



TOWN OF GIBSONS

Policy Manual

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| SECTION: | PLANNING AND LAND USE | |
| TITLE: | Affordable Housing and Community Amenities | POLICY # 3.14 |
| APPROVED DATE: | July 17, 2007 | RESOLUTION #: R2007-349 |
| REVISED DATE: | March 1, 2016 | RESOLUTION #: R2016-051 |

PURPOSE

In order to alleviate the shortfall in affordable housing and community amenities as a result of increased residential development within the Town of Gibsons, Council will request as part of any new residential rezoning, funds towards or the provision of community amenities and affordable housing. The authority to pursue these voluntary contributions will be addressed through the use of Section 482 “Zoning for amenities and affordable housing” in the *Local Government Act*.

DEFINITIONS

Affordable Housing

Housing units that meet the needs of households in the Town of Gibsons whose income falls below the median income levels at rates that are no higher than 30% of the gross household income.

Community Amenities

Improvements to parks and public spaces, community, social and / or cultural services that offset the impact of the proposed development and that benefit the community at large.

Cash in Lieu

A cash contribution to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund in lieu of providing Affordable Housing units and / or a cash contribution to the Community Amenities Reserve Fund in lieu of providing Community Amenities.

Housing Agreement

Affordable Housing and Community Amenities Policy No. 3.14

The standard Housing Agreement developed by the Town which provides a mechanism to leverage funds for the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund for any Affordable Housing ownership units.

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

The intent of providing funds towards the Community Amenity Reserve Fund is to enable the Town to build up a cash reserve to pay for the expansion of services and development of parks that are needed as a result of the increased density enabled by residential rezoning applications. For larger residential rezoning applications community amenities could be provided on or off site instead of providing funds.

Residential rezoning applications that result in the creation of less than 10 residential lots or multi-family residential units will be encouraged to contribute to a community amenity reserve fund towards the development of parks, community, and cultural services

Residential rezoning applications that result in the creation of 10 or more residential lots or multi-family housing units will be encouraged to either provide community amenities on or off site or contribute funds to the community amenity reserve fund.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Town supports the development of affordable housing with a range of tools and incentives. This Policy outlines the available support options for different types of Affordable Housing.

General

It is preferable that actual units of affordable housing be supplied within the proposed residential development as this ensures affordable housing is provided as integral part of all new development in the Town. Alternatively, contributions to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund enable the Town to build up a cash reserve that can be used to purchase land for affordable housing projects or to support projects by affordable housing providers.

Residential rezoning applications that result in the creation of less than 10 residential lots or multi-family residential units will be encouraged to contribute funds towards an affordable housing reserve fund.

Residential rezoning applications that result in the creation of 10 or more residential lots or multi-family residential units will be encouraged to provide at least 10% of the units for affordable housing on or offsite or contribute funds or in kind services in an equivalent amount towards an affordable housing reserve fund.

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The Town has reduced Subdivision Bylaw requirements for servicing of new development to promote housing affordability and improve the Town's financial sustainability by reducing the amount of new assets that will need to be maintained and renewed.

The Town has introduced Zoning Bylaw options for small lots (RC zoning).

The Town plans to update Zoning Bylaw provisions to include bonus density provisions that support the development of Affordable Housing.

Affordable Ownership

The following types of ownership units are currently eligible as Affordable Housing under this Policy:

- Single Family or Duplex unit up to \$ 258,500, at least 1300 sft and at least two bedrooms
- Two bedroom condo up to \$ 200,000, at least 1000 sft
- One bedroom condo up to \$ 160,000, at least 800 sft

An upper limit of \$ 258,500 has been established based on median income data from the 2014 housing needs assessment. The price and size ranges above reflect types of housing that the market currently does not provide and are based on an assumed construction cost of approximately \$ 200 / sft. This information may be updated from time to time based on changes in the real estate market.

If ownership units are built as part of a development, a Housing Agreement will be required ensuring that at time of re-sale a contribution to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund is made determined by the difference between restricted price and market price.

Council may consider Cash in Lieu instead of the provision of ownership units as part of the development.

Market rental

The Zoning Bylaw provides options for Secondary Suites and Garden Suites within certain areas of the Town.

Council may consider reductions for servicing requirements under the Subdivision Bylaw for purpose built rental projects providing apartments for rent.

Council may consider allocating funds from the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund for market rental projects in exchange for commitments preventing strata conversion of the rental apartments.

Market rental units are not expected to have pricing restrictions.

Affordable (subsidized) rental

The following levels of monthly rent are currently eligible as Affordable Housing under the category Affordable rental:

- Bachelor / Studio: up to \$650
- 1 bedroom: up to \$875
- 2-bedroom: up to \$925
- 3-bedroom: up to \$1087.50
- 4-bedroom: up to \$1200

The rent levels above are derived from Housing Income Limits that are monitored by BC Housing based on market rents in the area. This information may be updated from time to time based future updates of housing needs and availability of rental options.

Council may consider reductions for servicing requirements under the Subdivision Bylaw.

Council may consider allocating funds from the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to facilitate the development of affordable rental housing units.

Seniors housing, special needs housing, services for the homeless

Council may consider reductions for servicing requirements under the Subdivision Bylaw.

Council may consider allocating funds from the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to facilitate the development of seniors housing, special needs housing or services for the homeless.

Strata Conversion applications

Council may support Strata Conversion applications provided that each rental unit is replaced with rental units of a similar level of affordability.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESERVE FUND

Council will endeavour to make use of any available funds within 5 years of receipt of the funds.

Council may consider adding tax revenue as a contribution to the reserve fund through the annual budget process.

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Council may consider applications for a grant or loan from the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund, subject to approval and adoption of a expenditure bylaw (as required for Reserve Funds). The following list outlines eligible requests that can be made by proponents of Affordable Housing projects:

- project development funding, for example for expert reports following a satisfactory feasibility analysis
- contribution to off-set Development Cost Charges and / or development application fees
- contribution for required off-site works under the Subdivision Bylaw and / or administration charges for a Servicing Agreement
- contribution to facilitate securing funds from other sources
- contribution for cost of construction or the purchase of land
- contribution to facilitate the operation of a homeless shelter

ROLE OF STAFF

Council instructs the Director of Planning to use Section 482 of the *Local Government Act* to negotiate with the applicant the amenities and affordable housing to be provided as part of the residential rezoning prior to the application being referred to a Public Hearing.