

Below are our comments for the Council Compensation Review Task Force. Thank you for the opportunity to engage with this process:

LYAC Submission to Council Compensation Taskforce

INTRODUCTION

The London Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) represents youth aged 15-25 in the City of London. It seeks to present the youth perspective on key issues in the City and to articulate how youth are uniquely impacted by policy decisions. The LYAC strives to engage youth in important municipal issues and does not confine itself to youth-specific policy areas. The LYAC has chosen to write about the principles and values that we believe should underpin the Committee's review of Council compensation. The compensation of London City Council members is of importance to London's youth constituency and the LYAC thanks the Council Compensation Taskforce for the opportunity to submit thoughts its behalf.

COMPENSATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Accessibility and Availability

London Youth face barriers to participation in the political system. Youth often do not feel comfortable engaging in the traditional political system because they are intimidated by the age-gap between youth and Councilor; or by a lack of direct knowledge of government. In addition, the majority of London's youth are not of voting age so they are not conditioned to expect the same level of constituent support from their Councilor. As a result, many youth do not engage with their City Councilor and find their views underrepresented in the City.

The LYAC recommends that the Council Compensation Committee ensure that Councilors are paid enough for Council to expect each Councilor to devote significant time and energy to initiating direct contact with youth constituents.

Recognition of Time Required

Councilors should be informed and knowledgeable about the key issues facing London's youth population. Youth understand the importance of a strong commitment to research, study and preparation and believe that a key element of a City Councilor's job is to demonstrate a willingness to read reports, conduct primary research and prepare stances on issues. Youth also understand what it is like to have other responsibilities that constrain available time to accomplish tasks.

The LYAC recommends that the Council Compensation Committee ensure that Councilors are compensated in line with the expected time needed to effectively review reports, conduct primary research, prepare stances on issues and maintain day-to-day constituency outreach activities.

Maximizing Salary Investment

London's Youth recognize that being a City Councilor is a demanding role. Councilors must learn about a variety of complex issues 'on-the-fly' and may not feel equipped to participate in each discussion. In order to maximize the City of London's investment in Councilor salaries the LYAC believes that every effort should be made to provide new Councilors with the necessary opportunities to learn their role, the issues that they will encounter and the skills that they will need to meet expectations. Clear job expectations and opportunities for development mean that youth can expect a certain level of understanding coming into the role.

The LYAC recommends that the Council Compensation Committee ensure that any level of compensation is accompanied with clear instruction and training on the responsibilities and expectations of holding civic office and that opportunities for mentorship and professional development be made available to Councilors.

AND

Specifically that the Council Compensation Committee ensure that any level of compensation be accompanied by the availability of resources to assist Councilors in the comprehension of how policy decisions uniquely impact youth.

REVIEW PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

A Designated Youth Voice

Youth are underrepresented in the City's committee structure. Many barriers prevent youth from participating in City committees making it unlikely that any youth will ever hold one of the citizen-at-large appointments to the Council Compensation Committee.

The LYAC recommends that the Council Compensation Committee add a designated youth seat to the Committee.

A Youth Engagement Strategy

Youth should be engaged in the process of reviewing councillor and mayoral compensation. Many youth do not interact with traditional forms of media and do not understand the value that they could bring to the discussion. It is also likely that many youth do not feel informed enough to offer an opinion on the topic of councillor compensation. The LYAC applauds the Council Compensation Committee for its efforts to engage citizens of London in this year's review and believes that future reviews will offer an opportunity to further develop this outreach to better engage youth.

The LYAC recommends that the Council Compensation Committee committee explore alternative methods of obtaining youth opinions on Council compensation by considering the use of social media online discussion forums, focus groups, etc.

Thank you Heather,
Matt Ross

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