



POLICY REPORT
DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Report Date: July 11, 2017
Contact: Chris Robertson
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: July 25, 2017

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability
SUBJECT: 2017 Inflationary Rate Adjustments to Density Bonus Contributions

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the 2017 inflationary rate adjustments for Density Bonus Contributions available in certain zoning districts, and instruct the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to make application to amend the Zoning and Development By-law to increase the values of the affordable housing shares and the amenity shares in the RM-8 and RM-8N Districts Schedule and in the RM-9, RM-9A, RM-9N, RM-9AN, and RM-9BN Districts Schedule, generally in accordance with Schedule A, and that the application be referred to a public hearing.

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the amending by-law, generally in accordance with Schedule A, for consideration at public hearing.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval to adopt the annual inflationary adjustments to Density Bonus Contributions with these new rates becoming effective September 30, 2017 (if approved at public hearing). A separate Council report for inflationary adjustments to Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) Targets will be presented to Council for approval as CAC Target adjustments do not require a zoning and development by-law amendment.

The 2017 inflationary rate adjustments recommended in this report represents an increase of 11.9%, reflecting increases in local assessed property values and local non-residential construction costs. Since 2010, the average annual rate adjustment has been approximately 4.2%. By ensuring that rates and revenues keep pace with annual changes to property and construction costs, purchasing power is maintained and the City retains its ability to provide necessary growth-related amenities and infrastructure.

The proposed inflationary rate adjustments have been shared with development industry stakeholders (Urban Development Institute, National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Greater Vancouver Homebuilders Association) and at the time of finalizing this report written responses had not been received.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

In June 2003, Council adopted the Financing Growth Policy that sets the framework for the collection and allocation of DCLs to help pay for eligible capital facilities needed for growth related to the following DCL eligible categories: parks, housing, childcare, and engineering infrastructure. The Financing Growth Policy set the framework for City-wide Development Cost Levy (DCLs) rates, how DCL revenue is allocated, and established a policy for City-wide CACs.

In July 2008, Council approved an adjustment to City-wide DCL rates to reflect construction cost and property inflation with the implementation of these new rates to be effective in January 2010.

In October 2009, Council adopted the annual inflationary DCL rate adjustment system for all future rate adjustments to the City-wide DCL and Area Specific DCLs, with the new rates effective on September 30th of each year.

In 2014, Council approved Density Bonusing Contributions in Marpole.

In May 2016, Council adopted the DCL annual inflationary rate adjustments system for Density Bonus Contributions and CAC Targets.

In July 2016, Council approved new inflation adjusted rates for all CAC Targets and density bonus zone contributions, including a one-time catch up for past inflation incurred since the targets were first established.

In 2016, Council approved Density Bonusing Contributions in the Joyce Collingwood Station Precinct.

In 2017, Council approved Density Bonusing Contributions in the Mount Pleasant I-1A and I-1B zoning districts.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager and the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability RECOMMEND approval of the foregoing.

Vancouver's development contribution approach has evolved over time to respond to changing market conditions, regulatory environments and community needs. In recent years, the City has implemented a number of new Density Bonus Contributions and CAC targets which provide more certainty for new development and align with the provincial CAC guidelines introduced in 2014. As the use of these approaches has increased, there has been a reduced need for negotiated CACs. The City's increased use of pre-set contributions is intended to enhance

predictability for the development industry, and support a growing city through expediting housing supply and enabling economic development and job growth.

As part of the upcoming Cambie Corridor Planning Program: Phase 3 (now anticipated for presentation to Council in the first quarter 2018), the City will be recalibrating CAC Targets and Density Bonus contribution rates in the Cambie Corridor and adjacent Marpole area. The recalibration of rates will be established by updating public benefit strategy growth costs and testing development viability for appropriate growth cost recovery. Based on preliminary information, it is anticipated that the rates in these two areas could require further increases. Over the next few months, staff will review progress made on the draft Cambie Corridor Phase 3 Public Benefit Strategy (PBS) and may return to Council in fall 2017 with interim recalibrated rates provided that there is sufficient information in the interim PBS to adjust rates ahead of the delivery of the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 plan.

REPORT

Background/Context

This report proposes this year's annual inflationary rate adjustment to Density Bonus Contributions. A separate Council report for inflationary adjustments to Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) Targets will be presented to Council for approval as these adjustments do not require zoning and development by-law amendment.

Vancouver's development contribution approach has evolved over time to respond to changing market conditions, regulatory environments and community needs. In recent years, the City has implemented a number of new Density Bonus Contributions and which provide more certainty for new development and align with provincial CAC guidelines introduced in 2014.

In October 2009, Council adopted the annual inflationary DCL rate adjustment system for all DCL districts in the city. The system uses an annual inflation index based on property value and construction costs to establish the rate.

The annual rate adjustment is initiated with a report to Council in either June or July proposing new DCL rates adjusted for inflation. If approved, these new rates come into effect annually on September 30th. The annual system is based on local and national best practices; uses publicly accessible, third party data; and, provides transparent and accessible calculations. It also considers changing market conditions through a review of local economic indicators, such as housing starts and local GDP forecasts, so that DCL rates do not get ahead of inflationary trends.

The DCL rate adjustment system commenced for all DCL Districts in 2010 and annual DCL adjustments have been adopted by Council every year since. Since 2010, the average annual rate adjustment has been approximately 4.2% (see Table 1), noting that a similar inflationary rate adjustment of 10.3% occurred in 2012. The system provides more predictability to both the development industry and the City, and having smaller annual increases has been broadly supported by industry stakeholders.

In May 2016, Council approved the adoption of the DCL rate adjustment system to Density Bonus Contributions and CAC Targets. In response to development industry feedback and to

provide greater certainty, the City has expanded the use of Density Bonus Contributions and CAC Targets in planned areas such as: Cambie Corridor; Little Mountain Adjacent Area; Norquay Village; and certain districts in Marpole. As Density Bonus Contributions and CAC Targets had not been adjusted for inflation since they were established, Council approved a catch-up in July 2016 for past inflation as part of the annual inflationary rate adjustment, with the catch-up resulting in area rates increasing between 8% and 25%. The inflationary rate adjustment system helps to maintain the purchasing power of DCLs, Density Bonus Contributions and CAC Targets for City investment in public amenities and infrastructure to support growth. In 2009, a similar one-time rate catch-up for DCLs was approved by Council when the inflationary adjustment system was first adopted.

Annual inflationary rate adjustments help keep development contributions aligned with current construction/property value inflation. Periodically, a more significant recalibration of these contributions (i.e. CAC Targets and Density Bonus Contributions) will be required as public benefit strategies and the capital program are updated. Typically, this type of update would also include a review of any potential impacts on development viability. With the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 plan nearing completion, both Cambie Corridor and Marpole rates will need to be recalibrated to align with the updated needs identified in the Public Benefit Strategy.

For more information on the Council approved annual inflationary rate adjustment system, see <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/annual-inflation-index.aspx>.

Recommended inflationary adjustments are presented in Schedule A. For more information on CACs, see Appendix A.

Strategic Analysis

The recommendations in this report will bring all Density Bonus Contributions in line with the most recent property and construction cost inflation. By ensuring that rates and revenues keep pace with annual changes to property and construction costs, purchasing power is maintained and the City retains its ability to provide necessary growth-related amenities.

Density Bonus Contributions were last adjusted under the annual inflationary DCL rate adjustment system on September 30, 2016.

Vancouver's inflationary index blends third-party, property inflation (BC Assessment property roll¹) and construction cost inflation (Statistics Canada Non-Residential Construction Price Index for Vancouver²) based on city costs for acquiring land and constructing public amenities and infrastructure identified in the 2015-2018 Capital Plan. The 2017 index shows a 29.2% increase in local assessed property values and a 6.1% increase in local non-residential construction costs. This year's increase to property values and construction costs is roughly three times higher than the average inflation experienced since 2010. The overall 11.9% inflationary rate adjustment is a result of this blended calculation. Since 2010, the average annual rate adjustment has been approximately 4.2% (see Table 1), noting that a similar inflationary rate adjustment of 10.3% occurred in 2012.

¹ BC Assessment Property Roll for the City of Vancouver, 2017

² Statistics Canada Non-Residential Construction Price Index for Vancouver, 2017

Table 1 shows annual inflationary rate adjustments from 2010 to 2017. Overall inflation was negative in 2010 reflecting the global and local economic slowdown during this period. In 2011 and 2012 inflation rebounded reflecting increased property values and construction costs. In 2013 and 2014, inflation was more modest reflecting a slower but steady rate of economic growth. Since 2015, local construction activity has been brisk which has resulted in higher property and construction cost indicators (see page 7 for details on economic indicators). Linking Density Bonusing Contributions to an annual inflationary index means that when annual inflation is positive, contributions might increase and when inflation is negative, contributions might decrease.

Table 1 also shows the two main data sources used to calculate the index: property values (BC assessment net property values for the City of Vancouver); and, construction costs (Statistics Canada non-residential construction price index for Vancouver annually). The inflationary index blends the two sources of inflationary data using the ratio of property acquisition and non-residential construction costs set out in the City's Capital Plan. Updated rates are established from this system.

Table 1: Annual Inflationary Rate Adjustments

Annual Rate Adjustment		<i>Data used to calculate index (for information only)</i>	
Year	Annual inflationary rate adjustments	<i>Local Property Value Inflation</i>	<i>Local Construction Cost Inflation</i>
2010	-1.4%	1.5%	-6.8%
2011	8.8%	11.4%	3.9%
2012	10.3%	13.7%	4.2%
2013	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%
2014	1.6%	0.8%	3.0%
2015	3.4%	8.6%	1.7%
2016	4.6%	16.5%	0.6%
2017	11.9%	29.2%	6.1%

Note: Vancouver's DCL rates have used this index to adjust rates since 2010. CAC Targets and Density Bonus Contributions were adjusted for the first time in 2016.

For more information on the annual inflation index: <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/annual-inflation-index.aspx>

In order to streamline the administrative process related to applying future inflationary rate increases to density bonus zones, staff has embedded the "formula" and annual process for applying the Council-adopted inflationary rate indexing system into Schedule F of the zoning and development by-law (see Schedule A in report). By embedding this annual process into the by-law, the requirement for an annual public hearing to adopt new rates is removed until such time as Council decides to alter the formula. This change would align with the approval process for annual adjustments to DCLs and Target CACs (the two other components of the inflationary rate indexing system) which are approved by Council and don't require public hearing.

Proposed Inflationary Adjustment to Density Bonus Contribution (2017)

Below are the proposed inflation adjusted density bonus contribution rates to take effect on September 30, 2017 (if approved at public hearing).

Table 2: Inflation Adjusted Density Bonus Contribution Rates
(\$/sq.ft. on net additional density)

Density Bonus Area	Year Established	Current Density Bonus Rate	Inflationary Increase (2016-2017)	Recommended 2017 Density Bonus Rate
Mount Pleasant (I-1A, I-1B zones, 3.0 to 5.0 FSR)	2017	\$6.00	N/A*	\$6.00
Mount Pleasant (I-1B zone, 5.0 to 6.0 FSR)	2017	\$43.00	N/A*	\$43.00
Joyce Collingwood (4-Storey Apartment Zone)	2016	\$3.00	+\$0.36	\$3.36
Marpole (0.75 FSR to 1.2 FSR)	2014	\$10.81	+\$1.29	\$12.10
Marpole (over 1.2 FSR to 2.0 FSR)	2014	\$59.48	+\$7.07	\$66.55
Norquay (4-Storey Apartment Zone)	2013	\$16.62	+\$1.97	\$18.59

* Mount Pleasant density bonusing was established in February 2017 and is not subject to the 2017 inflationary adjustment.

Implementation of inflation adjusted density bonus contributions requires amending the RM-8/RM-8N, RM-9/RM-9A/RM-9N/RM-9AN, and RM-9BN zoning districts which is subject to a public hearing. The outcome of the public hearing (required before a rate implementation can occur on September 30th) would establish whether inflation adjusted density bonus rates are approved. As noted in Table 2, the Mount Pleasant I-1A and I-1B zones are not being adjusted for inflation this year because these areas were only established as new density bonus zones in 2017.

Economic Indicators & Development Viability

As part of the annual inflationary adjustment process, current economic indicators are reviewed to verify that the proposed rate adjustments are in-line with current local market trends and forecasts. Current trends and forecasts indicate the following:

- The Conference Board of Canada³ is forecasting 2.4% and 2.5% growth in Vancouver CMA's Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2017 and 2018 respectively. Vancouver GDP growth will come in second place amongst Canada's 13 largest cities. Over the next year, Vancouver is forecast to be within the top performing economies of major Canadian cities.

³ Conference Board of Canada, Metropolitan Outlook 1, Spring 2017.
<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=8870>

- Employment growth is forecast to slow to about 14,000 new jobs this year after a record 61,000 jobs were added in 2016. The unemployment rate will fall from 5.5% this year to 5.2 % in 2018³.
- According to City of Vancouver data, the value of year-to-date building permits issued (as of April 2017) was generally in-line with last year's value, decreasing slightly by 2.8%⁴. However the year to date value is 17% higher than the average value over the last 5 years;
- Year-to-date housing starts in the City (as of April 2017) are lower compared to last year's record breaking year (total of semi-detached, townhouse and apartment units), but are generally in line with the average of the previous 5 years⁵; and,
- The City has increased capacity for redevelopment through new community plans, new district schedules and rezonings.

These indicators suggest that the recommended inflation adjusted rates for Vancouver are in-step with the overall direction of the economy and the real estate development industry.

In-Stream Rate Protection

For Density Bonus Contributions, the City provides in-stream rate protection for development permit applications that have been submitted prior to a rate change (provided that the application has been submitted to the City).

Further Recalibration of Rates

As part of the upcoming Cambie Corridor Planning Program: Phase 3 (now anticipated for presentation to Council in the first quarter 2018), the City will be recalibrating CAC Targets and Density Bonus contribution rates in the Cambie Corridor and adjacent Marpole area. The recalibration of rates will be established by updating public benefit strategy growth costs and testing development viability for appropriate growth cost recovery. Based on preliminary information, it is anticipated that the rates in these two areas could require further increases. Over the next few months, staff will review progress made on the draft Cambie Corridor Phase 3 Public Benefit Strategy (PBS) and may return to Council in fall 2017 with interim recalibrated rates provided that there is sufficient information in the interim PBS to adjust rates ahead of the delivery of the Cambie Corridor Phase 3 plan.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

Rate adjustments for Density Bonus Contributions have financial implications for the City and the development industry.

⁴ City of Vancouver, Statement of Building Permits Issued, April 2017
<http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/statement-of-building-permits-issued-april-2017.pdf>

⁵ CMHC, Housing Starts, April 2017
https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/esub/64175/64175_2017_M05.pdf

Financial Implications for the City

Development contributions such as DCLs, CACs and Density Bonus Contributions are the primary funding source for public amenities and infrastructure necessary to support growth, thereby reducing the impact on property taxes and other City funding sources.

As per Council policy, the rates are adjusted annually to keep pace with local construction and property inflation and to preserve the City's ability to deliver much needed public amenities and infrastructure. Should Council approve the proposed rate adjustments, and assuming development activity level remains steady, an additional \$0.3 million in Density Bonus Contributions could be generated before the next annual inflationary rate adjustment and/or major recalibrations.

Financial Implications for Development

The City's Financing Growth policies are based upon the principle that development contributions should not deter growth or harm housing affordability. Independent review of the market impacts of development contributions found the primary impact of these in Vancouver is to put downward pressure on the value of land for redevelopment⁶. Affordability should not be negatively affected as long as rates are set so they do not impede the steady supply of development sites. Given current and recent development activity there is little evidence that this supply has been or will be affected by the proposed rates.

The proposed rate adjustments represent an 11.9% increase, which is in line with current and forecast economic conditions and accounts for a relatively small percentage of overall development costs today.

Communications Plan

Every year the following steps are taken to ensure broad notification of proposed inflationary rate adjustment:

- Web site posting of proposed rates on the [City's Financing Growth web page](#);
- Notice of proposed changes in the City's CAC and Density Bonusing Information Bulletins (available online and at information kiosks in City Hall);
- Advertisements describing the proposed rate adjustments, together with details on how to provide feedback, were placed in the Vancouver Courier and Business in Vancouver newspapers;
- Staff notification to local industry groups (Urban Development Institute, National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Greater Vancouver Homebuilders Association); and,
- City Clerks notification to a list of stakeholders who have expressed interest in Financing Growth matters informing them of this report and where they can review it online prior to the Council meeting.

⁶ CAC Policy and Housing Affordability: Review for the City of Vancouver, Coriolis Consulting, 2014

At the time of finalizing this report, a written response from stakeholders had not been received.

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council approval for an annual inflationary adjustment to all Density Bonus Contributions with new rates to be effective September 30, 2017, (if approved at public hearing). This process, which has been ongoing since 2009, now synchronizes the inflationary rate adjustment of all development contributions and continues to align development contribution rates with local construction and property inflation. Annual rate adjustment maintains the purchasing power of growth-related development revenues so that needed civic facilities and infrastructure to serve new residents and workers can be provided.

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Affordable Housing and Amenity Share Costs

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend the Zoning and Development By-law
Regarding Affordable Housing and Amenity Share Costs

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the Zoning and Development By-law.
2. Council strikes Schedule "F" of the By-law and replaces it with the Schedule "A" attached to this by-law.
3. A decision by a court that any part of this By-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this By-law, and is not to affect the balance of this By-law.
4. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2017

Mayor

City Clerk

**Schedule F
Affordable Housing and Amenity Share Cost Schedule**

Zoning District	Affordable Housing Share Cost	Amenity Share Cost
RM-8 and RM-8/N (Marpole)	\$130.24 per m ² (0.75 to 1.2 FSR)	\$130.24 per m ² (0.75 to 1.2 FSR)
RM-9 and RM-9N (Marpole)	\$130.24 per m ² (to a maximum FSR of 1.20); and \$716.02 per m ² (for any increase in FSR above 1.20)	\$130.24 per m ² (to a maximum FSR of 1.20); and \$716.02 per m ² (for any increase in FSR above 1.20)
RM-9A and RM-9A/N (Norquay)	\$200.15 per m ²	\$200.15 per m ²
RM-9BN (Joyce-Collingwood Apartment)	\$36.13 per m ²	\$36.13 per m ²
I-1A (Mount Pleasant)	-	\$64.58 per m ²
I-1B (Mount Pleasant)	-	Level 1 - \$65.58 per m ² (to a max FSR of 5.0 above 3.0 FSR) Level 2 - \$462.85 per m ² (to a max FSR of 6.0 above 5.0 FSR)

In May 2016, Council adopted the DCL annual inflationary rate adjustment system for making annual adjustments to Amenity Share Contributions (Density Bonus Contributions). The annual inflation index is based on a blend of annual property value inflation (BC assessment net property values for the City of Vancouver) and annual construction cost inflation (Statistics Canada non-residential construction price index for Vancouver) and calculated using public, third-party data. The formula used to calculate the inflationary rate adjustment is as follows:

ANNUAL INFLATION ADJUSTMENT OF AMENITY SHARE COST AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING SHARE COST = (ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION INFLATION x 0.75) + (ANNUAL PROPERTY VALUE INFLATION x 0.25)

Rates are adjusted in accordance with this formula annually. The rate adjustment will be presented in a Report to Council every July, with new rates effective and enforceable on September 30 of every year. To view the Council adopted inflation index, refer to the City website at: <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/annual-inflation-index.aspx>.

Density Bonus Zoning

As enabled by the Vancouver Charter, a zoning bylaw may establish different density regulations within a district or zone to achieve amenities or affordable housing. This is referred to as Density Bonus Zoning. The density bonus provision defines an outright density that can be achieved without a contribution towards amenities or affordable housing (this is considered the 'base density') and extra density that may be achieved, to a maximum set out in the by-law, with provision of a specified contribution that will be directed towards amenities or affordable housing on the approved net increase in density.

Density bonus zones allow for:

- Outright density (or base density) with no density bonus contribution.
- Additional density, up to a limit set in a zone, with a contribution towards amenities and affordable housing.

The City has established density bonus zones in the following areas of city: Marpole; Norquay Village, Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct; and Mount Pleasant (see Map 1). Financial contributions are determined by the density bonus "affordable housing and amenity share" contribution rate set out in the zoning bylaw. For more information on Density Bonus Zoning, refer to City's webpage: <http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/density-bonus-zoning.aspx>.

Map 1: Density Bonus Zoning Areas

