



AGENDA

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

March 9, 2022

12:00 P.M.

A meeting of the STMP Committee will be held Wednesday, March 9, 2022 beginning at 12:00 p.m. at City Hall, (418 E. Second Street), Council Conference Room

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Call to order and roll call
- B. Appointment of Officers
- C. Additions or changes to the Agenda
- D. Approval of Minutes
- E. Updates from Committee Members
- F. Revisit Priority Action Items
- G. Start the discussion on Standing Committee
- J. Next Meeting – TBD
- L. Adjournment



The following Principles for Civil Dialogue are adopted on 2/20/2007 for use by the City Council and by all boards, committees and personnel of the City of Whitefish:

- We provide a safe environment where individual perspectives are respected, heard, and acknowledged.
- We are responsible for respectful and courteous dialogue and participation.
- We respect diverse opinions as a means to find solutions based on common ground.
- We encourage and value broad community participation.
- We encourage creative approaches to engage public participation.
- We value informed decision-making and take personal responsibility to educate and be educated.
- We believe that respectful public dialogue fosters healthy community relationships, understanding, and problem-solving.
- We acknowledge, consider and respect the natural tensions created by collaboration, change and transition.
- We follow the rules and guidelines established for each meeting.

Adopted by Resolution 07-09
February 20, 2007



**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN STEERING AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND
1:30 PM
MINUTES**

1) Call to Order

Lauren Oscilowski, Chair, called the meeting to order. Members present were Mariah Joos (via Webex), Andy Feury, Brian Schott, Michelle Howke. Nick Polumbus, Megan Powell, and Craig Workman were absent. Facilitators Dylan Boyle and Rhonda Fitzgerald (1:47 p.m.) were present. Four members of the public were in attendance.

2) Update from Committee Members

None

3) Recap Most Recent City Council Work Sessions

Council directed staff to continue to increase the fines to \$500 per night; the license number be included on listings; increase fees for licensing, look into 30 day to 90 days for long term, the three strikes policy similar to the County. The idea of a moratorium was tabled.

4) Discuss Proposed Moratorium on STRs (City Council Agenda Item for October 4th Meeting)

After discussion since a Public Hearing is scheduled for the October 4th City Council meeting, the committee would show support as recommended. The Committee would like staff to continue to work on the five enforcement suggestions and look into defining what is Resort Residential and Resort Commercial.

5) Development of Short-Term Rental Plan

A Short-Term Rental Plan should have:

- Options for rezoning based upon community livability and short-term rentals.
- What is a reasonable cap on the number of short-term rentals in the City of Whitefish?
- Is there a legal basis for the cap?
- Can fees for short term rentals be increased to help pay for costs associated with affordable housing?
- At the September 7th Work Session, 5 recommended actions for short term rentals were identified and Council instructed staff to implement those. What is the progress of these changes? Track the completion and effectiveness of these.

Three options were presented to the Committee for a Short-Term Rental Plan:

Option 1: Short-Term (w/90-day Moratorium)

- The questions in the plan are to be researched by City Staff and presented back to Council within 60-days of the start of the moratorium
- This allows 30 days for Council to direct action to City Staff as the moratorium expires.

Option 2: Short Term Rental Plan (Plan first and then Potential Moratorium)

- The questions in the plan are to be researched by City Staff and presented back to Council within 60 days (or whichever time frame seems appropriate).
- This allows (x) days for Council to direct action to City Staff on implementation of various portions of the plan, which could also include a moratorium.

Option 3: City Staff looks into options for rezoning and STMP works closely with City Staff and Legal to develop options for STR regulation

- The rezoning is researched by the Planning Department to report back in 60 days (or whichever time frame seems appropriate).
- STMP Committee researches and develops benchmarks for STR caps and costs (how to increase fees for STRs to help pay for costs associated with affordable housing) then works with City Attorney to legally vet these options and reports to Council in 60 days (or whichever time frame seems appropriate).

Andy cautioned against rezoning. It is difficult to do legally. 75% of the property owners of any given zone can petition the City to rezone. The City cannot initiate it and would be considered a downzone. Brian thought we should look into incentivizing long-term rentals.

What can be done is 1) Increase the Fee Structure; 2) Enforcement; 3) What can we do to incentivize long-term rentals as opposed to short-term; 4) Look at other compliance in terms of what people have to put on their licenses and websites.

Kristen Riter, Wisconsin Avenue, approached the Committee. She mentioned at the same time of this moratorium short term rental talk the City is entertaining three large hotels. At the same time, you are going to grow and bring in more visitors and going after some people whose short-term rentals help pay for their house. It is a mixed bag, can't point at the short-term rentals as bad people. She thinks short-term rentals is a little problem, not the problem. If you want workforce housing, incentivizing long-term rental should be the focus.

Nathan Dugan, 937 Kalispell Avenue, approached the Committee and agrees the license fee should be increased and he thinks the moratorium needs to be in place.

Giuseppe Caltabiano, Lion Mountain Loop, approached the Committee and stated we should be looking at enforcing short-term rentals that are not zoned for short-term rentals. The best enforcement is if we have the software to find where people are, a seal by the city in the comments, "this property is not zoned for short-term rentals".

What are the actions items for staff if a moratorium were to occur? Work on the five action items for enforcement, explore definition what you can and can't do in a short-term rental-based language of what other communities have found worked.

6) Discuss Options for Extending Current Committee an Additional Year or Recommending a

Standing Committee

The steering committee implement the action items of the plan city resident or represent an organization operating within the city.

Andy made a motion, seconded by Michelle to extend the Steering Committee one – year to implement the five action items in the plan and members of the Committee to reflect live inside city limit or represent an organization operating within the city.

7) Adjournment

Lauren adjourned the meeting at 2:47 p.m.

Sustainable Tourism Management Planning Committee
Prioritization of Recommended Action Items
(Extension of Sustainable Tourism Management Plan adopted September 8, 2020)

On August 3, 2020 the Sustainable Tourism Management Planning Committee presented the Sustainable Tourism Management Plan during a Council Work Session and the Resolution to adopt the plan (Resolution No. 20-38) was confirmed after a public hearing on September 21, 2020. Resolution No. 20-38 extended the STMP Committee through October 1, 2021 and the Committee was tasked to reassess and prioritize the action items outlined in the STMP. The below report provides a summary of prioritized action items along with supporting research.

The three action items highlighted at the beginning of the plan either respond to rapidly changing trends that are having a significant impact on the community or require a timely involvement in policy/legislative actions that will be considered within the upcoming year. The remaining action items are organized by category and can be reprioritized following completion of the Priority Action Items. Please refer to the STMP Committee Report Synopsis for additional information on each action item.

Priority Action Items:

1. City to redefine Short-Term Rental from ‘stays of less than thirty (30) days’ to ‘stays of less than (90) days.’ If the goal of Long-Term Rentals is to create neighborhoods, then the 30 day requirement is too short. The current 30 day term allows for a series of staggered short-term rentals to visitors (two weeks every month, for example) as opposed to a long-term rental to a community member who lives and works and Whitefish.

RESIDENTIAL, SHORT TERM RENTAL: The rental of an entire privately owned house, townhouse unit, condominium unit, apartment or other residence, or any space within a dwelling unit rented independently, *for stays of less than thirty (30) days*. Short term rentals as defined herein do not include the following: bed and breakfasts, hostels, and motel or hotel establishments, and they shall not provide food or beverages for sale on premises or with the rental of the dwelling. Renting a portion of the home for a short-term rental does not qualify as a home occupation.

Research/References

In response to the affordable housing crisis, Summit County Colorado (Breckenridge) and Tahoe have amended their definition of Short-Term Rental to ‘stays of less than (90) days.’

The City of Moab currently has a moratorium on new construction of overnight rentals in Moab City <https://moabcity.org/514/Short-Term-Rentals>

2. Develop education and outreach materials regarding the current resort tax including its history and benefits including funding source for infrastructure improvements, property tax relief, parks, and trails, and most importantly maintenance of existing projects.

Research/References

During the STMP's open house, we heard many residents say they did not know what the Resort Tax funds or that they received any property tax benefit from the program. In preparation for the ballot measure, we feel some education and outreach regarding the history and benefits of resort tax would be beneficial.

3. Provide a list, available on the city website, of licensed Short-Term Rental properties and require Whitefish Business License to be included on all rental sites. Increase fines to not more than \$750/night for STRs in violation of zoning.

Research/References

Example of Jackson, WY Short-Term Rental Listings

<https://www.jacksonwy.gov/335/Short-Term-Rentals>

Teton County Short-Term Rental Violations

<https://www.tetoncountywy.gov/653/Short-Term-Rental-Violations>

Moab City Short-Term Rental Violations

Transportation

1. City to adopt *Complete Streets Policy* to cut pollution, decrease traffic and fight climate change by supporting plans, policies and funding that promote activity-friendly routes to every day destinations. *Complete Streets* policies formalize a community's intent to plan, design and maintain streets for all users of all ages and abilities including people walking and biking. This policy would better position the City to insist on compliant plans from MDT and the county. (1,600 U.S. communities have adopted *Complete Streets* policies.)
2. City to prioritize *transportation catalyst projects* identified in adopted Downtown Business District Masterplan. "A bias toward the pedestrian and cyclist should be fostered for all streets in the Downtown, including Auto Mobility Streets."

Examples:

-Whitefish Promenade North Section including Viaduct Overpass improvements

- Whitefish Promenade South, protected bikeway from 6th to Railway on Spokane
 - “Traffic calming” strategies including reducing speed limits to 20mph
 - “Maintain Downtown Whitefish as a destination rather than simply a place to pass through.”
 - “Maintain curbside parking wherever possible”
3. The City and its many valuable outside partners will continue to work together on available grant opportunities and other sources of creative project funding.
 4. Develop an educational ‘Share the Road’ initiative including solutions to downtown core bike traffic. (Whitefish is ranked in the top 4% of bike to work commuters and 5% of walk to work commuters)

Synopsis of Transportation Research and References

- Complete Streets Policy review:
<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/elements-complete-streets-policy/>
<https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/complete-streets>
- Healthy Community Design Summit 2014 Recommendations- Mark Fenton
- STMP “Friend of the Fish” Values Statement:
 - Take it slow. Enjoy the Ride.
 - Slow down and take a deep breath. Enjoy and notice the quiet pace of life in Whitefish and the beauty that surrounds all of us in every moment.
 - Walk, ride, or hop on the S.N.O.W bus before you drive.
- Whitefish Downtown Business District Masterplan
[https://www.cityofwhitefish.org/DocumentCenter/View/303/2018-Revised-Whitefish- Downtown-Business-District-Master-Plan-Final-PDF](https://www.cityofwhitefish.org/DocumentCenter/View/303/2018-Revised-Whitefish-Downtown-Business-District-Master-Plan-Final-PDF)
- Whitefish Transportation Plan Update: Existing Conditions Report
<http://whitefish.transportationplan.net/wpcontent/uploads/sites/2/2021/01/Existing-Conditions-Report.pdf>

Funding

1. Develop City funded Matching Grant Program for partners to complete projects and programs. Grant would require partners to satisfy a 1:1 match and provide a long-term maintenance plan.
2. Develop a City webpage outlining funding and partnership opportunities. Could outline current City cost-share program for sidewalk maintenance, other grant opportunities like the CVB Grant, project Whitefish Kids playground project (as a case study on City contributing to partner projects), and other known funding sources.

Synopsis of Funding Research and References

- During the STMP's open house, we heard many residents say they did not know what the Resort Tax funds or that they received any property tax benefit from the program. In preparation for the ballot measure, we feel some education and outreach regarding the history and benefits of resort tax would be beneficial.
- The City and/or STMP Committee should advocate for the renewal of Resort tax where appropriate and clearly show that it falls within the objectives of the STMP.
- In talking with the City of Bozeman regarding their Park Improvement Grant, they have found a great benefit to providing matching funds to local partners for park improvements. They effectively double the impact (by requiring a 1:1 match), empower a community partner group, and don't have to do the work. Managing the grant fund is relatively simple, and their Parks Superintendent (Director) decides which project receives the funding. They allocate \$50k/year to the program. Craig Workman mentioned the City's cost-share program for sidewalk maintenance could be used as a model/template for partners to undertake projects.
- A brief synopsis on how other communities may be tackling these issues
See City of Bozeman [Parks Improvement Grant](#)

Recycling

1. Proceed with contract negotiations and implementations of curbside recycling services.
2. Research and expand opportunities for recycling, support local recycling businesses, and reduce overall waste. Specifically work to expand programs and options for recycling other materials and support efforts to reduce overall waste/plastic use.
3. Develop composting initiative for commercial and residential.
4. Develop options for commercial recycling within the proposed curbside recycling plan.

Synopsis of Research and References

From Climate Action Plan

- The life cycle of goods and materials accounts for a significant percentage of a municipality's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Goal to increase waste diversion and reduction through waste prevention, purchasing and repair policies, recycling, composting, and education.

Strategy

- CFW-3 Expand community recycling and composting.

CFW-3.1 Implement single-stream residential curbside recycling.

CFW-3.2 Improve public space recycling programs.

CFW-3.3 Develop opportunities for recycling of goods and food waste by local businesses.

CFW-3.4 Purchase a leaf vacuum and explore developing a leaf collection/composting repository with community partners.