

Title: Council Expense Policy		Policy No: 3.07
		Supersedes: Council Training, Conferences and Association Building Policy – No. 3.07 Rev. 2 (July 22, 2014).
Effective Date: July 22, 2014	Amended Date: October 8, 2024	Review Date: October 8, 2026
<p>Policy Statement: The City recognizes that Council plays a pivotal role in engaging with citizens and providing strategic direction to the City of Maple Ridge, and that Council may incur expenses throughout the course of their role during their term as an elected official. The City encourages Council attendance at Community Events and Conferences, and enrolment in Self-Directed Training that is aligned with their role as elected officials.</p>		
<p>Purpose: The purpose of this Policy is to establish procedures and guidance for Council regarding expenditures they may incur during the performance of their roles as elected officials. This Policy sets out parameters to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide transparency to the public on how funds are allocated towards Council expenditures; b. establish accountability and oversight of how funds are allocated towards Council expenditures; and c. support training, networking, and professional development opportunities for Council that enhance their role in serving the community. 		
<p>Scope: This Policy applies to members of Council, and relates specifically to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. attendance at meetings (in and out of town); b. conferences, training, and networking opportunities; c. reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses; and d. and other matters as set out in this Policy. <p>This Policy does not apply to items such as expenses for cell phones or other technology required by Council members to undertake their work, nor does it apply to expenses incurred to advance the business interests of the City. Examples of such expenses include those incurred to meet with officials in other levels of government to advocate for City interests.</p>		
<p>Definitions:</p> <p>“Community Events” means local events that Council members may wish to participate in for networking purposes in relation to their role as an elected official.</p>		

“Conferences” means municipal learning opportunities that the Mayor and Council may attend in accordance with this Policy that are hosted by specific organizations, those being the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Lower Mainland Local Government Association, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

“Council” means the Council of the City of Maple Ridge.

“Executive Committees” means executive committees associated with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Lower Mainland Local Government Association, or the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

“Mayor and Council” means either the Mayor, or Council, or both together, depending on the context within this Policy.

“Professional Childcare Services” means childcare services offered by a third party through licensed childcare professionals to supervise children 14 years of age or younger, offered as part of a Conference to all Conference attendees as an optional service. This definition excludes any childcare services offered by family members or any relatives of the child.

“Self-Directed Training” means professional development opportunities, workshops, or conferences that Council members may elect to participate in that are not Conferences or Community Events and are directly related to the role of an elected official.

“Subcommittees” means subcommittees associated with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Lower Mainland Local Government Association, or the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Procedure:

APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

1. All expenses claimed must be within the budget set aside for this purpose in the Council-approved Financial Plan.
2. Councillor expenses will be approved by the Mayor. Expenses for the Mayor will be approved by the CAO.
3. The Finance Department will provide Council with a monthly financial update report through a regular Council Meeting agenda that will allow members of Council to review their expenses. If expenses are expected to exceed this Policy’s budget allocation, planned expenditures must be adjusted accordingly to mitigate this issue or be pre-approved in accordance with section 4 of this Policy.
4. Any expenditures that might exceed the annual budget allocation must be pre-approved by Council. A summary of the proposed expenditures, including a description of the type of expenses, the expense estimates, and the reason for the expenses, is required prior to pre-approval.
5. Pre-approved expenditures in excess of the annual budget allocation will be recovered through a reduction in the annual budget allocation for the following fiscal year.

6. Any expenses in excess of the annual budget allocation in the final year of a Council mandate will be reimbursed to the City.

BUDGET ALLOCATION

7. The budget for expenditures is set out in Schedule A of this Policy.
8. Per diem will be determined and updated annually based on Canada Revenue Agency's Meals and Expense Allowance, found at the following hyperlink, as amended from time to time: HYPERLINK: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/corporate/about-canada-revenue-agency-cra/travel-directive/appendix-b-meals-allowances-october-2023.html> (described as [Appendix B: Meals and allowances - Canada.ca.](#))
9. Per diem allowances will be pro-rated based on the time of travel and meals provided. For each meal provided at a conference or event, the eligible per diem amount will be reduced by the provision for that meal.
10. Per diem allowances are included in the annual budgets for Mayor and Council.

TRANSPORTATION

Travel Expenses

11. Travel by bus, plane, train, or vehicle are permitted, including roundtrip travel. Expenses may only be claimed for economy travel fares, and associated costs of travel. Where multiple options for economy travel fares are offered, the option that provides an appropriate level of flexibility for travel changes may be selected.
12. Other costs associated with travel may also be reimbursed, including:
 - a. tolls;
 - b. first luggage fee;
 - c. parking meter fees;
 - d. vehicle mileage for distance travelled where travel including return trip is within a radius equal to or less than 80 kilometers from Maple Ridge City Hall is precluded from reimbursement, and any travel outside of this radius will be paid at the prevailing reasonable rate as determined by Canada Revenue Agency; and
 - e. taxis and rideshares (i.e. Uber).
13. Mayor and Council will use their own personal vehicle for City-business travel. Compensation for this use is incorporated into the current Council Remuneration Bylaw.

Partner and Family Travel

14. Partners or family members of the Mayor and Council will not be reimbursed for travel expenses.

Childcare

15. Where Mayor and Council are attending a Conference, they may register for and use Professional Childcare Services available to all Conference attendees.
16. The cost of using those Professional Childcare Services at the Conference may be claimed as an eligible expense, up to \$100 per day of the Conference, which will be reimbursed through the prescribed budget set out in Schedule A.

17. Costs incurred for Professional Childcare Services must be supported by receipts and submitted to the Finance Department within 30 days of Conference attendance prior to issuance of any reimbursement for claimed expenses.

Business and Personal Travel

18. Mayor and Council wishing to combine City-business travel with their own personal travel may do so at their own expense, including any additional accommodation and miscellaneous expenses not associated with business travel for the City.

ACCOMMODATIONS

19. Accommodation costs must be reasonable and within the prescribed budget of this Policy.
20. If Mayor and Council are travelling outside of Maple Ridge on City-business and overnight accommodations are required, the limits set out in section 8 of this Policy will apply.

TRAINING AND EVENTS

Registration Fees and Meals

21. If no overnight accommodations are required and no meals are provided, meals purchased, and fees associated with registration for Conferences, Subcommittees, Executive Committees, Community Events, and Self-Directed Training may be claimed per diem as set out in Schedule A.

Conferences and Subcommittees

22. The Mayor and Council may attend the following conferences:
- a. The Union of BC Municipalities (“UBCM”) on an annual basis;
 - b. The Lower Mainland Local Government Association (“LMLGA”) on an annual basis;
 - c. the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (“FCM”) a minimum of twice during their term of office; the Mayor may attend FCM annually.
23. If members of Council are official Council representatives for Subcommittees or Executive Committees of the UBCM or FCM, they may attend those Subcommittees or Executive Committees as needed, and any expenditures that are not paid for by UBCM or FCM may also be eligible to be claimed.

Community Events

24. The Mayor and Council may attend Community Events and incur reasonable expenses that align with this Policy such as registration and meals. Up to \$1,500 of the annual budget allocation may be directed to Community Events.

Self-Directed Training

25. Self-Directed Training provides Council members with the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that relate to their role as elected officials.
26. The Mayor and Council may attend Self-Directed Training and incur reasonable expenses that align with this Policy. Such expenses are provided for in the annual budget allotments outlined in Schedule A to this policy.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

27. Certain expenditures are ineligible to be claimed, including the following:
- a. costs for overnight accommodations in Maple Ridge;
 - b. traffic fines or parking tickets;
 - c. costs for vehicle repair, towing, or accidents;
 - d. mileage claims for travel where the distance of the return trip, as measured from Maple Ridge City Hall, is equal to or less than 80 kilometers;
 - e. costs related to partner or family travel;
 - f. costs related to political or partisan events;
 - g. costs related to degrees and diplomas; and
 - h. any other expenditures deemed to exceed the scope, intent, and budget of this Policy, as determined by the Director of Finance or their designate.

Administration:

1. This Policy will be administered by the Director of Finance or their designate.
2. This Policy will be reviewed by the Director of Finance or their designate 2 years following adoption to ensure that it is still meeting the requirements of the City. After the initial review, this Policy will be reviewed in the first year of Council’s mandate, the process of which will prevail over the Policy Governance Framework’s usual review requirement.
3. All registrations and travel arrangements related to this Policy will be coordinated through the Administration Department.

Consequences:

4. Breach of this Policy will be addressed pursuant to the most current Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.

Accommodations:

5. If there are extenuating circumstances that necessitate a partner or family member travel with a Council member, such as injury, illness or disability necessitating their assistance, exceptions may be considered to accommodate this and approved by a resolution of Council.

(Administration Only)	Signature	Date Signed
Resolution No.:	_____	_____

Schedule A – Annual Budget Allocation

	2024	2025	2026	2027
Mayor	\$15,000	\$15,300	\$15,606	\$15,918
Councillor	\$10,000	\$10,200	\$10,404	\$10,612

*Up to \$1,500 of the Annual Budget Allocation may be directed to attendance at Community Events

