



## Staff Report CCS2025-04

Committee 2025-06-09

Council 2025-06-23

Amendments

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**Submitted To:** Committee of the Whole | Council

**Submitted By:** Amanda Pegg, Executive Director, Customer & Corporate Services

**Prepared By:** Amanda Pegg, Executive Director, Customer & Corporate Services

**Subject:** Update to Non-Union Market Comparator Listing

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### Recommendation

**THAT** Staff Report CCS2025-04, Update to Non-Union Market Comparator Listing, be received

**AND THAT** HR Policy No. B-05, Non-Union Salary Administration, be amended to include the 2025 Gallagher Consulting recommended non-union market comparator listing, as proposed.

Amendments

None.

## 1. Executive Summary

As part of the 2025 municipal budget deliberations, Council approved a non-union compensation market analysis to aid in informing future decisions related to non-union total compensation. Updating the non-union market comparator listing is recommended to help ensure Collingwood's non-union compensation analysis reflects current market conditions, aiding in informed decisions for the Strategic Financial Plan (in progress) and the 2026 municipal budget deliberations.

The recommended update of market comparators aligns with the requirements of HR Policy No. B-05 Non-Union Salary Administration and this request respects Council's governance of this policy. The recommended updates are proposed to help ensure compensation decisions consider current market conditions, organizational complexity, and fiscal responsibility.

A thorough review of the comparator list was completed by Gallagher Consulting, the Town's retained compensation expert, this review underpins the accuracy of the recommended comparator listing and provides data to inform strategic decision making as it relates to non-union compensation and financial planning.

As a result of this update, Collingwood would be better positioned to attract and retain talent, fostering a high-performance culture aligned with Council direction, the Community Based Strategic Plan, Town program and service offerings and operational goals.

## 2. Analysis

The Non-Union Salary Administration Policy guides the Town of Collingwood in setting salary levels that:

- Are competitive with the current municipal market to attract and retain highly qualified employees.
- Promote equity and consistency across roles; and
- Are fiscally responsible and sustainable.

As part of the 2025 budget process and in response to recruitment and retention challenges, staff proposed moving from a target pay policy of P50 to P55. While Council did agree to increase the benefits package, this recommendation did not form part of the final approved 2025 budget. However, recognizing the importance of skilled and professional staff, Council directed Administration to return with further supporting

information as part of the 2026 budget cycle which would enable consideration of non-union compensation changes in the context of the Town's Strategic Financial Plan, scheduled for completion in 2025. An amount of \$25,000 was approved in the Town's 2025 Operating budget to complete this analysis.

A prudent first step in this analysis is validating the comparator municipalities used to inform market-based compensation. Administration is seeking Council approval of the proposed amended municipal comparator listing.

Gallagher Consulting has undertaken a comprehensive review of the existing comparator group with consideration of the following factors:

- Population and growth trends
- Organizational structure and scope of services
- Economic and geographical similarity
- Labour market competitiveness and regional mobility
- Availability of recent compensation data

In addition, due consideration was given to criteria noted within Town policy. Including:

- Municipalities of a comparable size of the population served
- Municipalities with similar employment markets
- Municipalities providing equivalent scope of services
- Geographic proximity
- Municipalities with seasonal influx
- Historical comparators used for various market scans

Based on the review completed, it is recommended that the following amendments be made to the 2021 policy approved comparator group to create an updated 2025 comparator list:

Comparator	High-level Justification	2025	2021
Town of the Blue Mountains	Significant direct competitor, high growth, geographic proximity	Y	Y
Municipality of Meaford	Anticipate compensation review in 2025, geographic location, limited job matching offset by other factors	Y	Y
Township of Tiny	High growth environment, similar geographic location/comparators used	Y	N
Township of Clearview	Much smaller, limited job matches. Not a direct competitor.	N	Y
Niagara-on-the-Lake	Different labour market (GTA), not a direct competitor. Appropriate comparator for tourism related programs/services, however, not Talent Management.	N	Y
Town of Huntsville	Similar population, some similarity in seasonal / tourism conditions, however, trends towards near north market (lags southern market)	N	Y
City of Owen Sound	Similar metrics population/households/budget/employees etc. Note - previous review only 26% of jobs matched	Y	Y
Township of Springwater	Aggressively moving to compete, influenced by City of Barrie, similar geographic conditions	Y	N
Township of Oro-Medonte	Similar in size to Springwater, similar influences from City of Barrie, similar geographic composition	Y	N
Town of Wasaga Beach	Metrics align, near neighboring municipality, significant direct competitor	Y	Y

Comparator	High-level Justification	2025	2021
City of Orillia	Upper geographic comparator: metrics not perfectly aligning (balances New Tecumseth)	Y	Y
Town of New Tecumseth	Most southern comparator, similar budget and employee count, growing with new industry impact (balances City of Orillia)	Y	Y
Town of Innisfil	Direct competitor	Y	Y
City of Barrie	Geographic location, direct competitor	Y	Y
County of Simcoe	Upper tier, geographic location, direct competitor	Y	Y

*Note: highlights indicate a change in comparator status*

Pending Council approval, the listed comparators in HR Policy No. B-05, Non-Union Salary Administration (2021) would be amended to the 2025 recommended list.

Benchmarking against an outdated or misaligned group of municipalities undermines the integrity of compensation analysis. A current and relevant comparator list will ensure that salary recommendations are based on defensible, market-aligned data. This update is intended to provide Council and staff with increased confidence and transparency in the compensation benchmarking process and help ensure strategic alignment with the Town's financial planning objectives.

### **Conclusion:**

A refreshed comparator group is the foundation of a credible and fiscally responsible compensation program. Approving and validating this list supports the goals of the Town's Non-Union Salary Administration Policy and will provide Council with a current market starting point for the compensation analysis. The upcoming Non-Union Compensation Market Analysis will give Council the requested data to make decisions aligned with strategic financial goals and the 2026 municipal budget targets.

Pending Council approval, the updated comparator listing will be confirmed with the consultant and the non-union market analysis will proceed with the 2025 comparator list.

### 3. Input from Other Sources

• Department Heads • Gallagher Consulting

### 4. Applicable Policy or Legislation

HR Policy No. B-05, Non-Union Salary Administration

### 5. Considerations

- Community Based Strategic Plan: Progresses towards achieving CBSP Goal
- Services adjusted if any
- Climate Change / Sustainability: Not Applicable
- Communication / Engagement: Not Applicable
- Accessibility / Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: Other:
- Registered Lobbyist(s) relating to content: [\[add content and meeting dates\]](#)
- Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP): [\[add content\]](#)

Next steps and future action required following endorsement: Completion of the non-union compensation analysis by Gallagher Consulting

### 6. Appendices and Other Resources

Not Applicable

### 7. Approval

**Prepared By:**

Amanda Pegg, Executive Director, Customer & Corporate Services

**Reviewed By:**

Department Heads

**CAO Comments:** Endorsed on June 4, 2025 to proceed to COW