

Report to Council

Report Title:	Alternate Work Arrangement Policy		
Prepared By:	Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer		
Department:	Administration		
Date:	December 14, 2021		
Report Number:	CAO2021-33	File Number:	C11AD, A09, C01
Attachments:	Draft Alternate Work Arrangement Policy Draft Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby approves Report Number CAO2021-33 – Alternate Work Arrangement Policy, prepared by Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer and in doing so approves bringing forward a By-Law to adopt the Alternate Work Arrangement Policy.

Report:

Background:

For the past 20 months the Municipality of Brockton has had to adapt the working environment due to COVID-19 protocols. As part of adapting to the pandemic many staff were asked to work from home while keeping the same level of service to customers and providing the same quality work. Management is pleased with how quickly employees were able to change their working environments including shifting to working from home. Brockton employees have proven that a remote work environment can be a successful working arrangement.

Analysis:

We have trusted many of our employees to work at home for the past 20 months during the pandemic. This has proven to offer a work-life balance through less travel time and added flexibility that has been welcomed by many employees. As a result, staff have prepared a new Alternate Work Agreement Policy. It is our goal and intention that this will also assist with staff retention, and positive recruitment in an increasingly competitive landscape and help to improve employee work/life balance for ongoing positive culture. This Policy has been reviewed in relation to other municipal policies, best practices related to remote work and to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Alternate Work Agreement Policy is proposed to be an agreement between the employee and their supervisor to allow staff to work from an alternate work location based on an agreed upon schedule. This policy will also include ensuring that employees still have in-office days to ensure that all staff still have a

presence in their work environment and can still collaborate with co-workers face-to-face and be available to the residents and businesses of Brockton. Departmental coverage in all aspects of customer service will be the responsibility of the Supervisor of each department when considering allowance of this agreement.

Due to service delivery needs and the nature of work, the alternate work arrangement cannot be implemented for all positions. Based on the various positions within Brockton less than 15% of the workforce would have a position that would be eligible and/or suitable to qualify for the Alternate Work Arrangement Policy.

The pandemic has permanently shifted how employees prefer to work and which benefits employees find most important. An important shift that happened during the pandemic is that employers have become more flexible about work locations. We must continue to look at fresh ways to attract and retain employees and offer essential services. Many neighbouring municipalities are considering some form of remote work policy or have implemented certain forms and Brockton employees have expressed the importance of remote work going forward. Brockton needs to remain progressive with its Human Resources practices to ensure we are meeting the needs of current and future employees and attracting qualified professionals to our roles.

Allowing employees to work from an alternate work location offers a work/life balance that many employees crave. Employees will benefit by spending less time on the road, reduced commuting costs and can assist with family caregiver responsibilities before and after work easier.

The Municipality of Brockton will benefit from the Alternate Work Agreement as remote work has proven to provide greater productivity of workers, increase employee loyalty and employees are reported to take fewer sick days and are less likely to spread their illness to others. With the Alternate Work Arrangement less staff will be in the workplace on a given day. Removing staff from the work environment is positive for the air quality in the office, reduces added noise due to additional people in the office, reduces wait times for washrooms and lessens the parking frustrations we experience due to the lack of parking at the Municipal Office for all employees. We must also continue to acknowledge and support the work of our frontline workers and continue to manage this change to ensure the positive culture and cohesiveness of our workgroup continues.

Attached is the proposed Alternate Work Arrangement Policy and Agreement for Council's consideration. A By-Law has been brought forward for Council's consideration with an effective date of January 1, 2022.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

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| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

There are minimal financial impact related to this policy implementation at this time. Many of the positions identified as being able to eligible or suitable for this policy are already set-up and operating in alternate work locations. Any new positions may require some IT support for the initial set-up, however not a significant cost to the Municipality.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer