

Staff Report



To	General Committee
Subject	Council Compensation Review and Revisions to the Reimbursement of Council Expenses Policy
Date	April 22, 2026
Ward	All
From	W. Cooke, City Clerk/Director of Legislative and Court Services
Executive Member Approval	J. Schmidt, General Manager of Community and Corporate Services.
CAO Approval	M. Prowse, Chief Administrative Officer
Staff Report #	CCS-007-2026

Recommendation(s):

1. That the following compensation be approved for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and members of Council for the 2026-2030 term of office, unless otherwise stated as follows:
 - a. Commencing December 2026, compensation equal to the average 2025 base compensation of comparator group of municipalities as listed in Appendix A to Staff Report CCS-007-2026, indexed for the 2026 calendar year;
 - b. That the base rate for each subsequent year of the term of Council be indexed annually in the month of December for each of the years 2027-2029 equal to the annual economic adjustment (cost of living) approved for the City of Barrie Non-Union staff;
 - c. Commencing December 2026, members of Council who are appointed to a local board or authority who provide compensation to their members, be eligible to receive compensation directly from the local board or authority instead of an annual payment being provided to the City.
 - d. That members of Council be compensated for their participation in meetings that do not provide compensation, based on their statutory duty as a member of Council in the amount of \$80 per meeting (with the exception of Council, General Committee and Reference Committees) and that staff develop a process for members of Council to report their attendance, to be presented at the 2026-2030 Council orientation.

e. The annual car allowance for members of Council be set as follows:

Councillors	\$3,000 (\$250/month)
Deputy Mayor	\$4,200 (\$350/month)
Mayor	\$7,200 (\$600/month)

2. That the following Council benefits and pension items for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and members of Council for the 2026-2030 term of office be approved:
 - a. Members of Council be provided the options to be enrolled in the Non-Union Extended Health and Dental Benefits Plan; and
 - b. Life Insurance Policy for members of Council be set at two times their annual remuneration.
3. That the Mayor and members of Council be enrolled in the Employee and Family Assistance Program.
4. That the Reimbursement of Council Expense Policy be amended to reflect the following changes for the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council, unless otherwise noted:
 - a. That the expense allocations for the Mayor and members of Council be established as follows:
 - i. That effective January 1, 2027, expense allocations for items such as communications to residents for the Mayor be determined using a base amount of \$15,000 instead of \$25,000 plus \$0.10 per person using population projections provided through the Development Services Department, and that the additional \$10,000 currently included in the 2026 Business Plan be transferred to the Mayor's Office operation budget; and
 - ii. The expense allocations for items such as communications to residents and to cover additional expenses due to the expanded responsibilities in the role, the expense allocations for the Deputy Mayor be increased to a base amount of \$7,500 plus \$0.10 per person using population projections provided through the Development Services Department; and
 - iii. The expense allocation for the remainder of Council remains at a base amount of \$5,000, plus \$0.10 per person using populations projections provided through the Development Services Department.
 - b. Effective May 1, 2026, provide that both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor conference expenses for the Association of Municipalities are covered through the conference expense account;

- c. That the conference expense account also cover attendance to other conferences/events that are of economic development benefit or support our friendship/sister cities relations as approved by the City Clerk and Director of Finance;
 - d. To increase the Council Conference budget to \$40,000 effective in the 2026-2030 term; and
 - e. Any housekeeping amendments to provide for further clarity on items eligible for expenses including telephone expenses, mileage, per diems, remove any duplications, etc. And that staff circulate the received policy to members of Council.
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Executive Summary:

To review compensation provided to City of Barrie Council. The purpose of this report is to assess current remuneration and propose adjustments to ensure fair compensation aligned with the responsibilities of elected officials and in comparison, with similar sized municipalities. A review of Council's compensation is done in advance of a municipal election year. This report also addresses recommended changes to the Reimbursement of Council Expense Policy which is also reviewed during each term of Council.

Key Findings:

Compensation for Council members for comparator municipalities. Staff reviewed information from the comparator municipalities utilized in the 2021 Council remuneration review. These municipalities were selected based on their relative size, geography, growth patterns, and governmental structure. The selected municipalities are all single tier municipalities. The chart in Appendix A summarizes the base honorarium for the position of Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillor for the comparator municipalities for 2025.

The amounts in Appendix A contemplate base remuneration for 2025. The analysis shows that the base remuneration for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillor are slightly lower than the average of the comparator group.

To bring Barrie's Council compensation in line with these municipalities, staff are recommending an adjustment to the base honorariums beginning in December 2026 to be more in alignment with the comparators. The annual economic adjustment (cost-of-living) is in keeping with current practice.

Meeting per diems are being introduced, effective the 2026-2030 term, for attendance at local boards or authorities (where a per diem is not currently provided), as well as at certain city meetings. Attendance at Reference Committees, General Committee, and Council are not subject to the per diem as this forms part of the base remuneration. Currently members of Council do not receive per diems for any of the meetings they attend above their base remuneration. Local Boards such as the Conservation Authorities currently provide a meeting per diem, which is paid directly to the City annually. Staff is recommending that these be paid to the applicable member of Council rather than directly to the City, effective the 2026-2030 term. Staff are recommending providing members with a meeting per diem of \$80 for attending city meetings or the local board/authority that does not provide a per diem. This amount is in alignment with the remuneration paid to the Committee of Adjustment. This additional per diem is associated with their statutory duties including and not limited to attendance at Advisory Committees, local boards, meetings with other government representatives, economic development initiatives, etc. Staff will develop a process for reporting attendance to receive the per diem and present it during the orientation of the 2026-2030 term of Council.

The Reimbursement of Council Expense Policy is being updated to reflect increases to expense amounts, conference attendance and amounts allocated and other housekeeping amendments. Increases to the Deputy Mayor's expense allocation. The expense allocation that applies to the member in the Deputy Mayor position is used for both their role as Deputy Mayor and City Councillor. During this term the Deputy Mayor's role has grown in responsibility and time commitments including attendance at meetings outside of Barrie, events with or on behalf of the Mayor. Given this, it is being recommended that the Deputy Mayor position base expense allocation be increased by \$2,500 to accommodate extra expenses required as part of this position.

Financial Implications:

The proposed increase in Council compensation will result in additional budgetary requirements starting in late 2026, with the swearing in of the new Council. Costs incurred for the recommended changes for December 2026 are to be addressed through total budget management.

Staff will fully budget for any approved increases in the City's 2027 Operating Budget and subsequent years as required.

Alternatives:

The following alternatives are available for consideration by General Committee:

Alternative #1 General Committee could recommend not moving forward with increases in remuneration to the mayor, deputy mayor and councillor positions. While this alternative is available, staff have completed a review of comparator municipalities and believe the recommended increases allows Barrie to be in alignment to other municipalities' compensation for members of Council.

Alternative #2 General Committee could recommend not moving forward with changes to the Remuneration of Council Expense Policy. This alternative is available but not recommended as staff have reviewed usage of expense accounts, responsibilities and conference attendance and believe the proposed increases are required, especially for the conferences as most members of Council have been attending at least one or both.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

Public awareness of compensation and benefits provided to members of Council is in alignment with the City's Accountability and Transparency Policy.

Affordable Place to Live		
Community Safety		
Thriving Community		
Infrastructure Investments		
Responsible Governance	X	Ensure Accountability and Transparency

Additional Background Information and Analysis:

Compensation review results from 2021/2022. Prior to the 2022-2026 Term of Council, a citizen Committee was struck to review and make recommendations concerning the compensation. This Committee made a number of recommendations associated with remuneration, amounts allocated to Council conferences, benefits, and mileage. Most of the recommendations in that report continue to be consistent with the recommendations being proposed in this report.

Consultation and Engagement:

Staff obtained information with respect to remuneration of members of Council from various Ontario municipalities.

Environmental and Climate Change Impact Matters:

There are no environmental and/or climate change impact matters related to the recommendation.

Appendix:

Appendix A – 2025 Base Remuneration Comparator Municipalities

Report Author:

W. Cooke, City Clerk/Director of Legislative and Court Services

File #: C00

Pending #: Not applicable

Appendix A - 2025 Base Remuneration Comparator Municipalities

Municipality	Mayor 2025	Deputy Mayor 2025	Councillor 2025
Kingston	145,308	53,689	50,689
Sudbury	151,714	56,474	49,433
Guelph	164,942	-	51,317
Oshawa	139,220		51,090
St. Catherines	132,710		30,855
Barrie	139,660	51,775	44,276
Average	145,592	53,979	46,277
Median	142,484	53,689	50,061

Proposed 2026 (inclusive of COLA):

1-Dec-26	151,052	58,012	48,012
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