



INTERIM COMMUNITY BENEFIT FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

■ Does the city have a community benefit program?

Yes. On March 15, 2021, the City Council adopted a Resolution to document the interim process for determining community benefits and public improvements for certain development projects. This is an “interim program” as a more comprehensive and detailed program will be completed in conjunction with the General Plan Update.

■ When is a community benefit required?

There are several scenarios where an applicant may be required to provide community benefits beyond code requirements as part of their development application. These additional benefits are typically provided as part of a development agreement negotiation or as required by existing General Plan goals and policies; and are only required in circumstances when a developer has a request that exceeds baseline City standards.

Development Agreement - State law allows cities to enter into development agreements with developers. The purpose of development agreements is to allow developers to vest standards in effect at the time an agreement is signed – in exchange for providing benefits beyond standard fees, mitigations and conditions of approval (which must have a nexus to project impacts). The City’s development agreement procedure is outlined in Resolution No. 1990 -120.

General Plan Provisions - There are several General Plan provisions that allow for increased building height in exchange for community benefit or public improvements in certain areas of the city such as downtown, El Camino Real corridor area and the State Route 92/Grant Street/Concar Drive/Delaware Street vicinity.

■ What is the purpose of the interim community benefit framework?

The purpose of the Interim Community Benefit Framework is to provide guidance for determining the appropriate value and provide a list of Community Benefits and Public Improvements.

Program Structure

Appropriate Value – An increased building height and a longer vesting period can increase the value of a development; however, it may be challenging to determine the appropriate value. The adopted Resolution requires city staff to contract with an economic land-use consultant to determine or confirm the appropriate monetary value of the proposed community benefits given the development capacity increase (or certainty provided by a development agreement). The cost for consultant services are to be paid for by the applicant consistent with the City’s Comprehensive Fee Schedule.

List of Potential Community Benefits and Public Improvements - A list of potential community benefits and public improvements is provided below. The list has been developed based upon feedback received during public workshops, community meetings, and City Council guidance.

As you review the list, there are a few important aspects to note:

- All developments are required to pay standard fees and make certain improvements based on the impacts of their project. In order to be considered a community benefit, the contributions must exceed standard requirements.
- The list has been acknowledged by the City Council as the preferred list of improvements, which is intended to provide a sense of certainty for the community, developers, and staff. However, developments vary in size, scope and location, and a developer must work with staff and the community in the beginning of the process to select the appropriate benefits.
- Whether the benefit is provided onsite or in the neighborhood, they usually still do have a positive citywide impact. Examples: additional onsite affordable housing helps the City meet its housing goals, a protected bike lane would help everyone get across the city.

Table 1: List of Community Benefits and Public Improvements

Transportation
Implementation of improvements identified in Traffic Action Plans (TAPs)
Infrastructure – curb, gutter, drainage, green infrastructure, trash capture, roadway, traffic signal upgrades, traffic signal interconnect/communication network improvements nearby the project site (beyond those normally provided via project nexus)
Nearby bike and pedestrian improvements
Nearby pedestrian-scale lighting improvements
Nearby ADA right-of-way improvements
Contribution for last-mile transportation services (i.e. shuttles)
Payment toward traffic improvements above the required Transportation Impact Fee (TIF)
Contribution to public parking fund (currently only available for projects within Central Parking Improvement District area, potential to collect funds to provide help provide public parking near train stations)
Housing
Additional affordable housing units above the inclusionary or density bonus requirement
Acquisition of existing market rate housing units to convert into affordable
Contribution towards City housing funds
Contribution of land for affordable housing
Parks/Open Space
Contribution for park improvements
Contribution for recreation center improvements/construction
Contribution of land for public parks
Provide additional privately-owned public open spaces (POPOs) within project (i.e. Linear Park at Bay Meadows I)
Other
Provide day care within project
Monetary contribution to the City

■ **Where can I find out more information?**

March 15, 2021 - [Agenda Report for Interim Community Benefits Framework](#) and [adopted Resolution](#).

If you have questions, please reach out to the Planning Division staff at planning@cityofsanmateo.org or (650) 522-7212.