
Council Remuneration Review Report: 2024

Presented by: Council Remuneration Review Committee

Chair: Tab Pollock Members: Kenton Dueck, Jane Manning, Shane Mudryk

Council Committee of Whole Meeting: September 11, 2024

Contents

Background 3

Recommendations for Council Approval 3

Research and Analysis 4

Compensation Model 5

Summary..... 6

Appendices.....7

APPENDIX A - Research and Analysis 8

APPENDIX B - Policy and Procedure Documents..... 19

Background

The City of Grande Prairie mandates an independent review of Council's compensation on a four-year cycle, which occurs in the year prior to the municipality's General Election. With the next General Election scheduled for 2025, a Committee of four public members from the community was appointed to review remuneration rates for the Mayor and Councillors, including salaries, benefits, and reimbursements. The recommendations from the Committee, if accepted, will establish the compensation rates for Council members for the upcoming term (2025-2029).

Recognizing the significance of their task, the Committee conducted a comprehensive remuneration review and assessment to guide their recommendations. This included a thorough examination of internal compensation data and a comparative analysis with similar mid-sized cities. The findings confirm that the City of Grande Prairie's compensation is appropriately aligned with its peers within the province.

The Committee also acknowledged the substantial work carried out by the Mayor and Council, both within the organization and through collaboration with community groups, organizations, and businesses, to continually enhance the quality of life and economic prosperity of the community. Grande Prairie, known as the "Most Entrepreneurial Community in Canada," is a youthful, rapidly growing city that plays a pivotal role in regional partnerships and advocates for growth opportunities at the provincial and federal levels.

With an estimated population of 67,265 residents (as of 2023), Grande Prairie serves as the regional hub for a catchment area of nearly 300,000 people, extending across Northwest Alberta, into the BC Peace, and even further, attracting residents and businesses from Canada's Territories for retail shopping, entertainment, culture, education, healthcare, and services.

Understanding the complexity and demands of the roles within the Council is crucial to conducting a thorough assessment. Providing a fair and competitive compensation model is essential for attracting quality candidates who are eager to serve this innovative and dynamic community. The Committee's recommendations, supported by the analysis presented, strike a balance between fairness, competitive value, and fiscal responsibility, positioning the City well for the next election cycle.

Recommendations for Council Approval

The Council Remuneration Review Committee recommends that Council approve the following actions:

1. **Acknowledge Completion of the Review:**
 - Council should receive the Council Remuneration Review Report: 2024 for information and acknowledge that the Council Review Committee has completed its Ad Hoc role as required.
2. **Policy Consolidation and Amendments:**
 - Council should direct Administration to consolidate Council Policy 100 and Procedure 100-1 into a single, streamlined Council Policy 100.
 - Upon approval of the consolidated Council Policy 100, Council should direct Administration to repeal Procedure 100-1.

- Administration should prepare amendments to Council Policy 100, reflecting approved remuneration changes recommended in the Council Remuneration Review Report, to take effect after the Municipal General Election in October 2025 for the term ending in October 2029.

Research and Analysis

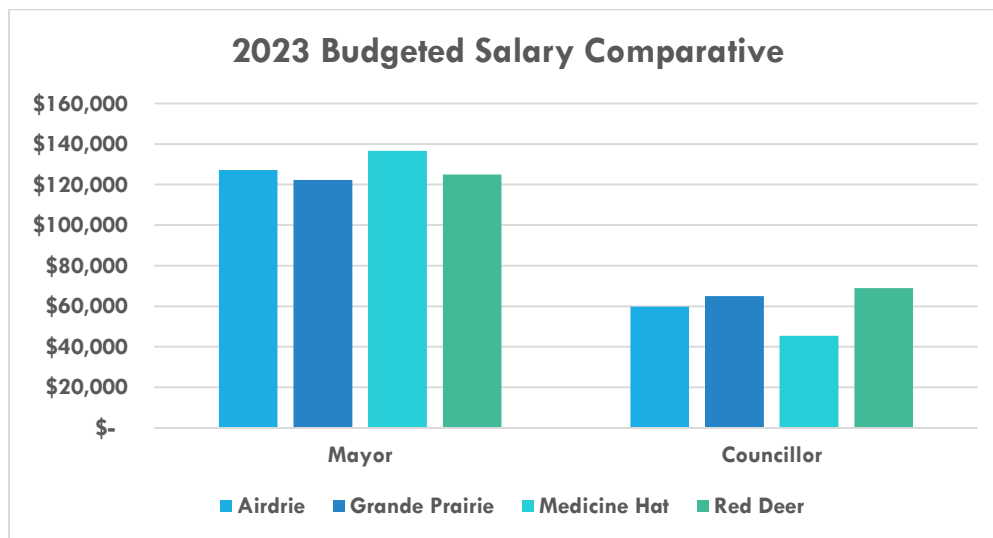
The Committee's research involved reviewing a variety of source documents, including:

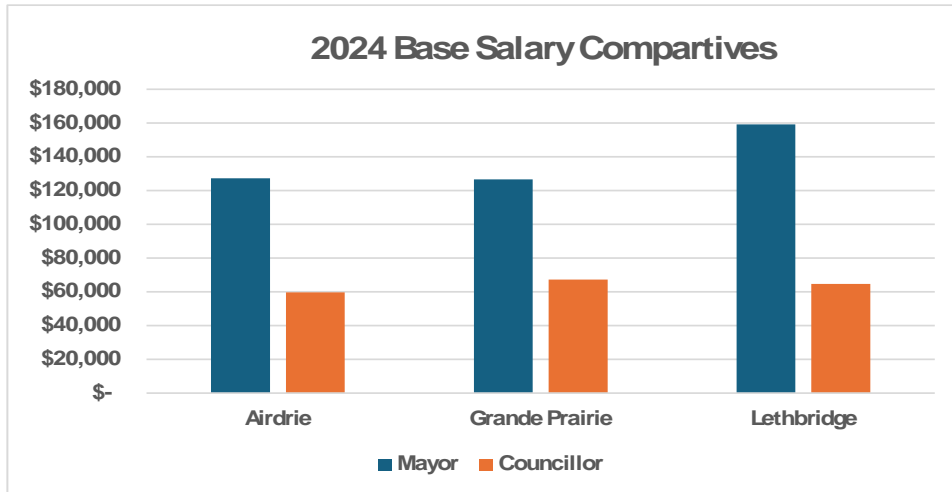
- Jurisdictional scans of mid-sized cities for financial and policy comparisons.
- Existing compensation models for the City of Grande Prairie.
- Current and historical pay rates for categories such as salaries, health and wellness benefits, pension options, flex-spending for conferences, training, meetings, mileage, and expense allowances.
- Mandatory and optional time commitments for Council members.
- A survey of current Council members.

Jurisdictional Scan and Findings

Research was conducted across several municipalities within Alberta, as well as British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The focus narrowed to five comparable mid-sized cities in Alberta: Airdrie, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer. The Committee evaluated the compensation models used in these cities, recognizing the challenge of achieving direct comparisons due to varying models, such as salary plus benefits versus salary plus per diems. Refer to Appendix A for detailed information and illustration of the findings from the research conducted.

The Committee's analysis concluded that the City of Grande Prairie's compensation levels are competitive and fair relative to its peers. This is further supported by the method of annual increases tied to the Alberta Consumer Price Index (CPI).





Internal Document, Policy, and Member Review

The Committee placed a heightened value on obtaining input from the current council members. Providing an anonymous forum for Council to provide candid feedback was important. To achieve this a survey was created and administered using Survey Monkey. The Director of Legislative Services performed the functions of question set-up, collection, and summarizing the responses for review by the Committee.

The review policy and procedure documents formed an additional part of the review process, assessing for readability, transparency, consistency between documents as well as comparison within the peer review.

Refer to Appendix A for detailed information and illustration of the findings from the research conducted.

Compensation Model

1. Mayor’s Salary:

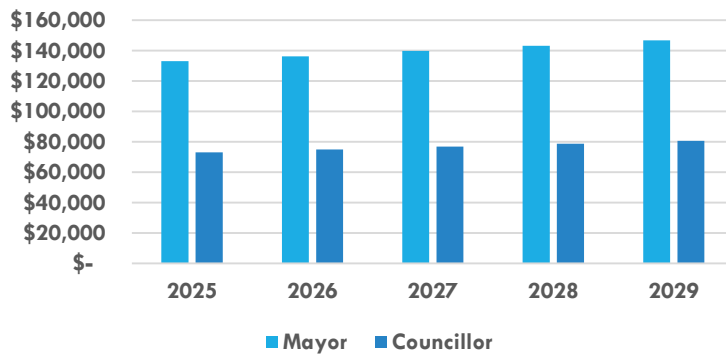
- The Mayor’s base salary should continue to be indexed to the Alberta Consumer Price Index (CPI), with no adjustments for years with a negative CPI. The Alberta CPI rate reflects inflationary increases in the cost of living.

2. Councillor Salaries:

- Councillor salaries should be set at 55% of the Mayor’s base salary, providing a consistent and fair compensation model reflective of a 25+ hour week.

The graph that follows illustrates the Mayor’s salary projection based on an estimated CPI rate for each of the identified years. The Councillor salary is based on the 55% rate of the Mayor salary.

Councillor base salary at 55% of Mayor



3. Mileage/Vehicle Allowance:

- The Mayor’s monthly vehicle allowance should be increased to \$600 reflective of inflationary cost factors accumulating over the last four years. The increase also takes into consideration that the rate will be in effect for the next four-year term. The Councillor allowance is adjusted to 55% of this amount, consistent with the salary model.

4. Additional Benefits:

- No changes are recommended to current benefit amounts, which include health and wellness allowances, life insurance, and extended health coverage.

5. Per Diems:

- The current per diem rates should remain unchanged.

6. Transition Subsidy:

- The Transition Subsidy for exiting elected officials should remain unchanged, providing financial support for those who do not seek re-election or are defeated.

7. Expenses and Use of Personal Technology:

- No changes are recommended to the current expense reimbursement policy or the allowance for the use of personal technology.

Summary

The Committee conducted a thorough assessment of Council’s remuneration, policies, and procedures. The recommendations outlined aim to create a fair and reasonable compensation model, ensuring the City of Grande Prairie is well-positioned to attract quality candidates for public office in the next term. The Committee respectfully asks for Council's approval of these recommendations.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Research and Analysis

APPENDIX B: Policy and Procedure Documents

APPENDIX A - Research and Analysis

Jurisdictional Scan and Findings

List of Municipalities Scanned - Financial and Policy Information Researched

Alberta - Focused Mid-sized Cities

City of Airdrie
City of Grande Prairie
City of Lethbridge
City of Medicine Hat
City of Red Deer

Other Alberta Municipalities

Leduc
Spruce Grove
Brooks
Chestermere
Cochrane
Okotoks
County of Grande Prairie

British Columbia

Fort St John
Prince George

Saskatchewan

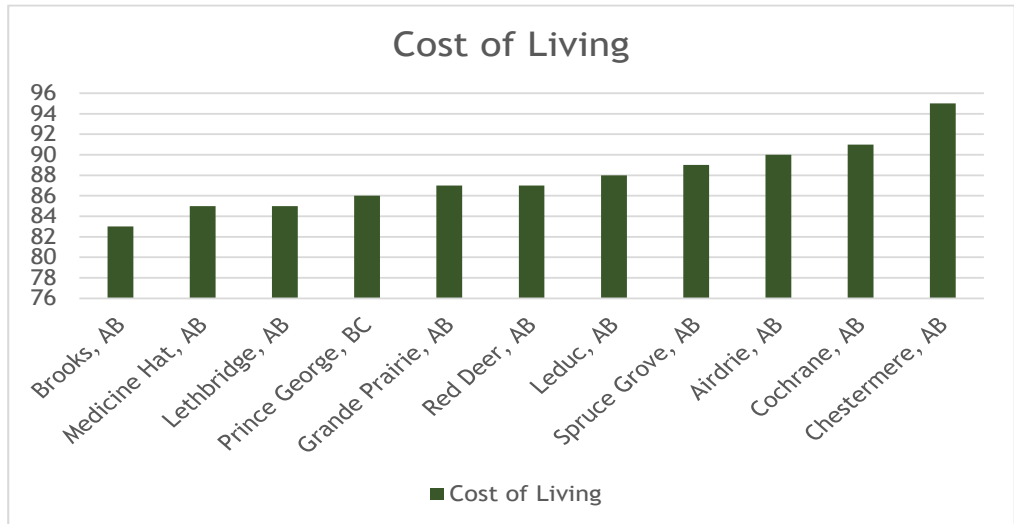
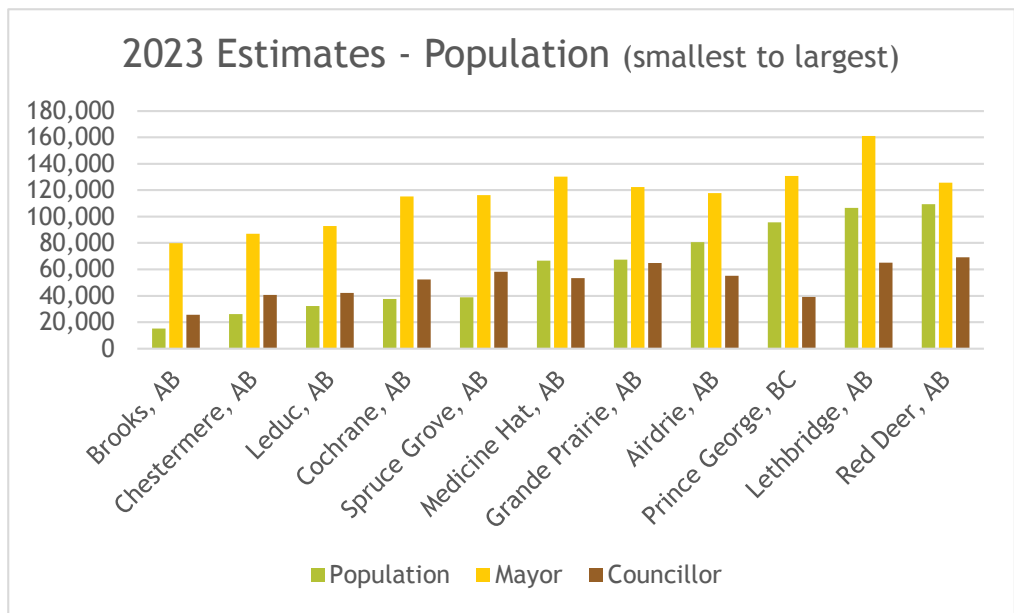
Prince Albert

Findings

Research was conducted on information from several municipalities including many from within Alberta and into British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Refer to the list of municipalities researched under Appendix A.

This high-level scan of municipalities provided additional data on areas such as cost-of-living figures as noted below. Upon a review of the initial scan the Committee focused their attention to comparatives across five mid-sized cities in the province: Airdrie, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer. The analysis of the five mid-sized cities is outlined further in the report.

Municipality	2023 Value Estimates			
	Population	Cost of Living	Mayor	Councillor
Brooks, AB	15,257	83	\$ 79,837	\$ 25,548
Medicine Hat, AB	66,648	85	\$ 130,219	\$ 53,349
Lethbridge, AB	106,550	85	\$ 161,000	\$ 65,000
Prince George, BC	95,680	86	\$ 130,756	\$ 39,235
Grande Prairie, AB	67,265	87	\$ 122,336	\$ 64,940
Red Deer, AB	109,310	87	\$ 125,575	\$ 69,066
Leduc, AB	32,164	88	\$ 92,947	\$ 42,242
Spruce Grove, AB	38,985	89	\$ 116,308	\$ 58,154
Airdrie, AB	80,649	90	\$ 117,678	\$ 55,242
Cochrane, AB	37,502	91	\$ 115,278	\$ 52,262
Chestermere, AB	26,251	95	\$ 87,089	\$ 40,618



COL Source: areavibes.com

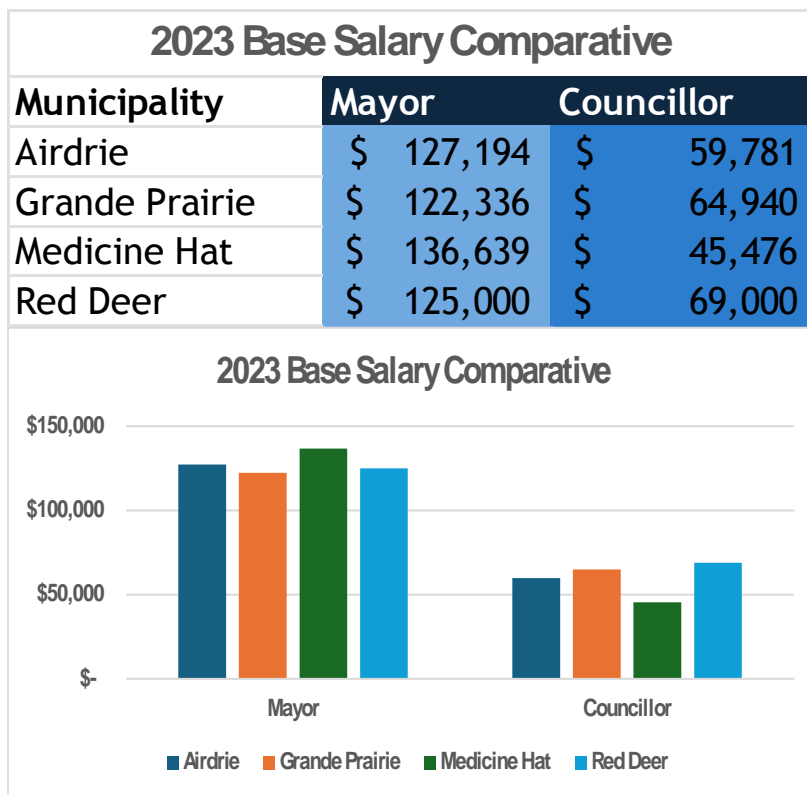
During the analysis, the Committee recognized the challenge of finding an ‘apples to apples’ comparison to other municipalities. It was apparent from the information collected that models of compensation vary. For example, there are straight salary plus benefits and allowances and salary plus per diems plus benefits and allowances. There are also variances to inclusions for benefits and allowances and values assigned when per diems are a calculator. For the review, and after considerable efforts to assess various compensation models the Committee elected to focus on two sets of salary-based values:

- Salary plus benefits and allowances as disclosed in each of the selected mid-sized cities 2023 Audited Financial Statements.
- The 2024 base salary figures from mid-sized cities, where available.

This sort-analysis collected information that provided a relative comparison of salaries from one municipality to another within the sample cities. The Committee concluded that the municipalities shown provided a reasonable base that determined that the City of Grande Prairie’s compensation is at a fair and reasonable level.

For illustration, the charts below are reflective of available financial values collected for the comparator mid-sized cities. **Chart 1** illustrates the Mayor and Councillor Salary Comparatives as budgeted for 2023 based on available information. Of note is that municipalities use different compensation models for council positions. For example, Grande Prairie’s model is base salary plus per diem for eligible meetings. In the chart below the Mayor and Councillor values for Grande Prairie are the base salary rate for each.

Chart 1: 2023 Base Salary Budget Estimates



Charts 2 and 3 below show the actual disclosure values extracted from each of the five comparator mid-sized cities 2023 Audited Financial Statements, with **Chart 2** comparing Mayor positions, and **Chart 3** for Councillors. Of specific note is that the actual total salary regardless of model shows that the compensation for the Grande Prairie Mayor position is closely aligned with the other mid-sized cities, falling in the middle of the five municipalities scanned.

Chart 2: Mayor Comparatives - Actual

2023 Financial Disclosure Comparatives - Mayor					
Municipality	Salary*	Benefit/Allowances	Total	Population	
Airdrie	\$ 117,678	\$ 14,729	\$ 132,407	80,649	
Grande Prairie	\$ 153,007	\$ 16,189	\$ 169,196	67,265	
Lethbridge	\$ 161,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 171,000	106,550	
Medicine Hat	\$ 148,000	\$ 31,000	\$ 179,000	63,271	
Red Deer	\$ 125,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 150,000	101,002	

Salary* = base plus other remuneration (i.e., per diem)

2023 Salary and Population Comparatives

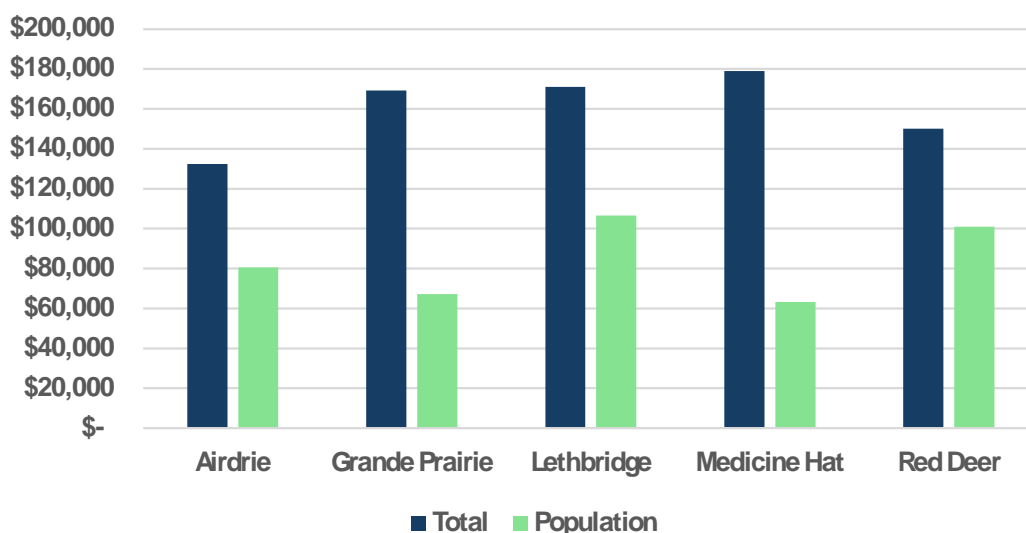
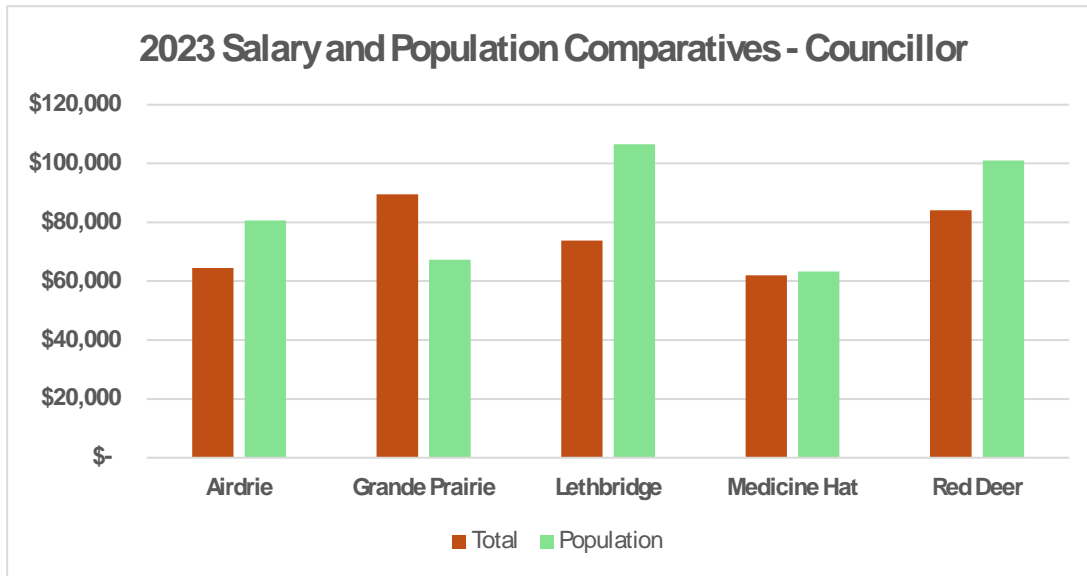


Chart 3: Councillor Comparatives - Actual

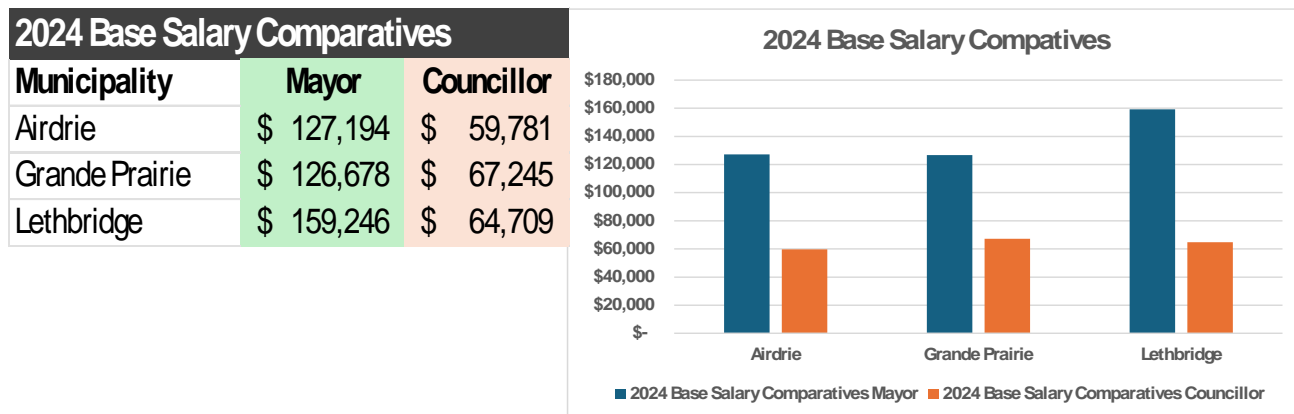
2023 Financial Disclosure Comparatives - Councillor					
Municipality	Salary*	Benefit/Allowances	Total	Population	
Airdrie	\$ 55,242	\$ 9,255	\$ 64,497	80,649	
Grande Prairie	\$ 76,935	\$ 12,589	\$ 89,524	67,265	
Lethbridge	\$ 65,000	\$ 8,750	\$ 73,750	106,550	
Medicine Hat	\$ 48,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 62,000	63,271	
Red Deer	\$ 69,625	\$ 14,500	\$ 84,125	101,002	

Salary* = base plus other remuneration (i.e., per diem)



As an additional measure, base salary values for the current year, 2024 were reviewed for three of the mid-sized cities where information was available. Refer to the 2024 Base Salary Comparatives in Chart 4 below.

Chart 4: 2024 Base Salary Comparatives



The Committee concluded that the City of Grande Prairie is providing competitive compensation to their counterparts in comparative mid-sized cities in the province. To further support this position the method of annual increases for Mayor and Councillors of the City of Grande Prairie was debated for a best model that continues to fairly compensate for time, commitment and responsibility given their respective roles.

Current practice for the City of Grande Prairie is that the Mayor and Councillors receive an annual increase to their base salary equal to the previous year’s Alberta Consumer Price Index (CPI). Per diem rates per meeting attendance is paid in addition to the established base salary.

Charts 5 and 6 below illustrate the ‘estimated’ base salary for the respective positions, Mayor and Councillor using CPI as the annual increase calculator. Following these, Chart 7 offers a historical picture of CPI calculations for the years 2020 through 2023. It is noted that for budget

estimating purposes a 5% CPI is used for 2025 and 2.5% for the remaining years of 2026 through 2029. It is important to recognize that estimated CPI percentages may change based on the actual rate set on any given year.

Chart 5: Mayor Salary with CPI Rated Annual Increase **Chart 6: Councillor Salary with CPI Rated Annual Increase**

Projected Mayor base salary 2025-2029			
Year	Prior Year	CPI Increase*	Total Base
2025	\$ 126,678	\$ 6,334	\$ 133,012
2026	\$ 133,012	\$ 3,325	\$ 136,337
2027	\$ 136,337	\$ 3,408	\$ 139,746
2028	\$ 139,746	\$ 3,494	\$ 143,239
2029	\$ 143,239	\$ 3,581	\$ 146,820

* CPI budget estimate = 5% in 2025 and 2.5% ea 2026-2029

Projected Councillor base salary 2025-2029			
Year	Prior Year	CPI Increase*	Total Base
2025	\$ 67,245	\$ 3,362	\$ 70,607
2026	\$ 70,607	\$ 1,765	\$ 72,372
2027	\$ 72,372	\$ 1,809	\$ 74,182
2028	\$ 74,182	\$ 1,855	\$ 76,036
2029	\$ 76,036	\$ 1,901	\$ 77,937

* CPI budget estimate = 5% in 2025 and 2.5% ea 2026-2029

*Annual CPI Increase (estimate). If CPI is 0% or negative the salary rate has no adjustment.

Chart 7: CPI Historical Figures

Consumer Price Index - Alberta				
	2023	2022	2021	2020
All-Items	164.1	158.9	149.3	144.7
Food	182.7	170.4	157.3	153.2
Shelter	204.7	192.1	180.2	174.6
Transportation	175.9	177.3	160.4	146.7
CPI Increase	3.55	6.2	4.8	1.1

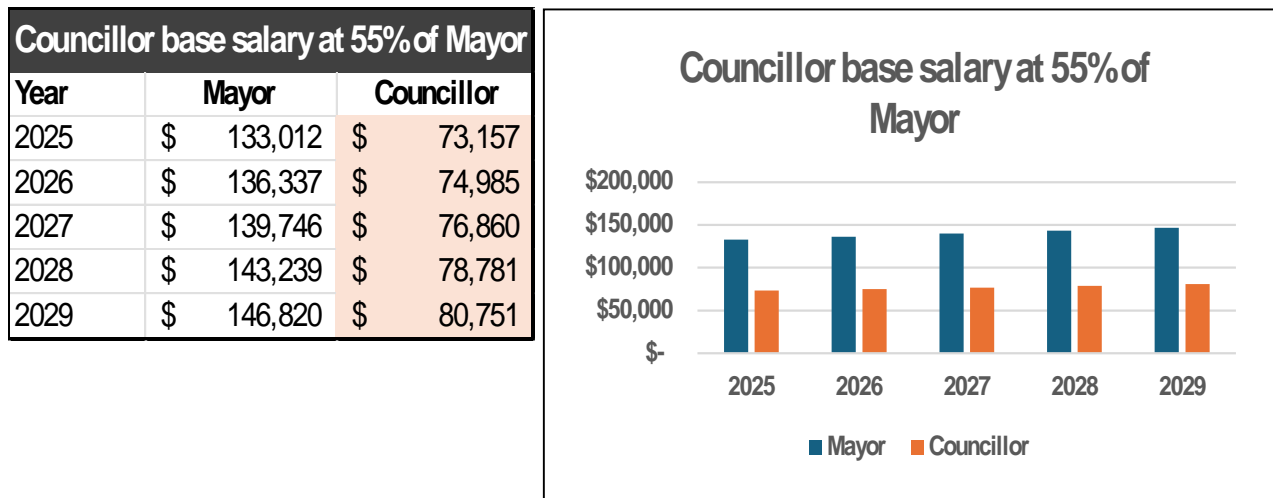
Salary Adjustment: Previous year CPI is rate for current year increase.
Example: 2023 CPI rate is calculator for 2024 salary increase.

As referenced previously, the Committee evaluated various compensation models. Through this assessment the Committee found two municipalities that use a percentage base for setting Councillor salaries. The City of Red Deer (55%) and the City of Airdire (47%) each use a percentage of the Mayor salary for calculating Councillor salaries. Recognizing that in all comparative mid-sized cities the Mayor position is full-time, and Councillor positions part-time based on the anticipated time required to meet the responsibilities of the role. The expectation of Councillors in the City of Grande Prairie fills a part-time position averaging 25-plus hours per week was further supported through the summarized results from the Council Survey conducted.

The Committee therefore presents the same 55% indicator as a comparative mid-sized city as an improved method of calculating compensation values for Councillors. **Chart 8** that follows illustrates the base salary that may be paid to Councillors using a 55% of Mayor Salary calculator.

Based on the 2025-Year salary values from current to the 55% calculator Councillors would realize a slight increase of \$2550 over the current CPI adjustment rate. The model change is a marginal increase and offers a consistent method of determining Councillor rate of pay as it is tied directly to the rate set for the Mayor salary.

Chart 8: Councillor Base Salary at 55%



Further support for the change in Councillor compensation calculator model was to assist in streamlining future remuneration reviews where only the Mayor salary would necessitate an extensive review. Supplemental to this and as an overarching recognition of the time contributed by both Mayor and Councillors the proposed compensation levels are considered fair and reasonable to recognize the collective efforts required of members serving on the City’s Municipal Council. Refer to **Chart 9** below as further basis for the importance of a fair and reasonable compensation for members of Council, Mayor and Councillors.

As a further support to the compensation levels recommended, the time commitment is presented as estimated minimum time expectation for Council members. It was determined that Council spends an average of 766 hours per year on mandatory meetings and an additional 306 hours on optional activities. Additional duties for the Mayor were not included in the table, however the Committee recognized that there are much greater demands for that position over the rest of Council thus warranting a full-time position. Time to prepare for meetings such as reading administrative reports and conducting research was also not included in the information below.

The City of Grande Prairie’s overall compensation for the Mayor salary, benefits, and allowances is equivalent to comparable mid-sized cities and with the change to a consistent (55%) calculator for Councillors, the Committee believes the City of Grande Prairie is well-positioned to attract quality candidates to represent the community in next term of office from October 2025 - October 2029.

Chart 9: Members of Council Estimate Time Commitments

2023 Council Time Estimates Based Meeting Commitments			
MANDATORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS	Qty. per yr	Duration (hr)	Time Req'd
Consolidated Committee Meetings	24	3	72
City Council	24	6	144
Council Committee of the Whole (monthly)	12	4	48
Council Committee of the Whole (budget)	3	8	24
Additional Council Committees and Workshops	11	2	22
External Boards & Committees	12	2	24
Alberta Municipalities	3	8	24
Federation of Canadian Municipalities	4	8	32
SUBTOTAL			390
Travel to and from meetings	100	0.5	50
Emails and phone calls	120	1	120
Stakeholder/Citizen/Ratepayer Meetings	162	1	162
Legislature	1	12	12
Additional Conferences	2	16	32
SUBTOTAL			376
TOTAL MANDATORY			766
OPTIONAL TIME	Qty. per yr	Duration (hr)	Time Req'd
Ribbon cuttings and speaking engagements	6	1	6
Lunch events	24	1	24
Evening events	24	3	72
Weekend engagements	18	1	18
Travel to and from engagements	72	0.5	36
Miscellaneous time commitments (estimated)	150	1	150
TOTAL OPTIONAL			306

Municipal Policy Documents

The Committee reviewed the following City policies and procedures:

- Council Policy 100 - Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement
- Council Procedure 100-1
- Council Policy 105 - Payment of Legal Fees for Elected Officials or Employees
- Council Policy 308 - Council and Employee Reimbursement
- Council Procedure 308-1

The Committee's review of the policies and procedures resulted in the recommendation to amend Council Policy 100 to include a consolidation of Council Procedure 100-1. The consolidation of the two documents would improve the policy as follows:

- The policy and procedure documents require update to create consistent requirements for process and rules.
- Reduces duplication of information thereby streamlining and creating improved transparency, readability, and understanding.
- The Council Policy places the approval of all rules and regulations bound by Council in the authority of Council.

The secondary amendment to Council Policy 100 is proposed to adopt recommendations put forward by the Committee for Council consideration as it relates to the remuneration review.

The proposed policy amendments align with the strategic priorities and objectives of this Council regarding the pillar of service, specifically, it supports the organizational behaviour of continuous improvement using process improvement methodologies while enabling and enhancing trust, transparency, and adaptability by ensuring accountability, integrity, efficiency, best practices, and innovation in all operations.

Council Member Survey

The list of questions put forward to gain insight from Council was extensive and assisted in gaining input on a variety of topics from level of compensation, process related questions, time spent performing their respective roles, as well as opportunity for open-ended comments on any topic relevant to serving on Council.

The summarized responses based on the majority answer included:

- The average estimated hours worked by the Mayor and Councillors were felt to be consistent with a full-time position for the Mayor at 40 hours and part-time for Councillors at 25-plus hours per week. There was recognition in the responses that the hours worked fluctuates from week to week to meet the needs of the role and balances out over the year.
- On average, the value for Councillors to serve in the role of Deputy Mayor was recognized as high without additional compensation expected or required.
- The importance of participation in training, conferences, meetings was identified as important at the same time as increased costs for travel was a concern that may cause constraints.

Details Relative to Recommendations Presented

Changes to Current Policies

Recommendation:

1. Policy 100 and Procedure 100-1 be consolidated into one inclusive Council Policy 100. Information contained in a single all-inclusive policy is easily accessible by members of Council, City Administration, and the General Public. Recommended to implement 2024.
2. Policy 100 be amended to reflect recommended compensation changes approved by Council that will take effect after the next general election, October 2025.

Mayor's Salary

Recommendation: That the Mayor's base salary continue to be indexed to the Alberta Consumer Price Index and revert to "zero" for any years that incur a negative CPI.

Councillor Salaries

Recommendation: That the Councillor annual base salary be calculated at 55% of the Mayor's annual base salary.

CPI Annual Compensation Adjustment

Compensation adjustments based solely on Consumer Price Index (CPI) are considerably lower than the average annual increase in income experienced across Alberta for other employed individuals. Use of CPI to adjust for inflationary increases in the cost of living is recorded annually and is the minimum level needed to keep Council salaries relevant. This index is typically used as a standard rate for increasing the salary for elected officials.

Mileage/Vehicle Allowance

Recommendation: That the current monthly vehicle allowance for the Mayor be increased to \$600, and that Councillors receive a monthly vehicle allowance calculated at 55% of the amount paid to the Mayor, which follows the same percentage base model as the salary calculation recommended for Councillors.

- The increase is reflective of inflationary cost factors accumulating over the last four years. The increase also takes into consideration that the rate will be in effect for the next four-year term. The Councillor allowance is adjusted to 55% of this amount, consistent with the salary model.
- Members of Council require frequent travel to and from meetings and for events throughout the city and region. The intent of the recommendation is to reimburse travel expenses for use of personal vehicles for City related business purposes except for the attendance at regular meetings in City Hall, which are considered reasonable expectations of the position. Meetings at locations other than City Hall should continue to be considered as additional travel in the line of duty and compensated accordingly. The implementation of a monthly vehicle allowance for Councillors allows for Council to claim expenses for the use of their personal vehicle for City business via a T2200.

Additional Benefits

Recommendation:

1. No change to the current benefit amounts as follows:
 - a. \$500 Health & Wellness - consistent with City employees,
 - b. Group Life Insurance - 100% paid by the individual,
 - c. Accidental Death & Dismemberment - 100% paid by the City,
 - d. Dependent Insurance - 100% paid by the City,
 - e. Extended Health - 100% paid by the City - consistent with City employees,
 - f. No Pension or RRSP program.
2. No change to the current Flexible Spending Allowance as follows:
 - a. 6.25% Flexible Spending Account - amount based on annual income to offset retirement benefits, supplementary health and/or dental, critical illness or other supplemental benefits that are not provided to members of Council but would be available to employees of the City or other organizations.

Per Diems

Recommendation: No change to the current rate for per diems.

- Half Day - \$150.00
- Full Day - \$300.00

Transition Subsidy

Recommendation: No change and that a Transition Subsidy continue to be available for exiting elected officials as follows:

- Council members, including the Mayor, may be entitled to receive a transition subsidy paid out as a lump sum payment should they choose not to run for another term, or are defeated in a municipal election and no longer hold the position of elected official. The subsidy will be available for members who have served a minimum of two (2) consecutive terms of office and will be paid out at 12.5% of their current base salary.

Expenses

Recommendation: No change. Policy 100 sets out the rates and allowances for reimbursement of travel, accommodation, and subsistence.

Use of Personal Technology

Recommendation: No change. Council members who choose to use their personal cellphone for City business are eligible to submit a request for a monthly allowance of \$40.00 and is consistent with the eligible allowance for qualifying City employees.

APPENDIX B - Policy and Procedure Documents

B-1 Council Policy 100 - Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

Policy Recommendation - DRAFT Amended Consolidation of Policy 100 and Procedure 100-1

B-2 Council Policy 100 - Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

Policy 100 Section Recommendations - DRAFT Amended To Take Effect October 2025

B-3 Council Policy 105 - Payment of Legal Fees for Elected Officials or Employees

B-4 Council Policy 308 - Council and Employee Reimbursement

B-5 City Procedure 308-1 - Council and Employee Reimbursement

APPENDIX B-1

Policy Recommendation - Consolidation of Policy 100 and Procedure 100-1



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

Policy Title	Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement		
Policy Number	100	Approved Date	1999-02-01
Department	Legislative Services	Last Amended	
Mayor Signature		Last Reviewed	
		Signature Date	

1. Policy Statement

The City of Grande Prairie (City) is committed to providing a fair and equitable level of remuneration for time and compensation including expenses incurred by the Mayor and Councillors while conducting business on behalf of the City.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To establish the rate of remuneration for the Mayor and Councillors, including rules for the reimbursement of expenses, to become effective after the Municipal Election for the four (4) year term of the next Council.
- 2.2. In support of Council's Strategic Priorities that enable and enhance trust and transparency, all approved expenses related to Mayor and Councillors' accommodation, travel, meals and event tickets are reported in the unaudited financial statements for the City on a quarterly basis and disclosed to the public on the City's website.

3. Definitions

In this policy:

- 3.1. "**Benefits Package**" means the City will provide a combination of insurance, extended health care and dental coverage to current Mayor and Councillors.
- 3.2. "**City**" means the municipal corporation of The City of Grande Prairie, having authority under the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000 C. M-26 and other applicable legislation. Where context requires, City also means the area included within the municipal boundaries of the City.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

- 3.3. **"Council Professional Development Account"** means the discretionary spending account assigned individually to Mayor and Councillors and funded annually to a maximum of \$20,000.00 for the Mayor and \$10,000.00 per Councillor from which all Discretionary Costs for Optional Events are paid.
- 3.4. **"Discretionary Costs"** means all costs incurred by the Mayor or Councillors for the purpose of attending an Optional Event.
- 3.5. **"Event(s)"** means conferences, workshops, seminars, social functions and educational or training opportunities in support of Council duties and responsibilities while serving as Mayor or Councillor for the City.
- 3.6. **"Flexible Spending Allowance"** means an annual amount provided as additional remuneration to current Mayor and Councillors. The Flexible Spending Allowance will have a range of payment options to choose from.
- 3.7. **"General Expenditures"** means an amount paid to a current Mayor or Councillors upon presentation of receipts or other supporting documentation for reimbursement of eligible expenditures incurred in the regular course of duties as an elected official for the City.
- 3.8. **"Local Region"** means the City and surrounding area to a maximum distance of 50 km, one way, beginning at the City Hall.
- 3.9. **"Mandatory Costs"** means all costs incurred by Mayor or Councillors for the purpose of attending a Mandatory Event while conducting City business.
- 3.10. **"Mandatory Event"** means all Events as listed in Schedule "A" of this Policy.
- 3.11. **"Optional Event"** means any Event that is not identified as a Mandatory Event.
- 3.12. **"Remuneration – Salary"** means an annual amount, paid by-weekly to the Mayor and Councillors.

4. Remuneration Review Committee

- 4.1. The Council Remuneration Review Committee will be established as set out in Schedule "A" of the [Boards and Committees Bylaw C-1422](#). The Committee will begin its work in January of the third year of the current Council term and will provide its final recommendations to Council no later than September of that year.
- 4.2. Council will approve the overall annual remuneration for the Mayor and Councillors in the third year of the current Council term, to become effective after the General Municipal Election for the four (4) year term of the next Council.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

5. General Principles

- 5.1. The annual salary and benefits are paid to the Mayor and Councillors for their attendance and performance of regular duties associated with the following responsibilities:
 - 5.1.1. Regular and Special meetings of Council, including Public Hearings, Quasi-Judicial Hearings and Committees of the Whole;
 - 5.1.2. Boards, Commissions and Committees as appointed within the Local Region;
 - 5.1.3. Annual Strategic Planning workshops, Budget deliberations and regional sessions/meetings regarding Intermunicipal Collaborative Framework projects;
 - 5.1.4. Conventions, conferences, seminars or workshops within the Local Region;
 - 5.1.5. Attendance at City of Grande Prairie functions including employee recognition, Municipal Government Day, cultural celebrations and festivals; and
 - 5.1.6. Attendance at ceremonies, grand openings, social functions, fundraisers for which ticket/expenses are paid by the City.

6. Salary & Benefits

- 6.1. Salary
 - 6.1.1. An annual salary cost of living adjustment will be applied equal to the Alberta Consumer Price Index, as reported by Statistics Canada, for the previous year and will take effect January 1. If the Alberta Consumer Price Index reflects a negative value, the value will revert to zero (0) for the purpose of this calculation.
 - 6.1.2. All salaries will be paid through the City's payroll system, on a bi-weekly basis and subject to applicable Canada Revenue Agency ("CRA") regulations.
 - 6.1.3. Salaries for the Mayor and Councillors are provided in the Table below.

Position	Base Salary*
Mayor	\$126,678.43
Councillor	\$ 67,245.35

*Current 2024 amount paid (2023 CPI adjustment made)



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

6.2. Benefits

6.2.1. Benefit rates are established by the service providers. The following benefits will be available to Mayor and Councillors:

Benefit	Premium – Member Paid	Premium – City Paid
Group Life Insurance	100%	0%
Accidental Death & Dismemberment	0%	100%
Dependent Insurance	0%	100%
Extended Health & Dental Care	0%	100%
Employee & Family Assistance Plan	0%	100%
Healthcare Spending Account (subject to CRA Regulations) (\$500.00)	0%	100%

7. Flexible Spending Allowance

- 7.1.** The Flexible Spending Allowance is calculated at 6.25% of the individual Mayor or Councillor's approved base salary, calculated annually, on January 1.
- 7.2.** The Mayor and Councillors, individually, may choose one (1) of the following options for pay out:
 - 7.2.1.** 100% on the second (2nd) pay period of each fiscal year;
 - 7.2.2.** In equal monthly instalments, paid on the second (2nd) pay period of each month;
 - 7.2.3.** In equal quarterly instalments, paid on the second (2nd) per pay period of each quarter (January, April, July and October); OR
 - 7.2.4.** As a direct contribution to a registered retirement savings plan, the Mayor or Councillor will have an existing plan and will be required to provide the City payroll department with the appropriate forms from their financial institution to initiate the transfer. This option is subject to available contribution room for each individual, subject to applicable CRA regulations.
- 7.3.** Flexible Spending Allowance will be prorated for the newly elected Mayor and Councillors in an election year and paid out on the second (2nd) pay period of November.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

8. Per Diems

- 8.1. A per diem shall be paid to the Mayor and Councillors to attend an approved Event occurring outside of the Local Region on behalf of the City, at the individual's discretion, as follows:
 - 8.1.1. **"Half Day"** means less than or equal to four (4) continuous hours and paid a total of \$150.00.
 - 8.1.2. **"Full Day"** means greater than four (4) continuous hours and paid a total of \$300.00.
- 8.2. All per diems shall be paid through the City's payroll system and are subject to applicable CRA regulations.
- 8.3. Per diem shall not apply, nor be paid for an absence from a Council or Standing Committee meeting when the absence is a result of another Event.

9. Transition Subsidy

- 9.1. The Mayor and Councillors may be entitled to a transition subsidy, paid out as a lump sum payment on their last day as an elected official.
- 9.2. The Mayor or Councillor is eligible for the transition subsidy if:
 - 9.2.1. They have served a minimum of two (2) consecutive terms of office; and
 - 9.2.2. They have been defeated in the most recently held municipal election.OR
 - 9.2.3. They have served a minimum of two (2) consecutive terms of office; and
 - 9.2.4. They choose not to run in the next municipal election.
- 9.3. The transition subsidy will be calculated at 12.5% of the current Base Salary.

10. Vehicle Allowance

- 10.1. An amount paid monthly to the current Mayor and Councillors of the City will be paid for the use of their private vehicle for the purpose of conducting business on behalf of the City within the Local Region.
- 10.2. The Mayor vehicle allowance will be paid monthly, through the City payroll system, and is set at \$500.00 per month.
- 10.3. The Councillors vehicle allowance will be paid monthly, through the City payroll system, and is set at 200 per month.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

- 10.4.** Note: The established vehicle allowance is intended to cover all costs incurred by the Mayor and Councillors for use of their vehicle for City business and includes but is not limited to; fuel, business insurance, repairs and maintenance.

11. Event Attendance

11.1. Attendance Eligibility

- 11.1.1.** A serving Council member of the City of Grande Prairie is eligible to attend Events, subject to the Event meeting standards as set out in this policy and subject to available funding.

11.2. Mandatory Events:

- 11.2.1.** Annually, Council will review Schedule "A" being the Mandatory Events listing.
- 11.2.2.** Council members will make every effort to attend the identified Mandatory Event. The Mayor or Council may grant a Council members' request to decline attendance for the following reasons:
- a.** Past Council experience is sufficient as to make the contents of the training redundant;
 - b.** Serious personal or family illness where attendance would cause undue hardship;
 - c.** Conflicting event scheduling, where one event is deemed more pertinent or where attendance would create undue personal hardship.
- 11.2.3.** Expenses incurred during attendance at a Mandatory Event will be recognized as a non-discretionary cost for reporting purposes and will be paid using Council's General Operating Budget. Per diems will be paid for Mandatory Event attendance.
- 11.2.4.** The Mayor or Council may specifically appoint Council members, as City representatives, to attend an event that contains particularly relevant or timely information. Costs incurred to attend such events will be considered non-discretionary for the appointed Council members and will be paid using Council's General Operating Budget. Per diems will be paid for appointed attendance. Costs will be recorded as costs for reporting purposes.
- 11.2.5.** Council may identify other events as Mandatory Events, by resolution.

11.3. Optional Events:

- 11.3.1.** Any or all members of Council may attend Optional Events or other events they deem to be pertinent to their role as a member of City Council at their discretion, subject to available funds allocated through their Council Professional Development Account. Any applicable per diems claimed will be paid from the Council Professional Development Account, subject to CRA regulations.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

11.3.2. Generally, any event a Council member may attend that does not fall under the Mandatory Event category will be considered an Optional Event.

11.4. Council Professional Development Event Summary:

11.4.1. Optional Events that incur expenses greater than \$2,000.00 shall require the attendee to provide Council with a brief summary of the information obtained from attending the Optional Event. The Council Professional Development Event Summary - Schedule "B" of this Policy, shall be provided during Council Round Table at a regular City Council meeting no later than 15 days from the date of the Optional Event.

12. Expenses

- 12.1.** The City will reimburse the Mayor and Councillors for reasonable expenses incurred while conducting business on behalf of the City.
- 12.2.** The Mayor and Councillors are encouraged to use the most economical method of travel available. In order to promote this value, reimbursement for travel will be on the most economical travel option available for each specific trip.

13. Reimbursement – Rates & Allowances

- 13.1.** The Mayor and Councillors will complete the Expense Claim Form, provided in Schedule "C" of this Policy and submit it to the City Manager's office for review. The City Manager's office will submit the form to Oracle on behalf of the Mayor or Councillor. The claim will be approved by the Chief Financial Officer in Oracle and then sent to the Accounts Payable department for review and approval for payment.
- 13.2.** Unless otherwise indicated in this Policy, all expenses claimed for reimbursement must include supporting documentation that includes:
 - 13.2.1.** Ticket/electronic ticket (for travel via bus, plane or train); and
 - 13.2.2.** Payment receipt (for accommodation, meals, travel via taxi, limousine, or other car service).
- 13.3. Air Travel and Ground Transportation Costs:**
 - 13.3.1.** Air Travel will be reimbursed at economy rates by the most direct route;
 - 13.3.2.** Ground Transportation including vehicle rental, limousine, taxi, on-demand pick-up, train and/or bus will be reimbursed at cost; and/or
 - 13.3.3.** Use of Personal Vehicle for travel outside the Local Region will be reimbursed at the current Government of Canada rate.
- 13.4. Accommodation and Subsistence Rates:**



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

- 13.4.1. Accommodation will be reimbursed for:
 - a. actual hotel or other room rental costs based upon single room occupancy; and
 - b. the amount of \$50.00 per overnight stay for private accommodation. Receipts are not required to submit a claim.
- 13.4.2. Where meals are not provided as part of the Event, the maximum amounts (including gratuities) that may be claimed, without receipts, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, are at the current Government of Canada rates.

14. Use of Personal Technology

- 14.1. The Mayor and Councillors who choose to use their own cell phone for conducting City business are eligible to submit a request for an allowance, to be paid monthly, through the City's payroll system, at an amount equal to the allowance set for City employees.

15. Ineligible Expenses

- 15.1. Ineligible expenses include:
 - 15.1.1. Alcohol;
 - 15.1.2. Costs incurred for spouses, partners, companions attending workshops, seminars, conferences, conventions or educational opportunities; and
 - 15.1.3. Costs incurred due to absences - Mayor or Councillors who do not attend an Event for which a registration fee, ticket, airfare, hotel accommodation or other associated cost has been purchased on their behalf will be required to reimburse the City for the costs.
(Note: This may be waived due to emergent/extenuating circumstances if approved by the City Manager.)

16. External Associations

- 16.1. Council Members will obtain approval, by resolution of Council, for a nomination or appointment to office for an external association, where the expenses are expected to be covered by the City (e.g. the Alberta Municipalities Board of Directors). Once appointed, costs will be managed as outlined for Mandatory Events.
- 16.2. The City will pay expenses and per diems required for Council members to fulfil an approved appointment to the Board of Directors of an association such as Federation of Canadian Municipalities and Alberta Municipalities or to a committee of an association, where the Council member is not paid expenses and per diems to by the association or committee of an association.



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

17. Related Information

- 17.1. The City will reimburse Council members for eligible personal expenses incurred to attend conferences, workshops, seminars and educational opportunities in accordance with the Council and Employee Reimbursement Council Policy 308.
- 17.2. Receipts are required for registration fees for conferences, conventions, seminars and training sessions/courses.
- 17.3. Gratuities are reimbursed to a maximum of 15%.
- 17.4. Foreign exchange rate costs for approved travel or other business purpose will be reimbursed, where applicable, at the actual cost in Canadian funds as indicated on credit card or other statement. Proof of current exchange rate charged must be provided.
- 17.5. Appropriate miscellaneous expenses (parking) will be reimbursed (Note: Fines for parking and traffic violations will not be reimbursed).
- 17.6. When the Mayor or a Councillor, as a representative of the City is attending a local social Event, banquet or fundraiser the cost of their spouse or partner's ticket for that Event will be reimbursed at actual cost.
- 17.7. When the Mayor or a Councillor, as a representative of the City is attending a conference or convention, and the banquet is a ticketed Event, the cost of their spouse or partner's ticket for the banquet will be paid by the City.
- 17.8. When personal credit cards are used for business expenses, the City will not reimburse annual fees and interest charges.

18. Responsibilities

- 18.1. City Council will review and approve any revisions to this Policy.
- 18.2. City Manager will review and approve any procedures related to this Policy.
- 18.3. City Administration will carry out the policy based on established procedures.

19. Legislative Authority & Other Reference

- 19.1. *Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, c M-26*

20. Version History



COUNCIL POLICY
Council Remuneration
and Expense Reimbursement

Action	Date	Description
New Policy	1999-02-01	
Revision	2000-10-30	
Revision	2002-07-02	
Revision	2008-03-24	
Revision	2012-06-25	
Revision	2016-10-03	
Revision	2017-09-18	
Revision	2020-08-20	
Revision	2021-10-25	
Revision	2022-10-03	
Revision	YYYY/MM/DD	Updated to new template. Combined policy and procedure.

DRAFT



COUNCIL POLICY

Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

Schedule "A": Mandatory Events

1. Alberta Municipalities (AM) - Annual Fall Convention;
2. Alberta Municipalities - Municipal Leaders Caucus - Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter Sessions*
3. Alberta Municipalities - President's Summit*
4. Elected Officials Education Program;
5. Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) - Annual Conference**;
6. Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) - Annual Spring/Fall Conventions*;
7. Economic Developers Alberta Conference - Annual Conference*;
8. Growing the North Conference;
9. Alberta Recreations & Parks Association (ARPA) - Annual Conference*;
10. Family & Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) - Annual Conference*;
11. Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association (ACCPA) - Annual Conference* and
12. Council appointed to Boards, Commissions and Committees that require attendance outside the Local Region.

The Mayor and Councillors will make every effort to attend Mandatory Events.

* The Mayor or delegate may attend and shall designate up to two (2) Councillors per session to attend as a Mandatory Event per year. Costs for any other Councillor that chooses to attend will be identified as Discretionary Costs.

** The Mayor or delegate with up to four (4) other Councillors shall be designated to attend the event(s) every year. Costs for any other Councillor that chooses to attend will be identified as Discretionary Costs.



COUNCIL POLICY
Council Remuneration
and Expense Reimbursement

Schedule "B": Council Professional Development Event Summary

Date:	
Event Name:	
Attendee:	

Summary of Training Provided

Summaries of training sessions provided by the facilitator can be attached to this report for information.

Highlights

- Highlight specific components of the event that you feel would be valuable to Council.
-

Cost of Event

Registration Fees	
Additional Workshop/Sessions Fees:	
Other:	

Recommendations

Future Attendance by Council Recommended?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	------------------------------	-----------------------------

If future attendance is not recommended, provide an explanation.



COUNCIL POLICY
Council Remuneration
and Expense Reimbursement

Schedule "C": Councillor's Travel Expenses

Councillor's Travel Expenses	
Councillor's Name	
Event Attending	
Date of Event	
Expenses	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
Total of Expenses	\$
Mileage (# of kilometers)	
Per Diem (how many days)	
Signature	

APPENDIX B - 2

Council Policy 100 - Council Remuneration and Expense Reimbursement

Policy 100 Section Recommendations - To Take Effect October 2025

6. Salary & Benefits

6.1 Salary

6.1.1 An annual salary cost of living adjustment will be applied equal to the Alberta Consumer Price Index, as reported by Statistics Canada, for the previous year and will take effect January 1. If the Alberta Consumer Price Index reflects a negative value, the value will revert to zero (0) for the purpose of this calculation.

6.1.2 All salaries will be paid through the City's payroll system, on a bi-weekly basis and subject to applicable Canada Revenue Agency ("CRA") regulations.

6.1.3 Salaries for the Mayor are provided in the Table below.

Position	Base Salary*
Mayor	\$126,678.43

***Current 2024 amount paid (2023 CPI adjustment made)**

6.1.4 Salaries for Councillors will be set at a rate of 55% of the Mayor rate.

10. Vehicle Allowance

10.1 An amount paid monthly to the current Mayor and Councillors of the City will be paid for the use of their private vehicle for the purpose of conducting business on behalf of the City within the Local Region.

10.2 The Mayor vehicle allowance will be paid monthly, through the City payroll system, and is set at \$500.00 per month.

10.2 The Councillors vehicle allowance will be paid monthly, through the City payroll system, and is set at 55% of the Mayor vehicle allowance rate per month.

APPENDIX B-3

Council Policy 105 - Payment of Legal Fees for Elected Officials or Employees

CITY OF
GRANDE PRAIRIE



POLICY

POLICY NO:	105	APPROVAL DATE:	November 4, 2002
TITLE:	Payment of Legal Fees for Elected Officials or Employees	REVISION DATE:	
SECTION:	Administration	PAGE	1 OF 1
DEPARTMENT:			

POLICY STATEMENT

The City will ease the financial burden of an Elected Official or employee being sued by a third party for liability or conflict of interest.

REASON FOR POLICY

To establish a policy concerning the payment of legal fees where a member of City Council, Administration or an employee is sued by a third party for liability or conflict of interest, subject to the wording, conditions and exclusions within the City's Liability Policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The City will acquire third party liability insurance, which will cover items under Clause 2 and 3 of this policy, subject to the wording, conditions and exclusions within the City's Liability Policy.
2. A claim for all defence costs made by a third party is covered by the City's Liability Insurance where the insurance company's lawyer defends the action.
3. Pursuant to a claim made under 1, the insurance company will pay any damages awarded by a judge, unless a judge rules that an elected official or employee has acted "illegally, wilfully or recklessly" or where the City did not condone, approve or have prior knowledge of such action.
4. A claim that is made by a third party against an elected official or employee and is not covered by the City's insurance, will be paid by the City. The City will pay the legal fees on behalf of the elected official or employee where it is deemed performance of duties resulted in action being taken by a third party and provided that the actions of an elected official or employee were not carried out illegally, wilfully or recklessly.

APPENDIX B-4

Council Policy 308 - Council and Employee Reimbursement

CITY OF
GRANDE PRAIRIE



POLICY

POLICY NO:	308	APPROVAL DATE:	September 22, 2003
TITLE:	Council and Employee Reimbursement	REVISION DATE:	May 28, 2012
SECTION:	Finance	PAGE	1 OF 1
DEPARTMENT:	Finance		

POLICY STATEMENT

The City will reimburse employees and Council for reasonable expenses incurred while the employee or member of Council is conducting City business as per the rates established in the accompanying procedure.

The City will base the reimbursement of employees and Council upon the current rates established by the Provincial Government of Alberta. The City recognizes that it is more expensive to travel within Northern Alberta, and therefore includes a slight premium on the Government of Alberta rates.

Council and employees are encouraged to use the most economical method of travel available. In order to promote this value, reimbursement for travel will be on the most economical travel option available for each specific trip.

REASON FOR POLICY

To set guidelines for the reimbursement to Employees and Council for expenses incurred while conducting City business.

RESPONSIBILITIES

City Council will review and approve any revisions to this policy.
City Manager will review and approve any procedures related to this policy.
City Administration will carry out the policy based on established procedures.

APPENDIX B-5

City Procedure 308-1 - Council and Employee Reimbursement

CITY OF
GRANDE PRAIRIE



PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE NO:	308-1	PAGE:	1 OF 2
TITLE:	Council Reimbursement	APPROVAL DATE:	May 28, 2012
POLICY:	308, Council and Employee Reimbursement	REVISION DATE:	September 18, 2017
SECTION:	Finance		
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:	Finance		

REIMBURSEMENT RATES AND ALLOWANCES

This schedule contains all reimbursement rates and allowances in Canadian dollars and specifies when receipts are required.

1. **Transportation Rates:**

Monthly Vehicle Allowance for Mayor

\$400.00 per month

Outside of the City of Grande Prairie (Mileage is not paid within City limits)

Council are encouraged to use the most economical method of travel available. In order to promote this value, reimbursement for travel will be the lesser of:

1. **Air Travel and Ground Transportation Costs:**

Air Travel will be at economy rates by the most direct route. Submission of receipts required.

Ground Transportation including limousine, taxi and/or buses will be reimbursed at cost. Receipts required if over \$11.00 per airport taxi/bus trip, or

2. **Automobile Travel** actual kilometres travelled outside of the City may be claimed at the current rate established by the Government of Alberta plus 5%.

* This can be found at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/travel-meal-and-hospitality-expenses-policy-expenses-policy>
Business Use of Private Vehicles

When deemed necessary that a Councillor travels by automobile in lieu of public transportation, the Councillor can claim the entire automobile travel expense as calculated in #2 above, regardless of which method results in the smaller amount.

Note: The established rates are intended to cover all costs incurred by the member of Council for use of their vehicle for City business and includes but is not limited to, fuel, business insurance, repairs and maintenance.

2. **Lodging and Subsistence Rates:**

Meals receipts will be reimbursed for actual costs or for a set amount per meal at the current rate established by the Government of Alberta.

- * This can be found at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/travel-meal-and-hospitality-expenses-policy-expenses-policy>

Alcohol costs will not be reimbursed.

Accommodation will be reimbursed for actual hotel costs based on single room occupancy upon presentation of hotel receipts. If arrangements for private accommodation are made, and commercial facilities are not used, an allowance of \$50.00 per day will be reimbursed without receipts.