Whitehorse City Council Meeting Monday December 13, 2021

RE: Whitehorse South Trail Plan

My name is Patrick Milligan

I live in Wolf Creek

Thank you for this opportunity to address Council on the proposed Whitehorse South Trail Plan.

My primary concern is that if the proposed Dawson South MMU trail is approved by Council it will negatively affect our property value and detract from the quiet enjoyment of our residence.

It will also compromise an opportunity for appropriate Wolf Creek Regional Park planning. The Dawson South trail runs through the riparian setback of Wolf Creek and is the most heavily used non-motorized trail within the Wolf Creek sub-division.

In a recent letter to Mayor Cabott, I included an attachment entitled “Habitat and Wildlife Values” which shows photos taken at our property, or acquired from other sources to show what we have observed in the environmentally sensitive area in close proximity to the existing trail.

It seems bewildering that an extraordinary effort is required to advocate for the protection of an Environmentally Sensitive Area within the City Of Whitehorse, when its protection is supported by the Official Community Plan, Zoning Designation, the Kwanlin Dun City of Whitehorse Heritage and Ecosystem Design Proposal, the reconciliation principle of the draft OCP, and the Snowmobile and ATV bylaws.

In addition, the City conducted a MMU Exit Trail survey, which specifically allowed Wolf Creek residents to make an informed choice between two MMU trail options: the Dawson South Trail (trail near our property) and the Dawson North Trail.

Based upon survey results, Council approved the Dawson North MMU trail in 2018. Council clearly resolved a trail designation conflict within the Wolf Creek Sub-division by approving the Dawson North MMU Trail.

City administration has ignored the premise of the Wolf Creek MMU Exit Trail Survey and has instead proposed the Dawson South Trail as a MMU trail in the draft Whitehorse South Trail Plan.

There are other MMU trail options readily available (and used) that do not involve disrupting an Environmentally Sensitive Area or compromising planning for the City of Whitehorse Wolf Creek Regional Park.

My second concern is that the Whitehorse South Trail Plan does not include any designated trails along the Alaska Highway corridor.

There are many heavily used trails and existing trail connections along the highway corridor, which can easily be incorporated into the Whitehorse South Trail Plan. A Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Yukon Highways and Public Works would greatly enhance inter-neighbourhood trail connections within the Whitehorse South area.

My third concern is that there is what I characterize as a net loss of non-motorized trails in Whitehorse South that results from the proposed Whitehorse South Trail Plan and current bylaws.

Based upon the definition of Non-Motorized Multiuse Trails in the 2020 Trail Plan, all Whitehorse South trails are Motorized Multiuse Trails. I hope Council will initiate a process that deals with this disparity.

My personal observation is that there has been exponential growth in motorized trail use (summer and winter) in Whitehorse South.

Unfortunately, the City appears to lack appropriate planning that will help to mitigate such growth, and its subsequent impact on the environment, on the safety of trail users, and on wildlife and residents who must put up with the noise and disruption that is often associated with motorized vehicles.

My recommendation is that Council not approve the Whitehorse South Trail Plan at this time. There are a number of issues that Council and City administration should work through to ensure that the Whitehorse South Trail Plan is a plan, which all Whitehorse South residents can support. Please take the time to do it right!

Thank you,

Patrick Milligan