

**WEST COVINA CITY COUNCIL COMPENSATION SURVEY:
CURRENT & PROPOSED COMPARED TO SELECTED CITIES**

City Council Uses “Salary” from Highest Paid Cities to Justify a 165% “Salary” Increase

Compiled by Jerri Potras, November 2023; Updated December 2023

West Covina City Council’s compensation had not been increased since July 1, 1990. Some benefits and allowances were reduced or eliminated through the years due to budget concerns. At the September 19, 2023 the City Council unanimously voted to increase their compensation to the maximum allowed by law and to reinstate department head benefits and allowances. The new rates do not take effect until after November 2024 election. ^{1, 2}

This table is a modified version of the table included in the September 19, 2023 Staff Report showing surrounding cities councilmember compensation data. My estimate for the increased salary and benefits the West Covina City Council approved and/or is considering has been added in pink.

City	Population	Annual Salary ³	Other Pay ⁴	Defined Benefit Plan Contribution ⁵	Retirement Cost Covered ⁶	Deferred Compensation Plan ⁷	Health, Dental, Vision ⁸
<i>Dollar amounts shown are city cost for one city councilmember for one year.</i>							
Azusa	49,704	12,176	8,141	1,230	21	0	7,877
Baldwin Park	70,855	6,133	21,417	440	0	6,917	896
Burbank	105,451	50,841	11,438	4,148	0	600	6,203
Covina	50,449	4,114	1,429	235	0	0	0
Downey	112,584	0	450	0	0	0	0
El Monte	107,706	8,334	4,543	767	88	8,003	5,540
La Puente	37,587	6,432	6,908	590	151	0	17,659
Monterey Park	60,207	6,000	0	778	0	0	8,328
Ontario	179,516	25,493	8,899	1,440	414	13,843	4,539
Pasadena	138,310	21,161	325	1,838	0	4,814	11,297
Pomona	149,766	11,232	327	771	0	0	4,518
Whittier	87,931	9,863	0	0	0	0	12
West Covina • Current Pay: \$765/Month	108,243	9,180	0	174	0	0	0
West Covina • New Pay: \$2,027/Month ³	108,243	24,327	3,600	See Note ⁵	See Note ⁶	3,600	0
Estimated Increase:		\$15,147	\$3,600	Varies	Varies	\$3,600	0

Notes

- ¹ California Government Code § 36516(a) limits councilmember salary increases to 5% for each calendar year from the operative date of the last salary adjustment in effect when the ordinance to increase the salary is enacted. West Covina’s current rate was adopted in 1989. The effective date was 1990.
- ² The November 7, 2023 Staff Report erroneously refers to the September 19th City Council meeting as September 9. During the month of September, the Council Meetings were held September 5 and 19, respectively.
- ³ *Annual Salary* (aka stipend) is a fixed amount of money paid monthly for services and/or to defray expenses. \$2,027 is the maximum amount the City Council can increase their current compensation by law. The September 19, 2023 staff report estimates the impact to the General Fund at \$80,000 annually.
- ⁴ *Other Pay* includes auto allowance and expenditures for conferences, community events, phones, city-associated travel other expenditures outlined in the City Council Expense & Reimbursement Policy. The Auto Allowance is \$300 month.
- ⁵ *Defined Benefit Plans* are defined by the Internal Revenue Service as providing a fixed, pre-established benefit for employees at retirement. Information on West Covina’s specific plan applicable to Councilmembers has been requested.
- ⁶ *Retirement Cost* are optional. When elected to office, councilmembers may select to retire through the city. Councilmembers elected after 2013 follow the Public Employees Pension Reform Act of 2013 which requires them to pay an appropriate share of pension costs as determined by law. The city pays the remaining cost.
- ⁷ *Deferred Compensation Plan* is \$300 per month which may be applied to a list of plans provided by the city, to medical dental, or life insurance premiums, or taken in cash in lieu of depositing funds in a deferred compensation plan.
- ⁸ *Medical, Dental, Vision* insurance is an option paid entirely by the councilmember. Deferred compensation may be used.

REFERENCES

- City of West Covina. (September 19, 2023) City Council Meeting. Staff Report. Agenda Item 6. Consideration of Council and Commissioner Compensation and Benefits.
- City of West Covina. (November 7, 2023) City Council Meeting. Staff Report. Agenda Item 5. Consideration of Changes to City Council’s Allowance and Council Expense & Reimbursement Policy.
- City of West Covina. Department Head Salary & Benefit Schedule Effective December 6, 2022