

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
15322 BUENA VISTA AVENUE, WHITE ROCK, B.C. V4B 1Y6



POLICY TITLE: DENSITY BONUS / AMENITY CONTRIBUTION

POLICY NUMBER: COUNCIL - 511

Date of Council Adoption: April 15, 2013	Date of Last Amendment: June 28, 2017
Council Resolution Number: 2017-309	
Originating Department: Planning and Development Services	Date last reviewed by the Governance and Legislation Committee: June 12, 2017

Policy:

Purpose

The purpose of density bonus/amenity contribution requirements is to permit an increase in allowable densities in exchange for providing community amenities. It allows the City to participate in a share of the increase in property values resulting from increases to the allowable densities. Variables such as location, land value, lot size, building costs and market conditions affect the feasibility of value increases to the land when greater density is permitted. If these variables provide worthwhile economic gains to a property owner proposing redevelopment of their site, over and above the costs of providing the amenity contribution, then density bonus is a realistic way of acquiring benefit for the community.

Amenities

Council's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan highlights several priorities which may be realized partly through the use of amenity contributions. The waterfront in particular is identified as the primary opportunity to drive the local economy and support community initiatives. As White Rock's main attraction, the waterfront is an amenity that serves the City as a whole, and it is the public open space that is most impacted by increased development. Therefore the improvement of the waterfront is the main priority for Council in allocating amenity contributions. Provision of amenities in the Town Centre, Lower Town Centre and surrounding areas, including but not limited to streetscape, public realm and transportation improvements, public art and building floorspace for civic uses, are also considered as a part of this policy.

Section 3.4.17 of the 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP) outlines the amenity contributions eligible for consideration for the Town Centre Area. The list of eligible amenity contributions for developments located outside of the Town Centre Area and which require rezoning, are similar, with clarification for area of applicability in brackets. Eligible contributions within the Waterfront, Town Centre Area, Lower Town Centre and elsewhere in the community are outlined as follows:

- A building or space within a building for civic uses, including but not limited to office, meeting or convention space (Town Centre Area)
- The provision and improvement of new publicly accessible open space, including a public square and/or pedestrian routes, either through dedication, easement, statutory right-of-way or covenant (all areas; with a preference for the East and West Beach Waterfront Business Areas)
- The improvement of existing publicly accessible open space and/or pedestrian routes (all areas; with a preference for the East and West Beach Waterfront Business Areas)
- Underground publicly accessible parking (Town Centre Area and East and West Beach Waterfront Business Areas)
- Publicly accessible parking (East and West Beach Waterfront Business Areas)
- Outdoor public art in the Town Centre Area located as recommended in the 2011 Town Centre Urban Design Plan (Town Centre Area)
- Outdoor public art elsewhere in the community subject to the review and advice of the City's Public Art Advisory Committee (all other areas)
- A transit station, "bus loop" and/or transit shelters (Town Centre Area)
- Special needs or non-market affordable housing (all areas)
- People movement infrastructure (e.g. outdoor escalators, funiculars, or gondola) to link Uptown to the Waterfront (Town Centre and Lower Town Centre areas, all areas)
- the provision of publically accessible open spaces or buildings or spaces within a building for civic uses, to serve the increased population. This could include the possibility of a shared-use facility at White Rock Elementary School (e.g. community gym space, art gallery, etc.) (Town Centre, Lower Town Centre Areas)
- the provision of public art that reflects the Johnston Road 'arts and culture corridor' (Town Centre, Lower Town Centre areas).

Process

In the Town Centre Area and Lower Town Centre Area, the City will establish the zoning that includes the maximum allowable densities both with and without the amenity contribution requirements, and proponents for redevelopment will be required to enter into written agreement for amenity contribution as a condition of development permit approval (when approved by Council for on-site amenities) and prior to the issue of building permits. Densities are expressed in terms of "Floor Area Ratio" (FAR) which is determined by dividing the gross floor area by the total site area.

For all other areas outside the Town Centre Area where higher densities are permitted in the OCP, redevelopment projects greater than 3 stories in height and/or 1.1 FAR in the Multi-Unit Residential designations, or greater than 3 stories in height and/or 1.75 FAR in the Commercial designations, will require rezoning to comprehensive development (CD) zone, and will be required to enter into agreement to establish the requirements for density bonus / amenity contribution prior to final approval of rezoning. Densities are expressed in terms of "Floor Area Ratio" (FAR) which is determined by dividing the residential floor area, commercial floor area, or institutional floor area (as applicable) by the total site area. For these projects, the CD zoning will make it possible to determine the appropriate site densities and

building heights on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the direction for allowable heights and densities established in the OCP. Further, market research will be required to determine the appropriate amount of density bonus / amenity contribution required, on a project by project basis.

Unless otherwise decided by Council, all amenity contributions will be in the form of payment- in-lieu. A reserve account will be created for deposit of these funds. Funds within this account will only be expended for those types of amenities listed above to be provided in the Waterfront area, the Town Centre area, the Lower Town Centre area, or in other public areas as determined by Council, and for the benefit of the overall community. Where Council has agreed to accept the amenity contribution to be developed on-site in conjunction with the redevelopment proposal, the specific amenities to be provided will be determined through discussion and negotiation between the City and the proponent. When it is agreed that the amenities are to be provided on-site, public access to the amenity will be secured through written agreement or covenant registered prior to building permit approval in the Town Centre and Lower Town Centre areas and may require the submission of financial securities acceptable to the City. Outside of the Town Centre and Lower Town Centre areas, public access to the amenity will be secured through written agreement or covenant registered prior to final approval of the rezoning.

Determination of Amenity to be Provided

Amenity contributions are required for every development:

- a) In the Town Centre Area and Lower Town Centre Area for developments exceeding three (3) stories in height and/or 1.75 FAR; and
- b) For every rezoning outside of the Town Centre Area and Lower Town Centre Area for proposed developments exceeding three (3) stories in height and/or 1.1 FAR in the Multi-Unit Residential designations, and three (3) stories in height and/or 1.75 FAR in the Commercial designations.

Note: In the Town Centre and Lower Town Centre Areas, FAR is calculated based gross floor area as defined in the zoning bylaw. For rezonings outside of the Town Centre and Lower Town Centre Area, FAR is calculated based on residential floor area, commercial floor area, or institutional floor area, as defined in the zoning bylaw, or a combination of the above if applicable.

Exemption of Above Ground Parkade Floorspace

Above ground parking floorspace areas, when contained within an above ground enclosed building, and not utilized for pay parking purposes or other revenue generating purpose, are exempt from providing amenity contributions.

Amenity Contribution Approach

1. Within the Town Centre Area, amenity contributions will be determined by using the following target rate as a guide in identifying the equal share of the increase in property value resulting from an increase in allowable density:

- \$0 for the 1st 1.75 FAR;
 - \$430 per m² for FAR of 1.75 to 5.4.
2. Within the Lower Town Centre Area, amenity contributions will be determined by using the following target rate as a guide in identifying the equal share of the increase in property value resulting from an increase in allowable density:
- \$0 for the 1st 1.75 FAR;
 - \$323 per m² for FAR of 1.75 to 3.5.
3. For every rezoning outside of the Town Centre Area and Lower Town Centre as noted above, the amenity contribution required will be determined for the entire project, on a project by project basis, based on the advice and recommendations of a qualified market research consultant specific to that project. Proponents will be required to submit the market research report at the time of application submission, and the City reserves the right to commission a 2nd report from an alternate consultant to determine the amenity contribution for that project.

In establishing the value of a proposed amenity, hard costs, soft costs and land costs will be considered. Eligible costs for on-site amenities, when approved by Council, therefore include:

- i) Hard Costs – all material and labour costs for the construction of the amenity;
- ii) Soft Costs – all fees and costs for the construction of the amenity; and
- iii) Land Costs – eligible only where the ownership of the land containing the amenity is transferred or dedicated to the City.

To determine the value of the on-site amenity, a 3rd party appraisal will be required.

Affordable Housing

Secured non market and market rental housing, as well as other forms of affordable housing, are considered community amenities as they provide for a more diverse range of housing types, tenures and rent or price levels that are available to White Rock residents. On this basis, and on upon the recommendations of the City's 2016 Rental Housing Task Force, the City will consider waiving or reducing community amenity contributions for these types of development applications, on a project-by-project basis, through using the following approaches as a guide in determining appropriate amenity contribution reductions.

Consideration of Amenity Contribution Reductions

1. Affordable Rental Floorspace:
- Affordable rental housing developments are those in which at least 30% of the units are owned or managed by non-profit groups and designed to be affordable for low and moderate income households.

- Consider waiver of up to 100 percent of applicable community amenity contribution for affordable rental floorspace, subject to this floorspace being secured by relevant legal agreements, and a review of the relevant development application and its merits in providing an affordable rental housing amenity that benefits the community. Projects will also be evaluated in way that considers how the proposed non or below market rental unit rates relate to what is currently available on the housing market, as determined by local and sub-regional housing market and household income indicators.
2. Secured Market Rental Floorspace:
 - Secured market rental housing developments are those designated for rental purposes only and protected with a covenant, lease agreement, or housing agreement registered against title for the life of the building.
 - Consider waiving up to a maximum of 50 percent of applicable amenity contribution for secured market rental floorspace, subject to this floorspace being secured by relevant legal agreements, and a review of the relevant development application and its merits in providing a secured market rental housing amenity that benefits the community.
 3. Amenity contribution reductions may also be considered for other types of affordable housing applications, on the condition that the proposals demonstrate the ability to provide rental, home ownership and/or other tenure models and dwelling units that are rented or purchased at rates below what is currently available on the housing market, as determined by local and sub-regional housing market and household income indicators, and continue to be offered at below market rates for a time period specified by the City of White Rock and secured by relevant legal agreements. A market research/housing consultant may be utilized in determining potential amenity contribution reductions, on a project by project basis, and consistent with the approach described above regarding the determination of amenity contribution value.