

The Role of CACs in the Redevelopment of Riley Park/South Cambie

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INTRODUCTION

For many cities around the world, the goal to become sustainable as well as be termed as a “livable” city is at the forefront of city planning. Presently, half of the world’s population lives in cities and this is expected to rise to 70% by 2050 (BCCIC, 2016). The SDG initiative was adopted by all UN member states in 2015 and consists of a sustainable development agenda to provide “a global blueprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future” to be met by 2030 (UN, 2018). More specifically, SDG 11 outlines the goal to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (UN, 2018), requiring the collaboration of local organizations, municipal and regional governments and the global community. SDG 11 applies to Canadian cities in promoting urban sustainability by improving public transit, becoming bicycle-friendly, creating green spaces and decreasing homelessness (BCCIC, 2016). Vancouver has been identified as one of the world’s greenest cities as it is one of most rapidly-growing cities in Canada with LEED certification being adopted by new buildings in their developmental stages (BCCIC, 2016).

The scope of the following report fits within goal 11 of the SDGs, as we seek to explore the nature of Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) in relation to the provision of amenities and the cost of housing in Vancouver’s Riley Park and South Cambie areas. CAC Policy is established with the goal of meeting the urban growth needs of Vancouver and ensuring that the City promotes sustainable livability of its communities.

What are CACs?

With Vancouver's rapid urban growth, the demand for public and community amenities also increases at a rapid rate. To meet the City's need for these amenities, funding is created in the form of the Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) policy. CACs are collected from developers, who either wish to build new developments or are a rezoning applicant in Vancouver, giving the City financial and/or in-kind capital to fund projects providing the public with these amenities. CACs are a funding tool to provide public amenities and address the costs of growth-related public benefits (City of Vancouver, 2020a). All CACs are negotiated between the applicant and the City (on behalf of Council) with Council as the approving authority and secured as conditions of by-law enactment. Development contributions help ensure that with additional density added to the urban landscape, the costs of additional public benefits are shared between developers and the City, rather than the City solely bearing the costs of growth (City of Vancouver, 2020a). More specifically, CACs help the City build and develop public facilities, parks and open spaces, community centres and libraries, transportation services, arts and cultural facilities and neighbourhood houses (City of Vancouver, 2020a).

The City of Vancouver (2020a) defines CACs as:

In-kind or cash contributions provided by property developers as part of the rezoning process, which grants an increase in development potential or a change in the permitted uses of a site. (p. 2)

Within the City of Vancouver's (2020a) larger financial framework, CACs can be found under the 'development contributions':

- **City contributions:** City contributions primarily fund the maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure and amenities (2020b). They include property taxes and utility fees.
- **Partnership contributions:** External funding from senior governments (i.e. federal, provincial, and regional) or senior government agencies (e.g. Translink), non-profit agencies, foundations, and philanthropists (City of Vancouver, 2020b) (e.g. senior government funding, non-profits)
- **Development contributions:**
 - **Development Cost Levies (DCLs):** Per square foot levy charged on all new developments to fund affordable housing, childcare, parks, transportation, and utilities.
 - **Density Bonus Zoning:** Increased floor space under existing zoning in exchange for providing public benefits and affordable housing.
 - **Community Amenity Contributions (CACs):** In-kind or cash contributions for public benefits when the City approves a rezoning. (City of Vancouver, p. 2)

CAC contributions can be provided in two forms:

- **In-kind CACs** – A form of CAC where land and/or capital facilities are provided by applicants, typically as an on-site public benefit;
- **Cash CACs** – A form of CAC where a cash payment is provided by applicants in-lieu of providing land and/or capital facilities as a public benefit. Cash CACs are accounted for in dedicated reserves and allocated through the City’s capital planning and annual

budget processes. (City of Vancouver, 2020b, p. 5)

CAC policy outlines how CAC contributions are determined, allocated and spent within the City. All CACs undergo a negotiation process between the developer and the City which is concluded with the Council's approval and secured conditions of by-law enactment (City of Vancouver, 2020a). The policy emerged from the establishment of the City's Financing Growth policy from 2004 (City of Vancouver, 2020b) and include the following principles:

- Secure amenities through rezoning to help maintain the livability of the city and its neighbourhoods as redevelopment occurs
- Provide a fair exchange between the amenities being provided, and the new density (or development rights) being granted, so that desired redevelopment occurs and housing affordability is maintained
- Provide consistency and predictability in the application of CAC Policy, so that developers can anticipate the amenity contributions being sought, and community can expect appropriate amenities that meet local needs when rezoning occurs
- Be consistent with other City policies
- Be developed with informed input from stakeholders
- Be separate from other development charge requirements, to ensure there are not double payments being made for amenity items. (City of Vancouver, 2020b, p. 6)

Riley Park/South Cambie

The Riley Park/South Cambie region has seen and continues to undergo extensive change and urban growth with increasing population and urban development. Oakridge Centre, Canada Line, Hillcrest Centre, Little Mountain Housing Site, and the Cambie Corridor Redevelopment along with numerous housing redevelopment projects are some notable examples in the area (RPSC Community Visions, n.d.)

The Riley Park-South Cambie Community Visions Group

The Riley Park-South Cambie (RPSC) Community Visions Group is a City-Council approved “watchdog” and advisory group established in 2005 (2020). It is not aligned with any political party, is open to the public, and is composed of RPSC residents (RPSC Community Visions Group, 2020). Its focus is on community planning within the geographic area between W 16th and 41st and Oak and Fraser Street (RPSC Community Visions Group, n.d.) Their goal is “to maintain and strengthen the community’s identity in the face of considerable change.” (RPSC Community Visions Group, n.d.)

The community group meets monthly to discuss issues relevant to the RPSC area including topics and concerns surrounding development, housing, traffic, arts and culture, and gardening/greening (RPSC Community Visions Group, 2020). They also present input and feedback to City Council, City staff and officials, and developers concerning new development, construction and change within the RPSC region (RPSC Community Visions Group, n.d.). Such recommendations and advice has helped emphasize the community’s desire:

to identify the specific location and design of housing; to stress the need for housing that is affordable for working people; to design improvements to community shopping areas;

to participate in community planning, and to pressure the City and Developers to maintain the values and qualities that have made this area one of the finest places to live in Vancouver (RPSC Community Visions Group, n.d.)

LITERATURE REVIEW

The underlying foundations of our research, which stem from the current body of literature, has explored the importance of amenities within a socio-cultural context. Understanding the existing literature allows for a deeper and more holistic approach towards the relationship between community amenities and development, especially within a sustainable development framework. Drawing from the local Vancouver context, Peter Dickinson (2019) explores the relationship between certain architectural designs and their influence on the implementation of amenities. He refers to the term ‘Vancouverism’ to showcase the new model of urban planning that favours tall glass buildings with chic aesthetics and astounding views as observed within Vancouver’s downtown core. These buildings, graced with accessible walkways and green spaces appear more like ‘performance art’ as Dickinson (2019) phrases it. From this initial overview of the development landscape in this densely populated area, CACs are then introduced to showcase the impacts they have on public benefits. Dickinson (2019) compares Vancouver’s CAC policies as being fairly similar to Toronto’s Density-for-Benefits Agreements (DBAs) policy. Dickinson (2019) contrasts these two with other North American municipalities who approach this concept of urban planning from a more systematic fashion instead of being on a case-by-case basis. Particularly focused on the benefits to the Arts resulting from such CAC cost levies, Dickinson explores the downside of such funding mechanisms stating that they encourage competition for real estate space between organizations. What ensues is a ‘survival of the fittest’ mentality where only the large development companies survive. An additional pitfall is that the system allows developers to treat CACs as transfer costs thus impacting the same

market pricing for housing that governments are claiming to combat. Similarly, Moore (2013) focuses on trading density for benefits in comparing Toronto and Vancouver using both quantitative and qualitative data gathered between 2007 to 2011. Moore (2013) explores what constitutes as benefits, how agreements are valued in the first place and who in the end actually benefits from such amenities. A large criticism Moore (2013) puts forward is the lack of transparency in density for benefits policies in both Vancouver and Toronto. Moore's (2013) concludes that DBA's in Toronto are fairly political in nature leading to unclear objectives, whereas Vancouver's strategy enables a more effective use of these cost levies. Yet, both cities have complex procedures to enforce their respective policies, which, coupled with the lack of transparency, makes the policies and their goals inaccessible to the general public. Another scholar, Audretsch (2019), approaches the amenities conversation from a particularly novel perspective by focusing more on different types of amenities rather than just comparing their presence and absence within a community as most other research papers have done. In dividing amenities as either being cultural or subcultural, this author explores the difference in amenities and the impact they have on local start-ups. This sociological approach to economics (i.e entrepreneurship) explores the impact of culture in attracting human capital and thus place-specific innovation. Focusing on 69 of the largest cities in Germany, the study utilises exploratory factor analysis to confirm their main hypothesis linking the presence of sub-cultural amenities to growth in entrepreneurship. Strahilevitz (2006) provides yet another perspective from which to approach the relationship between developers, amenities and communities. Strahilevitz (2006) provides a point of view that is important to consider when discussing amenities and its relationship with community development. Based on United States' data,

Strahilevitz approaches the discussion utilizing a legal framework and posits that developers circumvent housing laws by introducing costly amenities into their developments and as such require homeowners to pay a hefty sum for them. The claim here is that profit-seeking developers will select amenities for their residents also keeping in mind that they want to prevent certain 'undesired' residents from purchasing their homes. Here, discrimination against certain population groups is at play and is a concept that most other papers do not take into account when discussing amenities provided by developers versus by the city. The important aspect to consider regarding Strahilevitz's (2006) argument and our research paper is that the amenities that CACs provide cater to populations who might otherwise not be able to access them within their housing units.

QUALITATIVE DATA REVIEW

The following section includes the transcription of interviews that were conducted, the questions were asked by student interviewers and the responses that were provided (not verbatim) can be found below.

Developers

We spoke to two employees from different developing companies with projects based in Vancouver.

1. The first interviewee was the Vice President of Development from Pennyfarthing.

Pennyfarthing Homes is a Vancouver-based real estate developer with a 35-year history, being established in 1980 with building homes, condominiums and townhouses (Pennyfarthing Homes, 2020).

- *From your perspective of costs for development projects, how much does the cost of community amenity contributions (CACs) impact the decision for pricing a home?*

The City's CAC rates have changed over the years from 55 to 70+ per square foot. There are 'soft' costs to development including the cost of consultants, architects, utilities whereas 'hard' costs include the physical construction of the development. CACs make-up a huge portion of these soft costs. Other soft costs include Development Cost Levies (DCL's) which combined with CACs add-up to impact the total costs of the home or housing unit. Prices are also impacted by increased demand of people wanting to live at a particular location or neighbourhood.

- ***What are your expectations for how the City uses the CAC contributions?***

CACs are used by the City to build buildings and communities to improve the community. They help provide services to existing communities and to future populations who will live in these areas like community centers, schools, and public gatherings.

CACs one hundred percent impact where a developer builds because it impacts/reflects where people want to live. With the location and presence of community amenities, the livability and walkability of homes can be enhanced. Many amenities are built around transit infrastructure. For example, Riley Park/South Cambie has the Skytrain Canada Line which draws people to the neighbourhood. This is also why there is a high level of development activity in this area since people want to live close to transit.

- ***Does the use and allocation of the CACs matter to you? For example, are you concerned with how much of the CACs you contribute goes toward developing a community center versus a cultural or art facility?***

Developers are not involved in the process once they pay the CACs and they do not see the money or have any input of where it may go. There is a preference dependent on the area of the city as some areas need different things. For Riley Park/South Cambie, community recreational centers are a huge need. The current community centers are packed with more people coming to live in the area along Cambie, Oakridge, Heather and Main Street.

- ***Does the availability of public amenities within a community at all impact the decision to provide private amenities to the residents of the property?***

Taking the example of Pennyfarthing's 7-storey development on 4939 Cambie, it contains several private amenities. This development has a community meeting room for strata meetings and has a rooftop common area providing a view and common BBQ/gathering space. In assessing which private amenities are provided, a developer looks at the building use for the demographic group for children or adults and then they decide whether to implement a daycare or quiet work space. Fitness rooms or gyms are often not provided as private amenities because there are so many pre-existing gyms in communities.

- ***What do you think the strengths and limitations of Vancouver's current CAC policy are?***

CAC policy is part of the government service business and part of the process. As a developer, I do not know what the City does with the money. A limitation is that CACs are not promoted as much.

- ***How do you decide on how to make your CAC contributions as either in cash or in kind?***

This is not a choice for developers. It is part of the City's rezoning policy and CAC fee schedule which is made accessible. Developments in the Cambie area are in-cash contributions.

- ***Based on your experience elsewhere, how do Vancouver's CAC rates and practices compare?***

Compared to some of our developments located in the City of North Vancouver, New Westminister, and Langley, Vancouver's CAC rates are more expensive.

- ***Have you ever been consulted by the City of Vancouver as to how your CAC monies are being spent?***

No, I have not.

- ***What suggestion(s) do you have that would improve how CACs are determined, collected and utilized?***

The City has continued to raise CAC rates, making development more expensive. People want to understand where their dollars are going and the public wants to see the benefit.

One issue is that CACs are collected at rezoning. Let's say the use of a single-family house is rezoned to a highrise building. The CAC is collected when rezoning for the development is enacted; however, the development is not yet completed. The CAC money must be provided at the time of enactment. It would be better if CACs were collected further down or were deferred to a later time in the development process. For example, in North Vancouver the CACs are paid when the building's construction begins versus when the site has been rezoned. This timing of collection forces developers to come-up with the money much earlier, leading them to pay interest rates and contributes to higher prices that consumers have to pay for a unit. It is also a popular opinion among developers that CACs are very costly.

Another area of concern is affordable housing, especially for the ‘missing middle’.

Considering the basic economics of supply and demand, the City holds the supply and developers do not hold land nor have control over the policies of zoning. The City gives extra density to certain sites to provide affordable housing allowing the number of stories to be increased. The City constricts supply by, 1) underdensifying areas that could be higher stories and, 2) making the time, fees, and processing long and more expensive. If supply is opened-up, then prices of homes will lower. The City also is responsible for managing the tension between community/neighbourhood concerns while meeting the demands for housing.

2. The second interviewee was a planner from Brook Pooni Associates, an “urban planning consulting firm with 30 years of experience implementing residential, commercial, and public projects in over 30 municipalities across North America” including Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary (Brook Pooni, 2020). Their role includes helping clients with the rezoning process and co-ordinating public meetings.

- ***From your perspective of costs for development projects, how much does the cost of community amenity contributions (CACs) impact the decision for pricing a home?***

It is more likely that if there are more amenities, there is more value to live in the community. The location is dependent on the client and some CACs are more prescriptive in nature while others are more so recommendations.

For example, Dunbar Ryerson United Church was a partner that one client had. The client entered in partnership with the church to rezone. The church was a historic stone building

with a meeting hall. The rezoning plan was to sell the meeting hall and develop condos; with the restoration of the heritage of the church, putting social housing above the church, and securing a cultural space/activity center in the community. This rezoning was proposed to the City.

- ***What are your expectations for how the City uses the CAC contributions?***

CACs are important because they enable growth for new amenities in the community. For example, in 2013, the West End Plan was introduced by the City. We know that new density is needed in Vancouver for moderate and low-income households and we need to meet the needs of the community. CACs provide the City the ability to provide public benefits, convey the benefits of new development. Another argument that can be made is that new developments are a benefit in and of themselves, considering how they can create new employment and housing; however, the broader public is not really a direct beneficiary, but there is spillover into the community. CACs are a good strategy for the city to provide a community with amenities

- ***Does the availability of public amenities within a community at all impact the decision to provide private amenities to the residents of the property?***

The interviewee suggested we take a look at the West End Community Plan in regards to this question.

- ***How do you decide on how to make your CAC contributions as either in cash or in-kind?***

CAC negotiations depend on the type of project. For example, non-market housing (or social housing) is considered as an in-kind contribution, but is still part of the CAC cost. With the West End, cash contributions are made and there are suggestions for what it's used towards.

- ***Based on your experience elsewhere, how do Vancouver's CAC rates and practices compare?***

The interviewee has not been a part of the CAC discussion elsewhere, but Calgary might be similar in policy structure.

- ***Do you know exactly where and how your CAC contributions are being spent?***

The interviewee was not sure which development specifically the money comes from. They shared that they are aware that the Gordon Neighbourhood House is a recipient of CACs. When rezoning is approved, there is a council that talks about the price of the CAC and breaks-down the allocation. Sometimes the cash goes into the pool. One example is in the West End where there are plans for a library, an aquatic center, and childcare, provided in a breakdown in the report. Another example is a Vancouver Jewish community center where there was no CAC, but there was housing made available.

City of Vancouver

We met with two City of Vancouver staff members, respectively in the community planning and finance departments at City Hall.

- *We understand from our preliminary research what the premise of the CAC policy is, can you explain a bit more in-detail what the City's primary goals are with this policy?*

CACs are just one source of funding and as such are a tool used to generate funds for public benefits. Similar to CACs would be Development Cost Levies (DCLs) that serve a similar function. This means that not all public benefits are funded solely from CACs. Part of the City's job is to forecast future developments and changes in population densities of certain locations, and in doing so, try to budget to accommodate for these changes. The Financing Growth Review was passed in 2004 and predicts approximately 5,000 newcomers to Vancouver per year. In this way, developers can pay their fair share for contributions to public benefits with the addition of new members to a specific community.

- *Are CACs used specifically within a community in which the development is occurring? What percentage of the CACs are used in the area in which they were generated?*
 - *If not, what are the criteria for deciding how and where amenity projects are developed?*

- ***What are the criteria for determining what amenities are needed within a community and are community members (or visions groups) consulted in any way?***

The preferred contribution from the City’s perspective is to receive in-kind contributions where the public benefits are delivered on-site, however cash contributions are more popular. The cash contributions are then held in a reserve until they are allocated or budgetted for a specific project. CACs are actually prioritized to stay in the same communities and re-invested in that same area. With the new 2020 policy update there is now the possibility of moving money around to fund projects in other communities if needed. The priority is still for money to be kept within the originating community; however, now there is more flexibility. For example, the Hillcrest Centre may be funded with other communities' CACs as it attracts people from neighbouring communities as well.

- ***We are aware of the 2020 policy update for CACs. Would you clarify what the main changes are and how these changes improve upon the prior policy? How do these changes help the City achieve their goals in relation to CACs?***

There are five major moves of the 2020 policy:

1. *Clarifying what is eligible and ineligible for CACs*

Eligible: Creating categories to help prioritize city’s investments to create a “narrower” bucket for spending.

Ineligible: CACs are not for existing operations or repairs as CACs are meant to serve for growth-oriented needs.

2. *CACs broadened to be spent beyond investment areas*

The reason for this move was to acknowledge the fact that land values differ across the City and different neighbourhoods. In allowing a portion of CAC money to be spent in other areas, it provides a more equitable way to benefit areas with lower land values.

A follow-up question was posed to find out what the percentage breakdown of this policy is:

There is no current percentage breakdown at this moment. This will be figured out as a part of the City Plan (part of the public investment strategy).

3. *Timing of cash payments*

Originally, CACs are asked and paid out at the time of the development; however, this can be challenging for developers to be able to pay that lump sum upfront.

With the new policy update, a payment plan or deferment can be arranged including the set rate of inflation. This option is/will be available for projects larger than \$20M.

4. *Clarification on the rules regarding changing CACs*

In the past, there have been some inquiries made regarding the possibility of refunds for CACs due to problems arising in the development process of a project leading to a halt or re-evaluation. This policy makes it clear that CACs, once paid out, can not be given back to developers. The reasoning behind this is due to the

fact that once the funds are received, they are included in the budgetary planning for future events.

5. *Ownership of in-kind CACs*

Before the new policy update, the ownership of in-kind CACs was solely the City of Vancouver's. Now, the ownership can be taken on by non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities and the government.

- ***The Mayor has been quoted saying that “the developer contribution model also ensures that we are not impacting housing costs or adding an additional burden on taxpayers.” What exactly is this model and how does it operate?***

Similar to the comments made in the previous question, the developer contribution model allows the developers to not have to pay that much cash upfront as most funds can be derived later on in the project life cycle. How CACs are paid for in terms of the specific funding sources are up to the developers themselves. Similar to how you would envision a payment plan, developers are then able to plan better and have more cash upfront for initial costs of production.

- ***What is the relationship between CACs and the cost of housing?***

In order to explore this topic, the City hired external consultants to assess whether the CACs increased the cost of housing and the conclusion from that report was that they in fact do not impact housing costs.

- ***In relation to the Riley Park/South Cambie area, how have CACs been allocated? And more specifically, regarding the Little Mountain Housing Project.***

From their understanding of the Little Mountain situation, an in-kind contribution was a part of the rezoning that was enacted in July 2018. The site is to provide neighbourhood housing, social housing which is thus tied to the timing of the construction. Amenities are meant to serve growth, thus it makes more sense for the housing to be built before introducing these amenities. The interviewees were not very informed regarding the specifics of this project and as such could only provide more general information.

- ***How do you obtain community input into the decision making process for the uses and location of CAC money that you receive?***

This is based on a needs assessment; that is, it depends on whether it falls within the community plan area or is more focused on rezonings. The community involvement is broken down into either an internal or external component. For internal communications, the City will usually consult with social planners to determine population growth projections for a specific area which will be factored into the discussions and budgets for amenities. External communications are involved in order to gather feedback about land use, transportation, community well being etc., and this is where the community plan consultation is utilized. It is often the case where the City will need to balance the needs based on the growth projections from the internal communications (e.g. childcare facilities) with the interests of other groups consulted.

In the past, for the Public Benefit Plan, a number of tools were utilized to receive external input such as: online surveys, larger community open houses, workshop series, walking tours with staff and on occasion smaller events such as coffee chats. For rezoning purposes, tools such as open houses for the developers and public hearings before Council are utilized.

- ***Recently, City of Vancouver Planning announced a new city-wide planning process for Vancouver. Are CACs used to support this kind of planning?***

CACs are not used for the City-wide plan

- ***Recently, the Parks Board announced a multi-million dollar review of the Queen Elizabeth park. Is that being funded by CAC money? If so, is there a reason why the review process is being prioritized over immediate improvements?***

CACs are used to accommodate growth and as such are not utilized for improvements or fixes of operational amenities. The QE review itself is not being funded by CAC money.

ANALYSIS

Conclusions from Qualitative Interviews

The conclusions drawn are not meant to be generalizing stakeholder groups or fully representative of their views and beliefs. The qualitative research that has been undertaken only provides more insight into the different perspectives available regarding the specific topics of discussion.

The largest insight drawn from the interviews conducted with the City, developers, and in our community-based research with RPSC Visions Group was the conflicting interests of these stakeholder groups when considering CAC policy.

The City adopts a growth-oriented approach when it comes to determining CAC policy and allocation. The Financing Growth Review approved by City Council in 2004 reflects this approach. The City's responsibility is to accommodate Vancouver's growing population while providing a suitable level of services and amenities for existing and future residents. As a result, the City's financing structure and CACs specifically, are budgeted to facilitate this expected growth. The City uses CACs as a tool requiring developers to contribute to the provision of public amenities with the consideration of increases in the population of communities.

In contrast, RPSC is most concerned and interested in building community and preserving/creating amenities to allow for this to occur. In our conversations, there also lay an undertone of mistrust towards the City with regards to their commitment to the needs of the current community versus the future. The RPSC Group has continuously advocated for their community's needs/desires and maintenance of quality of life in regards to planning and

development in the Riley Park/South Cambie areas since 2005. Such areas of interest include increasing housing density, affordability for housing and small businesses, amenities, walkability and transit. Despite being a group officially recognized by City Council, over the years, it appears that the City has done little to fulfill the suggestions or actively involve the RPSC Group in decisions regarding developments made in the community. One such example includes the ambiguity and lack of communication concerning the Little Mountain Site Redevelopment, ongoing since 2007.

Next, we observe that the developers' interests, particularly drawing from the perspective of the interviewee from Pennyfarthing, is the impact that the provision of amenities has on the appeal of living in a specific community. Developers intentionally build new developments where there is high demand for housing. The interviewee mentions that with community amenities, the livability and walkability of housing is further enhanced thereby creating a greater demand and marketability for housing in the neighbourhood.

Another interesting observation we made was that the City has been listening and responding to these stakeholder groups as shown in the recent 2020 CAC Policy update. An example of this is changing the timing of when CAC money is collected. The interviewee expressed that one limitation of CAC policy was the difficulty of paying CACs upfront before construction of the development began. With the new policy update, for projects larger than \$20 million, now there is an option for developers to choose a payment plan or defer when to pay the CAC with a set rate of inflation. This change allows for developers to be less financially strained from the very beginning of a development project. While the City is often criticized for its limitations and inaction, we simultaneously recognize that the City has a difficult role in

prioritizing its own goals, as well as the desires of residents, developers, and other involved stakeholders. We believe it is important to also highlight the areas of improvement as well as the areas where the City is doing rather well.

One of the main questions we wished to explore in the preliminary stages of our research was with regards to tying specific new housing developments to the implementation of public amenities specifically within the RPSC area. At this stage of our report, tying in information from our interviews and additional articles we have researched, we have gathered that it would be very challenging (if not near impossible) to try to trace money backwards from a given physical amenity to its original CAC source. Our understanding of this entire process is that all CAC payments from one area are pooled together into a ‘bucket’ or ‘pool’ of funds. This bucket also consists of money collected from other amenity funding sources (e.g. DCLs) and it is this general bucket that is made use of when budgeting for a new amenity. With the new policy updates which we discussed earlier, we understand that it should now be easier for money to be moved around from each areas ‘public amenity funding source’ as is needed.

In looking at what the relationship between CACs and housing affordability are, we turned to the ‘CAC Policy and Housing Affordability review’ that was conducted by Coriolis Consulting group (2019) on behalf of the City of Vancouver. This report was brought up during our interview with the City of Vancouver when specifically asked about this causal relationship. According to the report, there is no evidence to show a direct link between the implementation of CACs and the prices of housing units. The report’s rationale argues that it would not fit within an economic framework to push the entire cost of CACs forward onto the home buyers. In other words, the increase in price (that would not be unilateral across all new developments) would

create price disparities and would urge buyers to look elsewhere as following basic supply and demand metrics. Another interesting point that was raised in this report was that many development sites have already been rezoned, but developers would not have to pay CACs specifically. This fact backs up the supply-and-demand framework such that the units that do have to pay CACs still need to price match the units that do not; which is why the costs cannot be arbitrarily shifted forward. A similar sentiment was shared during our interviews with some developers in that CACs are incorporated into the initial costs of a housing project for example, as a part of the purchase of land. If the costs of CACs were to significantly reduce the anticipated profits from pricing the housing units at market price, then the project would not be undertaken.

Development Plans for Riley Park/South Cambie

The City of Vancouver has created a number of strategic planning reports that cover most neighbourhoods in Vancouver (which can be found on the City of Vancouver website). These reports include housing and public amenities developments that the City plans to introduce as well as progress reports of sites that have already begun. Their plans reflect the goals of the city to cater to the housing and childcare needs of a community, their greenspace, and healthy community living. In this section of the report we seek to provide some general overview on the projects that have been set aside as stated in the Cambie Corridor plan specifically without replicating tables that already exist. The Cambie Corridor plan has set aside specific budgets where about \$47M has been allocated to providing childcare facilities, \$77M for new park spaces, \$10M to upgrade existing parks, \$23.5M for the Oakridge center that is already being

carried out and more (City of Vancouver, 2018). For a more detailed representation of the developments and amenities that have been introduced, please refer to Appendix A.

Although the existence of such reports is a step in the right direction, our major takeaway is that it is fairly challenging to consolidate a holistic and up-to-date dataset regarding the status of developments in the specified geographical area. The City has disparate information in numerous reports and it would be difficult to consolidate such information without having to individually walk each neighbourhood to note development sites with a slim chance that there is sufficient information regarding the development's status available. On one hand, we can see how the administrative costs of keeping such information up-to-date and gathered might be undesirable, but we are also of the opinion that providing the general public with access to specified lists of approved development sites and more detailed information on their developmental progress allows the community to be more informed and at ease. It is often the case that developments take longer than originally planned or are stalled for one reason or another leaving the community with various questions regarding why. One key example we have discussed in this report is the Little Mountain site. Having a designated space for this information could provide future use to avoid individual inquiries on status reports and further manage expectations.

Comparisons to Other Cities

Toronto

In 2005, there was a case between the Toronto District School Board and the local ratepayers who were opposed to the proposed hotel and condo development in the

Yorkville neighbourhood (Moore, 2013). Initially, the School Board accepted the proposal but later it decided that they were concerned with how the towers would significantly exceed the density and height restrictions of the construction site, as the towers would cast a shadow onto the nearby schoolyard (Moore, 2013). Accordingly, the developers offered the school board \$2 million for a redesign and reconstruction of the school's playground, which the school board accepted even though the money would not mitigate the concern of the towers' shadows (Moore, 2013). From this event, the \$2 million cash payment was included into a \$5 million contribution agreed upon in Section 37 policy between the City and the developers (Moore, 2013).

Section 37(1) was first introduced in the Ontario Planning Act in 1983, but later amended in 1990 to its current form and reads as follows:

The council of a local municipality may, in a by-law passed under section 34, authorise increases in the height and density of development otherwise permitted by the by-law that will be permitted in return for the provision of such facilities, services or matters as are set out in the by-law.

(Planning Act, 1990. s. 37(1))

Section 37 allows municipalities in Ontario to secure "facilities, services or matters" (benefits) from developers, in return for heights and densities that otherwise exceed existing zoning by-law restrictions" (Moore, 2013, p. 2) otherwise referred to as a density for benefit agreement (DBA).

The 2005 School Board case has served as a precedent for how Section 37 agreements operate and the nature of such agreements has been relatively obscure

(Moore, 2013). Moore (2013) also states that until recently, DBA policy has not been scrutinized by the public, but now there is growing concern with the nature of DBA negotiations, how benefits are being secured, and the allocation/distribution of cash contributions.

Toronto and Vancouver share common attributes as they are both large metropolitan cities, respectively having the first and third largest populations in Canada (Moore, 2013). Both cities have undergone significant development and construction leading to the unique urban landscape that can be found today. Vancouver and Toronto both negotiate density and value of benefits on a case-by-case basis (Dickinson, 2016).

However, in the institutional sense, the cities differ on how they operate. The City of Vancouver has a council elected at large from its active party system whereas the City of Toronto lacks a party system and elects its councillors by ward (Moore, 2013). This institutional difference leads Toronto to have a “weak-mayor” system and politically powerful councillors which is not present in Vancouver (Moore, 2013). This is a key difference that plays a substantial role in determining how each city uses DBAs.

Moore (2013) finds that these institutional differences shape the final use of contributions secured. In the City of Toronto, DBAs are highly politicized, given the influence and power councillors wield when negotiating agreements and allocating the benefits (Moore, 2013). This political environment has contributed to the unclear policy and planning objectives associated with policy’s use and benefit allocation. Moore (2013) argues that this is where Vancouver is more successful because its “technocratic process” insulates CACs from politics, making allocation of developer contributions more

effective. However, as we find in this report, the process for negotiating CACs and amenities in Vancouver is still subject to a complex process lacking full transparency. Moore (2013) attributes the nature of DBA policy to its complex process meant to be unintelligible to outsiders.” (p. 4).

Chicago

Clark et al. (2002) draw on a theoretical framework of New Political Culture (NPC) to examine how a city’s economy and its culture influences the industrialization and urban growth of cities in the United States, more specifically Chicago. NPC is a leadership pattern that is signified by its responsiveness to consumption as opposed to production. Clark et al. (2002) argue that NPC is more pervasive in cities with less hierarchical structures, where citizens have access to more resources (e.g. education, higher income, more professional and high tech service occupations).

Today, Chicago is described as a postindustrial city with its urban focus on entertainment, consumption and amenities (Clark et al., 2002). Clark et al. (2002) trace the history of the city in the last half of the twentieth century and the six mayors to illustrate the changes into the New Political Culture that is observed in modern-day Chicago. Many policy lessons can be derived from this city from its major areas of public amenities and consumption of schools and parks (Clark et al., 2002). The article suggests seven conclusions from Chicago’s good management of public goods, managed growth, and consumption of amenities; all of which increase a city’s likelihood to have policy innovations similar to Chicago and are as follows:

- 1) Managers operate in an environment characterized by high risk and uncertainty

- 2) The status quo's legitimacy is low
- 3) Policy alternatives are actively monitored and criticized by many political participants in an open-system environment
- 4) Managers are talented and ambitious but also trusted and personally well-connected to political leaders who support them in good times and bad
- 5) Political leadership is stable and coherent
- 6) General policy direction is clear
- 7) Managers have autonomy and encouragement to pursue dramatic change (Clark et al., 2002, p. 511)

With the growing importance of amenities in urban life, Clark et al. (2002) make the case that amenities are a major cause of urban economic development and population growth, as is also beginning to be recognized by economists and urban policy analysts. While the City of Toronto is marked by a fierce political environment within which DBA policy remains unclear and inaccessible to the public, the City of Chicago has some policy lessons that can equalize the traditional political hierarchies. Comparing the theoretical ideas of New Political Culture to what can be observed in the City of Vancouver, we would argue that Vancouver is on the right track of serving the urban growth and the needs of Vancouverites. Drawing parallels to Chicago's urban growth over the years, we argue that Vancouver's adoption of its growth-oriented approach is appropriate in being the most prepared and forward-thinking for expected urban growth. As Clark et al. (2002) conclude that post industrial urban citizens increasingly prioritize 'quality of life', the role of cities and their policies concerning the provision and sustainability of amenities.

CONCLUSION

Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles

The framework of sustainable development has been utilized as the main theoretical perspective for our understanding and interpretation of the various policies that we have addressed in this paper. In a traditional sense, sustainable development approaches have usually been employed in a global/international context. The development effectiveness principles that were drawn up in 2010 (i.e. the Istanbul Principles) are guidelines that have been drawn up to encourage mutual growth and development. Despite the fact that our research is community based, we find that there is some merit to utilize these same principles in a local community framework. Civil society organizations on a global and local scale have a duty and responsibility to be fully accountable for development practices, policies and actions (CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness, 2010). Thus, such practices should be consistently measured by the pre-conditions laid out by these principles to ensure effective development is achieved (CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness, 2010).

From our interviews and various research regarding the City of Vancouver's CAC policy, one of our observations has been that despite the availability of a lot of information regarding the specifics of the different policies and goals of the City, it is nonetheless fairly inaccessible to the everyday person. Having so much information presented as 100 page plus reports using highly specific jargon would be daunting to anyone and as such, there is room for improvement. This is less of a critique to the City and more of an application of the Istanbul principles to further

improve upon the goals of the various interest groups we have identified in our report. The specific Istanbul principle we are referring to in this case is number 5 and reads as follows:

Practice transparency and accountability

CSOs are effective as development actors when they ... demonstrate a sustained organizational commitment to transparency, multiple accountability, and integrity in their internal operations (CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness, 2010).

Asset-Based Community Development

This research project has utilized an asset-based community development approach aligning with the aforementioned SDG 11 and Vancouver's progress in achieving its sustainability goals. The asset-based community development (ABCD) approach draws from the recognition of the existing strengths, asset resources of individuals and communities, and assists communities to mobilize and build upon them for sustainable development (International Association for Community Development, 2009). This approach begins from the bottom-up, placing emphasis and value on what is present in a community to further develop its sustainability and resilience. This development approach is not a new approach, but the principles and values are nevertheless essential now more than ever to transition our local communities and the City of Vancouver towards more sustainable practices of development.

Our entire project has fundamentally operated with this approach such that people in the community are of value and have great knowledge that can be offered in partnership with other actors (e.g. the City). By conducting community research with the RPSC Visions Group, we have observed that the group can be further encouraged and mobilized by traditionally

higher-level actors like developers and the City of Vancouver to create stronger participatory practices regarding topics of community planning and development. The City is made-up of citizens and to start with local community groups like RPSC Visions Group is a strong first step when looking to implement more citizen-led and endogenous development in the City's communities.

Next Steps

- Future research would benefit from accessing statistical (quantitative) data that would allow for a more in-depth understanding of CACs and their relationships towards effective growth and community building.
- Based on our experience researching and conducting interviews, we would encourage more partnerships and communication with the different stakeholders, each identifying their agendas and thought processes regarding decisions being made.
- We would encourage the City to have more participatory practices in order to gather as much input from those that will be affected as possible (e.g. Participatory budgeting used in the West End).

The City-wide Plan's "Listen and Learn" step in their timeline is a good first step towards achieving this goal. There should also be a measure of accountability on the City to share the information gathered from this initial step back to the communities it was collected from. Another practice to be encouraged is the implementation of more inclusive and citizen-led participatory practices in the City's process of approving or rejecting projects.

From an asset-based community development approach, we believe the onus should be equally shared by the City and the wider community regarding project input.

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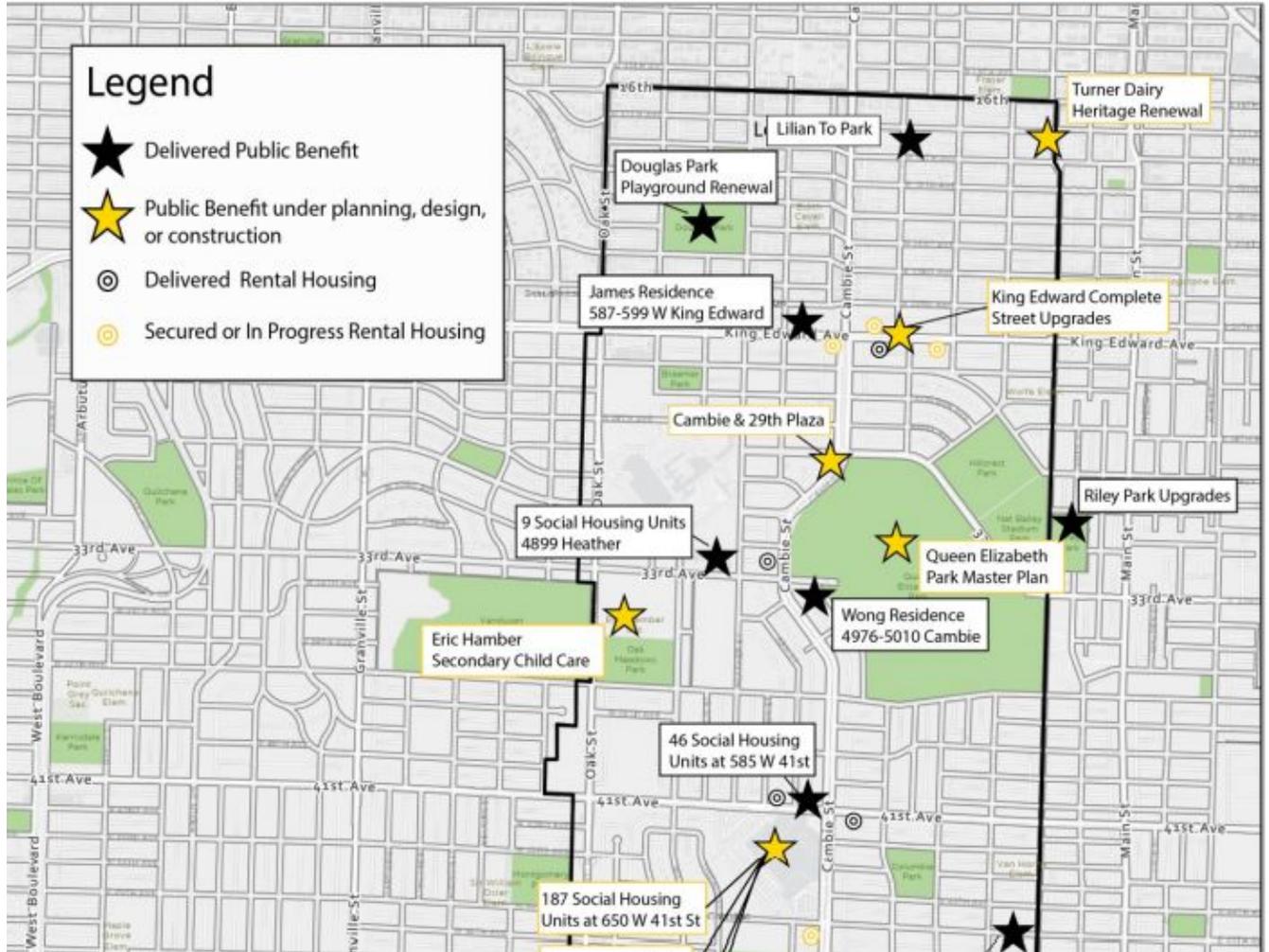
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APPENDIX

Appendix A1:

Cambie and Marpole Public Benefits Tracking



Appendix A2:



Appendix B1:

Amenities in Cambie Corridor and Marpole Completed since 2011

Category	10 to 15-year PBS Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Projects ○ In Progress Projects
 Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 950 social housing units (including Major Project sites and in Oakridge MTC area) • 190 below-market units • 2,000 secured market rental units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 social housing units (additional 78 units as Temporary Modular Housing) • 483 secured market rental units • Land acquisition of two affordable housing sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 650 social housing units ○ 392 net new secured market rental units ○ Social housing on Marpole Civic Centre site
 Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-12 facilities for 0-4 year olds • 4 facilities for 5-12 year olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 facilities in Marine Landing (Marine Gardens, Marpole Oakridge Family Place) • Restoration of outdoor play area at 8 Oaks Acorn childcare • After School Care at Sexsmith Elementary School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oakridge Centre ○ Pearson Dogwood ○ 2 facilities at VSB schools
 Parks and Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New parks on large sites • Fraser River Park • Pearson Dogwood Park • Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan and Phase 1 Upgrades • Park improvements and upgrades (minimum 2 in Marpole) • 7-8 new plazas/enhanced open spaces • Improve public access to/from Fraser River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades to Riley Park • Lillian To Park (17th and Yukon) • Playground renewal at Douglas Park • Green infrastructure plaza at 63rd Avenue and Yukon Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plaza at West 29th Avenue and Cambie Street ○ Oakridge Centre Park (9 acres) ○ Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan project ○ Park upgrades (Winona and Ash Parks playground upgrades) ○ Park renewal (William Mackie Park)

Appendix B2:

 Arts, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 new artist studios • Preserve and stabilize cultural assets • Retain/create multi-use neighbourhood creative spaces • 5% allocation from cash CAC in both Cambie and Marpole found city-wide and local on-site conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Artist Studios • Joy Kogawa House acquisition and renovation • 2 heritage projects (James House, Wong Residence) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>On-going efforts for Fraser Arms Hotel & protection of c̄asnaʔəm site</i> ○ <i>Marpole Civic Centre social/cultural non-profit space</i> ○ <i>Turner Dairy Heritage Redevelopment Project</i>
 Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakridge Civic Centre (Seniors' Centre, library renewal) • Hillcrest Community Centre – fitness centre expansion • Marpole Library renewal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marpole Civic Centre land acquisition • Marpole Oakridge Family Place • Marpole Neighbourhood House restoration

Appendix B3:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marpole Community Centre renewal • Partnerships with other agencies for aquatic facilities • Youth Hub • Non-Profit Organization Centre • Marpole Oakridge Family Place relocation and expansion • Marpole Neighbourhood House renewal and expansion • Fire Hall #23 • Community Policing Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Oakridge Civic Centre (community centre, library)</i> ○ <i>Marpole Library renewal and civic centre expansion</i> ○ <i>Marpole Community Centre renewal (including outdoor pool)</i>
 Transportation and Street Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade/expand walking and cycling networks • Complete Street design on Cambie Street and major streets • 'Car-light' greenway (Heather Street) • Safety improvements • Preserve Arbutus Corridor as future transportation corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45th Avenue and SW Marine Drive bikeway improvements • Arbutus Greenway temporary pathway and removable bollards • Oak Street improvements • Various traffic calming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Transportation improvements including Complete Streets on King Edward Avenue</i> ○ <i>Bicycle Mobility Centre at Marine Gateway</i>