



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Financial Services

To: Policies and Priorities Committee

From: Tom Kitsos, Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Date to Council: November 26, 2024

Report Number: FS-2024-15

Subject: Amendments to Travel Policies 14 and 127

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report FS-2024-20 entitled “Amendments to Travel Policies 14 and 127” **be received**;

And that direction **be provided** with respect to the defined amounts of the Annual Discretionary Allowances to be set out in Appendix A of Policy 127 for the Mayor and Members of Council;

And further that amended policies, policy number 14 “Travel Policy – Municipal Employees” and policy number 127 “Travel Policy – Council and Members of a Local Board” in Attachments 1 and 2 respectively, **be recommended** by the Policies and Priorities Committee for approval and adoption at the December 10, 2024, Regular Council Meeting.

Background

The Town of Tecumseh (Town) first implemented a Travel Policy in 2001, policy number 14, which has been updated several times since inception. The policy established allowable expenses for Council Members, Municipal Employees, and Appointed Officials.

The latest updates occurred in March and May of 2024, through council reports FS-2024-04 “Travel Policy – Council” and FS 2024-08 “Travel Policy – Municipal Employees and Members of Local Boards”, which included the following changes:

- Greater clarification of allowable expenses through use of definitions and/or expanded detail within the body of the policy;
- Travel Expense approval authority directly tied to budget approval authority;
- A separate policy for Council; and
- Updated reimbursement rates

Policy number 14 was renamed “Travel Policy – Municipal Employees and Members of Local Boards” and policy number 127 named “Travel Policy – Council” was created.

Both policies were adopted by Council and are currently in effect.

Comments

Administration recommends amendments to Policies 14 and 127 to address the following:

- Transportation fluctuating costs, practicality and reliability have become influential factors when traveling. Rail and air costs fluctuate continuously, making it challenging to determine comparable costs to personal vehicle. Additionally, personal travel restrictions and/or other considerations such as WiFi access may influence mode of transportation practicality. Administration recommends:
 - Easing restrictive language within the policies regarding allowable reimbursement amounts related to modes of transportation, allowing for reasonable flexibility to the satisfaction of the Expense Review Officer (ERO), for Members of Council, Members of Local Boards and Employees;
 - Recommendation to select flexible or refundable options, when traveling by a mode other than vehicle, to ensure adaptability in the event of unforeseen changes (rail, air delays/cancellations for example).
- Improve budgetary control and equitability while allowing for flexibility with travel arrangements for Members of Council;
 - Introducing an Annual Discretionary Allowance to reimburse Members of Council for reasonable expenses incurred while traveling on Town business. The Annual Discretionary Allowance applies to Members of

Council only and is to have a defined amount, restrictions for use and Member accountability.

- Allowable expenses for Members of Local Boards are more closely related to those of Council Members;
 - Administration recommends that policy number 127 be amended to include Members of Local Boards and that policy number 14 be amended to only pertain to Municipal Employees.
- Travel Pre-Approval requirements well in advance of Events;
 - Providing for greater budgetary control and a more structured methodology for prioritizing Event attendance and professional development.

Consultations

Chief Administrative Officer

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications with this report. Annual travel expense costs are limited to the approved annual budget.

Council direction is sought with respect to the defined amounts of the Annual Discretionary Allowances to be set out in Appendix A of Policy 127 for the Mayor and Members of Council. As noted in Section 10.1 c), notwithstanding the Annual Discretionary Allowance provided per Member of Council, the combined travel expenditures by all Council Members are limited to the department's annually approved budget.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2023-2026 Strategic Priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

Communications

Not applicable

Website Social Media News Release Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Tom Kitsos, CPA, CMA, BComm
Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
1	Policy number 14: Travel Policy – Municipal Employees
2	Policy number 127: Travel Policy – Council and Members of a Local Board