

▶ Council Compensation Ad Hoc Committee

# Council Compensation Research Findings

September 7, 2023



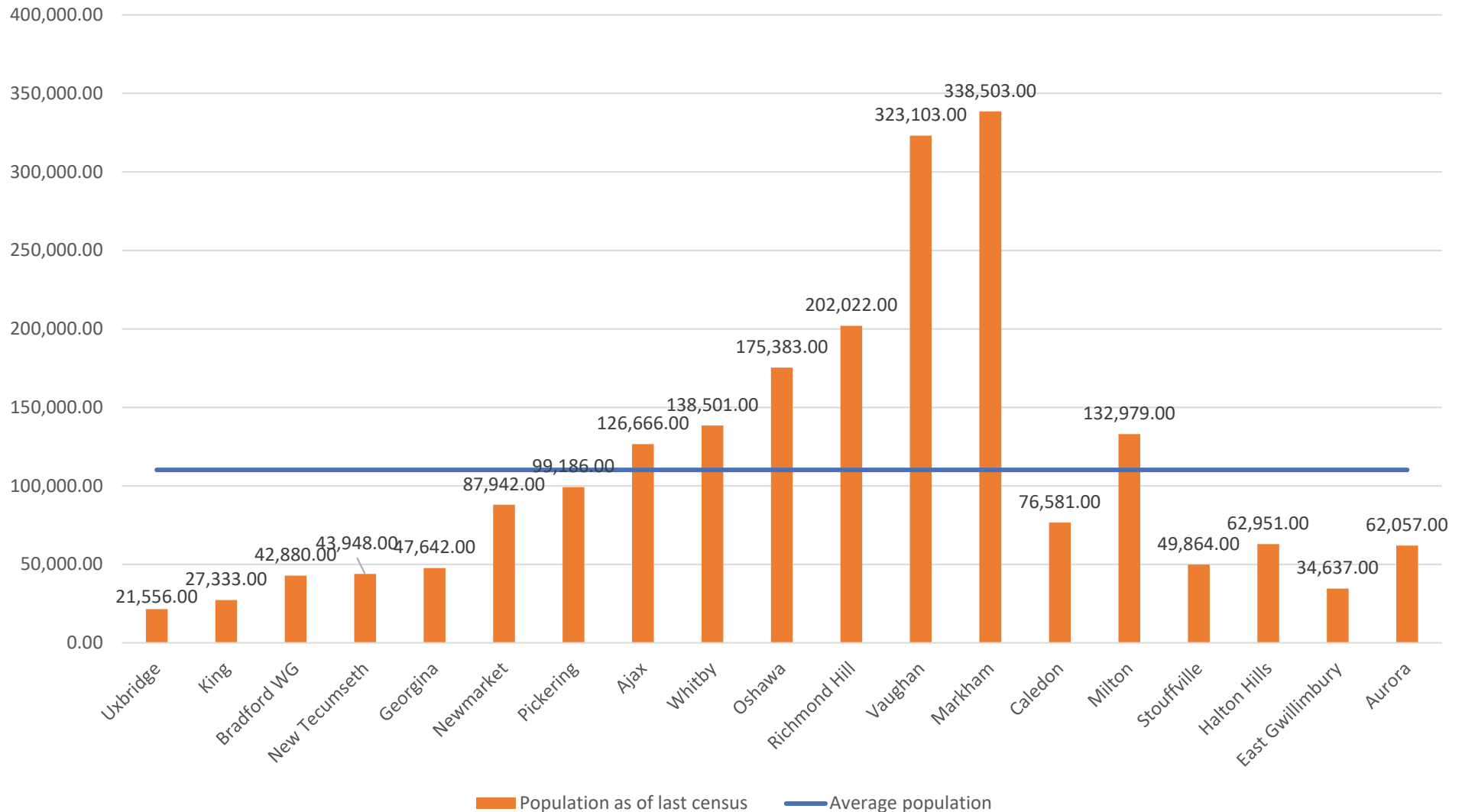
► Agenda

- Review of comparator municipalities
- Stakeholder feedback
- Part-time vs Full-time
- Severance provision of the by-law
- Summary of findings
- Next steps

► Review of comparator municipalities



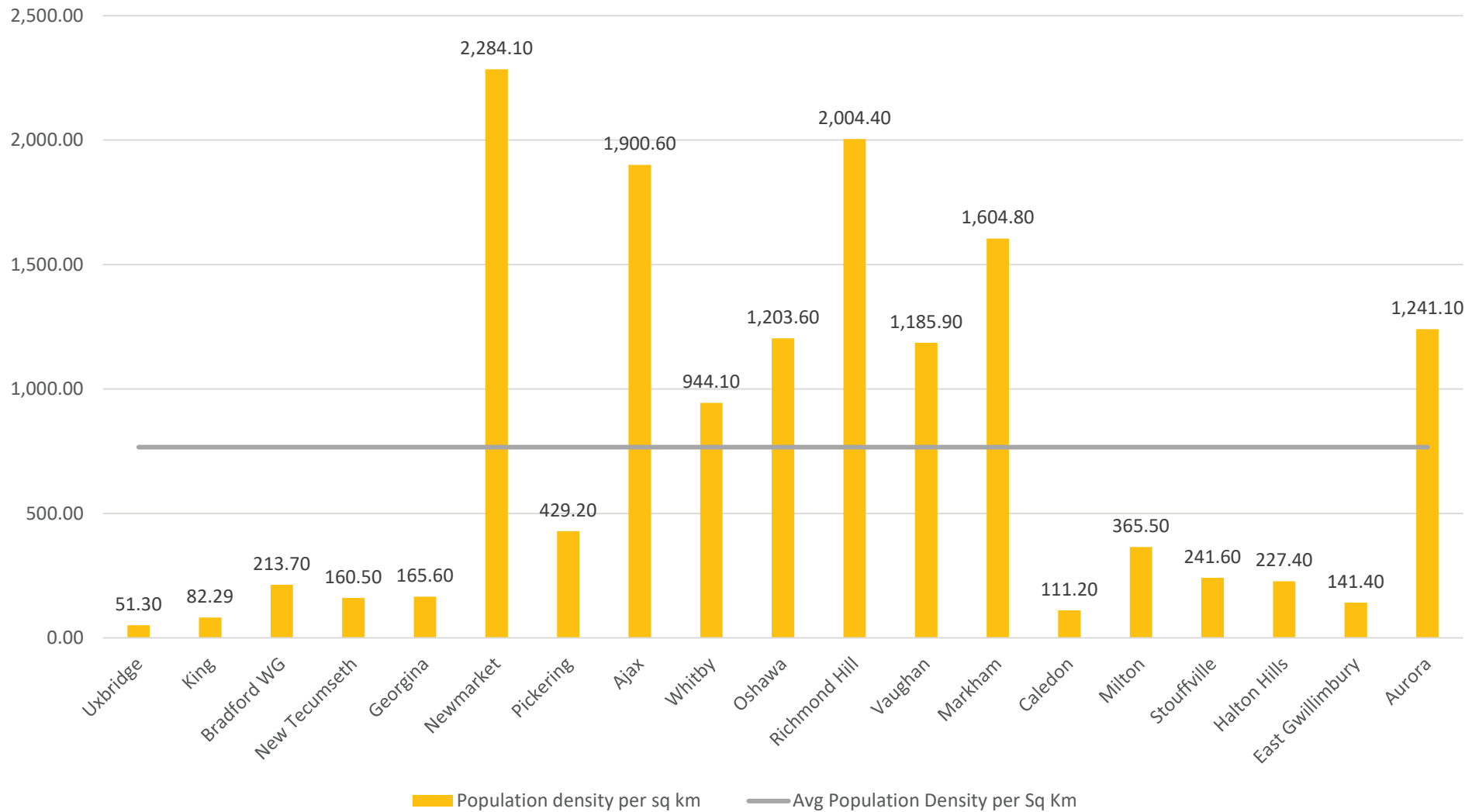
Population



► Review of comparator municipalities



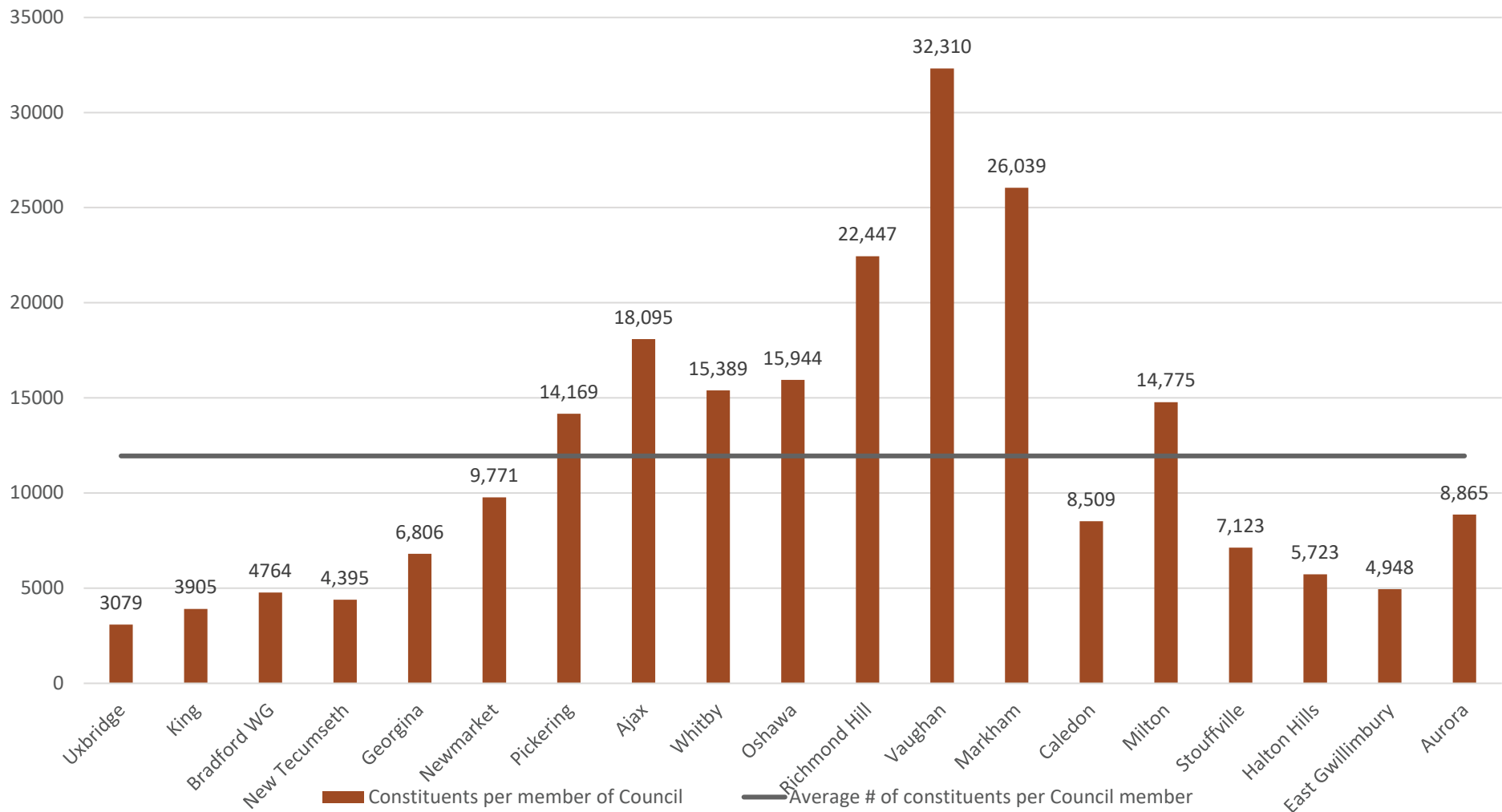
Population Density per Square Kilometer



► Review of comparator municipalities



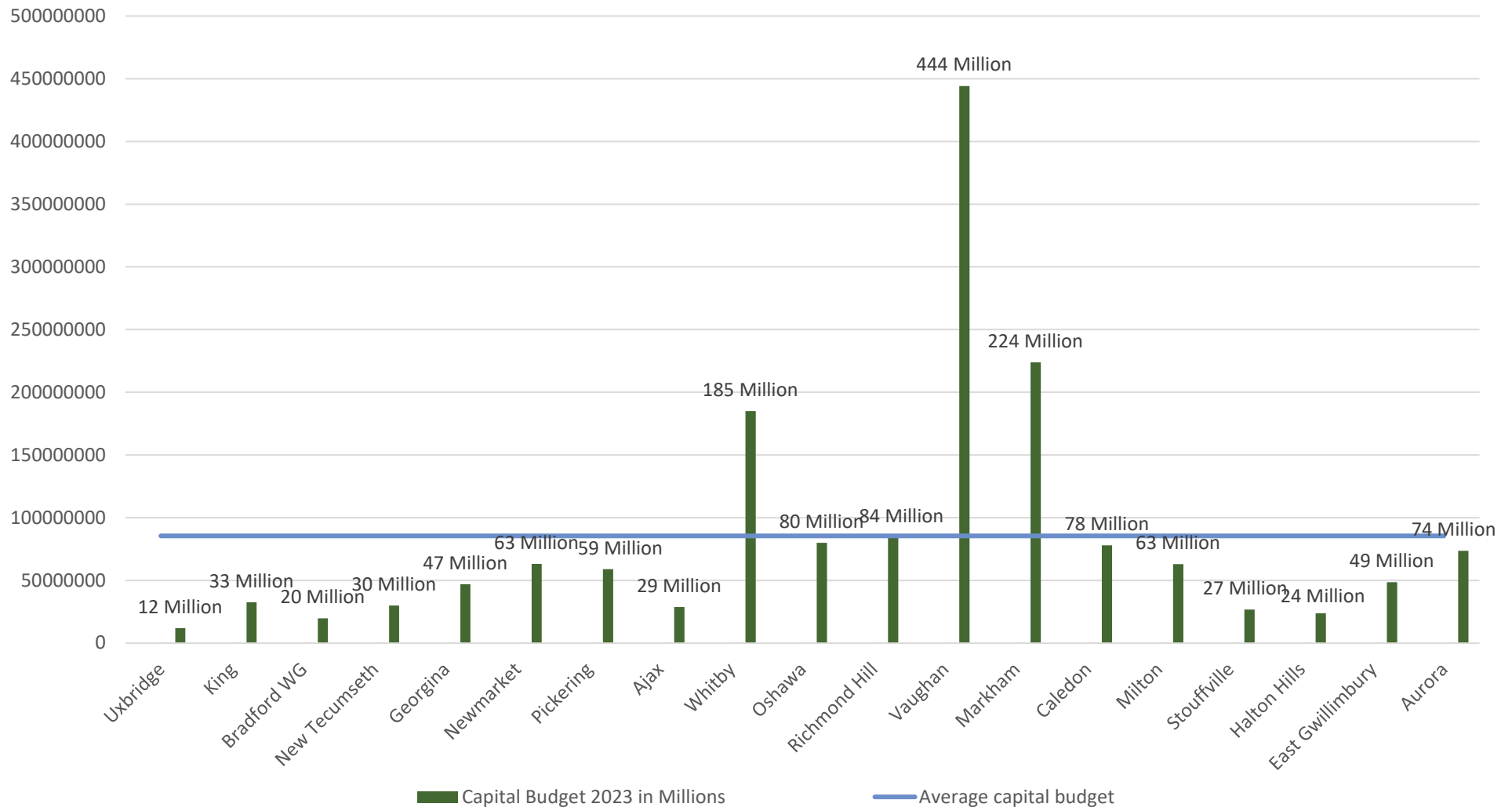
Number of Constituents Served per Member of Council (includes Mayor / Deputy / Regional and Local)



► Review of comparator municipalities



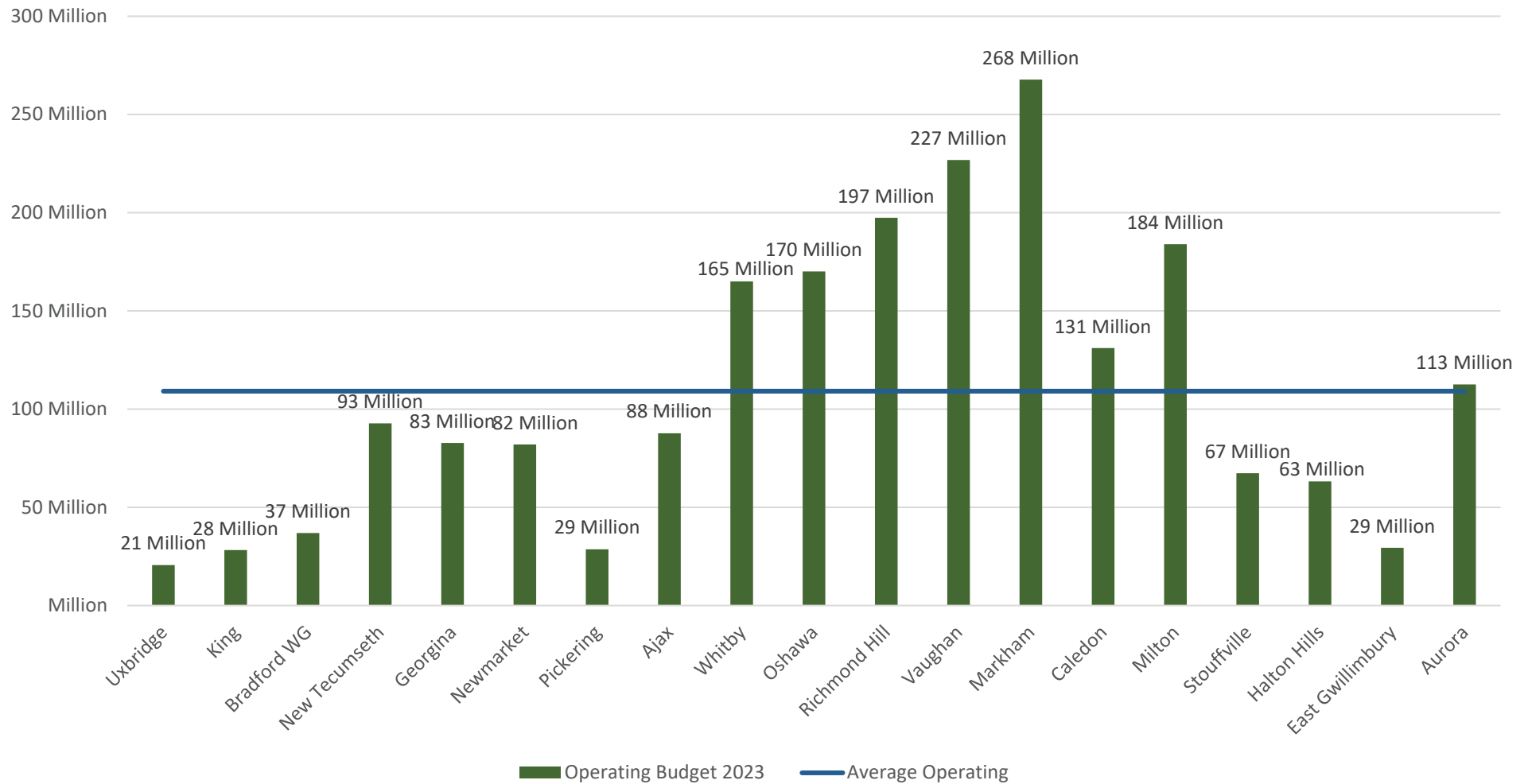
Annual Capital Budget



► Review of comparator municipalities



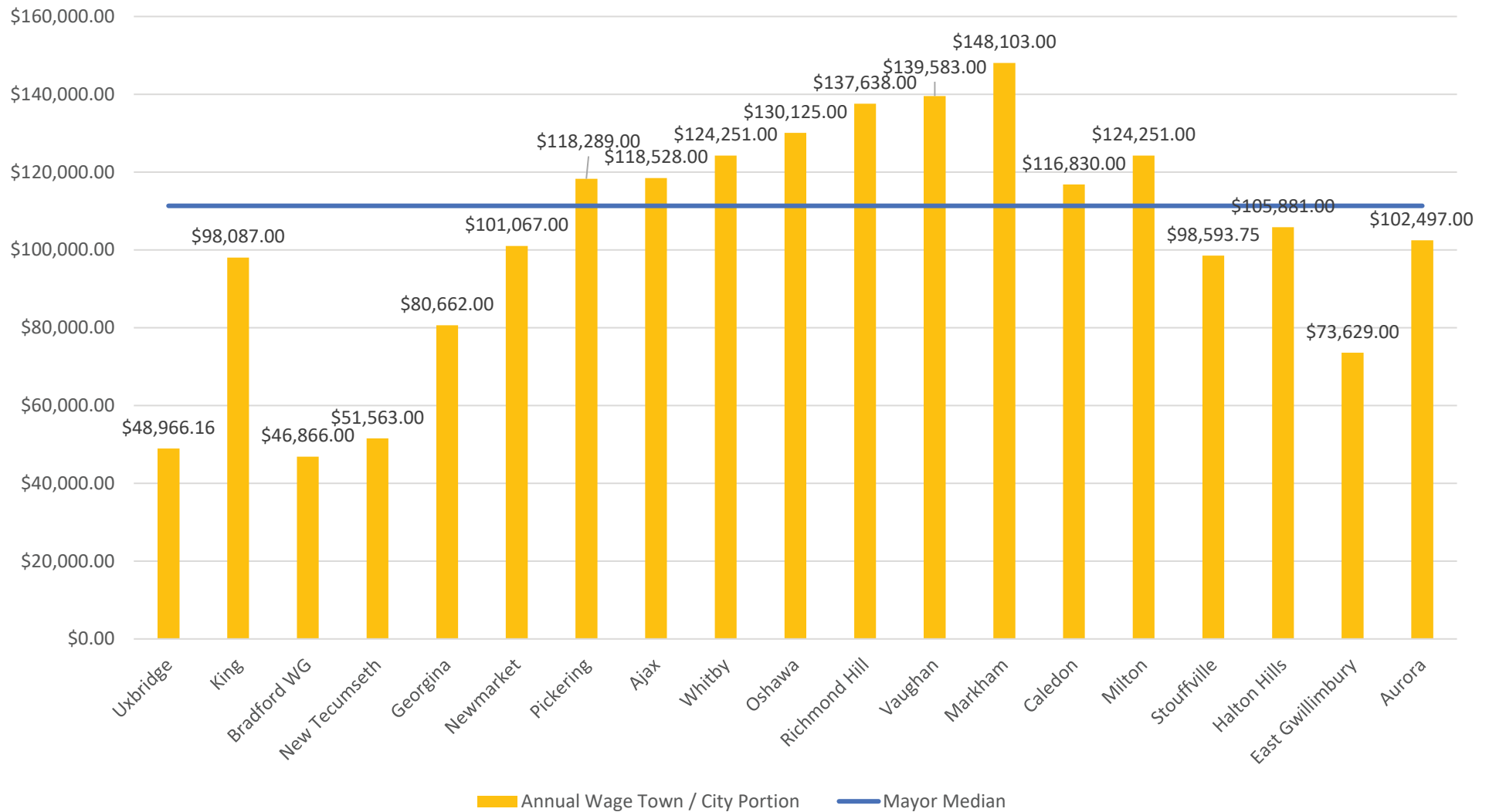
Annual Operating Budget



► Review of comparator municipalities



Mayor Salary Comparison

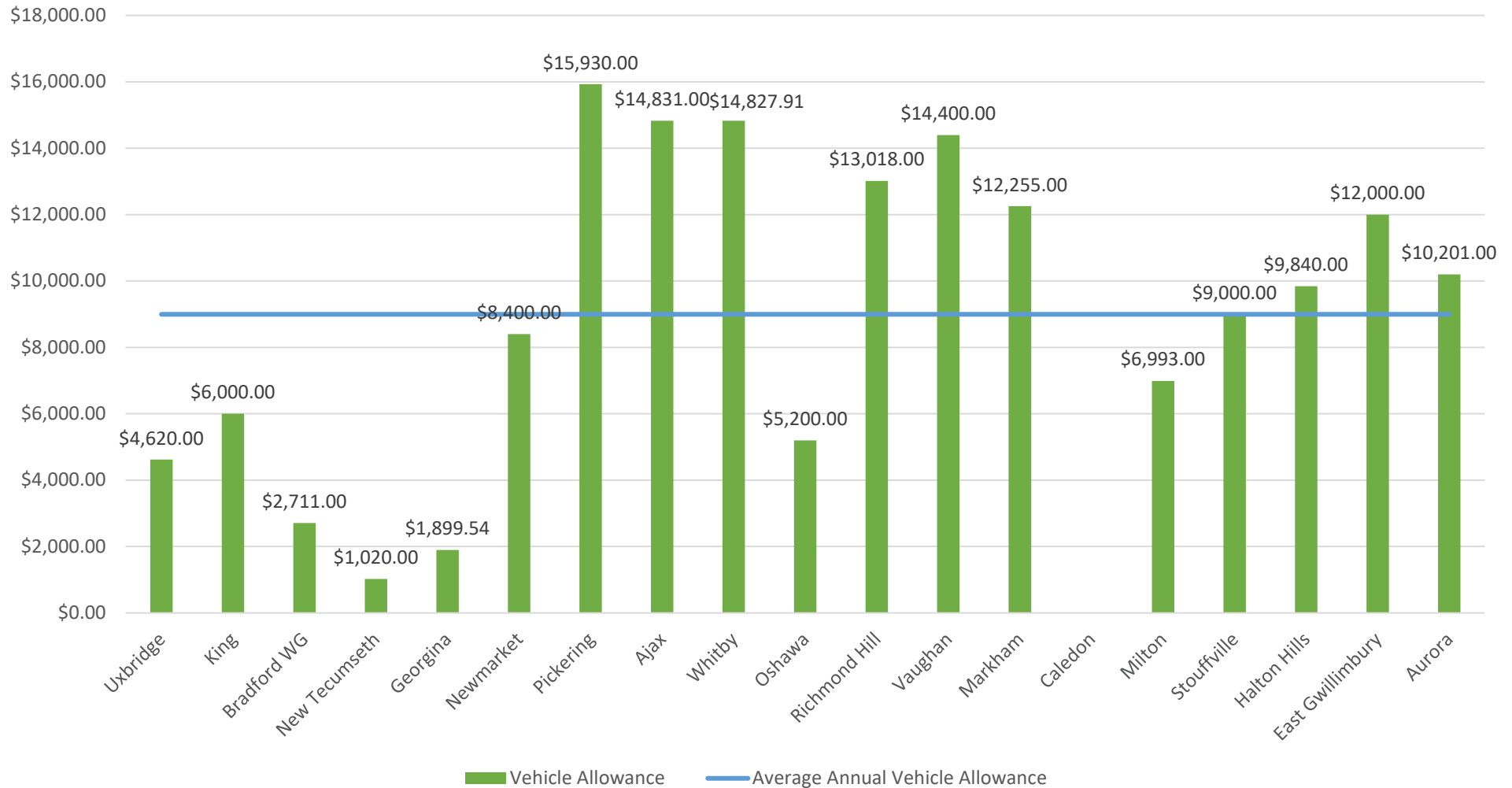




► Review of comparator municipalities

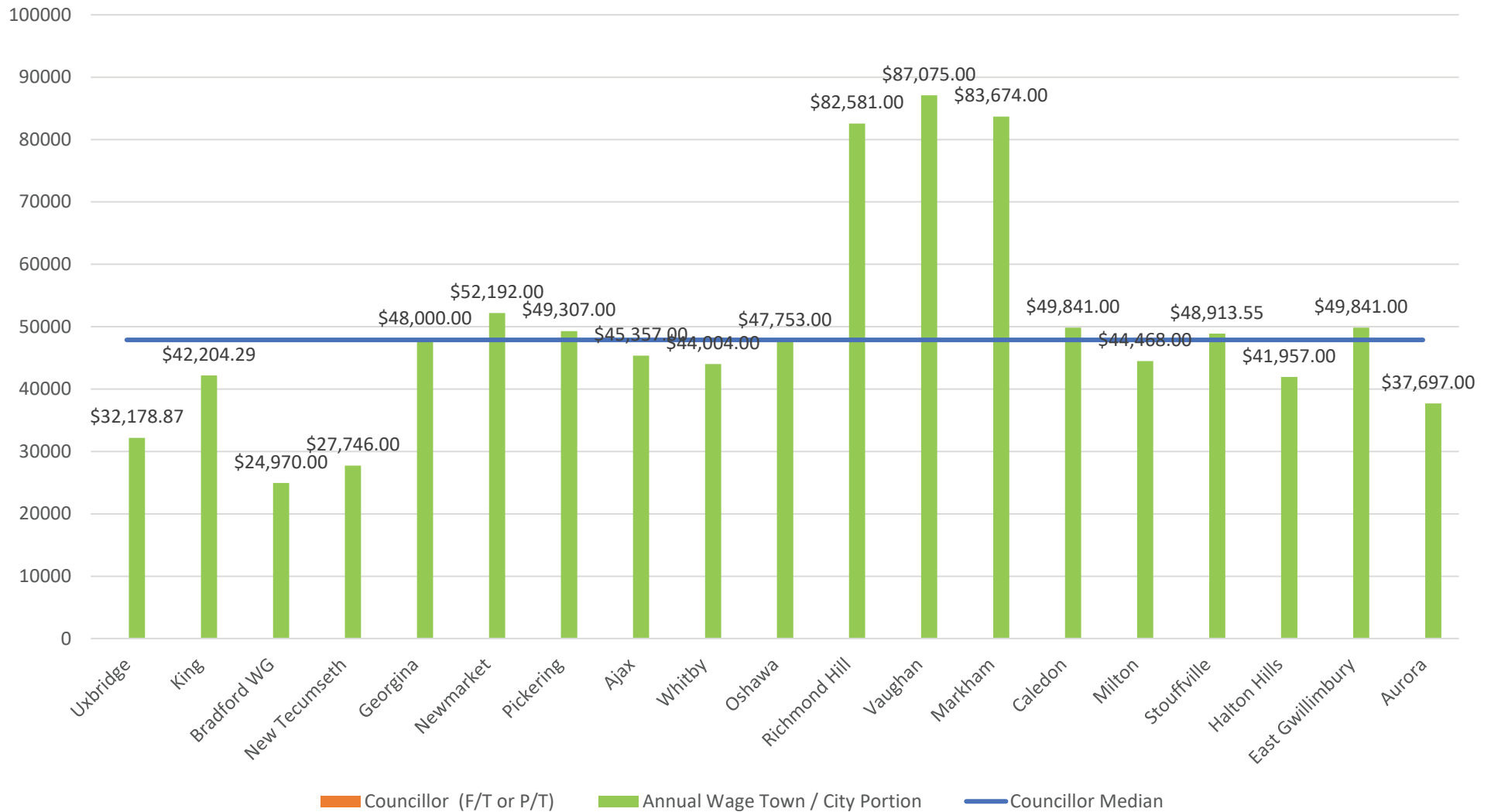


Annual Vehicle Allowance (Mayor)



► Review of comparator municipalities

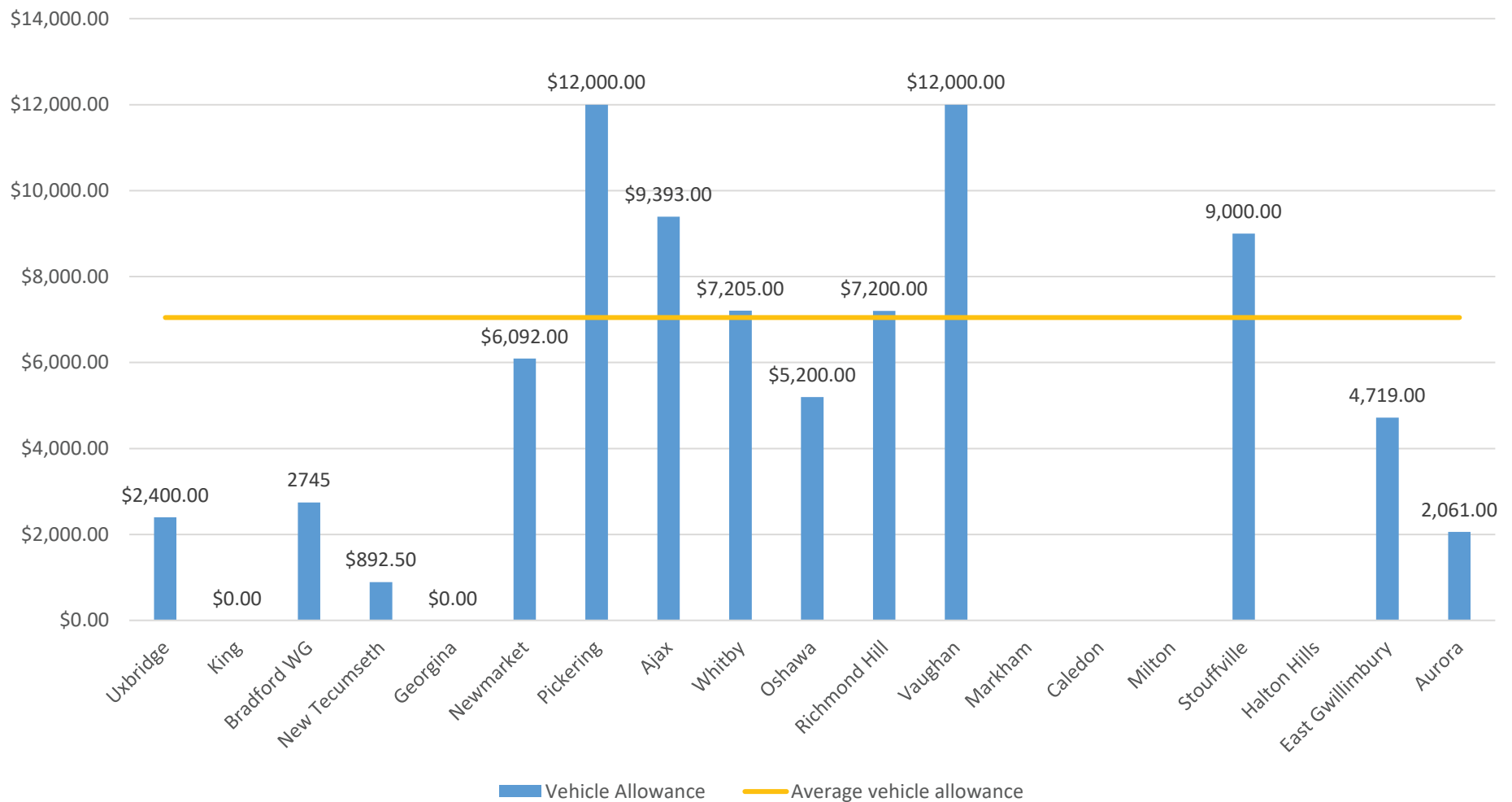
Councillor Wages



► Review of comparator municipalities



Value of Annual Vehicle Allowance Council Member



A short anonymous survey was deployed to collect feedback from each Member of Council.

Overall, four responses were received with a variety of experience in terms of total years on Council.

**1. On average, how many hours per week do you spend preparing for General Committee/Council including Public Planning and Closed Session meetings?**

1	Anonymous	15-20 hours
2	Anonymous	12 hours
3	Anonymous	6 hours
4	Anonymous	Depends on the content. Could be 5-15 hours of research, on-site visits and offline communication in addition to reading the reports.

**2. As a Member of Council your role requires you to attend public events and other boards and committees outside the normal Council related cycle. On average, how many hours per week do you spend on these types of events/meetings?**

1	Anonymous	3 hours
2	Anonymous	2 hours
3	Anonymous	2 hours
4	Anonymous	2-8 hours weekly depending on time of year.

### 3. Is participation in the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System of interest to you?

**Currently, there is no pension plan provision for members of Council with the exception of the position of Mayor. Considering the pension plan contributions for each member range between 9-14% (matched contribution by the Town), how interested are you in this being a feature for all of Council?**

**Responses reflect an average rating of “3”.**

(scale of 1 to 5, 1 being least interested to 5 being most interested)

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
# of responses	2				2

- The 2018 Municipal Council Compensation In Ontario report by AMCTO shows that 44% of municipalities with populations in the range of 50,000-99,000 were providing pension contributions to their elected officials.

#### 4. Is a group health and dental benefit plan of interest to you?

**Responses reflect an average rating of “2.25”.**

(scale of 1 to 5, 1 being least interested to 5 being most interested)

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
# of responses	1	2		1	

► **Council Member feedback**

**What other information would you like to share with the Council Compensation Committee in support of their work and to help them understand the challenges of your role?**

“One of the most significant challenges I face as a councillor is finding a delicate balance between the diverse interests of our community. Aurora is home to residents from different backgrounds, each with their own set of needs and priorities. As a representative, it is my responsibility to consider and address these interests while making decisions that benefit the community as a whole. Achieving consensus can be difficult, but it is crucial to ensure fair and equitable outcomes.”

“Managing the town's budget with limited resources presents an ongoing challenge. Allocating funds among various infrastructure projects, public services, and community programs requires careful deliberation. The needs of our growing population often exceed the available financial framework. Prioritizing spending and making tough decisions while considering long-term sustainability is essential. Striving to maximize the impact of every dollar spent becomes a constant endeavour”.

“Aurora has been experiencing rapid growth in recent years, leading to challenges in managing development effectively. Balancing the preservation of natural spaces, maintaining a high quality of life, and accommodating population growth is complex. Engaging with developers, ensuring appropriate zoning regulations, and addressing concerns related to traffic, infrastructure, and environmental impact demand careful consideration. Striking the right balance to ensure sustainable and responsible growth is an ongoing challenge. Engaging with the community is crucial to understanding their needs and aspirations.”

“Matters such as budgets, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and public planning require in-depth analysis and understanding. Staying updated on policies, regulations, and best practices in these areas is essential to make informed decisions that benefit the community. Navigating through the intricacies of these complex issues can be daunting but is crucial to finding viable solutions. Municipal councils comprise individuals with diverse perspectives, ideologies, and political affiliations”.



► **Council Member feedback**

**What other information would you like to share with the Council Compensation Committee in support of their work and to help them understand the challenges of your role?**

“Navigating political dynamics and building effective working relationships with fellow councillors can be challenging. Balancing personal values with the broader interests of the community requires tact and diplomacy. Constructive dialogue, compromise, and finding common ground are vital to achieving positive outcomes. Being a municipal councillor demands a significant time commitment. Attending council meetings, committee sessions, community events, and responding to constituent inquiries require substantial time and effort. Balancing these responsibilities with personal and professional commitments can be challenging. Effectively managing my schedule and priorities is crucial to fulfilling my duties as a councillor while maintaining a balanced life”.

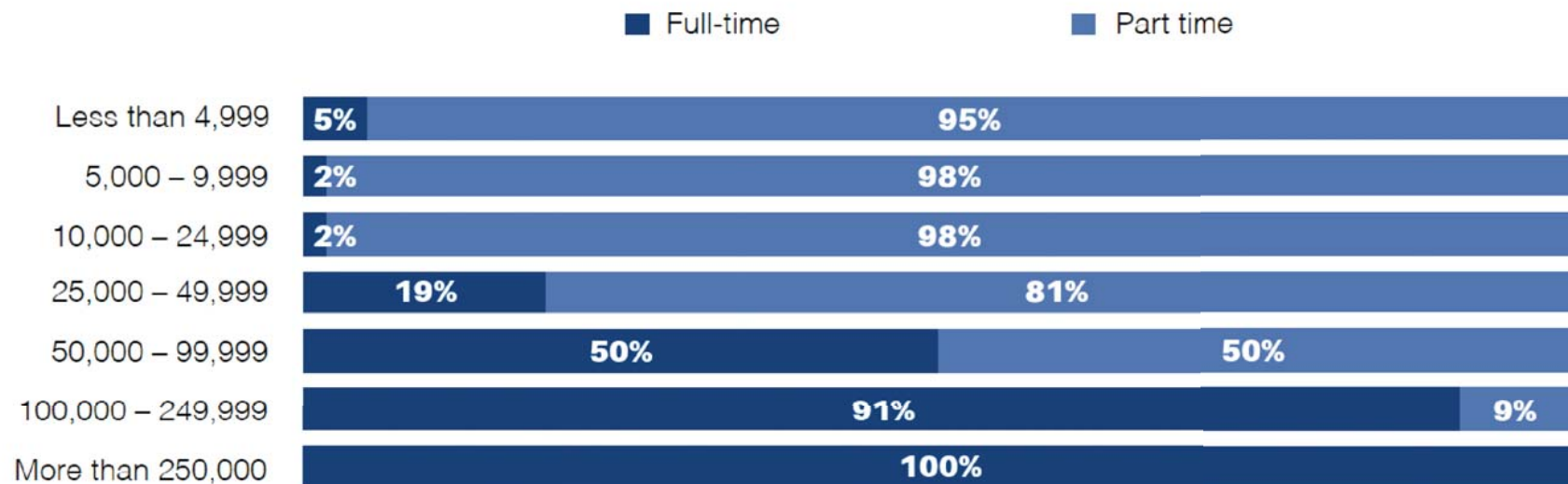
“I also think that the ‘comparators’ to similar or adjacent municipalities is acceptable practice. I also suggest that there needs to be some ‘job task analysis’ done because the identification and qualification of the work needed is important. The identification of hours of work may be helpful but it isn’t primary. In almost any HR evaluation, the amount of direct contact with the public as a representative is highly valued. The responsibility as a Board of Directors for a \$120M budget is a significant responsibility also. Finally, to have Council Members jobs be evaluated the same as other employees may be acceptable as a reference”.

“Aurora has grown and we handle very complex information and important fiscal decisions. In my opinion the public would want smart quality candidates who are compensated in a means that matches the overall talent, expectations, qualifications and role. We must also consider the Province looking at governance. Aside from all said, I hope you are able to achieve comparables from other Towns. Aurora Council compensation has been either very conservative or stagnant for many years where it needs a correction especially with the reduction in Council, our freeze and inflation”.

► **Part-time vs Full-time**

**Chart 4.**

**Full-time vs. Part-time *Heads of Council*, by population**

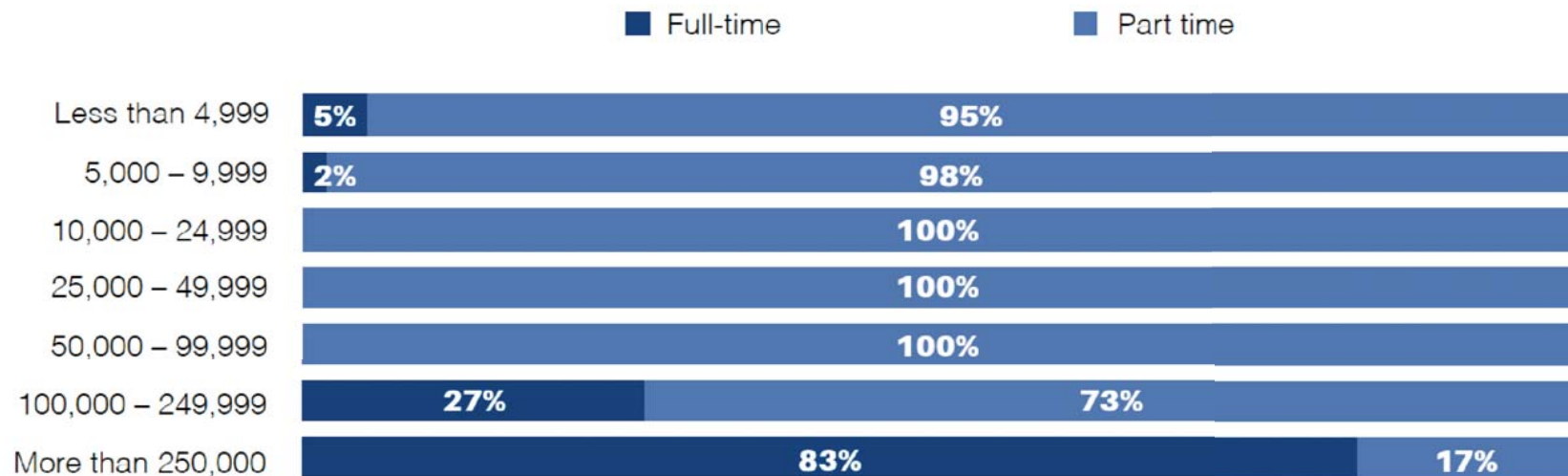


Source: [AMCTO report Municipal Council Compensation Ontario – 2018](#)

► **Part-time vs Full-time**

**Chart 5.**

Full-time vs. Part-time *Members of Council*, by population



Source: [AMCTO report Municipal Council Compensation Ontario – 2018](#)

► Severance by-law comparison



**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Severance Funding Formulas**

Municipality	Maximum Severance Provided	Funding Formula
Aurora	6 months	One month for every year of service to a maximum of six months.
East Gwillimbury	6 months	One month for every year of service to a maximum of six months.
Georgina	N/A	N/A
King	N/A	N/A
Markham	18 months	One month for every year of continuous service to a maximum of 12 months. Additional 3/52 of the annual remuneration per year of continuous service in excess of twelve years, to a maximum of 18 months.
Newmarket	12 months	One month for every year of continuous service to a maximum of 12 months.
Richmond Hill	18 months	One month for every year of service to a maximum equal to 18 months.
Vaughan	24 months	One month for every year of service to a maximum of 24 months.
Whitchurch-Stouffville	6 months	One month for every year of service to a maximum of six months
York Region	18 months	One month for every year of continuous service to a maximum of 12 months. Additional 3/52 of the annual remuneration per year of continuous service in excess of twelve years, to a maximum of 18 months.

Source: [York Region Committee of the Whole March 12, 2020, Report](#)

## ► Summary

- ✓ Pay for both the role of Mayor and Councillor is below 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or median.
- ✓ Vehicle Allowance for Council Members is below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or median.
- ✓ There is some interest from Members of Council to qualify for participation in the pension plan. Data shows that about 1 in 2 municipalities between 50-99k in population provide this.
- ✓ There seems minimal interest in participation in a group benefits plan (health and dental coverage). Same here on the benefits. 1 in 2 municipalities with a population between 50-99k provide group health benefits.
- ✓ Severance provision of the by-law currently applies only to the Mayor position. Those municipalities in York Region that have a severance by-law enacted apply it to all members of Council. Currently, Aurora applies it only to the Mayor.

► **Next steps**

1. Ad Hoc Committee to develop recommendations for Council's consideration
2. Staff to prepare a report to Council for the October 2023 General Committee meeting

Thank you