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# Mayoralty Status Review

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Recommendations from the Task  
Force on Mayoralty Status

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June 19, 2017

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## Executive Summary

Duly elected municipal councils provide both leadership and service through governance. The position of Mayor is the main spokesperson for Council and provides an essential leadership role to promote and foster the welfare and interests of the City by acting as a catalyst for Council's vision as set out in the Strategic Plan. This leadership role is also essential for building a cohesive team in Council in order to best serve the community. Demands on the position have increased substantially with the growth of the City and the increased need for regional collaboration; this has placed enormous pressures on the current part-time status of the position.

In April 2015, Council approved the establishment of the 2015 Task Force on Council Remuneration to review and provide recommendations concerning forms of compensation to elected officials for the current and 2017 - 2021 terms. The scope of this review also included status of the Office of the Mayor. The 2015 Task Force recommended that Council strongly consider a move to a full-time Mayor for the 2017 election based on the trends of the day in growth and business development. They recommended that a task force be struck early in 2017 to determine specifically if those trends were continuing and if a full-time Mayor was warranted for the City of Spruce Grove.

Based on this recommendation, in March 2017, Council approved the establishment of the Task Force on Mayoralty Status to review the position of the Mayor and recommend either to continue as part-time or move to a full-time for the 2017 – 2021 term of council. If the Task Force determined that a full-time Mayor was warranted, the Task Force would provide a recommendation for the compensation of that position.

Included within this report is a detailed overview of the mandate, methodology and process of the Task Force on Mayoralty Status. The recommendations, financial impact, rationale, as well as observations and considerations are outlined in detail in the report.

An analysis of input from Council and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), as well as consideration of economic development, growth, and regional cooperation factors were integral to the recommendation being brought forward and outlined below:

1. That the position of Mayor move from a part-time to full-time commencing at the 2017 – 2021 term of council.
2. That the base salary for the Mayor be adjusted from \$78,750 to \$88,000 effective October 23, 2017.

3. Benefits

That the benefits provided to the Mayor as outlined in section 5 and section 10 of the Council Remuneration Policy remain the same.

The recommendations are provided for Council's review and approval. The comments and observations included in this report are provided for context and consideration.

## Mandate

### ***Task Force on Mayoralty Status***

Council approved the formation of the Task Force on Mayoralty Status and appointed members at the March 13, 2017 regular meeting of Council. The appointed members brought a wealth of experience from both public and private sectors; including expertise in education, psychology, human resources, intergovernmental relations, community development and leadership.

The 2017 Task Force is comprised of three members, Mr. James Trodden, Ms. Susan Ulyot, and Mr. Daniel Doornekamp. One individual who served during the 2013 remuneration review was appointed once again for the 2017 Task Force on Mayoralty Status, thus providing the Task Force with a level of continuity and further insight into previous recommendations.

### ***Task Force Terms of Reference***

The Terms of Reference identifies the Task Force as an independent body charged with reviewing and bringing forward recommendations regarding the position of Mayor and regarding compensation for the position if it is determined that the position should move to full-time status. The final report and recommendations of the Task Force are not binding upon Council, and may be amended or set aside as Council deems appropriate.

The Terms of Reference are attached to this report as Appendix A.

## Factors Affecting the Position of Mayor

### **Methodology**

Following a review of the mandate of the Task Force on Mayoralty Status, as approved by Council, members spent time reviewing background information gathered to support their work. Information included the City's Strategic Plan, Council roles and responsibilities, Council Board and Committee appointments as well as reports on growth of the City, on regional collaboration and economic development. A list of the reference material reviewed is attached as Appendix B.

The Task Force quickly recognized the importance of separating the roles and responsibilities required for the position from the incumbent and identified this as a guiding principle for their work.

From this principle, the Task Force worked to gain a sound understanding of governance principles as well as the *Municipal Government Act* as they relate to and direct the roles and responsibilities of a Mayor and Council.

They sought to learn about the current challenges and opportunities facing the municipality and how that would impact Council and the role of a Mayor. The Task Force recognized that these pieces were integral to their work.

They sought to define the roles and responsibilities of the position of Spruce Grove's Mayor and used this like a job description guiding the recommendations brought forward.

The Task Force met 7 times and between the three volunteer members, spent over 50 hours reviewing all aspects set forth in the Terms of Reference. They were assisted by two members of administration responsible for research and logistics.

### ***Key Factors***

A number of key factors were used by the Task Force to determine the current and future requirements for the position of Mayor and to inform their recommendations. They included:

- Consultation with all members of Council and the CAO;
- The current status of economic development and the economic development outlook for the City including upcoming development opportunities;
- The growing complexity of political matters, regional collaboration, regional economic growth and participation within the capital region;
- The City's Strategic Plan, its vision and the goals associated with achieving that vision;
- An analysis of the unprecedented growth the City is experiencing, and the long-range planning and growth outlook; and
- The public relations role of the Mayor as the City's spokesperson.

### **Input from Members of Council and the Chief Administrative Officer**

The Task Force opted to interview every member of Council as they recognized the value of the depth and breadth of knowledge within the current Council and sought their input. They specifically discussed Council's vision for the future, the top issues facing



the City, the activities and commitments of each member of Council as well as key areas and challenges for the position of Mayor.

Given the distinct relationship between the positions of Mayor and CAO and the unique nature of the two positions as the key spokespersons for the governance and administrative bodies that must work cooperatively in order to be successful, the Task Force's interview of the CAO focused on his relationship and interactions with the position, both in Spruce Grove as well as the other municipalities he has worked in. The Task Force and CAO also discussed how the position of Mayor adds value to Council and the community, future challenges facing the position and Council as a whole, and any risks and opportunities should the position be moved to full-time.

### **Growing the Economy**

The Task Force was provided with an overview of current economic development activity, future economic development opportunities, and how the work of a Mayor can propel them forward.

It was noted that economic development such as the upcoming Westwind development attracts investment and businesses which create employment opportunities in the City. Furthermore, the growth of the non-residential tax base helps keep residential taxes reasonable and creates a more positive financial outlook for the City. It was also noted that the involvement of a Mayor is a key part of any economic development success for the City, as the position is seen as the leader and key spokesperson for the City.

### **Engaging in Regional Collaboration/Issues**

Regional collaboration and inter-municipal partnerships have been identified as a priority. Recent proposed amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* highlight the requirement for more regional partnerships in order to create more effective and efficient service delivery and decrease the duplication of costs. Recent initiatives such as the Metro Mayors Alliance and proposed economic development arm are spearheading this shift.

The position of Mayor is currently involved in many regional meetings, committees and boards such as the Capital Region Board, Metro Mayors Alliance, Tri-Mayor meetings, Tri-Council meetings, and the Inter-Municipal Collaboration Committee.

### **Achieving the City's Vision**

The Task Force reviewed the 2015 – 2035 City of Spruce Grove Strategic Plan, which outlines the City's vision and goals for the future. The vision is to make Spruce Grove a

place where people choose to live by fostering an exceptional quality of life, a place where people choose to raise a family by creating a leading recreation, leisure and sports community and a place to where people choose to grow a business by creating a strong, diversified regional business centre.

Council, during their interviews, identified the following priorities for the next five to ten years:

- Reasonable taxes;
- Planned growth;
- Economic development;
- Community safety; and
- Exceptional quality of life.

Council also identified the growth of the community, the complexity of matters coming before them as well as the move toward a greater focus on regionalization and inter-municipal partnerships as having a direct impact on the increasing demands being placed on both Council and the position of Mayor.

The influence a Mayor can have on spurring strategies that focus on the priorities and work toward the vision was often mentioned. The position of Mayor is often the first point of contact for launching regional partnerships and for the business and development community. The Mayor's participation in discussions was identified as essential.

### **Growing the City**

The Task Force was provided with information regarding future growth within the City of Spruce Grove. It was noted that the City has been experiencing an average growth rate of 5.6% annually over the past ten years, and it is expected that the City's population will double within the next 15 years.

As the City has a policy to maintain a 25 year supply of residential and non-residential land, it will be required to annex land to support its growing population. A Mayor can have a prominent governance role in the negotiation process with other affected municipalities regarding annexation, which highlights the complex issues and time demands resulting from growth.

## Engaging in Public Relations

An elected official is often highly visible and a Mayor even more so. Given the position's high visibility and the spokesperson role, demands and enquiries from residents and the business community are common. Furthermore, media enquiries are generally directed towards a Mayor for comment on municipal issues.

## Recommendation

### *Full-time Mayor*

#### *Recommendation:*

That the position of Mayor move from part-time to full-time beginning with the 2017 – 2021 term of council.

#### *Rationale:*

A Mayor plays an important leadership role for Council and the community. In order for a Mayor to effectively act as a catalyst in achieving the vision of Council, it would be prudent to recognize the current and future demands of the position and shift it to that of full-time.

The position is often the first point of contact for developers and the business community. It is through access to a Mayor that potential developers or businesses gain a sense of how business-friendly the City is. Often the involvement of the position of Mayor open doors to economic development opportunities that the City otherwise would not have.

Through increased commercial/industrial development and tax base, the City can create jobs, keep residential tax rates reasonable, and provide quality services to residents, which all deliver on the City's vision of the best place to live, to raise an active, healthy family and to grow a strong, successful business.

The growth plans of the City will place more time demands on the position of Mayor with respect to advancing the interests of the City, ensuring growth benefits the City, and ensuring that the City's values are maintained and the City's vision is achieved as the City grows.

The position of Mayor is increasingly involved in regional collaboration and regional issues. The position's participation is necessary in advocating and lobbying for regional initiatives that benefit the City and the greater region as a whole. The demands on the position of Mayor with respect to regional issues will grow given upcoming amendments to the *Municipal Government Act*, as well as recent initiatives in the Edmonton metro region.

With the increase in growth, economic development, regional issues and resident and business demands, it is anticipated that media enquiries and the spokesperson role of the position will continue to increase.

The impact of the increasing demand on the position's time to participate in these activities, as well as a requirement to delve into and decide on more complex matters further highlights the need for a full-time Mayor.

## Remuneration

### Methodology

Following a review of the mandate of the Task Force on Mayoralty Status, as approved by Council, members spent time reviewing background information regarding current remuneration figures for the position of Mayor and comparative data on remuneration and benefits from comparable municipalities with a full-time Mayor.

### Key Factors

The key factors that were used by the Task Force to determine the remuneration for a full-time position included:

- An overview of the current requirements and demands of the position;
- A review of compensation data of other like-sized municipalities within in Alberta with a full-time Mayor;
- A further review of like-sized communities facing similar demands such as economic development, regional collaboration and/or growth.

### Current Requirements

The Task Force noted that although the position of Mayor is currently designated as part-time, the requirements and demands of the position are currently full-time in nature.

The Task Force would also like to highlight that although the position of an elected official may carry a label of part-time or full-time, the demands of the position and the hours of work are not traditional in nature; there is a strong requirement for flexibility.

## **Comparators**

The Task Force engaged Administration to conduct research of comparator municipalities to assist them in making informed recommendations. It was determined that industrial development, community growth and a more prominent role in regional collaboration contributed to other municipalities moving to a full-time Mayor.

Compensation information from like-sized municipalities that utilized a full-time Mayor were provided to the Task Force, and is included within this report as Appendix C. The Task Force reviewed comparator data of like-sized municipalities, and specifically focused on comparator data from the City of Fort Saskatchewan, the City of Okotoks and Parkland County given similar characteristics such as a similar population size, location outside of a large urban centre, involvement in regional collaboration, industrial growth and a desire to diversify their tax base.

## **Recommendation**

### ***Mayor Remuneration – Base Salary***

#### *Recommendation:*

That effective October 23, 2017 adjust the base salary for the position of Mayor from \$78,750 to \$88,000.

#### *Rationale:*

Although the position of Mayor is currently designated as part-time, the requirements and time demands of the position are full-time in nature and the compensation should reflect the full-time designation.

Based on review of the comparator quantitative data from the City of Fort Saskatchewan, City of Okotoks and Parkland County, the Task Force determined that

an increase in salary was warranted. All three municipalities share similar characteristics to the City of Spruce Grove and provided a relevant and useful comparison for comparing salaries. The salary increase represents a compensation philosophy that is competitive, based on a per capita calculation of comparable salaries of like municipalities. 10

### ***Benefits***

#### *Recommendation:*

That the benefits provided to the Mayor as outlined in section 5 and section 10 of the Council Remuneration Policy remain the same.

#### *Rationale:*

The Task Force determined that the City provides excellent benefits. Members of Council are offered the same benefits package as City Administration.

These benefits include but are not limited to:

- a. Extended Health benefits
- b. Dental benefits
- c. Life Insurance
- d. Health and Wellness benefit
- e. Canada Savings Bond contribution deductions
- f. Self-directed RRSP contribution deductions
- g. Tax Free Savings Account contribution deductions
- h. Computer Purchase Program
- i. Employee Family Assistance Program

Council may also participate in a retirement savings program where the City matches up to 4% of a Council's annual salary into an RRSP or RIF for each year of elected service to the City.

## Financial Impacts

The recommended annual salary of the position of Mayor will increase by \$9,250. The pro-rated increase for 2017 will be absorbed in the City's budget, and will be factored into the City's 2018 – 2020 Corporate Plan which will be brought forward for Council approval later this year.

## Considerations

The Task Force gained insight into municipal governance and administration during its tenure. The group also, through its interaction with Council and Administration made some key observations that they believed were important to share with Council.

### **Leadership and Strategic Support**

As per s. 153 (a) of the *Municipal Government Act*, the role of Councillors are to consider and bring to Council's attention anything that would promote the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole. The role of the position of Mayor is that of Chair of Council, who acts as a team captain.

The role of the position is also partly defined by the vision established in the City's Strategic Plan. That role is to act as a catalyst in the implementation of the City's vision and goals. With the move to a full-time Mayor there is an increased opportunity for the position to further engage in the leadership role provided through the Strategic Plan and to provide the strategic support to Council as a team in furthering the City's vision and goals.

### **Communication**

It is the responsibility of the position of Mayor to act as a facilitator for the Council/Administration interface. Both the Council Team Charter and Council's Guiding Principles outline Councils' commitment to honest and constructive communication between Council members, for Council to share information and keep one another informed on an ongoing basis, and to have purposeful discussions that respect and challenges each other's ideas and opinions. Furthermore, the Council/Administration Protocol outlines the need for Council to adhere to communication channels with Administration.

The Task Force noted that this communication role will become particularly important given the change in role of the position of Mayor to full-time, while Council remains part-time. There is an opportunity for the position of Mayor to take an increased leadership role in ensuring ongoing and effective communication with members of Council and Administration. This will mitigate any communication gaps between the Mayor and Council, and between Council and Administration.



**Appendices**

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Appendix B: Task Force on Mayoralty Status – Reference Material

Appendix C: Mayor Remuneration Comparison

## References

1. 2015 – 2035 City of Sprue Grove Strategic Plan
2. Council/Administration Protocol
3. Council Team Charter
4. Council's Guiding Principles
5. *Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter M-26*



## TASK FORCE ON MAYORALTY STATUS TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Purpose:**

The Task Force on Mayoralty Status is established to review the part-time status of the office of the mayor and provide a recommendation to Council.

### **Scope:**

The task force will review the position of the mayor, recommending either to continue as part-time or move to full-time for the 2017-2021 term of council.

If the task force determines a full-time mayor is warranted for the City of Spruce Grove, the task force will be required to provide a recommendation for compensation of that position.

### **Composition:**

The task force will be composed of three to five public members who currently reside in the City of Spruce Grove and meet the eligibility requirements of an elector as stipulated in the *Local Authorities Election Act*:

- at least 18 years old,
- a Canadian citizen, and
- resided in Alberta for at least 6 consecutive months and the person's place of residence is located in the area.

At the first task force meeting the members shall choose a chairman from among their number. The chairman shall act as a spokesperson for the task force and as liaison between the task force and administration.

### **Membership Participation:**

Members who have been appointed to the task force by Council will receive no remuneration. Members who cannot fulfill the commitment may be replaced by Council.

### **Decision Process:**

Decisions of the task force will be made by simple majority of the members present. The chairman shall be considered a member and shall be entitled to vote on all motions of the task force.

### **Quorum:**

A quorum for task force meetings shall be three (3) members including the chairman.

**Closed Meeting Sessions:**

Task force meetings will not be open to the public.

**Administrative Support:**

The City Clerk shall assume the role of staff advisor to coordinate and assist the activities of the task force.

**Task Force Reporting:**

The task force shall present its report to Council no later than the regular council meeting scheduled on April 10, 2017. This would require the task force to complete its deliberations and the report no later than April 1, 2017.

The task force report to Council shall be in the form of advice and recommendations. These recommendations are not binding upon Council, and may be amended or set aside as Council deems appropriate.

## Task Force on Mayoralty Status – Reference Materials

1. Task Force on Mayoralty Status Terms of Reference
2. Meeting Schedule and Calendar
3. City of Spruce Grove 2015 Council Remuneration Review Final Report
4. Reference Documents
  - a. City of Spruce Grove Strategic Plan
  - b. 2016 Spruce Grove Municipal Census Report
  - c. 2016 Federal Census Profile
  - d. City of Spruce Grove Growth Study Business Item
  - e. City of Spruce Grove Growth Study Excerpt
  - f. Public Notice: Metro Mayor's Alliance
  - g. Metro Mayor's Alliance Presentation to Council
  - h. Capital Region Board Growth Plan Executive Summary
  - i. Retail Gap Analysis Executive Summary
  - j. 2016 Development Activity Report
  - k. 2016 Building Permit Summary
5. Council and Mayor Duties and Appointments
  - l. Briefing Note: Mayor's Calendar
  - m. Council Committee and Board Appointments
  - n. Mayor's Calendar February 2016 – February 2017
6. Comparative Data
  - o. Briefing Note: Comparative Municipality Information
  - p. Full Time Mayor Status by Population
  - q. Town of Okotoks– E-mail correspondence
  - r. City of Fort Saskatchewan Public Council Remuneration Review Committee Recommendations for 2011-13
  - s. 2012 Parkland County Council Remuneration Committee Compensation Review
  - t. Lethbridge Citizen's Assembly on Councillor Employment and Compensation Final Report (2016)
7. Salary and Benefits
  - u. Council Salary and Benefit Disclosure
  - v. Council Travel and Subsistence
  - w. City of Spruce Grove Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
  - x. Council Remuneration Comparison (2015)
8. Sample Interview Questions

APPENDIX "C"

| Mayor Remuneration - Market Comparisons |                                     |              |                      |                     |                            |           |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Municipality                            | Population<br>(2016 Federal Census) | Mayor Status | # of Council Members | Base Salary<br>2017 | 2016<br>Per Diem/Allowance | Total     |
| City of Spruce Grove                    | 34,066                              | Part-time    | 7                    | \$78,750            | \$18,233                   | \$96,983  |
| City of Fort Saskatchewan               | 24,149                              | Full-time    | 7                    | \$77,365            | \$0                        | \$77,365  |
| Town of Okotoks                         | 28,881                              | Full-time    | 7                    | \$77,661            | \$2,800                    | \$80,461  |
| Parkland County                         | 32,097                              | Full-time    | 7                    | \$82,715            | \$27,319                   | \$110,034 |