



GRAND VALLEY

STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Donna Tremblay, Deputy Clerk/Communications Coordinator
Meeting Date: March 24, 2026
Report Number: 2025-188
Subject: Council Remuneration Review

Recommendation

THAT Council receive the Report Council Remuneration Review;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves the Council Remuneration Policy in accordance with Attachment 3 to this report.

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs staff to prepare and present a Council Remuneration By-law for adoption at a future meeting of Council.

Executive Summary

Purpose

This report is presented to Council with the findings of the Council compensation review conducted by staff and seeks approval of the Council Remuneration Policy.

Key Findings

- Council provided direction to conduct a staff-led Council Compensation Review
- Scope of review included remuneration, expenses and benefits. Results are presented within the body of the report.
- Grand Valley Council remuneration falls below the median of the comparator group
- 2026-2030 Council compensation adjusted to the 50th percentile of the comparator group
- Draft Council Compensation Review Policy provided for future compensation reviews.

Financial Implications

2026-2030 Council compensation rates will impact the last 6 weeks of the 2026 budget year as the new term commences on November 15, 2026.

Report

Background

On June 24, 2025, Council passed [Resolution 2025-06-43](#), directing staff to proceed with Option Three, for the Council Remuneration and Meeting Review. Option Three included the following scope of work in relation to the Council remuneration review:

Staff-Led Review

- Complete internal comparative analysis of Council pay and benefits across Dufferin and Wellington Counties
- Review past and current remuneration structures in line with 2022 directive
- Compile findings and provide recommendations to Council

Previous Council Compensation Reviews

In 2022, staff conducted a council compensation review and presented their findings and analysis to Council on June 14, 2022 (attachment 1). The review gathered Council compensation data as far back as 2010 and found that there had been no change to the rates of pay for any Council position from 2010 to 2022. Staff noted Council's pay had in fact decreased during the 2018-2022 Council Term as 2019 legislative changes eliminated a 1/3 tax exemption from their pay and Council approved a one-third cut to their compensation to ease the economic struggles presented by the COVID-19. In 2022, following discussions, Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution 2022-06-09

Moved by P Latam, Seconded by R Taylor

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receives Report – Council Remuneration Review;

AND FURTHER THAT the remuneration be adjusted to the average of comparable neighbouring municipalities as presented;

AND THAT an annual cost of living adjustment equivalent to the percentage increase which Town staff receives as compensation apply to the remuneration for Council;

AND THAT Council instruct staff to establish a Council Remuneration Review Process Policy.

Recorded Vote

Councillor Paul Latam – Yea

Councillor Stephen Miles – Yea
Councillor Rick Taylor – Yea
Deputy Mayor Philip Rentsch – Nay
Mayor Steve Soloman - Nay
CARRIED

On September 27, 2022, Council adopted By-Law 2022-59, attachment 2 which provided for the paying of remuneration and expenses to Council with the following base pay rates for the 2022-2026 Term of Council as follows:

Position	Pay Rate Beginning of Term
Mayor	\$ 17,240.00
Deputy Mayor	\$ 13,797.00
Councillors	\$ 12,932.00

Discussion

There are no pre-determined hours of work for an elected official, and their role cannot be defined as full-time or part-time, but instead better described as a continual role of governance, requiring elected officials to participate in special projects, fulfill board/committee appointment responsibilities, and be available to their constituents on demand.

Serving on Council has widely been considered a volunteer commitment and the role of members of Council has been undeniably expanding. The growth of technology and expansion of social media permits the public to contact their representatives through a variety of channels at whatever time is convenient to them. Council has become more accessible and expected to be more responsive than in the past, and for some, the role has become 24/7, even though they continue to be compensated as a part-time volunteer.

Legislated Authority to Establish Council Remuneration

The Province of Ontario has mandated that Municipal Council is responsible for establishing their own level of compensation.

[Section 283](#) of the Municipal Act, 2001 provides Council with the power to determine remuneration for its members and [Section 284\(1\)](#) of the Municipal Act, 2001 requires the Treasurer of the municipality to prepare an itemized statement each year on the remuneration and expenses paid to Council and its local board members in the previous year. Annual Reports are prepared with the most recent dated March 11, 2025 [2024 Statement of Council and Local Board members remuneration and Expenses Paid Report](#).

Conducting the Council Compensation Review

Remuneration for elected officials should be fair and reasonable for both Council and the taxpayers of Grand Valley. Appropriate remuneration should achieve the following goals:

- Reflective of the nature, responsibility and accountability associated with the positions;
- Attract strong, qualified candidates to local government; and
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

Remuneration for members of Council and Heads of Council is difficult to analyze given the vast differences in scope and size of municipalities, as well as economic, demographic and financial variables impacting municipalities.

Analysis

The comparator group used for the Council compensation review aligns with Council's direction to include municipalities from both Dufferin and Wellington Counties. While Attachment 3 provides an overview of the full comparator group for reference, it was recognized that a more meaningful analysis required focusing on municipalities that were comparable to Grand Valley in terms of population, responsibilities and Council size, rather than strictly geographic location. A subset of municipalities was selected based on their similarity to Grand Valley's size and scope. This subset group is presented in **Table 1** and forms the basis for the recommendations provided in this report.

Table 1 – Subset Comparator Group

Municipality	Population	Size of Council
Amaranth	4,327	5
East Garafraxa	2,794	5
Mono	9,421	5
Melancthon	3,132	5
Mulmur	3,571	5
Grand Valley	3,851	5

The data gathered to conduct the Council remuneration review included:

- Council remuneration;
- Per diems for meeting attendance;
- Allowances such as tech allowances;
- Expense reimbursements including attendances at conference and training sessions; and
- other benefits such as healthcare and OMERS benefits.

Remuneration

Like Grand Valley, the subset comparators adjust base pay rates annually for cost-of-living adjustment equal to the management/employee increases.

Commencing with the 2022-2026 Term of Council, compensation has generally, except for 2025, been adjusted automatically based on the Council approved annual cost-of-living increase for management and staff.

In 2025, during February 25, 2025 budget discussions, Council passed [Resolution 2025-02-47](#) forgoing receipt of their July 1st cost of living increase. **Table 2** represents the Council-approved CPI increases and annual base salary adjustments from 2023 to 2026. Although, Council did not receive their cost-of-living increase in 2025, the table values reflect base rate adjustment with CPI included.

Table 2

		2023	2024	2025**	2026
Position	Pay Rate Beginning of Term	Approved CPI increase	Approved CPI increase	Approved CPI increase	Pay rate end of term
		6.5%	4.3%	2.7%	1.9%
Mayor	\$ 17,240.00	\$18,360.60	\$19,150.11	\$19,667.16	\$20,198.17
Deputy Mayor	\$ 13,797.00	\$14,693.81	\$15,325.64	\$15,739.43	\$16,164.40
Councillors	\$ 12,932.00	\$13,772.58	\$14,364.80	\$14,752.65	\$15,150.97
**Resolution 2025-02-47 - Council foregave their 2025 CPI increase					

Comparables

Council remuneration data was collected from 2024 Municipal Treasurer’s Reports as legislated under Section 284(1) of the Municipal Act and posted on the comparator municipal websites.

The average for Market Comparators, Dufferin County Municipalities and subset comparator group (Table 1) is provided in **Table 3**.

Table 3

	Market Comparator Average	Dufferin County Average	Comparable (sub-set) Average	Grand Valley
Mayor	\$32,164.03	\$27,241.27	\$20,252.43	\$17,901.52
Deputy Mayor	\$20,237.31	\$20,023.35	\$17,032.31	\$14,326.52
Councillor	\$20,341.27	\$17,853.81	\$15,396.01	\$13,428.22

**** Note:** amounts reflected for Grand Valley do not include CPI indexing to the base rate.

Benchmarking Council Remuneration – Using the 50th Percentile

It is a common practice for Council’s base pay compensation to align with the same pay percentile target adapted for management and staff.

In 2024, the Town conducted a Human Resources Program Review and at Council’s direction, staff compensation was kept at the 50th percentile. (February 25, 2025 – [Human Resource Program Review, Final Report.](#)) The 50th percentile is the dollar rate where 50% of the rates in comparator organizations are below this amount and 50% of the rates are higher.

The 50th percentile pay target is reasonable based on the size and scope of the comparator group.

Table 4 reflects the amounts which were used to benchmark Grand Valley Council remuneration within the subset average and the 50th percentile of for this subset. The amounts provided for Grand Valley Council are the 2024 CPI indexed amounts provided in **Table 2**.

Table 4

	Comparable (sub-set) Average	Comparable Median - 50th percentile	Grand Valley
Mayor	\$19,962.66	\$18,659.50	\$19,150.11
Deputy Mayor	\$16,791.02	\$15,657.96	\$15,325.64
Councillor	\$15,158.62	\$14,957.52	\$14,364.80

Summary

The base pay rates for Deputy Mayor and Councillors are below the 50th percentile of the defined comparable subset. Recommendations for percentage increase, to realize Council compensation at the 50th percentile amongst the subset comparators are provided in **Table 5**. Note as the Mayor’s base rate is above the Comparable Median, there is no recommended change or percentage increase for this position.

Table 5

	Comparable (sub-set) Average	Comparable Median - 50th percentile	Grand Valley	Recommended change	Percentage Increase
Mayor	\$19,962.66	\$18,659.50	\$19,150.11	\$0.00	0.0%
Deputy Mayor	\$16,791.02	\$15,657.96	\$15,325.64	\$332.32	2.2%
Councillor	\$15,158.62	\$14,957.52	\$14,364.80	\$592.72	4.1%

Recommended Base Rate for 2026-2030 Term of Council

Table 6 – Summarizes the following:

- Base rate increases during the 2022-2026 term of Council,
- application of the percentage increase to the 2026 Council base pay to realize the 50th percentile starting base pay for the 2026-2030 Term of Council.
- Base rate remuneration for the 2026-20230 Term of Council.

To ensure the 2026-2030 Term of Council compensation remains within the 50th percentile, staff are recommending Council continue to receive the annual cost of living adjustments approved for management and staff.

Position	Pay Rate Beginning of Term	2023	2024	2025**	2026	P50 Increase	2026-2030
		Approved CPI increase	Approved CPI increase	Approved CPI increase	Pay rate end of term		Council Pay Rate
		6.5%	4.3%	2.7%	1.9%		
Mayor	\$ 17,240.00	\$18,360.60	\$19,150.11	\$19,667.16	\$20,040.83	0.0%	\$ 20,040.83
Deputy Mayor	\$ 13,797.00	\$14,693.81	\$15,325.64	\$15,739.43	\$16,038.48	2.2%	\$ 16,391.33
Councillors	\$ 12,932.00	\$13,772.58	\$14,364.80	\$14,752.65	\$15,032.95	4.1%	\$ 15,649.30

**Resolution 2025-02-47 - Council foregave their 2025 CPI increase

Benefits and Expenses

A summary of additional expenses and benefits data is provided in attachment 3. Staff have reviewed the data and are recommending reimbursement of expenses as follows:

- Mileage reimbursement for attending meetings outside of the municipality for municipal business the current per kilometer rate of travel paid to employees (Canada Revenue Agency rates);
- Automatic meeting Per-diems based on Board and Committee attendances
- Training events, conferences and workshops

Recommended Change to Per Diem Meeting Reimbursement

Staff are recommending that, to reduce administrative tasks for Council and staff, the per diem for board and committee meeting attendance be provided as lump sum semi-annual payments based on attendance records provided by the various Board and Committee Secretaries. This process would no longer require Council to submit vouchers to request board and committee per diems and will ensure that the Treasurer’s annual report of Council remuneration and expenses accurately reflects time and compensation for Council duties.

Additional Expense Considerations

Council may wish to provide direction regarding including other expenses and benefits provided by the comparator subset including:

- IT services and supplies allowance
- Cell phone reimbursement
- Health and OMERS benefits.

Council Remuneration Policy

In accordance with Council’s direction, a draft Remuneration Policy has been prepared and presented as attachment 4. The Policy and Council Remuneration By-Law will provide the Chief

Administrative Officer with delegated authority to complete and implement the market review, based on Council-approved parameters within the policy. The review will be initiated six (6) months prior to an election, with the results being automatically implemented for the new term of Council.

Summary:

Council's role, as stated in the Municipal Act, is to represent the public, set direction through policies and programs, oversee services to ensure accountability and transparency and to maintain the Town's financial integrity. Compensation for the scope of this responsibility should reflect the importance of the work and align with comparable municipalities.

Financial Impact

2026-2030 Council compensation rates will impact the last 6 weeks of the 2026 budget year as the new term commences on November 15, 2026.

Consultations

Steven Freitas, Director of Finance/Treasurer

Attachments

Attachment 1- June 14, 2022 Council Remuneration Review

Attachment 2- By-Law 2022-59 A By-Law to provide for paying remuneration to members of Council.

Attachment 3- Listing of comparator expenses and benefits

Attachment 4- Draft Council Remuneration Policy

This report was submitted by

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This report was approved by

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