

	Policy Title: Housing Amenity Contributions Policy	Policy No: CO-033
	Authority: Council	Classification: 0340-40
	Date Adopted: June 8, 2026	Motion No: 2026-229
Historical Changes:		

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Housing Amenity Contributions Policy (the “Policy”) is to provide guidance to Council, Staff, developers/applicants, and the public for the collection of in-kind and cash in-lieu contributions towards affordable housing and to establish a transparent, efficient, balanced, and predictable process.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

Defined Word	Definition
District	means District of Sooke.
Affordable Housing	means housing that sells or rents at a rate that is affordable (costs no more than 30% of annual income) to households in the lower two income quartiles in Sooke. <sup>1</sup>
Affordable Housing Reserve Fund	a reserve fund established by Housing Reserve Fund Bylaw to hold any funds resulting from cash-in-lieu contributions towards affordable housing through the Housing Amenity Contributions Policy.
Housing Amenity	a public housing amenity in the form of either affordable housing units (long-term rental or ownership) or land for housing that provides a benefit to the residents of the District of Sooke. <i>A Housing Amenity is considered separate from and does not include any projects identified by the District’s Development Cost Charge (DCC) or Amenity Cost Charge (ACC) program.</i>
Housing Amenity Contributions	are contributions of public housing amenities that are negotiated as part of the rezoning application process and initiated by the applicant/developer. <i>CACs cannot be a DCC project as identified by the District’s Development Cost Charge (DCC) project list or an ACC project as identified by the District’s Amenity Cost Charge (ACC) project list.</i>
Cash-In-Lieu Housing Amenity Contributions	are housing amenity contributions provided as cash, in lieu of providing affordable housing to the District, which is then earmarked for eligible affordable housing initiatives (housing units or land) identified by the District.

<sup>1</sup> Based on current CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing) data

Housing Amenity Contributions Target Rates	are a set rate or amount negotiated with applicants and the District and secured as a contribution for affordable housing through a rezoning process for developments with fewer than 100 residential units.
In-Kind Housing Amenity Contribution	are affordable housing contributions provided by an applicant as part of a rezoning application process. These amenities are typically provided on-site as either affordable housing units (long-term rental or ownership) or land for housing.
Mixed-Use	a development where the majority (>50%) of the ground floor space of a multi-unit residential building is dedicated for commercial, industrial, or institutional uses.
Not-for-Profit Rental Housing	refers to housing owned by the Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, the District or another local government under the Local Government Act, a public housing authority or a not-for-profit society incorporated under the Societies Act, SBC 2015, c. 18, as amended, or Part II of the Canadian Corporations Act, RSC 1970, c. C-32, as amended, and where the Applicant has demonstrated to the reasonable satisfaction of the District that the development is eligible for a rent or capital housing subsidy from the Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, or a public housing authority.
Official Community Plan	refers to the most current version of the District of Sooke's Official Community Plan, as amended.
Purpose-Built Rental	refers to buildings specifically designed and constructed with dwelling units intended for long-term rental occupancy, to provide a stable and secure housing option for residents of Sooke.
Long-Term Rental	refers to the leasing or renting of one or more sleeping units in a dwelling unit for a period of 30 consecutive days or more, which may include purpose-built rental (see definition, above) buildings and other types of residential buildings.
Residential Floor Area	refers to the total saleable and rentable area within a building designated for residential use as part of a dwelling unit or dwelling units, but excludes parking areas, elevators, stairwells, lobbies, or similar built areas not used as dwelling space.
Rezoning Applications	refer to a rezoning application, which has been submitted to the District of Sooke in a satisfactory form, in accordance with the applicable procedures, and with all applicable fees paid.
Zoning Bylaw	refers to the District of Sooke's Zoning Bylaw, as amended from time to time.

### **3. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY**

This Policy is based on a hybrid model that simplifies the administration of Housing Amenity Contributions for affordable housing by encouraging negotiations only for major developments, with 100 units or more, while allowing smaller developments (with 5 to 99 units), to proceed through the rezoning process with clear Target Rates.

Contributions for affordable housing shall be considered in all rezoning applications with residential tenures (strata, rental, or both) that require zoning amendments unless explicitly exempt under **Section 5.0** of this Policy. This hybrid model includes two approaches for determining Housing Amenity Contributions :

- **Approach A – Negotiated Housing Amenity Contributions:** Development applications seeking 100 units or more.
- **Approach B – Housing Amenity Contributions Target Rates:** Development applications with between 5 and 99 units in all zones.

These two approaches are outlined in **Sections 3.1 - 3.2** below.

#### **3.1. APPROACH A – NEGOTIATED HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Development applications with 100 units or more are encouraged to undergo site-specific Housing Amenity Contributions negotiation with the District of Sooke.

1. Through negotiated Housing Amenity Contributions, the District may seek in-kind or cash-in-lieu contributions towards affordable housing based on the preferences of the District, the applicant, and community.
2. The value of Housing Amenity Contributions for affordable housing (cash-in-lieu or value of in-kind amenities) that a project can support is determined through a land lift analysis, conducted at the applicant's expense.
3. For the land lift analysis, applicants shall provide two development pro formas: one for the residual land value of the site under the existing zoning and another for the residual land value under the proposed new zone. The land lift shall be determined as the difference between the rezoned land value and the existing land value.
4. The District reserves the right to request additional development pro formas and a third-party review at the applicant's expense.
5. Housing Amenity Contributions determined through this approach target a 50% of the increase in land value based upon the rezoning application and land lift analysis.

#### **3.2. APPROACH B – HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTION TARGET RATES**

Development applications with between 5-99 units are encouraged to make contributions based on target contributions ("Housing Amenity Contribution Target Rates"), provided an application meets the locational criteria and eligibility criteria found in **Section 4.0 - Table 1**.

1. Projects subject to Housing Amenity Contribution Target Rates are encouraged to make cash-in-lieu payments in accordance with the proposed target contributions as set out in **Table 1** below.
2. The District may consider in-kind contributions for affordable housing (units or land), provided that:
  - a. The in-kind affordable housing contributions that are aligned with the District's definition of affordable housing.
  - b. If the applicant can demonstrate, to the District's satisfaction, that the value of the in-kind affordable housing amenities is equal to or greater than the

Housing Amenity Contribution amount the District would receive based on Housing Amenity Contribution Target Rates.

3. For projects subject to CAC Target Rates, applicants may choose to enter into a Negotiated CAC process with the District, as outlined under Approach A above, to provide a cash-in-lieu CAC or in-kind CAC based upon third-party land lift analysis conducted at the applicant’s expense. The District reserves the right to request a development pro forma and a third-party review at the applicant's cost.

**4. RATES AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Housing Amenity Contribution Target Rates are outlined in **Table 1**, and associated eligibility criteria for development applications undergoing a zoning amendment. Please note, as per **Section 5.0** (below), projects that contain four (4) units or fewer are not required to pay Housing Amenity Contributions.

**Table 1 – Housing Amenity Contribution Target Rates**

Eligibility Criteria	Per Unit
<b>Apartments Developments</b>	\$2,000.00
<b>Mixed Use Developments<sup>1</sup></b>	\$2,000.00
<b>Townhomes Developments</b>	\$2,000.00
<b>Single-detached Subdivision</b>	\$3,000.00
<b>Purpose-built Rental<sup>2</sup></b>	\$1,000.00

<sup>1</sup> Mixed Use = >50% of the ground level leasable floor area is dedicated to commercial use.

<sup>2</sup> Purpose-built Rental needs to be secured for at least 50 years to receive an exemption under Section 5.0.

**5. HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTION EXEMPTIONS**

Where a rezoning application satisfies any of the following exemption conditions, as listed below, those portions of the rezoning application are considered exempt from the identified Housing Amenity Contributions outlined in this Policy.

The conditions for exemption from Housing Amenity Contributions include:

1. Not-for-profit rental housing units.
2. Purpose-built rental projects with five (5) to 99 units, where the rental tenure is secured for a period of 50 years or more, or the life of the building.
3. Projects with four (4) units / lots or fewer.
4. Non-residential developments.

**6. ALLOCATION OF HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS**

1. The distribution of Cash-in-lieu Housing Amenity Contributions collected through Target Rates or Negotiations shall be allocated to the District’s Affordable Housing Reserve Fund.
2. Cash-in-lieu contributions towards the Housing Reserve Fund shall be used for the purpose of fostering affordable housing, in accordance with the District’s Housing Reserve Fund Establishment Bylaw No. 259.

**7. PAYMENT OF HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Housing Amenity Contributions received as in-kind or cash-in-lieu contributions must be secured through necessary legal agreements and covenants with the District prior to adoption of a Zoning Amendment Bylaw. All contributions must be received or verified prior to the issuance of a Building Permit or Subdivision registration.

**8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION: HOUSING AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY AND RATES**

Monitoring and evaluation of this Housing Amenity Contributions Policy includes two recurring updates:

- 1. **Annual Policy Update** –target rates as shown in **Table 1** will be reviewed for inflationary adjustments on an annual basis. Annual updates shall be based on annual average inflation rates identified by Statistics Canada through their Consumer Price Index for Victoria.
  - a. The District will conduct an initial review of the policy after one year from the date of adoption to review the fixed target rates and relevant feedback from stakeholders in regard to the policy’s implementation.
- 2. **Comprehensive Policy Update** – This Policy should be comprehensively reviewed in two (2) years following adoption by Council and every five (5) years thereafter, or at an earlier date based on the recommendations of the Director of Planning or pursuant to Council direction.

While annual updates to this Policy are enacted through the approval of the Director of Planning, comprehensive updates, as per **Section 8.2** above, are at the sole discretion of the District of Sooke Council.

**9. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

The District recognizes that the feasibility of proposed projects can be impacted by updates to set target rates, and the following ensures an equitable process in the phasing-in of applications:

- 1. Applications received on or after **June 8, 2026** are subject to this Housing Amenity Contributions Policy, and subject to rates shown in **Table 1** as updated and published annually on **June 8**.

**REFERENCES**

Policy Owner:	Planning and Development
Related Policies:	