

<b>Section 5 - Finance</b>	<b>Policy # 1650.00.02</b>
<b>Subject: Council Expense Reimbursement</b>	<b>Revision # R-8</b>

**Purpose:** Travel outside of Courtenay is necessary for Council in order to participate in necessary and approved political and Corporate Business functions, professional development, training, representation, and local government informational and networking activities.

It is the purpose of this policy to establish general parameters for Corporate Business travel and representation rationale and a clear process for approval and reimbursement of eligible expenses to all members of Council when requesting, undertaking, and claiming for Corporate Business travel.

**A. Definitions**

In this policy:

**“Ambassadorial**

**Function”** means a political or corporate social event, meeting, or function, attendance at which provides for the enhancement of the City’s statutory and/or strategic corporate priorities. (i.e. opening galas, local community fundraisers such as Rotary Auction, regional initiative announcements, community foundation events, chamber of commerce events, leadership forums, LGLA or UBCM sponsored programs)

**“Claimant”** means an individual claiming for expense reimbursement under this policy, being a member of Council of the City of Courtenay.

**“Corporate Business”**

means the exclusive activity or activities being travelled to and from, approved by:

- Council for Council members

for which a Claimant shall seek expense coverage or re-imburement to the extent this policy permits and is further defined by classes as:

- Member Conference;
- Professional Development;
- Training;
- Required Representation; and
- Ambassadorial Function.

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**“Departure Period”** means the time spent travelling to a Travel Destination from Courtenay.

**“Distance”** means the total kilometres of travel eligible for expense reimbursement incurred by a Claimant during a Travel Period.

**“Member Conference”** means a convention or annual meeting of an organization or professional association to which the municipality or Claimant belongs or is affiliated with:

- Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM);
- Union of British Columbian Municipalities (UBCM);
- Association of Vancouver Island and Costal Communities (AVICC); and
- Other relevant organization.

**“Partner”** means a spouse or family member of a Council member.

**“Professional Development”** means course attendance for which the Claimant shall receive academic accreditation associated with his/her position;

**“Required Representation”** means a seminar, meeting, or event for which attendance is expected, requested, or required by a third party or previously assigned by Council to enable or facilitate municipal program participation, funding, or other political or corporate advantages necessary for the municipality.  
*(i.e. annually approved external appointments, Government and business sponsored meetings of local (project) or regional significance)*

**“Training”** means vocational or technical course attendance required to maintain regulatory standards and/or improve Claimant and municipal business efficiencies. (i.e. “newly elected” or parliamentary procedure seminars, LGLA)

**“Travel Destination”** means the location in which the Corporate Business shall be conducted.

**“Travel Period”** means the total time spent travelling to and from a Travel Destination beginning upon departure from Courtenay and ending upon return to Courtenay.

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**B. Guidelines for Corporate Business Travel**

**Council Travel**

- Each year, subject to Council approval, the Corporate Services Department will include in the annual budget the necessary funds to ensure all members of Council are supported to travel Corporate Business.
- Where the funds are used for travel, Council members will follow the guidelines set out in this policy and will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy.
- Corporate Business travel will be adjudicated on the following basis:
  - Cost to the municipality/Council budget;
  - Educational value within the context of Council duties and performance; and
  - Corporate strategic priorities.
- Attendance by a Council member to any proposed Corporate Business activity requires the prior authorization of Council unless otherwise stated in this policy. Authorization of Council must be made via a motion of Council prior to registering for the event or incurring any associated costs.
- Corporate Business as follows:
  1. *Appointed Member of Council – As the City Representative performing an official function*  
 Authorization: None if a pre-approved appointment by Council. If the appointee is unable to attend, the mayor or acting mayor may attend upon notification of Council.
  2. *Member Conference (i.e AVICC, UBCM, FCM)*  
 Authorization: None if event qualifies within guidelines set under Section A Definitions – Member Conference
  3. *Ambassadorial Functions, Other Conferences and Training*  
 Authorization: None if event qualifies within guidelines set under Section A Definitions - Corporate Business, annual cumulative costs are not to exceed \$2,000 per member.

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**C. General Claimant Terms**

1. All members of Council shall follow the directives within this policy when determining, undertaking, and claiming reimbursement for travel expenses incurred for Corporate Business purposes.
2. All members of Council shall be entitled to the reimbursements of allowances and expenses authorized under this policy.
3. Claims for expenses not applicable under this policy as associated with Corporate Business shall not be reimbursable unless approved by Council via resolution.
4. Where any allowance or expense is provided without charge and is included as a part of the Corporate Business activity, within a Travel Period, no claim for that allowance or expense can be made.
5. Where personal and Corporate Business is combined, reimbursement is to be based upon the lesser of actual expenses or the most economical expenses that would have been incurred had personal travel not taken place. Allowances and other expenses will not be reimbursed beyond the costs that would have been incurred had personal travel not taken place.
6. Partners and family may travel with and accompany members of Council to and from a Travel Destination provided that:
  - I. doing so does not displace or prohibit another Council member from traveling together when otherwise possible or planned;
  - II. partners costs are fully borne by the member of Council and not compensated by the City; and
  - III. if travel arrangements are booked by the City for a spouse, any spousal costs will be repaid to the City through direct payment or reduction of Council expense claim. A member of Council will not be booked for future events if there are outstanding spousal costs.

**D. Travel Mode and Distance Considerations**

1. In all cases, economy should be considered for all Corporate Business.
2. Air travel shall be considered as a component to a Travel Period only when:
  - I. it is more cost-effective than an alternative;
  - II. travel is required beyond Vancouver Island; and
  - III. there is a substantive reduction in the Travel Period.
3. The maximum mileage claim for long distance automobile travel shall be equivalent to the cost of fully refundable economy airfare available at the time of booking.

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**E. Travel Period**

1. Travel Period terms shall be anticipated and calculated using Google maps or an alternative.
2. Except in extraordinary circumstances, a Travel Period shall only occur between 6:00 am and 11:00 pm.
3. A Travel Period term shall be subject to reasonable travel mode flexibility and extension in the event of severe driving conditions, highway delays or closures, or other unforeseen and reasonable causes.

**F. Distance and Vehicle Charge Allowance**

1. Distance allowance does not apply when using leased, rental, or fleet vehicles, nor within Comox Valley Regional District boundaries.
2. Distance allowance in a private vehicle may be claimed by only one person.
3. Distance rates shall be commensurate with current Canada Revenue Agency rates.
4. Distance reimbursement shall be calculated using Google maps or alternative.
5. Distance allowance to singular destinations shall be reimbursed on a “there and back” basis.
6. Distance allowance to multiple destinations required to undertake Corporate Business shall be reimbursed on a “point to point” basis.
7. Parking, BC Ferries, and transportation toll charges incurred during a Travel Period may be claimed at value.
8. The City will not reimburse a member of Council for any fines or tickets incurred during the Travel Period.

**G. Meal Allowance**

1. A maximum of three meals per day are reimbursable to a Claimant when traveling outside of the Comox Valley Regional District.
2. Daily Meal Travel Allowance:
  - I. Meals/Gratuities:
 

(a) Breakfast	\$30
(b) Lunch	\$35
(c) Dinner	\$45
  - II. Where meals are included in a workshop conference or similar event, no meal allowance may be claimed.

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**H. Accommodation Allowance**

1. Where block rates are made available for group Corporate Business activities, bookings under such offers shall be made without exception. If not possible, bookings shall be made on the basis of adjacency and similar service.
2. Accommodation is claimed by actual expense through receipt.
3. In-room entertainment charges are not eligible for reimbursement.
4. Accommodation of a personal nature (with family, friends) may be claimed at a rate of \$50 per night.

**I. Filing an Expense Claim**

1. A form associated with this policy (the "Claim Form") shall be provided for Claimants requiring reimbursement for travel or other eligible expenses in accordance with this policy.
2. All claims for expenses under this policy shall only be made using the Claim Form.
3. Claim Forms shall be only approved by the CAO or delegate and submitted to the Finance Department for processing.

**J. Receipts**

1. Where applicable, eligible expenses for re-imbusement requiring receipts shall include:
  - I. airfare;
  - II. ferry;
  - III. car rental;
  - IV. parking;
  - V. tolls;
  - VI. taxi/bus/shuttle; and
  - VII. fees to sanctioned corporately supported events or sessions.
2. Eligible expenses for re-imbusement **not** requiring receipts shall include:
  - I. meals;
  - II. vehicle mileage; and
  - III. personal accommodation.
3. Expenses not eligible for reimbursement:
  - I. alcohol;
  - II. spouse or Partner expenses traveling with Council member;
  - III. in room entertainment charges; and
  - IV. personal portion of corporate travel.

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Adopted by Council:

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