

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: July 26, 2021

TO: Governance and Legislation Committee

FROM: Carl Isaak, Director, Planning & Development Services

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to Council Policy 511: Density Bonus / Amenity Contribution Policy related to the Official Community Plan Amendment

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Governance and Legislation Committee recommend Council endorse the proposed revisions to Council Policy 511: Density Bonus / Amenity Contribution Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 12, 2021, Council adopted an amendment to the Official Community Plan (OCP) which introduced new criteria for defining affordable housing and reduced the amount of height and density permitted in several land use designations (Town Centre, Town Centre Transition, and Waterfront Village), as an outcome of the OCP Review. The CR-1 zoning for the Town Centre area was also amended on May 10, 2021, and as a “density benefits” zone, includes specific sections regarding the provision of amenities in exchange for higher density. Following these updates to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw, staff recommend updating the Density Bonus / Amenity Contribution Policy (Policy 511) to reflect these changes. This corporate report presents proposed revisions to Policy 511, shown with highlighted changes in Appendix A, for the Committee’s review and discussion, and recommendation to Council.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

The Density Bonus / Amenity Contribution Policy (Policy 511) was originally adopted by Council on April 15, 2013, and last amended on October 19, 2020.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The current Policy 511 includes target rates for the value of amenity contributions based on previous zoning and OCP density maximums that have recently been revised. Policy 511 is proposed to be revised to reflect these new zoning and OCP parameters, as well as an update to the definition/criteria for affordable housing.

The proposed changes to Policy 511 are attached to this corporate report as Appendix A, which proposed changes highlighted.

The following items are the significant proposed changes to the policy:

- The density “ceiling” (maximum) in the Town Centre land use designation is reduced from 5.4 FAR to 4.0 FAR;

- The density ceiling in the Town Centre Transition land use designation is reduced from 3.5 FAR to 2.8 FAR (if providing replacement rental units) and 2.5 FAR (without replacement rental units);
- The trigger for requiring an amenity contribution is proposed to be based solely on FAR (gross floor area ratio) instead of building height (as the target rates are FAR-based, not based on height, this would simplify the administration of this provision); and
- The definition of affordable rental floorspace has been revised to refer directly to the new OCP policies 11.2.1(c) and 11.2.4 which provide more specific criteria about what is required to be considered eligible for additional density and consideration of amenity contribution reduction/waiver.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The update to Policy 511 is being undertaken within existing departmental resources. No changes to the target rates for amenity contributions are being proposed. As the maximum density in several areas in the City (particularly the Town Centre area and Town Centre Transition areas) has been reduced in the Zoning Bylaw and Official Community Plan, the total possible amount of amenity contributions received for projects in these areas is reduced. This does not directly impact the City's operating budget but may impact the funding available for future amenity projects undertaken by the City.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 482 of the *Local Government Act* enables zoning bylaws to establish rules to permit greater amount of density in exchange for the conservation or provision of amenities, including affordable and special needs housing. This Council Policy provides guidance during the rezoning application process as to the type of amenities desired by the community as well as the value sought in exchange for additional density.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

This corporate report was reviewed by the Financial Services Department.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Official Community Plan (OCP) Review was a top priority in Council's 2021-2022 Strategic Priorities, and relates the "Our Community" theme objective of guiding land use decisions of Council to reflect the vision of the community.

An additional related objective is selecting and completing the CAC projects to maximize the benefit to the community; the update to the policy to reflect the amended OCP does not directly impact the CAC projects approved by Council as these are being undertaken with CAC funds already received, however the changes recently made in the OCP and Town Centre CR-1 zone will impact the value of amenities received in the future.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The following alternative is available for Council's consideration:

1. Direct staff to continue to use the existing Policy 511. This may cause misunderstandings by proponents who anticipate being allowed higher levels of density than supported by the OCP and/or Zoning Bylaw; or
2. Direct staff to make further revisions to the policy, as directed by the Committee, prior to it being brought forward to Council for endorsement.

CONCLUSION

Following updates to the Official Community Plan adopted on July 12, 2021, and the Town Centre CR-1 zone on May 10, 2021, staff recommend updating the Density Bonus / Amenity Contribution Policy (Policy 511) to reflect the changes made to the OCP and Zoning Bylaw. Key proposed changes include replacing references to densities previously permitted in the OCP and Zoning Bylaw to the reduced density maximums now allowed, and simplifying the administration of the policy by changing the "trigger" for when amenity contributions are expected to be based solely on density (gross floor area ratio; FAR) rather than on density and building height.

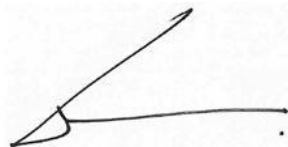
Respectfully submitted,



Carl Isaak, RPP, MCIP
Director, Planning & Development Services

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendation of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer