



Subject: 4 day work week

Report Number: CAO 24-012

Department: Office of the CAO

Submitted by: Joanna Kurowski, Human Resources Manager

Meeting Type: Council Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, August 12, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT report CAO 24-012 titled “4 day work week” be received as information;
and
- B. THAT Council approves the 4 day work week option to be included as a possible work schedule for employees pending departmental operations not being negatively affected.

BACKGROUND

In April 2023 the staff began a pilot project of 4 day work week for frontline staff to test the feasibility of this work option for departments that have front line staff. Office staff currently has an option to participate in the hybrid work model. The implementation of hybrid work model turned out to be successful from the perspective of no service interruptions and decrease in levels of service. There were also no concerns with staff availability for in-person meetings or required events or tasks.

With hybrid model having a positive impact on employees’ work-life balance, the 4 day work week model was introduced for a trial period of 12 months for frontline staff to offer similar benefit for improved work-life balance to this group of employees. This model incorporated the regular weekly hours of 40 into 4 work days with each work day at ten (10) hours.

DISCUSSION

While implementing the 4 day work week, the consideration was to retain or improve the existing levels of service without affecting the hours of operation. Departments considering this model were also tasked with allocating sufficient staff to provide business continuity and not create additional operational costs such as overtime.

The following departments took part of this project:

- Public Works

4 day work week Choose an item. Click or tap here to enter text.

Public Works Water and Sewer department piloted 4 day work weeks during summer months of 2023. The pilot project was well received by all personnel, and contributed to a positive work atmosphere. Business continuity was still maintained throughout all 5 days a week, and actually increased daily coverage from 7:30am-4pm to 6am-4:30pm with this model. Safety was also addressed with earlier start times, for example, main arterial roads are less congested at 6 am compared to the 7:30am traffic rush, contributing to greater staff and community safety.

Staff felt the 4 day work schedule was a progressive move, and definitely made the Town of Tillsonburg a more attractive employer, which in turn helps with employee retention. Work-life balance is more attainable with this schedule, and would be very desirable going forward for the department during the months of April-December.

- Recreation, Culture and Parks

The 4 day work week schedule was tested by selected Recreation, Culture and Parks staff. Staff that took advantage of this pilot project have appreciated the schedule and they would like it to remain in effect. The 4 day work week works well for the facilities operations staff and it would be desirable for them to continue as it provides great efficiencies for facility operations. TCC Customer Service staff also tried the 4 day work week and they indicated the 5 day work week would work better for them. The 4 day work week doesn't work for all Recreation, Culture and Parks areas of operations, but where it does work, this option would be valuable to provide to staff.

- Fire Services

4 day work week works well for fire prevention allowing staff to balance better their work-life schedule. Due to staff absences last year, the pilot project was not tested for the desired time frame for fire administration department.

Based on the above feedback, the staff recommends adding the option of 4 day work week to the work schedule availability for front line staff. This option would be considered based on operational needs and only if it would not affect business continuity and not lowering service levels in the community.

Having this option available to front line staff places the Town as a progressive and employee-oriented organization, which in turn can positively impact recruitment and attrition levels of new and current talent.

Staff have reviewed the Hours of Work and Overtime Policy to ensure accuracy.

CONSULTATION

SLT, Managers, Staff

4 day work week Choose an item. Click or tap here to enter text.

FINANCIAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

There is no financial impact and no additional funding required for this program.

CORPORATE GOALS

How does this report support the corporate goals identified in the Community Strategic Plan?

- Lifestyle and amenities
- Customer service, communication and engagement
- Business attraction, retention and expansion
- Community growth
- Connectivity and transportation
- Not Applicable

Does this report relate to a specific strategic direction or project identified in the Community Strategic Plan? Please indicate section number and/or any priority projects identified in the plan.

Goal – The Town of Tillsonburg will strive for excellence and accountability in government, providing effective and efficient services, information, and opportunities to shape municipal initiatives.

Strategic Direction – Enhance employee engagement and training as foundation for exceptional customer service; position Tillsonburg as a leader in the municipal sector.

Priority Project – *Immediate Term* – Employee Engagement Strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Council Report CAO 23-06

Appendix B – Hours of Work and Overtime Policy