



Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date of Meeting: October 22, 2025

Report Number: SRCFS.25.031

Department: Corporate and Financial Services

Division: Office of the Clerk

Subject: **SRCFS.25.031 – Council Compensation
beginning with the 2026 Term of Council**

Purpose:

To recommend that a Council Compensation Review Committee not be formed for the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council, and that the compensation paid to Members of Council, beginning with the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council on November 15, 2026 be increased by the same approved percentage amount provided to non-unionized City Staff on a recurring basis.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That staff report SRCFS.25.031 be received;
- b) That the Council resolution to establish a Council Compensation Review Committee adopted June 8, 2022 be rescinded.
- c) That, effective the start of the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council on November 15, 2026:
 - i) the remuneration paid to City of Richmond Hill Council Members be increased annually on January 1 by the same approved percentage amount provided to non-unionized City Staff, including an increase of 2.70% effective January 1, 2027;
 - ii) the current non-monetary benefits provided to Members of Council be maintained, and where required aligned to the non-union Administrative Employee group; and
 - iii) all other Council remuneration policies be maintained.
- d) That staff continue to monitor trends in Municipal Council remuneration in each Term of Council and report back should significant variations be observed.
- e) That the Clerk be directed to place any by-law necessary to give effect to this resolution on a future Council agenda for enactment.

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Contact Person(s):

- Stephen M.A. Huycke, Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk, extension 2529
- Amy McArthur, Director People and Culture, extension 6378
- Sherry Adams, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services, extension 2521

Report Approval:

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Key Messages:

- The current Council Compensation Review Committee method of determining Council compensation is onerous for City Administration and should only be used when significant variations from comparator municipalities are observed.
- The current rate of remuneration paid to Members of Council is comparable to other municipal Councillors suggesting no significant adjustment is required.
- To ensure that Member of Council compensation continues to align with comparable municipal salaries it is recommended that effective the start of the next Term of Council (November 15, 2026) Council salaries continue to be adjusted annually by the same percentage increase approved by Council for the non-union Administrative Employee group.
- Staff will continue to monitor trends in Member of Council remuneration each term of Council and will report back only if significant variations are observed.

Background:

Since at least 2013 (prior to the 2014 Municipal Elections), Council has used a Council Compensation Review Committee (“CCRC” or “Committee”) to make recommendations to Council on the remuneration that should be paid to Members of Council for the upcoming Term of Council. The 2013, 2018 and 2022 CRCC’s have all made similar recommendations to Council. For example, the 2013 Committee made the following recommendation:

“Increases in compensation for members of the Town of Richmond Hill Council should be aligned with increases provided to non-unionized Town Staff with an annual cap of 2.5% in the first year of the 4 year elected term commencing in 2014, (effective date of the increase to be January 1, 2015) and up to 3.0% in subsequent years (effective date of the increases - January 1, 2016 through January 1, 2018).”

The 2017 CCRC (for the 2018-2022 Term of Council) made the following recommendation:

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“That increases in compensation for members of the Town of Richmond Hill Council for the 2018 to 2022 Term of Council should be aligned with increases provided to non-unionized Town Staff, including an increase of 1.75% effective January 1, 2019, with an annual cap of up to 2.25% in subsequent years (effective date of the increases - January 1, 2020 through January 1, 2022), subject to adoption of clause 2 in these recommendations.”

The 2022 CCRC (for the current Term of Council) made the following recommendation:

“That increases in compensation for members of the City of Richmond Hill Council for the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council should be aligned with increases provided to non-unionized City Staff, including an increase of 1.70% effective January 1, 2023, with an annual cap of up to 2.25% in subsequent years (effective date of the increases - January 1, 2024, January 1, 2025 and January 1, 2026).”

The Committee, as required by its Terms of Reference, has been supported by the Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services, the Director of People and Culture and the City Clerk. This means that three senior staff members have dedicated significant time to a committee which has not resulted in any significant changes to Member of Council Compensation.

At the same time, and as is further discussed below, the remuneration paid to Members of Council remain consistent with other comparator municipalities for multiple terms. For operational and administrative efficiency, staff are recommending that a CCRC not be formed for the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council, and that Member of Council compensation be increased annually by the same percentage amount approved by Council for aligned non-union Administrative Employees beginning with the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council that starts on November 15, 2026. If approved, staff will continue to monitor council compensation in comparators with other municipalities. Should significant discrepancies be noted, staff will report back at that time to seek Council’s direction.

Discussion:

Council as a whole is responsible for setting the remuneration that is paid to individual Members of Council. Currently, all Members of Council receive an annual salary as well as non-monetary benefits (OMERS Pension, Extended Health Care, Dental Care, Long Term Disability and Life Insurance) in compensation for their service as Members of Council. The annual salary for Members of Council for the remainder of the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council are as follows:

Council Compensation - 2022 to 2026 Term of Council

Office	2025 Annual Remuneration	2026 Annual Remuneration
Mayor	\$ 145,452	\$ 148,724
Regional and Local Councillor	\$ 87,279	\$ 89,242
Ward Councillor	\$ 87,279	\$ 89,242

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In addition to the annual remuneration paid by the City, the Mayor and Regional and Local Councillors receive an annual salary of \$62,623 from the Regional Municipality of York for their service as members of Regional Council. The Regional salary, which was last adjusted effective April 1, 2024, is determined exclusively by Regional Council and paid by the Region through reimbursement to the City.

Comparator Municipalities

Council Compensation Review Committees (CCRCs) are currently utilized by only two municipalities—Burlington and Barrie. The remaining municipalities surveyed rely on established by-laws and/or align general wage increases for Members of Council with those provided to non-union staff. Based on the responses received, this approach reflects a broader trend in municipal governance, where formal committees are less common and compensation adjustments are integrated into existing administrative frameworks.

To ensure that Council remuneration remains competitive and equitable, staff monitor trends in compensation paid to Members of Council across other municipalities each term. This practice not only supports the CCRC process where applicable, but also serves a critical function in maintaining salaries that reflect market standards. Adequate compensation is essential to attract a diverse and qualified pool of candidates to elected office. Put simply, if Council salaries are set too low, individuals who may otherwise be strong candidates could be financially unable to pursue public service.

Table 1 includes the base remuneration paid to Members of Council in nine different municipalities.

Page 5**Table 1 – Comparative Municipal Council Salaries**

Municipality	Position	2024 Base Remuneration	2025 Base Remuneration
Whitby	Mayor	\$129,701	\$129,701
	Regional Councillor	\$50,776	\$50,776
	Councillor	\$50,776	\$50,776
	Regional Remuneration	\$62,143	\$62,143
Vaughan	Mayor	\$150,410	\$154,922
	Deputy Mayor	\$104,688	\$107,829
	Regional Councillor	\$95,171	\$98,026
	Councillor	\$95,717	\$98,026
	Regional Remuneration	\$63,623	\$63,623
Milton	Mayor	\$126,584	\$129,242
	Regional Councillor	\$45,357	\$46,310
	Councillor	\$45,357	\$46,310
	Regional Remuneration	\$56,332	\$58,304
Mississauga	Mayor	\$84,485	TBD
	Regional Councillor	N/A	N/A
	Councillor	\$96,598	\$98,530
	Regional Remuneration	\$63,666	\$65,575
Newmarket	Mayor	\$118,255	\$121,212
	Regional Councillor	\$76,495	\$78,407
	Councillor	\$54,567	\$55,931
	Regional Remuneration	\$63,623	\$63,623
Markham	Mayor	\$156,729	\$162,215
	Regional Councillor	\$88,548	\$91,647
	Councillor	\$97,403	\$100,812
	Regional Remuneration	\$63,623	\$63,623
Barrie	Mayor	\$131,937	\$136,880
	Regional Councillor	N/A	N/A
	Councillor	\$43,407	\$44,275
	Regional Remuneration	\$18,079	\$22,710
Burlington	Mayor	\$151,477	\$154,734
	Regional Councillor	N/A	N/A
	Councillor	\$66,099	\$67,520
	Regional Remuneration	\$56,332	\$58,304
Oakville	Mayor	\$147,405	\$152,196
	Regional Councillor	N/A	N/A
	Councillor	\$58,689	\$60,596
	Regional Remuneration	\$56,332	\$58,304

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Council Compensation Review Committee Process

Since at least 2013 (prior to the 2014 Municipal Elections), Council has used a Council Compensation Review Committee to make recommendations to Council on the remuneration that should be paid to Members of Council for the following Term of Council. Under the Terms of Reference for the Committee, the committee is comprised of five citizen members, two of which are business representatives from within the business community and is also attended by the Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services, Director or People and Culture, and City Clerk. Forming the CCRC requires solicitation of applications by the Office of the Clerk, review of applications and conducting of interviews by the three senior staff noted above. Additionally, the work requires senior staff to prepare for and attend several committee meetings (four for the 2022 to 2026 Committee, and five for the 2018 to 2022 committee), as well as respond to email requests for information. Finally, the work of administering the CCRC includes providing advice, commenting on, and editing the Committee's final report before it is presented to Council for consideration.

Staff have observed during the recruitment for the last two Committees that it is extremely challenging to attract qualified candidates (i.e. knowledgeable about public sector compensation and human resources) to serve on the CCRC. Staff have also observed that the Committee's focus can lean towards non-compensation/human resources considerations that is outside of the scope of the CCRC's Terms of Reference. It has also been observed that when recommendations are not accepted by Council, despite being repeatedly advised that their role is only to advise, the Committee's response is highly and publicly critical. Finally, it should be noted that the recommended cap on annual economic adjustments does not take into account the potential impact of higher inflation on the remuneration paid. Based on these facts, it is staff's recommendation that the CCRC process be discontinued and only be used when significant variations in comparator compensation is observed.

Aligning Council Compensation to annual increases provided to non-union administrative staff effective the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council

For the concerns noted above, staff do not recommend establishing a Council Compensation Review Committee for each new Term of Council. Instead, staff recommended that effective November 15, 2026:

- the salary paid to Members of Council be increased each January 1 by the same Council approved percentage amount provided to non-unionized City Staff, including an increase of 2.70% effective January 1, 2027, on a permanent basis;
- the current non-monetary benefits (OMERS Pension, Extended Health Care, Dental Care, Long Term Disability and Life Insurance) provided to Members of Council be maintained, and where required aligned to the non-union Administrative Employee group; and
- all other Council remuneration policies be maintained.

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These recommendations are essentially the same as those made by previous Council Compensation Review Committees. The only variation from previous CCRC recommendations is that staff do not believe that there should be any cap on annual increases (e.g. 'increases in compensation...be aligned with increases provided to non-unionized City Staff... **with an annual cap of up to 2.25% in subsequent years**'). The annual cap is not connected to the value of Members of Council's work, and will result in compression of Council salaries over time.

Staff believe that benefits of adopting these recommendations include:

1. Administrative efficiency by reducing staff workload:
 - Eliminates the need to form a Council Compensation Review Committee (CCRC) every term, which consumes significant time from three senior staff (Commissioner, Director, City Clerk).
2. Provides Consistency and Transparency including:
 - Predictable adjustments: Linking compensation to the established Administrative Employee schedule ensures increases are consistent with other City employees and Council-approved economic adjustments.
 - Clear methodology: Provides a transparent and objective way to determine compensation without subjective debate every term.
3. Ensures market competitiveness:
 - Data shows Richmond Hill's Council salaries are already aligned with other municipalities; no significant adjustments are required.

If Council chooses to adopt this recommendation, staff will continue to monitor trends in Council compensation. Staff will report back if significant variances are observed. In the event that a significant variance occurs, one option to address the variances could be to form a Council Compensation Review Committee at that time.

Alternative Options

If Council chooses not to adopt the recommendations, Council could choose too either:

1. Direct staff to establish the Council Compensation Review Committee for the 2026 to 2030 Term of Council by simply receiving this report for information only; or
2. Direct staff to report back on aligning Council Salaries to the non-union Administrative Employee Salary Schedule

Alternative Option 1 would maintain the same process described above, placing significant administrative burden on staff required to recruit and administer the Council Compensation Review Committee, and is therefore not recommended. Alternative Option 2, aligning Member of Council salaries to non-union employees, is not a methodology used in any other Ontario Municipality.

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Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications that arise from adopting the recommendations contained in this report. The annual remuneration paid to Members of Council is included in the annual operating budget.

Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

This report has no specific link to the 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

N/A

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCFS.25.031 - Council Compensation .docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Oct 7, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Sherry Adams - Oct 7, 2025 - 11:48 AM

Darlene Joslin - Oct 7, 2025 - 1:22 PM