- *LUNA* — LUNA, which stands for "Late & Unique Night-time Alternatives", is described on the program's website as:

...an innovative crime prevention strategy that contributes to social sustainability and reduced crime by engaging young adults in meaningful learning opportunities, providing them with healthy nightlife options, and shaping the future of our visitor experience and community life.

LUNA helps to address Whistler's top risk factors which contribute to the development of problem behaviours: community norms favourable towards alcohol, binge drinking and poverty. LUNA's events are affordable, alcohol-free, promote positive values, and are produced and run by young adults in cooperation with local organizations and businesses which believe in these values.

LUNA is supported by a number of community groups and businesses; however, it is considered an RMOW program and receives the bulk of its annual funding from the municipality. In 2010, the total municipal contribution was \$55,000. The *Service Review Team* acknowledges the excellent work of staff and volunteers involved in LUNA. The *Team* also, however, questions whether LUNA is core to the mandate of the municipal government.

The *Service Review Team* recommends that RMOW reduce its financial support for Youth Services by 50%, beginning 2012, for an annual cost reduction of \$127,500.¹³

➤ **Reduce Sister City Expenditure
Recreation**

Like many municipalities across British Columbia and Canada, RMOW participates in a Sister City program that helps to connect communities in different countries. The program helps to build Whistler's profile as a resort community internationally, and provides important educational experiences to local students.

The *Service Review Team* determined that the program, when run as intended, should cost RMOW about \$64,000 per year. In 2011, however, the budget figure for the program was \$75,000. The *Team* recommends that the budget moving forward be reduced to the \$64,000 level.

CHANGES TO CONSIDER FOR IMPLEMENTATION POST-2012

➤ **Adjust Facility & Program Fees
Recreation**

Staff report that facility rental fees and program fees are set at full cost recovery levels. The *Team* endorses this approach but suggests, as well, that the municipality consider changes to recreation fees and charges that include:

¹³ Council has asked staff to work with key youth service providers and stakeholder groups to determine how exactly to implement this reduction.

- higher fees for value-added programs
- congestion pricing — that is, fees that change based on volume of users
- premium facility rental fees that can be charged to user groups who require a higher-than-basic level of service

The department already plans to undertake a full review of its fees and charges in 2013. The *Team* suggests that this review be structured to address the aforementioned points.

➤ **Seek Contributions from SLRD & VOP
Recreation**

Residents from the Village of Pemberton and certain electoral areas of the Squamish Lillooet Regional District make use of Whistler's recreation facilities and programs.¹⁴ These residents pay user fees — as do residents of Whistler — when they attend a facility or register for a program. They do not, however, contribute through their local taxes to the net cost of Whistler's recreation services.

The *Team* recommends that agreements for annual contributions from surrounding electoral areas and VOP be negotiated. It is common across the province for jurisdictions that benefit from a municipality's recreation services to make annual financial contributions to assist with the cost of providing the services. In the event that benefitting jurisdictions are unwilling to negotiate agreements, the *Team* recommends that differential user fees be introduced to charge non-Whistler residents higher program registration fees.

The annual savings to be realized through this change would be the subject of negotiations and are, therefore, not possible to predict.

➤ **Explore Merchandising Opportunities
Recreation**

The *Team* notes that it may be possible to increase revenues by selling facility- and activity-related merchandise at the Meadow Park Sports Centre. The Centre already sells goggles and other items, and also provides a towel rental service (which generates \$18,000 each year in net revenues). Recreation staff will explore opportunities in the coming months.

¹⁴ Recent efforts by RMOW to collect usage data confirm that residents of Pemberton and other jurisdictions outside of Whistler do use (and, therefore, directly benefit from) Whistler's facilities and programs.

➤ **Outsource / Reassign Flag Work
Bylaw Services**

During the past summer Bylaw Officers were used during key events to direct traffic in the day-skier parking lots. This reliance on Bylaw staff is not considered by the *Team* to be an effective use of resources, for two reasons:

- Bylaw Officers' wages are too high for this type of work
- when working as flag persons, Bylaw Officers cannot be enforcing parking and other bylaws — activities that generate fee revenue for the municipality

Efforts will be taken next summer to use less expensive contractors or casual, seasonal staff from other departments for event-related flag person work. Efforts will also be taken to ensure that, wherever possible, all costs of such work are recovered from event organizers.

➤ **Absentee Management Program
Fire & Rescue**

When one of Whistler's professional fire fighters is on an unscheduled absence from work the organization is required to provide coverage by calling-in other professional fire fighters on the force. The department cannot choose to operate with one less fire fighter on shift, since such a decision would violate the existing Council-endorsed service level that requires four fire fighters per shift at all times. The department can also not choose to cover any staff shortages using paid-on-call fire fighters. This decision would violate RMOW's collective agreement with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

The cost to the municipality of calling-in professional fire fighters to cover unscheduled absences is considerable, ranging from \$70,000 to \$140,000 per year in recent years. In some municipalities (e.g., City of Surrey), the union and management work together to reduce periods of unscheduled absence, and to share responsibility over the cost of covering absences. Typically, however, such arrangements exist only in places in which the union is required through the collective agreement to help provide coverage its absent members.

The *Service Review Team* recognizes the challenges faced by the organization in managing unscheduled absences in a cost-effective way. The *Team* also recognizes, however, that the current approach to providing coverage for unscheduled absences is simply not sustainable. The *Team* believes that there is merit, at the very least, in raising the topic for discussion with the local IAFF executive.

➤ **Consolidate Building Maintenance Library**

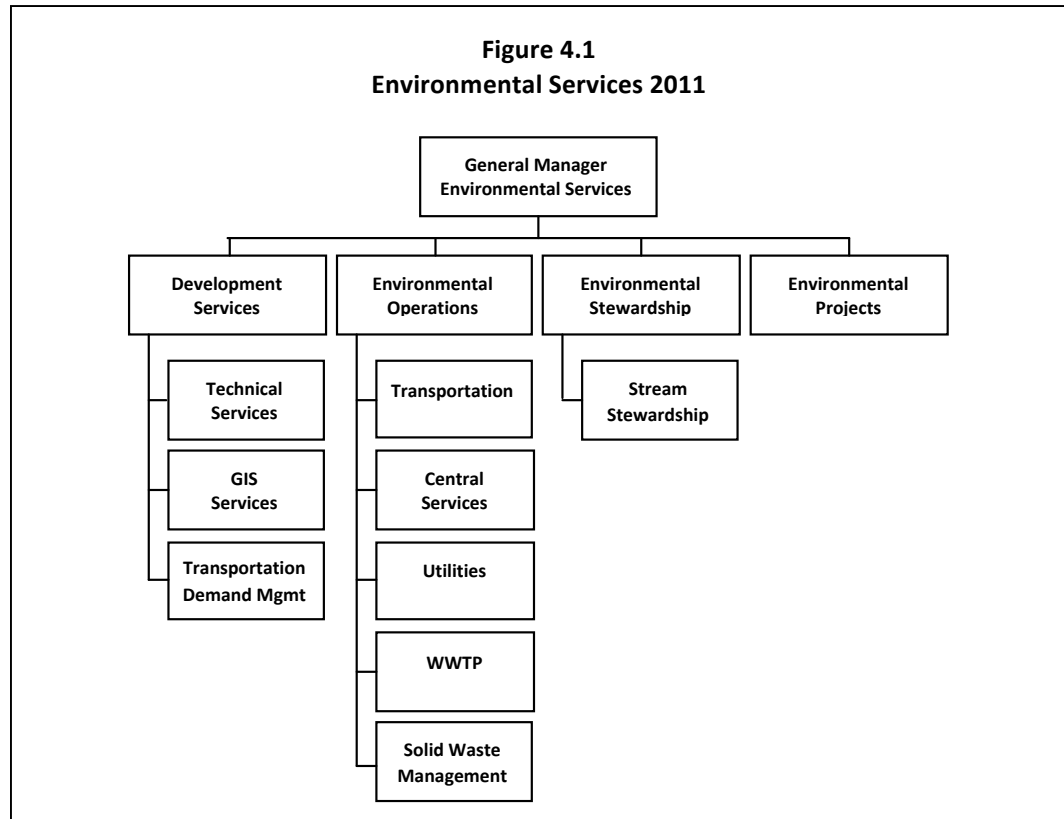
At present, building maintenance (including janitorial work) at the Library is overseen by the Chief Librarian. The Librarian reports that the maintenance efforts consume a disproportionate amount of Library staff time.

The *Service Review Team* feels that efforts should be made to consolidate responsibility for the maintenance of all municipal buildings under the Facility Construction & Maintenance division of *Resort Experience*. Included in this change would be the Library, as well as the various recreation buildings that are maintained separately. Buildings under the control of *Environmental Services* could also be included in the change. At a minimum, it is anticipated that consolidation would result in bringing all janitorial work under a single contract, as well as all HVAC work and other key functions. The use of a single contact for all buildings would be expected to result in savings from the current situation.

This proposed change will be raised with the Senior Management Team and examined further. If the change is seen to have merit, a cost reduction estimate can be developed.

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

This chapter outlines the changes identified, developed and put forward by the *Service Review Team for Environmental Services*. The organization chart for *Environmental Services* is presented in Figure 4.1.



Most of changes outlined in this chapter can be implemented for the 2012 budget year. These changes are summarized in Figure 4.2 and are described in detail in the text that follows the figure. Other changes, not included in Figure 4.2, will require additional work in the months ahead before action, if warranted, can be taken. These changes, which would take effect after 2012, are profiled later in the chapter.

Environmental Services is RMOW's engineering and public works department. It is the department that is responsible for Whistler's basic municipal infrastructure systems and services, including its water and sewer utilities, solid waste management facilities and road network. Changes to these services have the potential to impact residents, businesses and visitors to the resort. In some cases, impacts will be unavoidable — they are a normal and expected result of cost

reduction exercises. In all cases, however, efforts will be taken to mitigate impacts and/or help users adjust.

**Figure 4.2
Summary of Changes to Implement for 2012**

Service Area	Change Considered	Annual Cost Reduction
Transportation	Bring Thermoplastic Inset Capacity In-House	\$38,500
Central Services	Strengthen Role of Stores in Procurement	\$25,000
Utilities	Reduce or Eliminate Participation in Benchmarking	\$25,000
Central Services	Eliminate Automotive Apprentice Position ¹	\$53,000
Utilities	Eliminate Operator II Position ¹	\$47,000
Utilities	Eliminate Instrument Technician Position ¹	\$74,000 ²
Transportation	Restructure Snow Clearing Contracts	\$27,000
Total Annual Reduction		\$289,500

¹ These positions can be eliminated in 2012 through attrition.

² This annual *operating* budget savings of \$74,000 would be offset by an additional annual *capital* cost of \$24,000 associated with the contracted maintenance of the equipment.

Total Staff Impact: - 3 FTE

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES FOR 2012

➤ **Bring Thermoplastic Inset Capacity In-House
Transportation**

Throughout much of the Resort Municipality lines on municipal roads are applied using conventional line painting equipment. On certain roads, however, lines applied using thermoplastic technology. Inset thermoplastic lines are initially more expensive than conventional lines to apply, but are less costly over time (inset thermoplastics do not need to be re-applied nearly as often as conventionally painted lines). Thermoplastic insets also offer safety and environmental benefits over conventional line painting. At present, Whistler contracts out all thermoplastic work to a Vancouver-based firm.

The *Service Review Team* proposes that the contract for thermoplastic inset work be eliminated, and that the capacity for doing the work in-house be developed using newly acquired RMOW equipment and the Resort

Municipality's existing Road Maintenance service crews. Key points on the proposal are as follows:

- The equipment that is necessary to perform thermoplastic inset work was recently acquired by the municipality using funds from *Environmental Services'* 2011 capital allocation (the department has capital monies remaining because of lower-than-anticipated asphalt expenditures). Staff estimate, conservatively, a ten year lifecycle for the equipment.
- Thermoplastic insets would be applied to a high proportion of roads over a four year period — put differently, the program would replace conventional line painting in many parts of the community. Some existing staff resources can be reallocated in 2012 to allow the department to achieve early expansion.
- It is expected that, on average, \$38,500 would be saved each year for the first five years following the introduction of the change. This figure is equal to the annual amount currently spent by RMOW on the contracted thermoplastic service. In subsequent years, savings could be higher for a number of reasons. The durability of insets compared to that of paint, for example, would result in less re-application work which, in turn, would result in less fuel consumption (and lower fuel costs).
- Finally, the *Service Review Team* expects that over time there will be revenue-generating opportunities through the sale of service to other groups, such as stratas. (The first such opportunity actually arose the week after receiving the equipment in early July, 2011.)

➤ **Strengthen Role of Stores in Procurement
Central Services**

Stores is RMOW's purchasing centre. Staff in the centre serve as an internal resource for all departments, available to provide advice and assistance on a broad range of procurement needs. A key role of Stores is to leverage volume purchases from suppliers so that all staff across the organization receive the lowest prices. In choosing suppliers and making purchases, Stores works to promote a number of important procurement-related objectives that, taken together, help to maximize value to individual departments and to the municipality as a whole. These objectives include quality, sustainability, quantity, price, delivery, and continuity.

Stores works best when staff in all departments follow Stores' lead. At present, however, not all service groups take advantage of the knowledge and expertise that Stores offers. This situation results in:

- the likelihood that the best prices are not being obtained
- duplication of purchases
- unnecessary expenditure of staff time
- the risk that RMOW's sustainability and other objectives (related to supply) are not being supported
- the possibility that RMOW is exposed to unnecessary risk when a decision is taken to not award a purchase to a preferred supplier

The practice also complicates the organization's efforts to ensure proper risk management in tendering and other procurement processes.

Strengthening the role of Stores in procurement represents good management practice for RMOW. With a stronger role, Stores could add value by ensuring that it serves as the single voice for the organization in procurement negotiations. Stores would also be able to focus on educating and instructing internal clients on supplier selection, sustainability considerations, quality and logistics. In addition, Stores could periodically assess purchases to verify that clients understand and are engaging in best practices.

A stronger role for Stores in procurement would have the potential to save RMOW money. Over an eight-month period in late 2010 / early 2011, the organization as a whole acquired over \$500,000 in standard goods and services. Stores' staff and the *Service Review Team* feel that if Stores were better utilized across the organization, about 5% savings could be achieved over-and-above existing cost efficiencies. On an annualized basis, this reduction could save RMOW \$25,000 - \$35,000.

The General Manager of *Environmental Services* will be working with staff from Stores to establish specific recommendations for all departments.

➤ **Reduce or Eliminate Participation in Benchmarking Study Utilities**

Each year *Environmental Services* participates in a nation-wide benchmarking program organized by a large, private consulting firm. The program compares RMOW's utility operations against those of other places, and is intended to help the department identify areas of concern or areas for improvement. Participation in the program costs RMOW \$25,000 per year in hard costs (i.e., the fee paid to the consulting firm), and up to \$50,000 in soft costs (based on the significant amounts of time required by a variety of staff to collect the detailed data required for the study).

Managers in the department question the value that RMOW receives from its participation in the study. The *Service Review Team* feels that, at the very least,

the organization should reduce its frequency of participation substantially, perhaps opting-in to the study every three years.

If RMOW withdrew entirely from the program, the organization would save \$25,000 per year (the \$50,000 in staffing time would simply be reassigned to take on other important tasks). If RMOW reduced its participation, the organization would save an average of \$16,500 per year.

➤ **Eliminate Automotive Apprentice Position
Central Services**

In an effort to provide some additional capacity leading up to the 2010 Olympics, Central Services created the position of Automotive Apprentice. The *Service Review Team* feels that this position can be eliminated beginning the 2012 budget year. The incumbent in the position would replace a retiring Mechanic in the service area.

The annual savings to the department, effective 2012, would be \$53,000. This amount represents the salary and benefits associated with the Automotive Apprentice Position.

➤ **Eliminate Operator II Position
Utilities**

Recently the Utilities division decided on a trail basis to not fill one Operator II Position. This position has been vacant for one year, but has continued to be funded. The *Service Review Team* supports eliminating the position on a permanent basis (and, thus, to no longer fund it). The *Team* also supports, however, reinstating a Seasonal Labourer position that was eliminated earlier.

The net annual savings to the department, effective 2012, would be \$47,000.

➤ **Eliminate SCADA / Instrument Technician Position
Utilities**

The *Service Review Team* feels that the municipality's SCADA system could be operated and maintained properly, and less expensively, using service contracts. The existing position in charge of this system, as a consequence, could be eliminated.¹⁵

¹⁵ The existing position is presently vacant, but continues to be funded. With this proposed change, funding would cease.

The net annual savings (staff position minus contract services), effective 2012, would be approximately \$50,000. Savings to the department's *operating* budget would actually be closer to \$74,000, since the monies required for the contract services would be funded, along with all other SCADA expenses, out of the department's *capital* budget.

➤ **Restructure Snow Clearing Service
Transportation**

Snow clearing at RMOW is an expensive core service. It is currently provided at a level that is considered to be quite high throughout the entire municipality — higher, to be sure, than in most other municipalities. Whistler's level of service has been set by Council, however, in response to community survey data that consistently rank snow clearing as one of the services most valued by Whistler's residents and businesses.

A reduction in service level in order to reduce expenditures is not deemed to be possible. A modest cost reduction, however, could be achieved by bringing all public-road snow clearing in-house under *Environmental Services*. At present, municipal crews handle snow clearing on public roads throughout most of the municipality, but not at Creekside, Function Junction or Cheakamus Crossing. Snow clearing in these areas is contracted to a private firm. To date, this arrangement has been necessary in order to enable RMOW crews to focus their efforts on the Village and other residential areas. Staff feel, however, that under most circumstances there is sufficient capacity in *Environmental Services'* Transportation Division to take on responsibility for snow clearing throughout the entire community, and to eliminate the use of a contracted firm.

The private contract cost to provide snow clearing at Creekside, Function Junction and Cheakamus Crossing is \$6,625 per road kilometre each year for the four-month winter period. The cost for RMOW crews to serve these areas would be \$2,600 per road kilometre. The total savings expected from this change changes are estimated at \$27,000 per winter.

Two points are worth emphasizing:

- First, the change to expand the responsibility of RMOW crews is not expected to result in any reduction in snow clearing service level for the community. Staff will monitor the change to ensure that existing service levels — levels that are important to the community — are protected.
- Second, during particularly difficult snow clearing events RMOW would rely on overtime staff to keep up with demand. This reliance on overtime exists today.

CHANGES TO CONSIDER FOR IMPLEMENTATION POST-2012

➤ Introduce Bylaw to Phase-out "Once-Through" Cooling Systems Utilities

Several restaurants and hotels in Whistler use "once-through" cooling systems in their operations. Through these systems, treated municipal water enters the operation, cools equipment, and is discharged into the municipal sewer system. The water is used once only before being discharged; there is no attempt to re-use the water.

A reliance on once-through cooling systems promotes unsustainable water consumption (considerable water volumes are used) and imposes significant costs on the entire water utility. This reliance also results in high peak sewage flows and concentrations, which in turn result in significant added sewage transport and treatment costs. These costs are imposed on the entire sewer utility. A decision to phase-out once through systems would help to lower costs, and would also help to reduce energy use and emissions of water and air contaminants, including green house gases, that are released during biological sewage treatment. These results would support Whistler's sustainability objectives.

In 2008, RMOW examined the need for, and expected benefits from, a program to phase-out once-through cooling systems. The report produced at the time estimated that 686,000 m³ of water were wasted each year by users of such systems. This amount represents 12% of RMOW's 2010 drinking water volume, and 15% of the municipality's 2010 sewage volume. The *Service Review Team* feels that these estimates need to be revisited — put simply, the *Team* does not have confidence in the figures.

The *Team* believes that efforts to address the issue could ultimately save the municipality anywhere from \$200,000 to \$500,000 per year in water and sewer costs. These figures, which are lower than savings cited in the 2008 report, represent broad estimates only. Moreover, the savings would not be immediate, but would be realized over time as existing plumbing systems were replaced during renovations. The *Team* suggests that RMOW study the issue more closely to test feasibility and to develop more accurate and defensible cost saving estimates.

➤ Change Delivery of Solid Waste Management Function Solid Waste Management

Solid Waste Management at RMOW is provided by the municipality using private contractors. The *Service Review Team* believes strongly that considerable savings could be realized by changing key elements within the existing service

delivery framework. The *Team* also believes that even greater savings may be possible by:

- making specific high-value investments such as a covered wood fibre storage and on-site windrowing
- eliminating some or all service contract elements and bringing the delivery of those functions in-house after the current contract expires in 2012

Managers will be working over the next year to evaluate the costs and benefits of the specific investments, and of bringing some or all solid waste functions in-house. In the meantime, managers have identified and have begun to work on changes to make within the existing service framework. These changes are outlined in Figure 4.3:

**Figure 4.3
Potential Changes Within Existing Service Framework**

Change	Annual Net Savings
Where permitted and practicable, reduce the work performed by, and certain costs incurred by, the contractor in order to avoid the contractor's 15% mark-up	\$12,000 (in utility charges)
Revise bio-solid and food scrap fees to ensure that RMOW recovers or avoids the full cost of accepting materials from jurisdictions outside of RMOW	\$100,000 (estimated subsidy to SLRD / Squamish)
<p>Increase the "garbage and mixed waste" fee to adjust for cost increases that have occurred in recent years as a direct result of base utility fee increases and agreed-to service contract cost escalators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · the "garbage and mixed waste" fee has remained unchanged for some time at \$120 per tonne despite underlying cost increases for the municipality, and a low reserve contribution rate · a rate increase to \$130 would generate \$160,000 in additional revenues based on 2010 tonnages · targeting this change to garbage rather than other waste would provide additional waste-diversion incentive to the community 	\$160,000 (increased cost-recovery for garbage)

Based on information gathered to date, the *Team* estimates that if all of the changes within the existing service delivery framework were implemented

savings would be \$272,000 per year. This estimate will be confirmed in the coming months as work continues.

➤ **Introduce Eco-Driving Initiative
Central Services**

Fuel for vehicles represents a significant cost to RMOW every year. Over the past year, managers in Operations have been investigating the development and implementation of an aggressive and multi-faceted eco-driving initiative that would promote fuel efficiency. The *Service Review Team* believes that the initiative, if pursued, could yield savings on an organization-wide level, possibly as much as 10% of RMOW's total annual fuel bill.

The *Team* notes that there are a number of costs associated with the development and implementation of an eco-driving program, including training for staff, and the acquisition, instalment and monitoring of GPS in all vehicles. Over the next year, managers will compile all relevant information to determine if there is a business case to be made.

It is worth noting that the potential benefits of an eco-driving initiative go beyond dollar savings. The initiative could also help to promote RMOW's sustainability objectives, and could contribute towards the municipality's efforts aimed at achieving carbon neutrality. Finally, with its GPS element, the initiative could help managers to better assess staffing utilization and the appropriateness of current staffing levels.

➤ **Restructure Sampling & Lab Functions
Utilities, WWTP & Environmental Stewardship**

The Utilities, Wastewater Treatment Plan (WWTP) and Environmental Stewardship service areas must obtain a range of water samples and perform various lab tests on those samples. The *Service Review Team* feels that there may be some small cost savings to be realized from either combining sampling and lab functions for the various areas, or from outsourcing all lab work. Additional (limited) savings might be possible by engaging groups such as Whistler Blackcomb in the program.

The *Team* cautions that cost savings, if available, would be limited. Nevertheless, the *Team* feels that the proposal merits further investigation.

➤ **Introduce Energy Saving Measures
WWTP**

Managers in various departments have begun to examine opportunities to reduce energy use. Such opportunities include retrofitting buildings with energy efficient lighting, developing micro power generators, and heating buildings with captured waste heat. Within *Environmental Services*, managers believe that a decision to capture and re-use waste energy produced by the WWTP facility would save \$25,000 per year (the capital investment required to generate the savings is estimated at \$125,000). In the coming months, the department intends to conduct the additional research necessary to confirm the value of a targeted program at the WWTP.

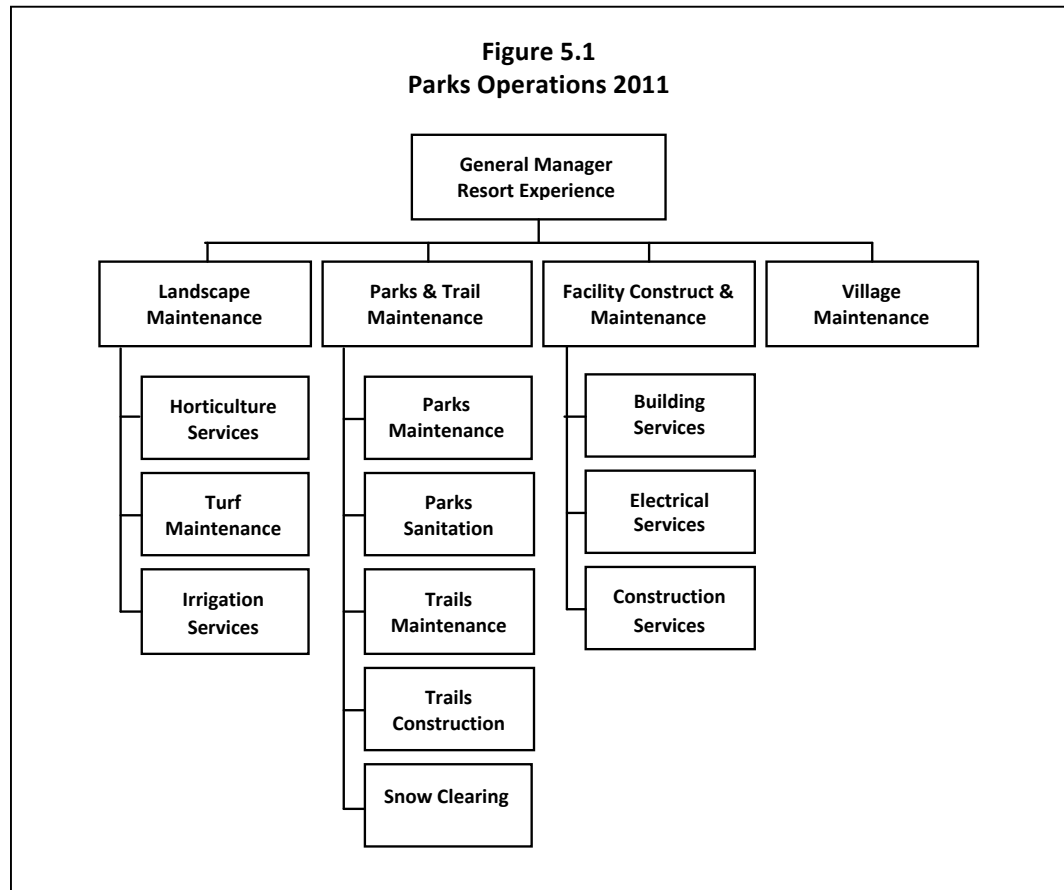
➤ **Capture and Re-use Waste Energy
Solid Waste Management**

There may be an opportunity to capture and re-use waste energy from the municipality's compost facility. The re-use of this energy would enable RMOW to reduce its purchase of new energy (i.e., fuel) and thereby save money. An up-front capital investment would be required, however, to capture the energy.

Preliminary research by the *Team* suggests that approximately \$24,000 per year in fuel costs could be saved. This amount represents a 21% internal rate of return on the required capital investment. Further research is required to confirm the accuracy of these figures. The *Team* is hopeful that the additional research will confirm the value of the initiative, and will pave the way to introduce the initiative later in 2012 or in 2013.

CHAPTER 5 PARKS OPERATIONS

Parks Operations is the largest division in the *Resort Experience* department. Staff within the division take care of Whistler's landscaping (on municipal lands), playfields, parks and trails. Staff also maintain Whistler Village and most civic buildings in the community. The division's current organizational structure is presented in Figure 5.1.



The *Service Review Team* that was established for *Parks Operations* reviewed the various services provided by the division and did find some changes that could be pursued to reduce overall costs. The number of changes and their value (measured in terms of potential cost reductions), however, were quite limited. The *Team* concluded through its review that:

- all of the services in the division are core services made necessary by RMOW's unique mandate which requires the organization to provide services that support both the community and the resort

- the existing service levels are necessary to meet community and visitor service expectations
- modest changes to service delivery methods could be pursued, but, by and large, the existing methods are efficient given the nature and level of the services

In a briefing to Council, the *Service Review Team* reported that within existing service levels only modest cost reductions were possible. If Council wishes to achieve greater cost reductions, existing service levels would need to be reduced. Council asked the *Team* to consider various service level reduction scenarios, and to identify the impacts on the community and the visitor experience that could be expected under each scenario. The *Team* held a fourth meeting, conducted the necessary research, and returned to Council to discuss anticipated impacts. The *Team* then recommended specific service level reductions for the various service areas in *Parks Operations*. These reductions, along with a small number of other changes, are presented in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2
Service Level Reductions and Other Changes to Implement for 2012**

Service Area	Change Considered	Annual Cost Reduction
Landscape	Reduce Horticulture Service Level	\$43,600
Landscape	Reduce Turf Service Level	\$62,000
Landscape	Reduce Irrigation Service Level	\$17,600
Parks	Reduce Parks & Trails Maintenance Service Level	\$39,500
Parks	Reduce Parks Sanitation Service Level	\$21,400
Parks	Reduce Parks Snow Clearing Service Level	\$23,000
Parks	Restructure Parks Maintenance Supervision	\$30,000
Facilities	Reduce Construction Services Service Level	\$25,700
Facilities	Pursue Aggressive Energy Reduction	\$20,000
Village	Reduce Village Maintenance Service Level	\$54,700
Total Annual Reduction		\$337,500

Total Staff Impact: - 6 FTE

COMMENTS ON CHANGES

In all of its discussions around services, service levels and service delivery methods, the *Service Review Team* was sensitive to the fact that most of the services provided by *Parks Operations* contribute significantly to Whistler's visitor experience. The services provided under landscape maintenance, for example, produce the flower beds and greenery in and around the Village, as well as the high-quality sportsfields that are used for tournaments. Parks crews maintain Whistler's range of parks and the Valley Trail that connects them to one another. Village maintenance crews ensure that the Village remains welcoming to visitors, in an excellent state of repair, and free of garbage.

The *Service Review Team* does not support reductions to service levels or expenditures that would risk damaging the visitor experience. The *Team* recognizes, however, that in Whistler's post-growth and post-Olympic phase the cost to provide all municipal services must be reduced. For this reason, the *Team* is recommending that the operating budgets for most services in the division be reduced by set amounts, as identified in Figure 5.2. Staff will work to determine how to implement the reductions so that any impacts on the visitor experience are minimized.

Most of the cost reduction figures identified in Figure 5.2 represent a 10% reduction to the individual service's 2011 operating budget. The 10% reduction applies, for example, to:

- horticulture service
- turf service
- irrigation service
- parks sanitation service
- parks snow clearing service
- facility construction service

The recommended reduction for parks & trails maintenance and Village maintenance is 5%. No reduction in expenditures is recommended for building maintenance or electrical maintenance (neither is shown in Figure 5.2). Reductions to these services would represent false economies.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

This *Report* has presented the results of the *Service Review Program* undertaken by RMOW for *Community Life*, *Environmental Services*, and the *Parks Operations* division of *Resort Experience*. Figure 6.1 summarizes the annual cost reduction that will result from the various changes identified in the *Report*, beginning 2012.

Figure 6.1
Summary of Annual Cost Reductions Beginning 2012

Department	Annual Cost Reduction	Staff Impact
Community Life	\$517,000	- 5 FTE
Environmental Services	\$289,500	- 3 FTE
Parks Operations (Resort Experience)	\$337,500	- 6 FTE
Total	\$1,144,000	- 14 FTE

It is important to reiterate a point made earlier, namely that the *Service Review Program* represents neither the beginning nor the end of efforts by RMOW to examine municipal expenditures and promote increased efficiency in municipal operations. In the coming months, the organization will examine further the post-2012 changes identified for *Community Life* and *Environmental Services*. The CAO also intends to launch the review of RMOW's organizational structure. These efforts are expected to produce additional cost reductions for the municipality.

SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM REPORT

**APPENDIX I
FACT SHEETS**



Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC, V0N 1B4
www.whistler.ca

November 2011



**Resort Municipality of Whistler
Service Review Program (Pilot Program Phase)
December 2010**

PARKS OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In late November 2010, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) initiated a *Service Review Program*. The *Program* is an exercise through which RMOW managers and staff will critically examine the key services provided by the organization. The *Program* sets out to examine three fundamental questions for every service:

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service appropriate?¹
- Is the current method of service delivery the most cost-effective?

The *Program* will ultimately involve the systematic review of all services provided by the organization, in all service areas. At the current time, however, the *Program* is being undertaken as a pilot project with a focus on the *Parks Operations* department of the *Resort Experience* division. Lessons learned during the pilot project phase will help to refine the review process for the organization as a whole.

On the morning of December 1, 2010, the *Service Review Team* for the pilot phase met to begin the project. The *Team*, which is profiled in Figure 1, confirmed the purpose of the *Program*, discussed roles and responsibilities, and reviewed the suggested process and timeline set out for the pilot phase. Later in the day on December 1, the consultant to the *Team* conducted separate interviews with the Manager and Supervisors of *Parks Operations* and its various service areas.

¹ Note that this question was stated implicitly, but not explicitly, in earlier documents outlining the *Service Review Program*.

**Figure 1
Service Review Team (Pilot)**

Member	Role
General Manager Resort Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team Leader - Ideas for changes - Responsible for changes
Chief Administrative Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall responsibility for <i>Service Review Program</i> and organization - Ideas for changes
Director Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advice on HR implications - Ideas for changes
Manager Parks Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service area expert - Ideas for changes - Advice on practical implications of proposed changes - Oversee implementation of changes
Parks Operations Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service area experts - Ideas for changes - Advice on practical implications of proposed changes - Assist with implementation
Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for process - Support to Team (research, writing, facilitation, etc.) - Ideas for changes

The purpose of the interviews was to gather the information required to document the current activities of the department, along with its existing

staffing, budgets and service levels. Documentation of the department, as it exists today, is an important starting point in the review process. It gives all members of the *Team* a clear and common understanding of "what is". This understanding needs to be in place before changes can be contemplated.

This paper, titled *Parks Operations*, sets out the information on the department as it exists today. The paper then presents a number of questions for discussion with the *Review Team* at upcoming workshops, the first of which is scheduled for December 22.

PARKS OPERATIONS TODAY

Parks Operations has four distinct areas of service:

- Landscape Maintenance
- Parks & Trails Maintenance
- Facility Construction & Maintenance
- Village Maintenance

Landscape Maintenance

► Services

Landscape Maintenance includes Horticulture Services, Turf Services, Irrigation Services, Green Space Maintenance, and the Merchant Hanging Baskets program. Each of these services is seasonal in nature, provided by RMOW from April through early November every year.

In Horticulture Services, one (1) permanent full-time leadhand manages thirteen (13) seasonal labourers in the following activities:

- design, preparation (including Spring clean-up), planting, weeding, maintenance and renovation of plant and flower beds in the Village, Whistler Creekside, Alpha Lake Park, and the grounds of the Meadow Park Sports Centre
- installation of drip irrigation in the Village
- pruning of shrubberies in the Village
- installation, maintenance and removal of hanging baskets
- raking of leaves and trimming of trees in late October
- placement of tree guards (November)

- maintenance of equipment, and handling of small projects as time allows

As suggested, the Horticulture group has responsibilities at the Village, Whistler Creekside, Alpha Lake Park and the Meadow Park Sports Centre. The bulk of the group's effort and time, however, are spent at the Village.

The largest program under *Landscape Maintenance* is Turf Services. One (1) permanent full-time leadhand oversees five (5) full-time and nine (9) seasonal equipment operators and labourers in the following activities:

- spring clean-up of turf areas in Village (involves removing gravel and foreign objects from lawns, cleaning, dethatching and fertilizing)
- preparing, dethatching, vacuuming, fertilizing, aerating, overseeding, mowing and ongoing care and maintenance of turf areas in large areas (using machines) and in small areas (by hand)
- edging of curbs and flower beds in Village
- grooming of ball fields and beach at Lost Lake (three times per week)
- general maintenance of ball fields

The Turf crews also contribute to maintenance of the fields at Myrtle Phillips, Whistler Secondary and Spring Creek Schools. Turf crews will be taking responsibility for turf in Cheakamus Crossing.

One (1) seasonal leadhand supervises three (3) seasonal labourers in Irrigation Services. This crew is responsible for the installation, maintenance, repair, audit and end-of-season decommissioning of RMOW's extensive landscaping and turf irrigation network.

Green Space Maintenance is a risk-management initiative undertaken by the Landscape Maintenance Supervisor with the assistance of a consultant. Each year, trees along the Valley Trail are assessed to identify potential hazards. Corrective steps are taken as required. The Merchant Hanging Basket Program is administered by the Landscape Maintenance Supervisor. Horticulture staff hang, maintain and remove baskets each year.

► Operating Budgets

Figure 2 summarizes the 2010 and 2011 operating budgets for *Landscape Maintenance* and its various services. The summary shows that:

- the largest service within the department is Turf Services
- labour (payroll, overtime, benefits) is by far the largest cost component for *Landscape Maintenance* — labour costs totalled approximately \$1 million in 2010 and 2011, which represents 73% of 2010 net budgeted expenses in 2010 (72% of gross budgeted expenses), and 75% of net budgeted expenses in 2011 (74% of gross expenses)
- overtime is essentially non-existent in all services
- *Landscape Maintenance* revenues (including internal cost recoveries) are not significant

► Service Levels

A publication titled *BC Landscape Standards* sets out six levels of landscape installation and maintenance for growers, landscape companies and municipalities.² The *Landscape Maintenance* group applies customized versions of the top three standards at its various sites throughout the community. Horticulture and Turf crews apply, for example,

- a customized Level 1 (Well-Groomed) standard to all turf areas and annual beds
- a customized Level 2 (Groomed) standard to planter beds
- a customized Level 3 (Moderate) standard to little-utilized areas

As illustrated in the attachment in *Appendix 1*, each of these standards translates into a certain number and frequency of activities (e.g., mowing) to be undertaken by staff at sites across Whistler. The number and frequency of activities, and the geographic scope of their application, drive *Landscape Maintenance's* operating costs.

² The document is published by a multi-stakeholder group that includes the Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, the BC Society of Landscape Architects, the BC Landscape and Nursery Association, and government representatives.

Figure 2
Landscape Maintenance
2010 & 2011 Operating Budgets

Program	2010	2011
Horticultural Services		
Payroll	295,866	307,829
Overtime	2,625	2,625
Benefits	40,112	46,032
Other*	89,384	79,680
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	427,987	436,166
Turf Services		
Payroll	369,121	385,580
Overtime	0	900
Benefits	58,133	65,792
Other*	170,356	168,071
Revenue	(502)	(502)
Sub-total	597,610	619,841
Irrigation Services		
Payroll	110,295	114,447
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	12,600	14,993
Other*	45,418	45,675
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	168,313	175,115
Green Space Maintenance		
Payroll	8,146	8,412
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	911	923
Other*	31,501	31,500
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	40,558	40,835
Hanging Baskets		
Other*	20,520	20,520
Revenue	(26,483)	(26,483)
Sub-total	(5,963)	(5,963)
General Office		
Payroll	71,027	73,871
Overtime	265	265
Benefits	19,215	19,562
Other*	32,024	30,761
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	122,531	124,459
TOTAL	1,351,036	1,390,453

* Supplies, vehicle insurance, cellular, uniforms, etc.

The service levels adopted by the group reflect a number of views including, for example:

- the view that well-groomed gardens and green spaces enhance Whistler's appeal, and have come to be expected by visitors
- the related view that less-than-perfect gardens and green spaces in high traffic areas will decrease Whistler's appeal to visitors
- the view that high-quality turf fields support local values regarding recreation and leisure, and are therefore necessary
- the view that high-quality turf helps to attract visitors to the resort (e.g., for tournaments)
- the view that Whistler's decision to become pesticide-free cannot be allowed to undermine the appearance of the community's landscaped areas or fields (put differently, weeds should be minimized)

➤ Labour

A good portion of the work that is undertaken by *Landscape Maintenance* must be done by hand. For example, gardens must be weeded regularly, and small parks and green spaces must be power-broomed, fertilized, mowed and raked. A significant amount of gravel and foreign objects must be removed by hand each year from flower and plant beds in the Village during Spring clean-up.

The use of labourers to perform activities by hand has a considerable impact on the service area's operating costs. Efforts to reduce the reliance on labourers would, therefore, lead to cost savings. One way to reduce this reliance would be to adjust service levels. Another way would be to ensure that landscaping and maintenance needs and issues were given a high priority in all park and green space planning. Careful planning of such areas would limit, if not eliminate entirely, the presence of tight spots that could not be maintained using machines.

As noted earlier, *Landscape Maintenance* is a seasonal area of service at RMOW. All permanent, full time staff, with the exception of the Supervisor, move to *Parks & Trails Maintenance* in the winter season to assist with snowclearing services. Machinery is also shared between the two service areas. Vehicles used to groom the ball diamonds and Lost Lake Beach in the summer are used to plough trails in the winter.

➤ Outsourcing

Landscape Maintenance experimented recently with outsourcing in one park attached to the Village. The Supervisor noted that the contractor did undertake the work required, and that service levels were maintained. The amounts of supervision and oversight required on the part of the Supervisor, however, were significant. Indeed, the time spent on supervision and contract management resulted in a total service cost that was slightly higher than that of the in-house approach.

Parks & Trails Maintenance

➤ Services

Parks & Trails Maintenance consists of six services: Parks Maintenance, Parks Sanitation, Trails Maintenance, Trails Construction, Snow-clearing, and Snowgrooming.

- Parks Maintenance is a seasonal service, running from the beginning of April through the end of November. One (1) permanent full-time leadhand supervises one (1) seasonal equipment operator and three (3) seasonal labourers in maintaining, repairing and improving all:
 - parks furniture
 - docks
 - signs
 - tennis courts
 - playgrounds
 - other infrastructure (other than buildings) in Whistler's various parks
- Parks Sanitation is a full-year service, but is reduced to 20 hours per week during the winter months. One (1) seasonal leadhand supervises seven (7) seasonal labourers in cleaning and maintaining all parks surfaces, parks washrooms and public areas. Garbage collection is included in the list of activities undertaken.
- Trails Maintenance is a seasonal service running from mid-May through the end of October. One (1) seasonal leadhand supervises three (3) seasonal labourers in maintaining and repairing RMOW's Valley

Trail network (i.e., municipal trails and sidewalks).

- Trails Construction is also a seasonal service, running from mid-May through the end of October. One (1) seasonal leadhand supervises (2) equipment operators and three (3) labourers in constructing new trails, and repairing existing trails, throughout the community. Extensions to the Valley Trail, the Sea to Sky Trail, and RMOW's recreational trail program are handled by this group. The group also handles the construction and repair of bridges on existing trails.
- Snowclearing on RMOW's trails is provided from mid-November through the end of March each year. One (1) seasonal leadhand manages four (4) seasonal equipment operators in snowclearing all Valley trails and Village sidewalks.
- Snowgrooming is provided on Lost Lake Trails and a part of the Valley Trail from December 1 to March 31. One (1) seasonal leadhand manages three (3) seasonal equipment operators.

Snowclearing in Cheakamus Crossing is outsourced to a private contractor. The cost of acquiring and assigning the extra equipment and operators precludes direct delivery by RMOW.

➤ Operating Budget

Figure 3 summarizes the 2010 and 2011 operating budget numbers for *Parks & Trails Maintenance*. The summary shows that:

- operating costs are relatively evenly spread among the five services
- labour is by far the largest single cost component throughout — costs totalled \$0.93 million in 2010, and \$0.97 million in 2011 (80% of net operating costs and 67% of gross costs in 2010; 68% of net operating and 81% of gross operating in 2011)
- overtime is highest in snowclearing, but even there is essentially non-existent
- significant one-time cost recovery existed in Trail Construction in 2010; otherwise, revenues are insignificant
- for accounting purposes, Trail Construction

**Figure 3
Parks & Trails Maintenance
2010 & 2011 Operating Budgets**

Program	2010	2011
Park Maintenance		
Payroll	171,794	178,520
Benefits	23,727	29,650
Other*	128,011	127,930
Revenue	(2,000)	(2,000)
Sub-total	321,532	334,100
Park Sanitation		
Payroll	142,611	147,273
Overtime	1,923	1,923
Benefits	15,751	19,101
Other*	40,924	40,924
Revenue	(5,000)	(5,000)
Sub-total	201,209	209,221
Trail Maintenance		
Payroll	116,958	121,052
Benefits	13,269	15,522
Other*	70,640	70,761
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	200,867	207,335
Trail Construction		
Payroll	139,310	n/a
Benefits	15,914	n/a
Other*	53,862	n/a
Revenue	(210,000)	n/a
Sub-total	(914)	n/a
Snowclearing		
Payroll	108,832	104,632
Overtime	4,000	4,000
Benefits	18,880	17,501
Other*	74,624	78,127
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	206,336	204,260
Snowgrooming		
Payroll	53,957	67,172
Overtime	5,000	3,000
Benefits	11,072	13,327
Other*	68,700	55,150
Revenue	(3,000)	(3,000)
Sub-total	135,729	135,649
General Office		
Payroll	71,027	73,871
Overtime	800	800
Benefits	14,575	14,656
Other*	13,249	13,249
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	99,651	102,576
TOTAL	1,164,410	1,192,227

* Supplies, vehicle insurance, cellular, uniforms, etc.

became a purely capital service in 2011 (2010 numbers are used to calculate the total labour costs, and the percentage of net and gross expenditures attributable to labour)

► Service Levels

Service levels in *Parks & Trail Maintenance* reflect the view that Whistler's parks and trails are key components of the resort community's total amenity package for visitors. Levels also reflect the view that parks and trails promote the community's environmental values (trails encourage walking and cycling over driving), as well as its recreation and leisure priorities. Snowclearing in parks and trails is a relatively recent service addition, added to accommodate and encourage year round use of the community's trail network.

► Outsourcing

Snowclearing of sidewalks and green spaces at Creekside and Cheakamus Crossing are outsourced to private companies. All other activities under *Parks & Trails Maintenance* are performed by RMOW staff.

Facility Construction & Maintenance

► Services

Facility Construction & Maintenance includes Building Services, Electrical Services and Construction Services.

- Building Services is responsible for the year-round maintenance of the following RMOW-owned municipal buildings:
 - Municipal Hall
 - Public Safety Building
 - Whistler Public Library
 - Public Works Yard building
 - Spruce Grove Field House
 - park washrooms and out buildings
 - hostel site
 - Millennium Place
 - various other minor buildings

Building Services is not responsible for the RMOW-owned wastewater treatment plant or Meadow Park Sports Centre, but does main-

tain the underground parking structures owned by the Whistler Village Land Corporation.

Building Services serves, in effect, as RMOW's building superintendent. Its two (2) full-time staff (both journeyman carpenters) directly do small repairs and small jobs (e.g., painting) for the buildings. They also oversee contracts related to janitorial services, security, elevator contracts, and others.

- The two (2) full-time electricians in Electrical Services provide year-round maintenance of electrical systems in RMOW-owned buildings, and also maintain lighting on Whistler's trails, street lighting throughout community, and the municipality's traffic lights.³ Electrical Services supports RMOW's IT group and its fibre optic network.
- Under Construction Services, one (1) full-time journeyman carpenter, one (1) leadhand (0.6 FTE), one (1) equipment operator (0.6 FTE) and various casual labourers provide general construction oversight and assistance on projects related to RMOW's buildings, parks and open spaces. By and large, Construction Services is a summer seasonal program.

In addition to these three services, *Facility Construction & Maintenance* provides project- and construction-management services to RMOW. The Supervisor of the service area acts as the "owner's representative" on large projects (e.g., Celebration Plaza, Whistler Library Building).

► Operating Budget

Figure 4 summarizes the 2010 and 2011 operating budgets for *Facility Construction & Maintenance*. The summary shows that:

- unlike the other service areas, labour costs are not the primary cost component of *Facility Construction & Maintenance* operations
- labour costs totalled \$0.57 million in 2010 and \$0.59 million in 2011 — or, 53% of net expenses in both 2010 and 2011 (43% of gross expenses each year)
- cost recovery (revenue) is significant in

³ Whistler's traffic lights are inspected by the *Roads* department.

Building Services and Construction Services power (utility) costs are significant in Building Services and Electrical Services

➤ **Service Levels**

The range of services and the service levels provided under *Facility Construction & Maintenance* are determined by the number of municipal buildings in place, capital plans for new facilities, and the need to maintain municipal buildings in a

**Figure 4
Facility Construction & Maintenance
2010 & 2011 Operating Budgets**

Program	2010	2011
Building Services		
Payroll	129,842	135,013
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	20,432	19,347
Contracts	195,600	195,600
Power (Gas)	113,800	113,800
Other*	94,335	94,336
Revenue	(129,951)	(129,951)
Sub-total	424,058	428,145
Electrical Services		
Payroll	129,842	135,013
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	26,645	26,787
Power (Hydro)	214,406	214,406
Other*	62,468	66,913
Revenue	(16,947)	(16,947)
Sub-total	416,414	426,172
Construction Services		
Payroll	140,600	146,215
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	28,852	29,009
Other*	81,568	81,568
Revenue	(108,644)	(108,644)
Sub-total	142,376	148,148
General Office		
Payroll	81,390	84,652
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	16,702	16,795
Other*	10,168	10,168
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	108,260	111,615
TOTAL	1,091,108	1,114,080

* Supplies, vehicle insurance, cellular, uniforms, etc.

state of good repair. Service levels are not a direct reflection of visitor expectations.

➤ **Labour**

Facility Construction & Maintenance is the smallest service area within the *Parks Operations* department in terms of number of employees. One full-time staff member is transferred from Construction Services to *Parks & Trails Maintenance* during the winter months to assist with snowclearing.

Staff in *Facility Construction & Maintenance* work four, ten-hour days per week. The change from five-day weeks was made to increase productivity.

➤ **Outsourcing**

Several activities under Building Services are outsourced to private operators. These activities include janitorial service, security service, HVAC maintenance, elevator maintenance, and others. Building maintenance and repairs that are considered large or time-consuming are also outsourced.

Village Maintenance

➤ **Services**

Village Maintenance deals with the "care and feeding" of Whistler Village. Eight (8) full-time staff, one (1) permanent part-time employee, four (4) seasonal staff and four to ten (4-10) casual employees make up the work crews that care for the appearance and safety of public areas.

The activities undertaken by staff include:

- snowclearing, de-icing, sanding of walkways
- litter pick-up, and the collection and sorting of recyclables
- cleaning of paver stroll areas, and clean-up of spills and pollution (including graffiti)
- repair of paving stones, rock walls, signage (small repair jobs)
- painting/staining of municipal property (e.g., benches)

- installation of festive lighting, flags and banners (seasonal and special events)

Village Maintenance is provided seven days per week over the entire year. During winter months, shifts operate from 7 am until 5 pm. Shifts run from 5 am until 9 pm during the summer. Hours are extended during special events and festivals.

Village Maintenance staff focus their time and effort on the Village itself, including Village North, Marketplace and Main Street. During summer months, some time is spent keeping the day parking lots free of garbage (day lots are the responsibility of Whistler-Blackcomb).

Not all areas of the Village are maintained by RMOW staff:

- the Skiers' Plaza is owned and maintained by Whistler-Blackcomb
- the elevated area in front of the Holiday Inn and Pan Pacific (Whistler Village) is privately owned and maintained
- the Town Plaza stretch in Village North (i.e., between the two bridges) is privately owned and maintained
- all arcades are privately owned and maintained

RMOW monitors the maintenance efforts of all private operators to ensure that results meet required standards. Corrective action (and cost recovery) is taken where necessary.

Snowclearing at Whistler Creekside is the responsibility of Village Maintenance, but is outsourced to a private contractor. There has been talk about *Village Maintenance* taking on maintenance duties at Cheakamus Crossing. Providing service to this area would be a challenge because of travel and the lack of suitable vehicles.

➤ Operating Budget

Figure 5 summarizes the 2010 and 2011 operating budgets for *Village Maintenance*. The summary shows that:

- labour costs account for a considerable portion of the operating budgets — \$0.85 million in 2010 (77% of net expenses; 71% of gross expenses) and \$0.88 million in 2011 (78% of net expenses; 72% of gross expenses)

**Figure 5
Village Maintenance
2010 & 2011 Operating Budgets**

Program	2010	2011
Village Maintenance		
Payroll	606,594	625,854
Overtime	25,000	25,000
Benefits	95,496	101,447
Contracts	125,000	125,000
Other*	159,133	160,291
Revenue	(97,566)	(97,566)
Sub-total	913,657	940,026
Creekside Maintenance		
Contracts	15,000	15,000
Other*	1,000	1,000
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	16,000	16,000
Festive Lighting		
Payroll	31,736	32,368
Overtime	0	2,700
Benefits	3,800	4,102
Other*	21,897	21,897
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	57,433	61,067
Sign Maintenance		
Contracts	7,712	7,712
Other*	7,712	7,712
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	15,424	15,424
General Office		
Payroll	71,027	73,871
Overtime	600	600
Benefits	14,575	14,656
Other*	11,090	11,090
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	97,292	100,217
TOTAL	1,099,805	1,132,734

* Supplies, vehicle insurance, cellular, uniforms, etc.

- *Village Maintenance* receives considerable revenues from a few sources, including patio license fee charges, and payments from Whistler Village Land Corporation for parkade-related services

► Service Levels

The level of service provided by *Village Maintenance* is very high, both in absolute terms and, it is believed, relative to that in other resort municipalities. This level reflects the significant importance of the Village to the visitor experience (i.e., the *Whistler Experience*).

► Outsourcing

The mechanized portion of the *Village Maintenance's* snowclearing service is contracted to a private company. All other services are provided using RMOW staff. When Village North was developed, private landowners initially assumed responsibility over all maintenance. The owners' difficulty in meeting proper service standards prompted them to transfer responsibility to RMOW's *Village Maintenance* crews.

There is considerable reluctance on the part of RMOW to outsource *Village Maintenance* services. The Village is a key element of Whistler's presentation and appeal, and, it is felt, must be kept in top condition. The past difficulties faced by private landowners in trying to meet RMOW's high service standards only confirm the view that outsourcing would be a high-risk proposition.

EXAMINING THE SERVICES

On December 22, the *Service Review Team* will be meeting for three hours to begin its critical examination of the services provided under *Parks Operations*. As noted in the introduction of this paper, there are three fundamental questions for the *Team* to explore for each service provided:

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service appropriate?
- Is the current method of service delivery the most cost-effective?

On December 22, the *Team* will focus on the first two questions. The third question, which explores *how* services should be delivered (as opposed to *whether* they should be provided at all, or at *what*

Issue of Service Delivery

At the December 22 Workshop, the group will consider whether Parks Operations should continue to provide all of its current services. The group will also examine existing levels of service, and assess whether in each case these levels are appropriate.

On December 22 the group will not discuss the third question at the heart of the Service Review Program — namely, the question which examines how the services are delivered, and which considers how they might be delivered more cost-effectively. In January 2011, a separate Workshop will be scheduled to focus on the topic of service delivery.

The issue of service delivery will be critical to consider for all services, including services that the group, at its December 22 Workshop, decides should continue to be provided by Parks Operations at current service levels. A decision by the Service Review Team to recommend the continuation of an existing service at an existing service level should not be taken to suggest that the existing method of delivering the service will be left unchanged. Staffing resources, and work practices and procedures, will be examined for all services, irrespective of outcomes on December 22.

level they should be provided), will be the focus of discussions in January, 2011.⁴

Service Provision

For each of the services identified under *Parks Operations*, the first fundamental question to be tackled by the *Team* on December 22 will be: Should RMOW be providing the service? In cases where the answer is "yes", the *Team* will switch its focus to service levels and, at a later date, methods of service delivery. Where the answer is "no", recommendations to (ultimately) exit the service will be drafted.

In thinking about whether or not to continue providing current services, it may be useful to begin by considering the following proposition:

⁴ Comparative research into the practices of other municipalities, and of resorts and (possibly) private operations, will be important for discussions on the third question. Such comparisons may be of less importance for the December 22 discussion.

**Figure 6
Services Currently Provided**

Service Area	Service
Landscape Maintenance	· Horticulture
	· Turf Services
	· Irrigation
	· Green Space Maintenance
	· Hanging Baskets
Parks & Trails Maintenance	· Park Maintenance
	· Park Sanitation
	· Trail Maintenance
	· Trail Construction
	· Snowclearing
	· Snowgrooming
Facility Construction & Maintenance	· Building Services
	· Electrical Services
	· Construction Services
Village Maintenance	· Village Maintenance
	· Creekside Maintenance
	· Festive Lighting
	· Sign Maintenance

- *Parks Operations* should direct its resources to services that are considered *core services* for Whistler.

A "core service" is a one that is critical to RMOW's mission. It is a service, put differently, that must be provided by RMOW in order to fulfill what it believes to be its fundamental role.

RMOW mission consists of two key elements:

- to provide basic municipal services — including services that RMOW is required, by law, to provide — that are required by the local community
- to provide a range of resort-related services that strengthen the appeal of Whistler to prospective visitors, and that enhance the visitor experience (i.e., the *Whistler Experience*)

This two-pronged mission sets Whistler apart from most other municipalities and results in a range of

core services that is broader than that in other places.

► Team Discussion

Figure 6 lists the services identified earlier in the paper for *Parks Operations*. Figure 7 then applies the core-service proposition to the services. The figure presents a set of questions for the *Service Review Team* to discuss at its December 22 workshop.

It can be anticipated — at the risk of pre-judging outcomes — that the *Team* will conclude that it is important to for RMOW to continue providing

**Figure 7
To Provide or Not to Provide**

Questions for Discussion

1. Is the service a *core service* (as defined in the text)?
 - Who is the primary "customer" — i.e., for whom is the service provided?
2. In your view, how important is the service to RMOW's mission?
 - Is the service one of the *most* important services provided by the department? How would you rank its importance on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being *most* important)?
3. What would be the impact of a decision to eliminate the service?
 - Who would be impacted? How would they be impacted?
 - Would the impact be acceptable, or would it be unacceptable? Why?
 - Would someone else step in to provide the service (i.e., fill the void)?
4. Could the service be eliminated (suspended) on a test basis?
 - What would be the risk?
5. If the group *had* to eliminate a service in each service area, would this service be one to go?

most if not all of the services that are currently provided by the department. It can be anticipated, in other words, that the group will conclude that most if not all of the current services fit the *core service* definition. Most of the proposed changes to services, it is expected, will relate to service levels and methods of service delivery. It is still considered valuable, however, to begin the assessment of each service by exploring the fundamental question of whether or not to continue providing the service.

Service Level

For each service that, it is determined, RMOW should continue to provide through *Parks Operations*, the review will shift to focus on service levels. Is the current level of service appropriate? What should be the level of service?

► Team Discussion

Figure 8 presents questions to guide the *Team's* discussion on service levels. Some of the questions apply to all services in the department. Others (where specified) focus on individual services.⁵

⁵ Questions can be asked of all services. The questions in the second half of Figure 8 are presented as examples.

Figure 8
Level of Service

Questions for Discussion (Each Service)

1. What would be the impact of reducing the existing level of service?
 - What would a significant reduction (25%) in net operating budget mean for the service? Would people notice?
 - Who would be impacted? How would they be impacted?
 - Could the service level be reduced (significantly) on a test basis? What would be the risk?
2. How would you rate the importance of the existing level of service on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest)?
3. If you *had* to recommend a reduction in the overall level of service in every area of service within *Parks Operations*, would you target this service? Why or why not?

Questions for Discussion (Select Services)

4. For *Horticulture*, is it critical for Whistler to eliminate (or severely restrict) weeds?
 - What reduction in current service level would be acceptable?
5. For *Snowclearing* and *Snowgrooming* (trails), is it critical to plough the Valley Trail in the winter? Is it necessary to groom part of it?
 - How many people use the trail (walk or ski) in the winter?
6. For *Parks Sanitation*, what would be the impact of reducing winter service?
7. What would be the impact of changes to the *Hanging Baskets* program? Could full costs be recovered?
8. For *Turf Services*, what would be the impact of eliminating (or cutting back) all work that is done by hand?
9. What is the *most* important part of *Village Maintenance*?
 - Could the other activities in *Village Maintenance* be reduced?



Resort Municipality of Whistler
Service Review Program
April 2011

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

In late November 2010, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) initiated a *Service Review Program*. The *Program* is an exercise designed to allow RMOW General Managers, Managers and Supervisors to critically examine the key services provided by the organization. The *Program* sets out to examine three fundamental questions for every service:

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service appropriate?
- Is the current method of service delivery the most cost-effective?

The *Program* began with a pilot phase which focused on the Parks Operations division of *Resort Experience*. The lessons learned during that phase were used to refine the *Program's* approach, and to prepare it for use by other departments. *Environmental Services* is the first department, post-pilot phase, to undertake the *Program*.

On January 25, 2011, the General Manager of Environmental Services met with key members of the team that conducted the Parks Operations' pilot phase review. Included in that meeting were the CAO, GM of Resort Experience, Director of Human Resources, and consultant to the process. At the meeting, the group confirmed the timing and approach for the review of *Environmental Services*.

In mid-February, 2011, the consultant distributed a worksheet to all Managers and Supervisors in *Environmental Services*. The worksheet introduced the *Service Review Program* and set out

the first task of the exercise — namely, the preparation of a "Fact Sheet" on the department and its existing range of activities. All Managers and Supervisors completed their sheets and submitted them to the consultant later in February. On March 1, and again on March 8, the consultant met individually with Managers and Supervisors (a total of eight meetings) to review and explore the information in the worksheets. The consultant used the information from the worksheets and the follow-up meetings to draft the Fact Sheet.

This document, titled *Environmental Services*, constitutes the Fact Sheet. It is intended, primarily, to give all persons involved in the process a clear and common understanding of "what is" in the department today. This understanding needs to be in place before any changes to the department, its services and its service delivery approaches can be contemplated.

On April 12, 2011, the consultant will be facilitating a workshop with the GM, Managers and Supervisors of Environmental Services. At the beginning of the workshop, the consultant will review the Fact Sheet with participants to set the stage for discussions on possible changes. Following the review, the group will turn its focus to the first two questions of the *Service Review Program*. More specifically, for each of the services within the department, the group will explore:¹

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service appropriate?

¹ Participants will be receiving a detailed workshop agenda prior to the event.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TODAY

Figure 1 shows the structure of *Environmental Services*. As illustrated, the department is divided into four divisions:

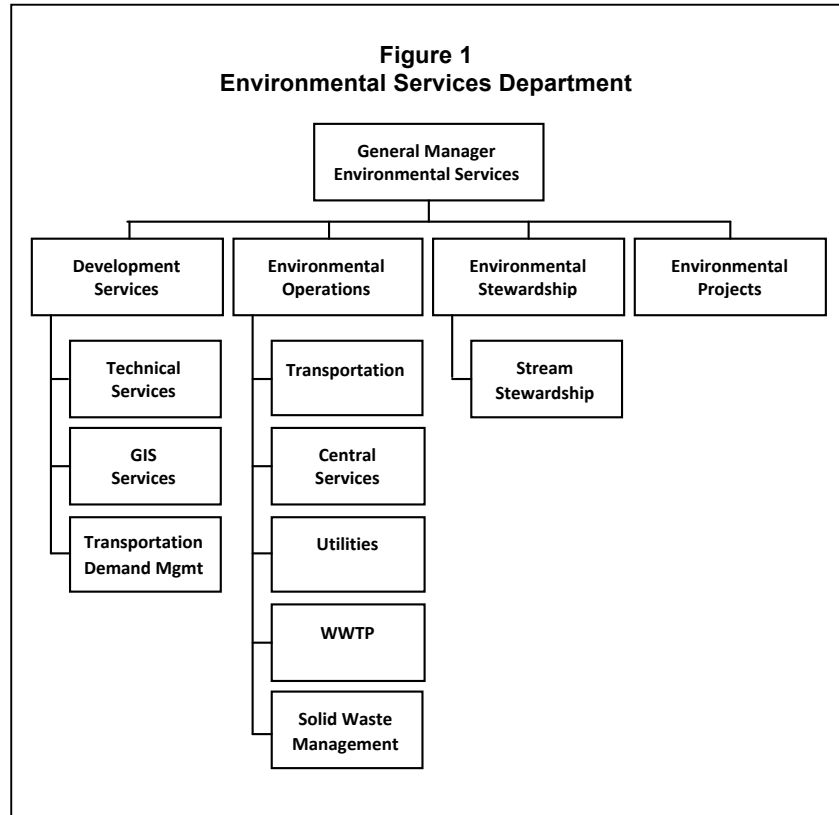
- Development Services
- Environmental Operations
- Environmental Stewardship
- Environmental Projects

Development Services

Development Services contains three service areas: Technical Services, GIS Services and Transportation Demand Management (TDM). The largest of these areas is Technical Services. Under Technical Services, one (1) full-time Senior Technologist and three (3) full-time Technologists work with the Development Services Manager on a number of activities, including:

- subdivision approvals (the Development Services Manager is RMOW's Approving Officer)
- strata conversion approvals
- administration of RMOW's crown land tenures
- engineering record keeping
- responding to referrals for rezonings, development permits, building permits, crown land tenures, and other items
- infrastructure planning
- providing input on capital projects undertaken by Environmental Services, and by other departments
- policy development and bylaw drafting
- land acquisition and expropriation
- traffic calming efforts
- special projects

Under GIS Services, staff are responsible for maintaining and upgrading the external and internal GIS systems, and for creating and maintaining all municipal mapping. Until recently, one (1) full-time GIS Coordinator was in place and responsible for the various GIS activities. The



position, however, was eliminated, and the duties were assumed by staff in Technical Services. The duties remain with Technical Services today.

TDM is staffed by one (1) full-time TDM Coordinator. This position works to increase public transit ridership, liaises with BC Transit, its contractors and other local governments, and organizes RMOW's Transportation Advisory Group. The TDM coordinator also manages, in conjunction with the Development Services Manager, RMOW's transit contract with BC Transit, and liaises with the transit contractor.

► Operating Costs

Figure 2 summarizes the 2009 operating budget and 2009 actuals for *Development Services* and its various service areas.² The payroll and benefit levels in the Figure include (it is assumed) two (2) FTEs — the GIS Coordinator is one position — that were cut from the division post-2009. All payroll costs, including those related to the

² 2009 is the most recent year with complete audited cost figures.

**Figure 2
Development Services
2009 Operating**

Service Area	2009 Budget	2009 Actual
Technical Services*		
Payroll	444,294	463,551
Overtime	0	6,899
Benefits	96,412	87,249
Legal	45,000	30,064
General Consulting	45,000	90
Approvals Consult	9,758	789
Lands Management	20,000	13,114
Other	13,907	1,567
Revenue	(55,000)	(11,735)
Sub-total	619,371	591,618
GIS Services		
Base Mapping	6,024	1,018
Sub-total	6,024	1,018
TDM**		
Transit Contract	4,989,385	4,729,151
Transit Expenses	188,750	98,014
Sea-to-Sky Transit	464,000	447,466
TDM	6,120	1,807
Transit Revenue***	(2,103,700)	(2,165,697)
Sea-to-Sky Rev	(464,300)	(447,467)
Sub-total	3,080,255	2,663,274
TOTAL	3,705,650	3,255,910

* Figures here include various programs in the Engineering Services budget, namely General Office (6211), Development Approvals (6221) and Revenues (6222), Base Mapping (6231), and Lands Management (6232). All labour costs for the entire division are also included here.

** TDM includes Transit Agreement (6461), Expenses (6462), Sea to Sky Transit (6464) and TDM (6471).

*** Does not include \$854,824 from hotel tax revenues.

Manager and the TDM staff, are accounted for under Technical Services.

The summary shows that:

- the bulk of costs attributed to the division are related to the transit contract, which is administered by the division
- actual costs in all areas of the division came in under budget
- development approval revenues received were well below anticipated revenues

► Service Levels

Service levels under Technical Services are driven in part by the amount of development activity in the municipality, particularly the number and complexity of subdivision applications. Levels are a function, as well, of decisions taken by Council and other departments on issues such as land acquisition and boundary changes. The number and complexity of special projects and capital projects underway also influence service levels. Finally, levels are influenced by the organization's desire for updated infrastructure plans, and for new development policies and bylaws.

Service levels for TDM are driven by Council's decisions on the expansion of the public transit system, and by Council's objectives and targets for reductions in travel and auto use.

► Other Points

Development and new property tax revenue data show that in 2007 Whistler's rapid growth period essentially came to a close. This reality does not mean, however, that all subdivision and development approval activities have stopped. In the coming years, Development Services will be expected to handle subdivision reviews and approvals for a number of subdivisions that are either certain or likely to proceed. Holborne, Function Junction (First Nations lands), Cheakamus Crossing (additional lots), the Wedgewoods phased strata and other developments are examples of such subdivisions.

The involvement of Technical Services' staff in infrastructure planning for the municipality may become more prominent in the coming years as the municipality directs more of its attention to maintenance and "housekeeping" duties — duties that include the need for updated and/or new long-term infrastructure plans. Responsibility for long-term planning will need to be clarified.

Environmental Operations

Environmental Operations is by far the largest division within *Environmental Services*. The division is divided into five service areas: Transportation, Central Services, Utilities, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Solid Waste Management.

► Transportation

Transportation is responsible for maintaining RMOW's road network and stormwater system, and for undertaking preventative measures to protect the community from flood damage. Many of the activities performed by staff in the service area are divided into summer and winter categories. During the summer season (April through October), road-related operating responsibilities include:

- street sweeping
- line painting and crack sealing
- signage and traffic control
- street lights and signalization
- roadside brush and tree removal

In the winter operational season (November through March), staff focus attention on:

- snow plowing
- sanding and de-icing
- snow removal (i.e., transport)

Stormwater management efforts take place at various times throughout the year, with event interventions occurring primarily in the spring. Efforts include the maintenance of catch basins, culverts, debris barriers, ditches and other stormwater facilities. Each September, Transportation is responsible for overseeing the removal of gravel from Fitzsimmons Creek — a task that is undertaken to mitigate the flood risk to the community.

Transportation provides substantial on-request assistance to various other RMOW departments on a *pro bono* basis.

On an annualized basis, Transportation has a total of 12.4 FTEs. During the summer season, the staffing complement totals 11 FTE's, and includes six (6) Equipment Operators (level 3), four (4) Labourers (level 2) and two Student Labourers (level 1). During the winter season, there are 14 FTE's including ten (10) full-time Equipment Operators, and eight (8) term Equipment Operators.³ These staffing figures have remained constant over the past three years, except for the

³ Full-time equipment operators remain with Transportation year-round, and are included in both summer and winter season staffing numbers.

period of time during the Olympics when additional resources were hired.

► Central Services

Central Services is divided into fleet management, stores and administration. In fleet management, six (6) full-time Mechanics, one (1) part-time Mechanic and one (1) seasonal Fabricator (total of 7 FTE's) service and maintain RMOW's 600-piece inventory of vehicles, machinery and small equipment. Included in this inventory are the municipality's fire trucks, the local RCMP fleet, various pieces of equipment (e.g., lawn mowers) used throughout the organization, and small engines that are used to help operate RMOW's various utility infrastructure systems. Fleet maintenance also services vehicles, on a *pro bono* basis, for the provincial government's Conservation Officer Service. School District vehicles use RMOW's fuel services, but pay for all fuel supplies.

The stores function is the municipality's purchasing centre. One (1) full-time Purchasing Agent, assisted by one (1) full-time stores Clerk, purchases a broad range of goods and services for and on behalf of RMOW's various departments. Staff provide advice to departments and ensure that the materials, products and services purchased by the organization meet Whistler's sustainability objectives, and are acquired in ways that are consistent with the municipality's purchasing policies and procedures. Staff maximize value-for-money by placing most orders through local government purchasing consortia.

Central Services' administration provides clerical and support services to the staff at the public works yard, as well as management supervision for the various functions of the service area. Central Services' Manager coordinates all vehicle and equipment insurance needs, oversees lifecycle planning for the fleet, addresses emissions issues and handles equipment purchases and liquidations. A total of three (3) FTE's, including the Manager, make up administration.

► Utilities

Staff in Utilities operate and maintain RMOW's integrated water supply and distribution system,

and the municipality's sanitary sewer collection system. Specific activities include:

- inspection, maintenance and repair of the many component parts that make up the water supply and distribution network, including intakes, wells, disinfection systems, pump stations, pressure reducing valves, transmission and distribution pipes, fire hydrants, service lines and curb stops
- all tasks related to the municipality's water sampling program
- monitoring, record keeping and reporting on water quality and water consumption
- inspection, maintenance and repair of the parts that make up the sewage collection system, including service lines and inspection chambers, sewer collection and trunk mains, manholes, lift stations and force mains

In addition to these duties, staff in Utilities assist with the operation of the landfill gas collection and flare system, and the landfill leachate collection system. Staff also maintain the supply and return portions of RMOW's new District Energy System.

The current staffing complement for Utilities is 23.14 FTE.⁴ This figure includes one (1) Chief Utilities Operator (EOCP level 4), several full-time Utilities Operators (levels 1, 2 and 3), several Equipment Operators (levels 1 and 3), one (1) full-time Electrician, and one (1) full-time Labourer. The complement also includes the following funded but vacant positions: one (1) Utilities Operator (level 2), one (1) full-time Electrician / Instrumentation Technician, and one (1) seasonal Labourer. All of the non-management staff in Utilities are unionized.

➤ Wastewater Treatment Plant

Six (6) full-time Wastewater Treatment Operators, one (1) full-time Millwright, one (1) full-time Lab Technician and (1) full-time Supervisor operate and maintain RMOW's wastewater treatment plant

⁴ The original 2011 budgeted figure was 24.8 FTE. During the budget process two seasonal Labourers and one vacant full-time Labourer position were cut to bring the total down to 23.14 FTE.

(WWTP). The plant receives, treats and releases liquid waste from Whistler's sewage collection system, as well as raw septage brought in from places outside of Whistler in the Squamish Lillooet Regional District.⁵ The plant is staffed seven days per week. Specific tasks undertaken by staff at the plant include:

- sample collection and testing
- data recording
- system performance monitoring
- sludge handling and removal
- equipment maintenance and repairs
- emergency repairs

With the exception of the WWTP Supervisor, all WWTP staff are unionized. Electrical, HVAC, gas and computer programming work for the facility are outsourced to specialists. Engineering consultants are hired from time to time, as required.

The nine (9) full-time staff at the WWTP also run key aspects of the District Energy System (DES). This system transfers captured heat from the WWTP to the residences at Cheakamus Crossing. WWTP staff are responsible for ensuring that the heat is properly diverted to the DES pipe system, and that the DES equipment within the WWTP is operating smoothly. Staff from Utilities (as noted earlier) maintain the actual DES pipes. Contractors perform various specialized DES functions, including:

- electrical work
- HVAC repair and maintenance
- Gas/boiler repair and maintenance
- software system design and programming
- water quality assessment
- engineering services

➤ Solid Waste Management

RMOW's Solid Waste Management program includes the Whistler Compost Facility, the Whistler Transfer Station, Nesters and Function compactor sites, and the Lot 22 Squamish compost curing facility. Staff involved in the function handle strategic planning for the program,

⁵ The plant was recently expanded to provide capacity for all of Whistler's planned bed units, and was upgraded with a new method of treatment.

**Figure 3
Environmental Operations
2009 Operating**

Service Area	2009 Budget	2009 Actual
Transportation		
Payroll	879,613	945,431
Overtime & Standby	43,192	45,560
Benefits	160,122	175,561
Contract / Consult	209,318	135,368
Vehicle Costs	483,512	608,740
Other (supplies)	333,897	366,912
Revenue	(15,300)	(231,430)
Sub-total	2,080,446	2,046,142
Central Services		
Payroll	756,290	783,600
Overtime & Standby	5,600	11,899
Benefits	164,033	167,255
Parts, Fuel, Goods	1,035,255	1,005,793
Other	148,142	161,503
Replace Reserve	952,807	1,063,718
Revenue	(2,585,082)	(2,920,753)
Sub-total	477,045	273,015
Utilities		
Payroll	1,410,740	1,057,449
Overtime & Standby	130,000	135,280
Benefits	298,863	232,101
Contracts	190,496	344,402
Power	270,100	217,738
Other	830,500	1,029,930
Allocations, Transfers	8,579,204	10,904,523
Debt Servicing	1,459,225	891,271
Revenue	(15,152,687)	(14,920,526)
Sub-total	(1,983,559)	(107,832)
WWTP		
Payroll	524,746	516,854
Overtime	90,000	89,121
Benefits	113,870	111,548
Contract / Consult	165,000	98,487
Chemicals / Power	445,000	564,558
Other	355,584	207,323
Revenue	(41,000)	(38,181)
Sub-total	1,653,200	1,549,710
Solid Waste Management		
Payroll	54,000	56,175
Benefits	11,718	10,473
Contract / Consult	2,980,647	3,480,507
Financing / Reserves	1,072,491	638,736
Other	786,371	617,458
Revenue	(4,743,926)	(4,965,905)
Sub-total	161,301	(162,556)

investment analysis, policy development and bylaw creation and maintenance. Staff also manage the contracts through which the various program component facilities are operated. Contracts also cover soil and compost sales in Whistler and Squamish.

Staff involved in Solid Waste Management are also in charge of the landfill closure program. Activities under this program include leachate collection and monitoring, landfill gas collection and landfill gas flaring.

Three (3) full-time staff members, including the Manager of Operations, one (1) Project Manager and one (1) Engineering Technologist are involved in solid waste management and the landfill closure program. Contractors (9.86 FTE) are used to run the Solid Waste Management facilities; and consultants are involved to a small degree in the landfill closure program (0.35 FTE).⁶

It should be noted that the three staff members — particularly the Manager — perform various managerial duties for the entire *Operations* division, in addition to their Solid Waste Management roles. Project management, work order management, benchmarking, and the production of regulatory documents and internal reports are examples of such duties.

➤ **Operating Budget**

Figure 3 summarizes the 2009 operating costs for Operations. It should be noted that in the base financial documents that were used to create the Figure, not all costs align clearly with the organizational structure used by the division.⁷ Efforts were made to assign all costs properly; but it is likely that revisions to the Figure will need to be made. It should be noted, as well, that the sub-totals for the service areas have not been added together to provide a division total. The important focus in Figure 3 is the individual service areas.

Additional points regarding the cost summary are as follows:

⁶ Very minor contributions from Utilities and WWTP groups are also made to the landfill closure program.

⁷ This comment applies to various sections of the *Environmental Services* budget.

- Under Solid Waste Management, \$63,618 is attributable to the landfill closure program. All other costs are related to the Solid Waste Management function.
- Costs associated with the managerial duties undertaken, primarily, by the Manager are allocated across the division, and are not recorded under Solid Waste Management.
- The significant revenues listed for some of the service areas consist of internal recoveries in the case of Central Services, and user fees and parcel tax dollars in the cases of Utilities and Solid Waste Management. No property value tax revenues are included.
- Allocations and transfers under Utilities include payments to other divisions (e.g., Central Services), and transfers to reserves.
- The division spends considerable sums to contract-out specific activities, particularly to run RMOW's Solid Waste Management programs.
- Certain supplies — namely power, chemicals and fuel — represent significant expenses. The cost of power is expected to increase significantly and steadily in the coming years.

➤ **Service Levels**

Different factors determine the levels of service provided within *Operations*:

- Service levels in Transportation are influenced by the amount of snowfall, safety concerns, and the need to ensure a high level of mobility — that is, to ensure that goods and people can move efficiently throughout the municipality. Levels are also influenced by the desire to provide an excellent visitor experience. This factor is one reason why the highest levels of road maintenance, repair and snow clearing are provided within the Village area.
- Service levels in Central Services are directly related to the size and condition of RMOW's inventory of vehicles and equipment. The larger the inventory, and the older the pieces within it, the more maintenance and repair

service required by Central Services' mechanics. The size and condition of fleets that Central Services maintains by contract (e.g., School District, RCMP) are also factors. So too is the degree of specialty required of staff. Mechanics who work on fire equipment, for example, require special training.

Within the Stores part of Central Services, service levels are influenced by RMOW policies that require departments to purchase through stores, and that require goods and services to meet environmental and other criteria.

- In Utilities, service levels are a function of the number, size and condition of the parts that make up the municipality's water and sewer systems. Every water line, sewer pipe, pump station, intake, valve, hydrant and other piece of equipment must be maintained regularly in accordance with a preventative maintenance schedule.

Service levels are also strongly influenced by provincial health regulations. Regulations on water quality, for example, require a certain frequency of testing and other activities to be undertaken. Finally, service levels are influenced by Council decisions to develop new types of green infrastructure, such as RMOW's District Energy System.

- At the WWTP, service levels are largely a function of provincial health and environmental regulations. As a Class 4, tertiary sewage treatment facility, Whistler's WWTP must meet the most stringent health and environmental standards. These standards dictate the qualifications that staff must obtain, influence staffing schedules (and the need for seven day per week coverage), and influence expenditures on supplies (e.g., chemicals), monitoring and maintenance.

As with Utilities, the decision to develop a DES contributes to determining service levels of the WWTP, albeit it in a minor way.

- Service levels for Solid Waste Management are determined by RMOW's environmental objectives, and by RMOW's approach to regulating solid waste generation behaviours

and practices. Levels are also determined in part by Whistler's mountain setting in which the presence of bears makes curbside garbage pick-up impossible. Provincial regulations determine services levels in the landfill closure program.

► Other Points

During the review of the worksheets, the department's budget materials, and the information obtained during the meetings with staff, a number of points emerged that are worth noting here:

- The amounts spent on service contracts are significant, particularly for Solid Waste Management. It is important for the department to be aware of and to scrutinize the contract provisions and the degree to which they are followed. Failure to scrutinize could lead to lost revenues or inflated costs for the municipality.
- On a related point, it may be useful to conduct some type of benefit-cost analysis on one or more contract to ensure that outsourcing, where used, remains the most beneficial option.
- The WWTP and the DES were developed under tight time constraints. Under pressure to deliver, the contractors for the projects focused primarily on getting the infrastructure built, and less on ensuring that proper as-builts and operating manuals were created. The absence of complete documentation today may mean that staff are able to get less efficiency from the facilities than they would be otherwise able to.
- Throughout many of the service areas there are considerable cost-recovery and revenue-generating opportunities. It is clear from the cost data (see Figure 3) that strong revenues and cost recovery are, indeed, being achieved. There may be scope, however, for additional gains. Additional attention on bylaws, policies, operating contracts, and fee-for-service agreements may be warranted.
- Utilities and the WWTP participate in formal benchmarking programs in an effort to identify and incorporate best practices, and to identify

and address service and/or cost concerns.⁸ Other service areas in the division are not involved in such programs.

- Whistler's utilities infrastructure is younger than infrastructure in many other municipalities, but is beginning to age. As infrastructure ages, maintenance and repairs — and the costs associated with them — tend to increase. Concerns with infrastructure are exacerbated by the fact that the municipality over the years has inherited a number of private utility systems that would not likely be considered "municipal standard" today.
- Solid Waste Management represents a considerable investment by RMOW. It may be useful to review the bylaws and policies governing the program, and to identify changes that would help to maximize environmental and financial dividends.
- Whistler's rapid growth in recent years has made it difficult for the division to attend to its various "housekeeping" duties (e.g., bylaw review and development, work order system improvements, etc.). There may be an opportunity now to focus more effort on these duties. Long-term infrastructure planning — as noted under *Development Services* — is one task that may be particularly important to consider.

Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Stewardship is responsible for developing and implementing policies, bylaws and work programs that promote RMOW's environmental protection and sustainability objectives as outlined in *Whistler2020*, and as measured by the *Whistler2020* Descriptions of Success. The division's one (1) full-time Manager, one (1) permanent part-time Environmental Coordinator and two (2) full-time seasonal Fish & Wildlife Technicians handle a number of tasks, including:

- administering the Cheakamus Community Forest (a partnership involving RMOW,

⁸ Unfortunately, the value of these programs is compromised by the lengthy delays in reporting back.

**Figure 4
Environmental Stewardship
2009 Operating**

Service Area	2009 Budget	2009 Actual
General		
Payroll	95,019	100,382
Overtime	0	245
Benefits	11,327	18,235
Contract / Consult	33,500	29,114
Other	19,172	13,089
Revenue	(704)	(0)
Sub-total	158,314	161,065
Stream Stewardship		
Payroll	38,221	38,532
Overtime	0	0
Benefits	4,617	3,410
Other	8,719	7,224
Revenue	(0)	(0)
Sub-total	51,557	49,166
TOTAL	209,871	210,231

Squamish First Nation and Lillooet First Nation)

- providing support and guidance to key committees and working groups (e.g., Whistler Bear Working Group)
- assisting with the Fitzsimmons Creek gravel management program
- implementing RMOW's stormwater management program
- assisting with OCP (author key section)
- developing the Whistler Land Trust
- implementing the Air Quality Management Program
- initiating and running water conservation projects, the reusable bag program and the yard waste drop-off program
- conducting public information around initiatives such as the pesticides bylaw, the iShift citizen program and Whistler Way
- participating in the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council, and the West Nile virus response program
- monitoring water quality in lakes and streams for compliance to Ministry of Environment and public health criteria
- providing staff support to the Whistler Fisheries Stewardship Group and related stream rehabilitation projects

- managing the Western Toad protection program

➤ **Operating Budget**

Figure 4 presents the 2009 operating cost summary for *Environmental Stewardship*. The payroll and benefits numbers in the Figure are lower than they are today (2011) in the division. The Manager's scheduled return to full-time, and the switch to permanent part-time status for the Environmental Coordinator, served to increase the division's overall cost. Even with this increase, however, the division remains quite small relative to *Development Services* and *Operations*.

➤ **Service Levels**

Service levels for this division are determined for the most part by Council decisions to promote and pursue environmental objectives. Service levels are also influenced by senior government requirements in some cases — specifically, for the Fitzsimmons Creek gravel management program, and for the stream and lake water quality monitoring.

➤ **Other Points**

The services provided under *Environmental Stewardship* are likely to be perceived by some observers as non-essential — i.e., non-core — services of the municipality. In the case of RMOW, however, the range of core municipal services is much broader than in other municipalities. Whistler's commitment to sustainable development, formalized through *Whistler2020*, means that *Environmental Stewardship* services are considered a key part of RMOW's mission, and are thus indeed viewed as core services for the municipality.

A key purpose of the division is to engage and leverage community resources. The expenditures made on *Environmental Stewardship*, therefore, may be considered an investment in community involvement and action towards sustainability.

Environmental Projects

Environmental Projects handles all significant capital projects for the *Environmental Services*

department, as well as several operating programs that are budgeted under capital. *Environmental Projects* also works with *Environmental Operations* to complete various minor capital projects each year. The full range of projects includes new and replacement water, sewer, drainage and road infrastructure. Specific activities include:

- development of long-term infrastructure plans (in cooperation with others) and updates of regulatory plans (e.g., liquid waste management plan)
- hiring of engineering consultants and overseeing the engineering design process
- tendering of consulting and construction work
- hiring of contractors and overseeing the construction process
- provision of information and progress reports on capital projects underway to Council and the community

The division is also responsible for developing the capital portion of the *Environmental Services* budget, based on the information in the organization's long-term infrastructure plans, the requests and instructions of Council and senior management, and the input of the *Environmental Operations* division. Projects are funded from the water, sewer, solid waste and general funds.

Recent projects in which the division has been involved include:

- construction of the Fitzsimmons Creek debris barrier
- WWTP upgrade
- construction of 21 Mile Creek UV water treatment facility, pump station and well
- day skier parking lot upgrade

Projects currently underway include the installation of water main replacements in three parts of the municipality, upgrading of the long-term water supply plan, and development of the Fitzsimmons Creek Flood Maintenance Program.⁹

The division is run by one (1) staff member — the Manager of Environmental Projects. The number

of engineering consultants and contractors under the Manager's direction fluctuates depending on the time of year (Whistler has a six month construction season) and the number of projects underway. Between 20 and 30 capital projects are completed in a typical year.

➤ **Operating Budget**

The budgeted and actual operating costs for *Environmental Projects* are not broken out specifically for the service area in the *Environmental Services* budget. It is assumed that the costs are allocated to the other service areas and/or charged to capital projects.

➤ **Service Levels**

Service levels have traditionally been driven mostly by new infrastructure needs. Increasingly, levels are becoming a function of replacement infrastructure needs. Many future projects will be shaped by operating budget considerations — the idea, that is, that projects should be designed in a way that minimizes operating costs.

⁹ The capital budget for *Environmental Projects* has ranged from \$7.2 million in 2005 to \$30.4 million in 2009.

SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM REPORT

APPENDIX II

WORKSHOP 1 AGENDA



WHISTLER

Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC, V0N 1B4
www.whistler.ca

November 2011



Resort Municipality of Whistler
Service Review Program — Environmental Services
April 12, 2011
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

WORKSHOP

EVENT: *Service Review Program* — Environmental Services
Workshop #1

WHERE: Piccolo Meeting Room
Municipal Hall

WHEN: Monday, August 8, 2011
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

WHO: Service Review Team (Environmental Services)

BACKGROUND: As the group understands already, the *Service Review Program* is an exercise through which management staff, with the assistance of an independent consultant, systematically and critically examine the services provided by RMOW. The key purpose of the *Program* is to identify possible ways to reduce net operating costs in the organization. Council's desire to reduce the size of the organization's overall operating budget is the main impetus for the *Program*. Other reasons for the *Program* are:

- to sharpen the organization's focus on its "core services"
- to give managers and supervisors a tool to assess and make changes to the organization's various operations
- to demonstrate to taxpayers, partner organizations and other stakeholders that RMOW understands, and is taking the steps required to excel within, the post-growth phase in Whistler's evolution — a phase that requires the organization to function at its customary high level, but within new financial constraints

The *Program* was initiated in December, 2010, as a pilot project in the *Parks Operations* division of *Resort Experience*. The *Program* is now being rolled out for all departments in the organization, beginning with *Environmental Services*.

Three fundamental questions that apply to every service lie at the heart of the

Program:

- Should RMOW be providing the service?
- Is the current level of service necessary?
- Is the current method of service delivery the most cost-effective?

These questions will be explored with managers and supervisors — the service review team — at a series of workshops over the coming weeks.¹ At the April 12 workshop the team will focus on the *first two* of these questions (the third question will be the focus of future discussions).

APPROACH

It is important to note there are two general approaches to conducting a *Service Review Program*:²

- One approach relies heavily on outside consultants to examine areas of service and to recommend changes. Under this approach the consultants interview staff and spend time in the department, but ultimately work independent of the department to critically review service levels and service delivery. The consultants apply their own understanding of the services being examined, as well as their own views and biases with respect to the relative importance of different services and activities in the organization. They make their own recommendations to senior management and Council.
- The other approach relies on teams of staff to review areas of service and to make recommendations for change. Under this approach, service review teams of managers and supervisors are formed to conduct the review in each department. An outside consultant is assigned to the team to guide the process, facilitate team discussions, conduct research for/with the team, put forward suggestions, and challenge the team to explore tough questions. The consultant, however, works *with* the team, not apart from it.

This approach features *collaboration* both among team members, and between the team and the consultant. The approach recognizes that the organization's managers and supervisors are the individuals with the expertise and knowledge of the services. The approach recognizes that it is the team that is best positioned to identify changes and make recommendations — recommendations that can be implemented, and that can achieve changes in ways that minimize stress to the organization.

RMOW's *Service Review Program* is being conducted using the collaborative, team approach. Managers and supervisors — service review team members — have a

¹ It is anticipated that three workshops in total will be required, as was the case with *Parks Operations*.

² These types of programs are often referred to as "core service reviews" in municipalities.

central role to play under this approach. Their role is to work together to challenge assumptions, consider alternatives and identify improvements to the services that are provided not only in their own service areas, but throughout the department. The consultant will guide the process and facilitate the discussion; but the consultant is not the expert when it comes to the department's services. The managers and supervisors are the ones with the service expertise. They are the ones, acting together as a team and with the help of the consultant, who need to critically and creatively examine what is done and what can/should be changed.

PREPARATION: Attached to this document is a copy of the *Environmental Services* paper that was distributed to team members on Thursday, April 7. The paper identifies and documents the existing services in the department, and was developed by the consultant based on information provided by *Environmental Services'* managers and supervisors in worksheets, and in person during separate discussions with the consultant. The paper also offers a number of observations ("other points") that emerged during the discussions. Team members should be familiar with the contents of the paper prior to the workshop.

Other than the paper, the only material to review for April 12 is this agenda document. Team members should reflect on the questions that are set out for group discussion (see later). These questions, and others like them, will be explored by the group at the workshop.

AGENDA: The agenda for April 12 is ambitious. Any items that the team is unable to get through (if there are any) will be deferred to the second workshop.

1. OPENING COMMENTS

2. SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Why a *Service Review Program*?
- What is the *Program's* purpose?
- What general approach has been chosen?
- What is the *Service Review Team*, and what is its role?
- What is the role of the consultant?
- What is the process for *Environmental Services*?

3. WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- What is the purpose of this first workshop?
- What do we hope to accomplish?
- How will we conduct our discussions?

4. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT

Group Discussion

- How are changes in Whistler impacting the department?
- What are the three biggest challenges facing the department?
- What is particularly exceptional about the department?
- What needs to change in the department?

5. SERVICES TO PROVIDE

Group Discussion

- Should RMOW be providing all of the services currently provided by *Environmental Services*? For each service, consider:
 - Is it a "core service"?
 - How important is the service to RMOW's mission? Is it one of the more important services?
 - What would happen if the service were eliminated? What would be the impact, and who would be impacted?
 - If some services had to go, could this service be eliminated?

6. SERVICE LEVELS

Group Discussion

- Are current service levels necessary? For each service, consider:
 - What would happen if the service level were reduced? What would a 10% reduction in net expenditure on the service mean? Would anyone notice?
 - Could the service level be reduced on a trial basis?
 - If we had to recommend a reduction in the overall level of service in the department, would this service be targeted? Is it as critical as other services?

7. CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

8. CLOSING COMMENTS

SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM REPORT

APPENDIX III

WORKSHOP 2 WORKSHEET



WHISTLER

Resort Municipality of Whistler
4325 Blackcomb Way
Whistler, BC, V0N 1B4
www.whistler.ca

November 2011



Resort Municipality of Whistler
Service Review Program (Community Life)
August 2011

WORKSHEET

The *Service Review Team* met in early August to begin the process of critically examining the services provided within *Environmental Services*. For each service, two basic questions were explored:

- Should RMOW continue to provide the service (i.e., is the service a core service)?
- Is the current level of service necessary?

On Wednesday, August 24 the *Team* will be meeting for a second workshop (time and place to be announced). At this second workshop some additional time will be spent looking at existing service levels, and at service level reductions to consider. The main focus of the second workshop, however, will be service delivery — that is, *how* our services are delivered at present. For each service, the *Team* will explore the question:

- Is the current approach to service delivery the most cost-effective?

In the *Service Review Program* the Managers and Supervisors in each area of the organization are the professionals with the knowledge and expertise required to assess and (if warranted) implement potential service changes. Other members of the *Service Review Team* are present to help the Managers and Supervisors challenge the *status quo*, and to identify possible changes to consider. On August 24 it will be important for *Team* members to continue to play these different roles.

This *Worksheet* booklet is being provided to help everyone make the most of our time together on August 24. Please think about and answer the questions that are posed in the pages that follow. The questions are intended to help you think critically about your respective service area — to think, that is, about how the services for which you are accountable might be delivered differently to save money. Some questions will be answered quickly; others will require considerable thought.

**SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAM
WORKSHEET FOR COMMUNITY LIFE**

Your Name:

Service Area:

Date:

Could your services, or parts of them, be outsourced? What would be the benefit? What would be the risk?

Should functions already outsourced be brought in-house? What would be the benefit? What would be the risk?

Could your group, or parts of it, be amalgamated with another service area in Community Life or in some other department? Are there opportunities to share services?

What are some specific activities within your service area that could be eliminated (permanently or on a trial basis) as cost-savings measures without undermining the core service you provide?

Are your staff fully utilized in delivering your core service? How much staff downtime do you observe?

If your staff are not fully utilized, is there a compelling reason to retain your current FTE's (e.g., staff expertise)?

Are there opportunities to eliminate or "red-circle" specific positions, including management / supervisory positions? Put differently, could you stand before Council and defend all current positions?

If Council determined that each service area needed to reduce its annual NET operating cost by 10%, what changes would you look to make? What would be the impact of such changes? Who would be impacted?

In your view, is the level of service provided by your work group unnecessarily high? Could the level of service be reduced (even on a trial basis) and still allow you to meet key requirements, and/or what you would consider to be reasonable customer expectations?

What are new some revenue-generating opportunities for your service? Where possible, are service costs fully offset by existing user fees? Could they be?

What "housekeeping" tasks (e.g., updating bylaws, reviewing user fees, revising contracts with School District and others, training staff etc.) need to get done in your area of service? How would the completion of these tasks help to reduce costs?

What best practices do you know of that are not being used in your area of service (e.g., shift patterns, use of special equipment, new technology, etc.)? Could they be implemented to reduce costs?

List three ideas you have for reducing the cost of providing the service(s) for which you are accountable (if listed in previous responses please say so). What information, if any, do you need to further explore the feasibility of such changes?

What cost saving ideas do you have for OTHER service areas within Community Life or in other departments (based on your knowledge of the services, and/or your observations)?

Give an ESTIMATE of the actual savings to your service area that would result from the various changes identified in your responses to the questions in this Worksheet.

Please complete and submit by August 22 to the General Manager of Community Life