



Office of the Councillors

Councillor – Duties, Remuneration and Benefits

Term of Office

The term of office for a Councillor is four (4) years. A Councillor position is deemed to be a full-time position in respect to the time commitment required.

Duties

Council is the governing body of the corporation and the custodian of its powers, both legislative and administrative. The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) provides that council can only exercise the powers of a municipal corporation in the proper form, by either bylaw or resolution.

Council is responsible for making the decisions necessary to allow the corporation to achieve its purposes by:

- Determining goals and priorities
- Developing and approving policies
- Raising and spending money
- Planning and providing services and programs
- Hiring the chief appointed official (City Manager)
- Representing the municipality

Council Roles

Representative role:

- Represent the electorate as well as the whole municipality
- Gather information and access in light of what is the common good and;
- Balance the wants of the individual constituents with the needs of the entire community

Legislative role:

- Participate in policy setting, law making process and

Executive role:

- Ensure policy is carried out appropriately through the Council process

In accordance with the MGA, Councillors have the following duties:

General duties of councillors

153 Councillors have the following duties:

- a) the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole and to bring to council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality;
- (a.1) to promote an integrated and strategic approach to intermunicipal land use planning and service delivery with neighbouring municipalities;
- b) to participate generally in developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality;
- c) to participate in council meetings and council committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which they are appointed by the council;
- d) to obtain information about the operation or administration of the municipality from the chief administrative officer or a person designated by the chief administrative officer;
- e) to keep in confidence matters discussed in private at a council or council committee meeting until discussed at a meeting held in public;
- (e.1) to adhere to the code of conduct established by the council under section 146.1(1);
- f) to perform any other duty or function imposed on councillors by this or any other enactment or by the council.

RSA 2000 cM-26 s153;2015 c8 s17;2016 c24 s15

Remuneration

On September 23, 2002, Council passed Bylaw 31M2002 which established the Council Compensation Review Committee (CCRC). This Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Council regarding its remuneration, pension, benefits and other forms of compensation, or levels thereof.

During its May 29, 2017, Council received CCRC's recommendation on Councillor remuneration. It was during that meeting that Council carried a motion that "Council vote, before each election, to accept or reject the use of the Alberta Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) indicator for the next 4-year term."

In its final report to Council (CCRC2017-0508), CCRC recommended the AWE be calculated taking the 12-month average from October to September, which is the current process.

During its meeting on January 15, 2019, Council decided to freeze Councillor remuneration to the 2018 levels, which were in effect on January 01, 2018 at a rate of, for each Councillor:

\$113,325.63 per annum; taxable

Pension & Benefits

Participation is voluntary in the Pension Plan for Elected Officials of The City of Calgary.

Elected Official's contributions are at the rate of 9% taxable earnings and the municipality contributes according to a formula.

For each year of plan participation, the benefit will be 2% of the member's best three-year average earnings. An unreduced pension is available at age 60, while a reduced pension may start at minimum age of 55 and is reduced by 3% for each year prior to attainment of age 60. A 2/3 pension continues to the surviving spouse on the retired member's death.

Members of Council are eligible to participate in a benefits plan that is similar to the benefits provided to City Senior Management. Some benefits are optional and may require a premium to be paid by the Elected Official. An enrolment package and details are provided after Elected Official has been sworn in.

The benefits are as follows:

- Extended Healthcare – choice of Level 1 or Level 2 in the MEBAC benefits plan - MEBAC subsidy amount or employee contribution paid by the Elected Official. Eligible dependents may be covered.
- Dental Plan – choice of Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 in the MEBAC benefits plan- MEBAC subsidy amount or employee contribution paid by the Elected Official. Eligible dependents may be covered.
- \$300 Health Spending Account
- \$3,000 Flexible Spending Account for non-taxable expenses or cash
- Basic Life Insurance – 2x salary – City paid. Optional Life Insurance – an additional 5x salary can be purchased – 100% paid by the Elected Official. Spousal Life Insurance up to a maximum of \$400,000 can also be purchased – 100% paid by Elected Official.
- Pension
- Group RRSP

Retiree Benefit coverage is available to Elected Officials and their eligible dependents who retire from public service having served at least 2 full consecutive terms and are a minimum of 55 years of age but are under age 65 and reside in Canada.

The benefit plan, the provisions and the 50% cost share is the same as available to City retirees as follows:

- Extended Healthcare
- Dental Plan
- Life Insurance

Transportation & Parking

Councillors receive a car allowance of \$9,400 per year payable bi-weekly basis.

A parking stall at the City Hall complex is provided. Councillors also receive a special parking permit.

Indemnification Policy

Members of Council are indemnified against legal liability from actions against such matters provided that the matter relates to the performance of a Council member's duties.

Ward Budgets, Assistance & Office Space

Each ward is allocated an annual ward budget. In 2019, the annual Ward budget was adjusted down to \$285,900, from its previous level of \$288,000..

The Councillor may spend this funding on salaries of staff (assistants) employed directly by them (up to three full-time staff); miscellaneous expenses up to \$11,900, which was adjusted due to budget reductions from the previous level of \$14,000 per annum; communications, research and office projects; and up to \$10,000 per annum for travel.

These funds and corresponding expenses are tightly monitored through related Council policies along with budgeting and accounting procedures.

Each Ward office is provided a private office for the Councillor and assigned workspaces for each Ward Assistant. All workspaces are fully-equipped office work areas.

In addition, there is a team under the leadership of the Manager, Office of the Councillors who serve the Councillor and their Ward offices and provide services that include, but are not limited to accounting, payroll, human resources, technology, and communications support functions.

Council Meetings

Generally, there are one to two Council meetings and one Strategic Council meeting a month, with no Council meetings scheduled in August.

Council meetings are on Monday's, commencing at 9:30 a.m., in accordance with the Council Calendar adopted annually by Council. The current Council Calendar is available from the City Clerk's Office or on The City's website.

Committee Meetings

The City of Calgary Council [Procedure Bylaw 35M2017](#) provides information on committees and proceedings. By this Bylaw, Council establishes Standing Policy Committees (SPCs) Special Committees and the Personnel and Accountability Committee (PAC).

Types of Committee appointments:

- a) Committees established under the Municipal Government Act;
- b) Committees established under other Legislation; eg. Police Act; and
- c) Outside Committees, Boards, etc. which request or require representation by a Member of Council; eg. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association.

A Councillor is expected to:

- a) attend Regular and Special Meetings of Council;
- b) serve on two Standing Policy Committees;
- c) serve on two special committees and various commissions and boards, as appointed by Council and, is in part, limited only to the involvement desired by the individual Councillor.
- d) act as Deputy Mayor on a monthly rotation, in accordance with the roster adopted by Council.

For a more detailed description of Committees, please refer to City Clerk's Corporate Records, Main Floor, Administration Building, 313 – 7 AV SE, (268-5892) or on the City of Calgary website, www.calgary.ca, and search "Boards & Committees".

Information Contacts

For information regarding nomination and election matters, please contact the Elections and Census office at 403-476-4106 or election@calgary.ca.

For general information regarding Council and/or Committee procedures, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 403-268-5861 or cityclerk@calgary.ca.

For general information on other Councillor-related matters, contact the Office of the Councillors at 403-268-2430 or councillorweb@calgary.ca.

Council Agencies

Please refer to the Council Policy, by searching www.calgary.ca for "Appointment of Members of Council, Administration and Citizens to Agencies and Establishment of Council Agencies", for the

classification and criteria for Council Agencies and the appointment process.

The listing of all [Boards, Commissions and Committees of Council](#) can be located on the City of Calgary's website.

To view the [Calendar of the meetings for all Boards, Commissions and Committees of Council](#) can also be located on the City of Calgary's website. This site is maintained by the City Clerk's Office.

Some content was updated on November 8, 2019