

WTA President's Report – 2025

Dear Members,

I want to begin by thanking all of you for your continued support, passion, and commitment to protecting Whistler's recreational future.

The Northlands rezoning process has not been transparent. For over two years, it unfolded behind closed doors, with no updates shared with the public. Then, last May, we finally learned that RMOW staff, Beedie Living, and four consulting firms had agreed on a projected land value increase should the rezoning go through.

That number is \$77 million.

In British Columbia, the accepted standard is for municipalities to receive 75% of any rezoning-related increase as a Community Amenity Contribution (CAC). In this case, that should mean \$58 million for Whistler. Beedie has offered an amenity package that they value at \$47 million. RMOW staff value Beedie's offer at \$38 million, a \$20 million shortfall.

But here's the problem: we still don't know how that \$77 million figure was calculated. Some real estate professionals in our community believe the estimate is too low. Yet none of the assumptions or supporting data have been made public. This leaves us—and all of Whistler—unable to question the results.

The WTA reached out for clarity, but got nowhere. So, we filed a Freedom of Information Request, which cost several hundred dollars. The request has been delayed several times due to a backlog of FOI requests. We are hopeful we'll receive some answers by Christmas.

Top Two priorities?

Through multiple rounds of public engagement, two top priorities consistently emerged.

1. Replace the Whistler Racquet Club (WRC) with a new, multi-use racquet facility
2. Create more employee housing to support our local workforce.

If Beedie's rezoning application is denied they can still develop a hotel under the current zoning. That zoning comes with major amenity obligations:

- The equivalent of a 16-court tennis facility
- An 18,000 sq. ft. spa
- A golf teaching academy
- And 27 employee housing units

These are not small contributions. Altogether, delivering what's already required by existing zoning would cost at least \$50 million.

Yet Beedie's current proposal—supported by RMOW's public communications—suggests they will grant valuable Phase 1 rezoning for the same \$50 million CAC. In other words, they get the massive land value boost, but the community receives nothing more than what's already required. How is this a win for Whistler?

This point alone raises serious questions whether the proposed rezoning truly serves the interests of Whistler residents.

Beedie says they will not proceed with building a hotel because it's not profitable. So, if the community denies the rezoning we could be left with no development and no club.

Housing.

Beedie Living has offered \$14.4 million towards 70 employee housing units on the Northlands site. While more housing is always welcome, let's look at the bigger picture.

Right now, over \$100 million in affordable and employee housing projects are either under construction or in approval across Whistler. These include:

- 106 WHA rental units (opening July 2026)
- 125 WHA rental units (targeted for 2028)
- 110 units by Sports Legacies beginning construction
- 30 ownership units at Nesters Road
- 20 units at Hillman

Whistler is doing an excellent job on housing. 84% of employees already live in Whistler. Few resort towns can make that claim. Housing is being addressed by the mayor, the council, the province, the Whistler Housing Authority, and the Whistler Development Corporation.

But the second community priority, replacing the WRC, is not. No directions given, no steps taken.

Recreation.

Beedie's current plan eliminates the WRC with no guaranteed replacement. The cost to rebuild is estimated at around \$25 million. Their offer for recreation is \$10 million, stretched over a decade. That's a \$15 million shortfall, just to get back what's being taken away. Instead of gaining an amenity, the community loses one—and has to figure out how to fund its replacement.

It is clear that most residents have little confidence that the RMOW would be able to build a new multi-use racquet centre on time or on budget, even with significant funding from Beedie. The community simply does not trust that it will happen. Why would the municipality assume the financial exposure, construction risk, and cost overruns.

The Beedie Group are developers with the resources, experience, and capacity to efficiently deliver the project.

The WTA's position is clear:

The rezoning agreement must stipulate that Beedie Living build the replacement facility before demolishing the existing amenity. Without that condition, there's a real risk that Whistler will permanently lose a vital recreation hub, one that had over 82,000 visits in 2024 alone.

But Beedie can't build until the RMOW takes the first essential step: identify a viable land site immediately. Kicking this decision down the road only increases costs, delays construction, and risks leaving Whistler without any indoor/outdoor

racquet facility for years, perhaps decades. If the RMOW is not willing to provide municipal land then the WRC must remain where it is.

The Good News.

Our campaign has momentum. The Whistler Racquet Club, the Sea to Sky Pickleball Club, and the WTA kicked off the Northlands public meeting season with a well-attended town hall at the WRC.

The event was initiated by WTA Director Guy Darby, with Jamie Grant and his team providing outstanding hospitality. The club was packed, reflecting the strong community interest and support.

The evening featured an inspiring video celebrating Whistler's past achievements, followed by powerful and heartfelt speeches from Ben Thomas and Jamie Grant.

Mayor Jack Crompton addressed the audience on behalf of the RMOW. His message. Be patient with the process. No decisions have been made. That is our concern. Four years into the process and no decisions have been made.

The past three open houses, hosted by Beedie and the RMOW were packed with passionate supporters—especially at the RMOW event, where the community's energy was unmistakable.

Our letter-writing campaign has been a huge success, with dozens of thoughtful, impactful messages sent to the mayor, council, and the *Pique*. Keep them coming.

What's Next.

We all need to stay engaged. The next opportunity is likely to be early next year, when RMOW staff reports on Northlands. We need to show up, speak out, and keep this issue front and center.

Once Beedie officially submits their rezoning application, there will be two more opportunities for public input. The WTA will keep you updated on dates and how to participate.

Thank you for standing with us. Now let us ensure Whistler's recreation future is protected and our community's voice results in action.

Sincerely, John Konig
President, Whistler Tennis Association