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Town of Aurora
Committee of the Whole Report
No. CS26-004

Subject: Council Compensation Review

Prepared by: Nicole Estrada, Manager, Human Resources

Department: Corporate Services

Date: May 12, 2026

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CS26-004 be received; and
2. That Council provide direction.

Executive Summary

In December 2025, staff were directed by Council to prepare an independent report outlining the total compensation for Council for the term of office following the 2026 Municipal Election. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with relevant information and analysis to support informed consideration of Council compensation. This report also seeks direction from Council regarding its preferred approach to Council compensation for the upcoming Council term.

- Staff conducted a market review of Mayor and Councillor compensation to evaluate the appropriateness of the current compensation relative to the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of elected office.
- Staff analyzed compensation practices across 10 neighbouring municipalities with similar population size and comparable Council structure to establish a relevant benchmark.
- Direction from Council is required with respect to the desired market position (percentile) within the identified comparator group.
- Direction from Council is required with respect to the transportation allowance entitlement for the Mayor and Councillors.

Background

In 2025, staff were directed by Council to conduct a compensation review for Members of Council. The review included the following:

- Annual salary for Mayor and Councillors; and
- Transportation Allowance.

The Town last conducted a compensation review in 2023. No changes were made at that time and instead, staff were directed to conduct a market review for council compensation for the next term of Council, effective January 1, 2027.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with relevant information and analysis to support informed consideration of Council compensation. This report also seeks direction from Council regarding its preferred approach to Council compensation for the 2026-2030 Council term.

Analysis

Staff conducted a market review of Mayor and Councillor compensation to evaluate the appropriateness of the current compensation relative to the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of elected office.

The review was intended to support fair and reasonable compensation while maintaining fiscal responsibility and accountability to Aurora taxpayers.

The analysis considered principles of fiscal prudence, the need to attract a diverse and qualified pool of candidates, and the recognition of the demanding nature, complexity, and public accountability associated with the roles of the Mayor and Councillors. Factors such as time commitment, decision-making responsibilities, and the breadth of issues addressed by elected officials were also considered.

Staff analyzed compensation practices across 10 neighbouring municipalities with similar population size and comparable Council structure to establish a relevant benchmark.

This included Bradford West Gwillimbury, Caledon, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Halton Hills, King, Newmarket, Pickering, Uxbridge and Whitchurch-Stouffville. The findings

outlined in this report are intended to inform Council’s consideration of compensation levels and provide direction to staff for the subsequent term of office.

Direction from Council is required with respect to the desired market position (percentile) within the identified comparator group.

As part of the market review, staff assessed potential market positioning options to guide the Town’s approach to Council compensation. A position at the 50th percentile is market. Anything above the 50th percentile is competitive. Based on the data reviewed, consideration may be given to a market position at approximately the 60th percentile, which balances fiscal responsibility with the objective of providing competitive and equitable compensation relative to comparable municipalities.

The current salary for the Mayor is assessed at approximately 3.34% below the 60th percentile of the identified comparator group, while Councillor compensation is approximately 31.96% below the 60th percentile of the identified comparator group.

Table 1: Compensation for Mayor

Mayor					
Current Annual Salary: \$114,647.22					
Metric		Amount (\$)		Difference vs Current (\$)	% Increase
50th Percentile	\$	116,674.57	\$	2,027.35	1.77
55th Percentile	\$	117,902.58	\$	3,255.36	2.84
60th Percentile	\$	118,478.63	\$	3,831.41	3.34

Table 2: Compensation for Councillors

Councillors					
Current Annual Salary: \$42,165.21					
Metric		Amount (\$)		Difference vs Current (\$)	% Increase
50th Percentile	\$	52,590.24	\$	10,425.03	24.72
55th Percentile	\$	53,289.67	\$	11,124.46	26.38
60th Percentile	\$	55,640.04	\$	13,474.82	31.96

Aligning compensation with the market would address these variances and support fair and equitable compensation reflective of the responsibilities, expectations, and demands of the roles of Mayor and Council.

Direction of Council is required on the transportation allowance entitlement for the Mayor and Councillors.

A benchmarking analysis of comparable municipalities indicates that the majority provide a defined annual transportation allowance for the Mayor and Members of Council. Within the comparator group, the Mayor's annual transportation allowance ranges from \$3,000 to \$16,000, while annual allowances for Councillors range from \$1,500 to \$12,000. Based on the average results of the comparator analysis, adjusting the Mayor's transportation allowance to \$12,000 to align with the market would represent a 17.14 per cent increase, while adjusting the Councillors' transportation allowance to \$3,250 would represent a 32 per cent increase.

Adjustments should recognize increased vehicle operating costs, and the travel demands associated with the role and, while remaining below most comparator municipalities, demonstrate a fiscally responsible approach to market alignment.

Advisory Committee Review

None.

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial Implications

Any increase to Mayor and Council compensation approved by Council would result in an incremental impact to the Town's operating budget beginning in the applicable term of office. Arising financial impacts from a change to the Mayor and Council's compensation would be addressed as a cost pressure as part of the 2027-30 operating budget.

Communications Considerations

The findings from this report does not have any communications considerations.

Climate Change Considerations

The findings from this report do not impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation.

Link to Strategic Plan

The report promotes progressive corporate excellence and continuous improvement by implementing policy and processes that reflect sound and accountable governance.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. That a by-law be brought forward to a future Council meeting that amends By-law Number 6552-23, being a by-law to provide for the annual remuneration to be paid to the Mayor and Members of Council, for any or all of the following as directed by Council:
 - a) The annual remuneration paid to the Mayor be adjusted to the [choose percentile] percentile.
 - b) The annual remuneration paid to each Councillor be adjusted to the [choose percentile] percentile.
 - c) The transportation allowance for the Mayor be adjusted to [insert rate].
 - d) The transportation allowance for the Councillors be adjusted to [insert rate].

And that the amendments come into effect on January 1, 2027.

2. That no changes be made to the existing remuneration or transportation allowance for the Mayor.
3. That no changes be made to the existing remuneration or transportation allowance for the Councillors.

Conclusions

Staff undertook a comprehensive market review of Mayor and Council compensation to assess the appropriateness of current compensation in relation to the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of elected office. This review included an analysis of compensation practices across ten (10) neighbouring municipalities with comparable population sizes and governance structures to establish a relevant market benchmark.

Based on the findings of the review, direction from Council is required with respect to the desired market positioning (percentile) within the identified comparator group, as well as the continuation or modification of car allowance entitlements for the Mayor and Members of Council. Reviews of benefits and severance entitlements for Members of Council confirm that no changes are required at this time. Council's direction on the identified matters will enable staff to proceed accordingly and ensure that compensation practices remain fair, competitive, and aligned with Council's objectives.

Attachments

None.

Previous Reports

None.

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on April 23, 2026

Approvals

Approved by Patricia De Sario, Director, Corporate Services/Town Solicitor

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer