

Exempt Compensation Policy – Amended Report (amendments in italics)

Recommendation:

THAT Exempt Compensation Policy No. 30.45 be approved by Council

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about the development of an Exempt Compensation Policy that formalizes the City's administration to exempt staff compensation. The policy is intended to support the attraction and retention of qualified employees, ensuring the organization has the talent required to successfully deliver on Council's strategic priorities and achieve its Objectives and Key Results (OKRs). *Please note amendments to the report are in italics.*

Previous Council Action:

Endorsed Exempt Total Compensation Review findings and implementation plan

Resolution # 07-2510-01 - Closed Council Meeting July 20, 2021

Endorsed Exempt Total Compensation Review finding and implementation plan

Resolution # R/2024-C-0143 - Closed Council Meeting October 8, 2024

Resolution # R/2025-C-76 Closed Council Meeting June 10, 2025

Financial Impact:

There is labour cost implications associated with conducting a market review and exempt staff compensation with the annually negotiated general wage increases for CUPE employees. These adjustments may result in changes to exempt staff salaries to maintain internal equity and market competitiveness.

Funding Source:

Within the existing financial plan and business planning

Strategic Alignment:

Governance & Corporate Excellence

Communications:

Required internal communications at the time of compensation changes

Exempt Compensation Policy 30.45

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to present the Exempt Compensation Policy for Council's consideration.

ANALYSIS:

Project Description:

Policy Purpose and Alignment

This policy establishes a consistent and systematic approach to exempt staff compensation, reinforcing the City's commitment to transparency, internal equity, and its ability to attract and retain skilled, high-performing employees — a commitment reflected in the City being named one of BC's Top 100 Employers for two consecutive years. These employees are essential to advancing Council's Strategic Priorities and delivering on key organizational objectives. The Exempt Total Compensation Policy is designed to align with the City's human resources strategic plan and reflects core principles of fairness, innovation, and performance excellence. It also supports the City's broader strategic direction by contributing to the achievement of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) aligned with the City's Mission, Vision, and Core Values—particularly in the areas of good governance and corporate excellence.

Compensation Philosophy

The City of Maple Ridge has adopted a market-aligned approach to all exempt total compensation, targeting the 65th percentile of a defined group of comparator organizations. This group includes an array of public organizations of similar size and scope where relevant, that compete for similar talent.

Policy Application and Procedure

This policy applies to all exempt employees of the City, except for the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

A comprehensive external market review of total compensation for exempt employees shall be conducted every *four* years by an independent compensation consultant, under the direction of the Director of Human Resources (DHR). *The review will commence in the fourth year of the cycle (Q1/Q2), with completion and implementation occurring by Q3/Q4 of the same year.*

The four-year cycle is designed to align implementation with the midpoint of Council's term, ensuring appropriate governance oversight while avoiding implementation during a municipal election year.

For example:

- *Review initiated in Q1 2024 and implemented in Q3/Q4 2024.*
- *New Council elected in 2026.*

- *Next review initiated in Q1 2028 and implemented in Q3/Q4 2028.*
- *New Council elected in 2030.*
- *Subsequent review initiated in Q1 2032 and implemented in Q3/Q4 2032.*

This structured approach provides predictability, transparency, and alignment with Council governance cycles while ensuring regular, objective market validation of exempt compensation.

The review shall be based on the City's Exempt Total Compensation Philosophy, comparator organizations, and relevant compensation indicators to ensure continued competitiveness. Following completion of the review, the DHR shall provide recommendations and revised salary ranges (if applicable) to the CAO for review and endorsement, targeting total compensation equivalent to the 65th percentile of the market before being presented to Council. Council shall review and approve any proposed adjustments and confirm its decision to the DHR through a Council resolution.

To ensure consistency and transparency in salary administration, annual general wage increases for exempt employees shall remain aligned with CUPE cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). The DHR shall review and, as necessary, adjust the exempt salary ranges to maintain alignment with these adjustments.

Sustainability/Climate Impact: not applicable

Public Engagement: not applicable

Strategic Alignment:

Support Council's Strategic Priorities through:

- I. Governance and Corporate Excellence by ensuring compensation is in line with those across the region, supports recruitment initiatives for "hard to recruit" positions.
- II. Helps to support a diversified thriving economy by enabling the city to be responsive to our evolving community needs through the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals.

Aligns with the Human Resources Strategic Plan by:

- I. Demonstrating a commitment to the recruitment and retention of our employees through competitive wages, benefits and flexible working hours for employees.
- II. Positions the City of Maple Ridge as an employer of choice.
- III. Supports the City's ability to attract and engage the necessary talent to move forward on achievement of Council's Strategic Priorities, while also reflecting the organization's value statements.
- IV. Maintains competitive market positioning, while ensuring internal equity and fairness.

Advisory Committee Consultation: not applicable

Financial Impact:

There is labour cost implications associated with conducting a market review as well as the annually negotiated general wage increases. These adjustments may result in changes to the

exempt salary ranges to maintain internal equity and market competitiveness. Annual general wage increases, in alignment with the cost-of-living adjustments negotiated through the CUPE Collective Agreement during its term, will continue to be incorporated in existing financial planning practices.

Applicable Legislation/Bylaw/Policy: not applicable

OPTIONS & IMPLICATIONS:

One alternative to formalizing the Exempt Compensation Policy is to continue with the current ad hoc approach, which relies on a 2004 resolution but lacks a clear, documented policy. While this informal practice has guided compensation decisions to date, it carries risks related to inconsistent application and potential challenges in maintaining consistency. Without a formal policy, decisions may be subject to re-evaluation or duplication, creating inefficiencies and potential confusion. Maintaining the status quo may also expose the City to challenges in demonstrating fairness and transparency. By contrast, adopting a neutral, bona fide policy ensures a consistent, transparent framework that aligns with best practices and reduces risk, providing clarity and accountability in exempt compensation management.

CONCLUSION:

The Exempt Total Compensation Policy supports the City's commitment to good governance, talent retention, and strategic service delivery. By aligning compensation with market standards, ability to pay, and internal values, the City strengthens its ability to achieve Council's strategic goals and ensure the continuity of service to the community.

Staff recommend that Council approve the policy as presented.

Prepared by: Cynthia Ulrich, Human
Resources Manager Total Rewards &
Wellbeing

Attachments: *(A) Exempt Compensation Policy 30.45 Amended*

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Exempt Employee Compensation Policy Amended.docx
Attachments:	- Policy 30.45 Exempt Employee Compensation (amended from Mar 3 COW).docx
Final Approval Date:	Mar 4, 2026

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

Michelle Lewis, Chief Human Resources Officer/Director, Human Resources

Carolyn Mushata, Director of Legislative Services and Corporate Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer