Local Government REIMAGINED CONFERENCE

APRIL 2-4, 2025 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Productivity in PJs: Exploring the New World of Remote Work

Steve Stuart, City Manager, City of Ridgefield

Lee Knottnerus, Deputy City Manager, City of Ridgefield

ICIMA conference



Instructions



Define It: What is Remote Work?

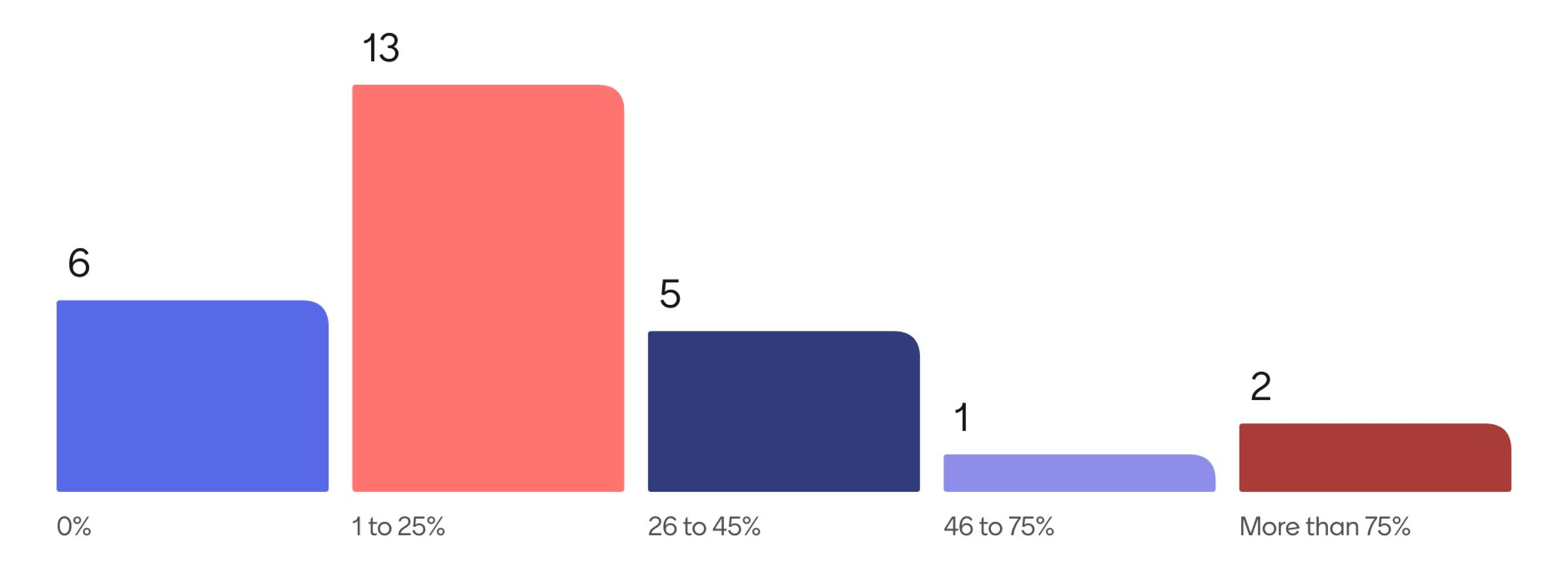
A flexible work arrangement where employees perform their job duties from a location outside the traditional office, often their home, using digital tools for communication and collaboration.



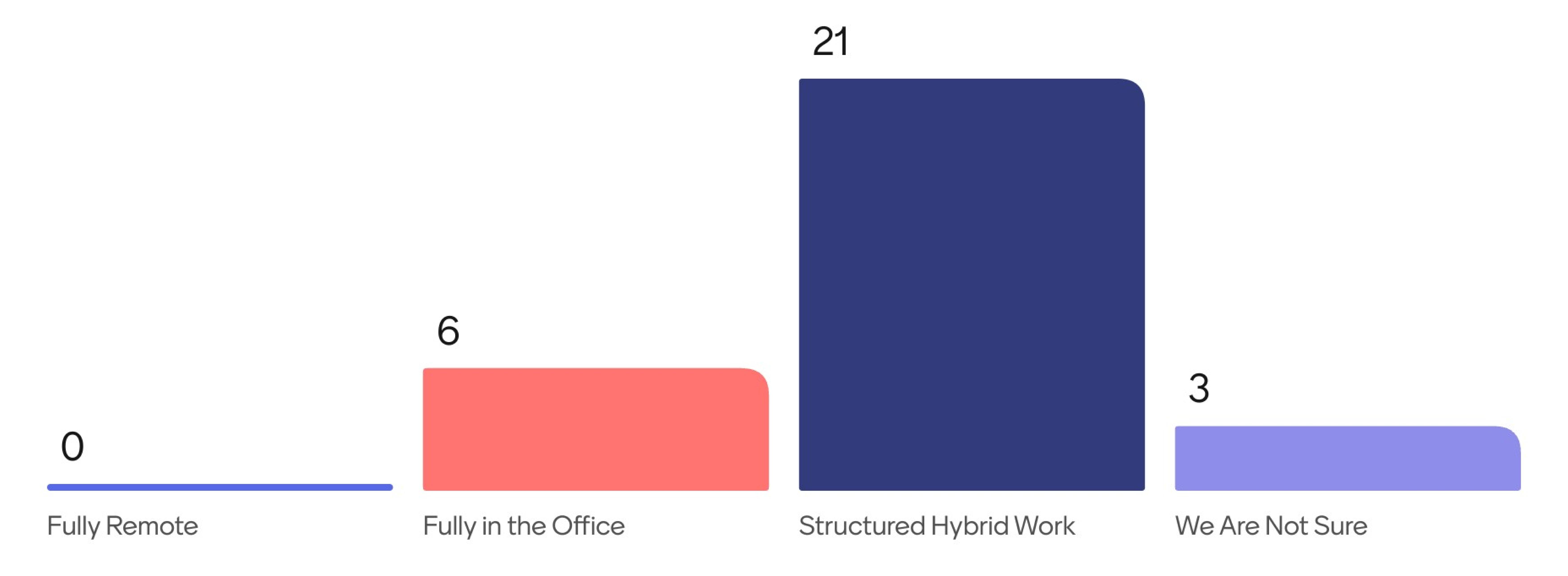




What percentage of your workforce is currently either fully remote or in a stuctured hybrid work option?



What workplace does your City leadership want?



History and Trends









Remote Work Over Time



$$1965 = 0.5\%$$

Less than 1% of all paid workdays were full days from home. Remote work definition relatively archaic and stagnant.

2000 = 1%

Low percentage of workforce BUT marked the beginning of an increase in access to broadband internet over the next decade (from 0-60% of homes able to access).



2003

Skype launched as one of the first free voice over internet call services.

Shutting down in May 2025.



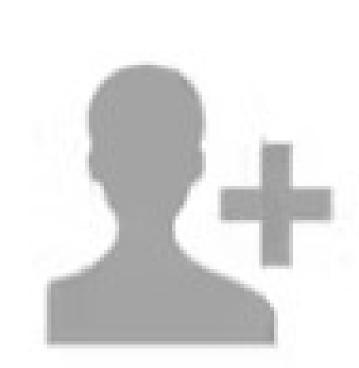
Did you offer remote work in some form prior to COVID?











2010-2019 = 4%-6.5%Steady Growth

60% of population had access to broadband internet, more internet teleconferencing software started coming online (Zoom in 2013; MS Teams and Google Meet in 2017)

2020 = 36%COVID-19

Sea change, prompted by a pandemic and supported with available technology.

- Majority of employees in 2020 indicated they would like to continue after pandemic.
- Employers in 2020 expected 20% of workforce to be fully remote after the pandemic (up from baseline of 7% before COVID)







2023 = 27% POST-COVID WORLD

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Why did it stick?

- Proved its practical
- Created support systems



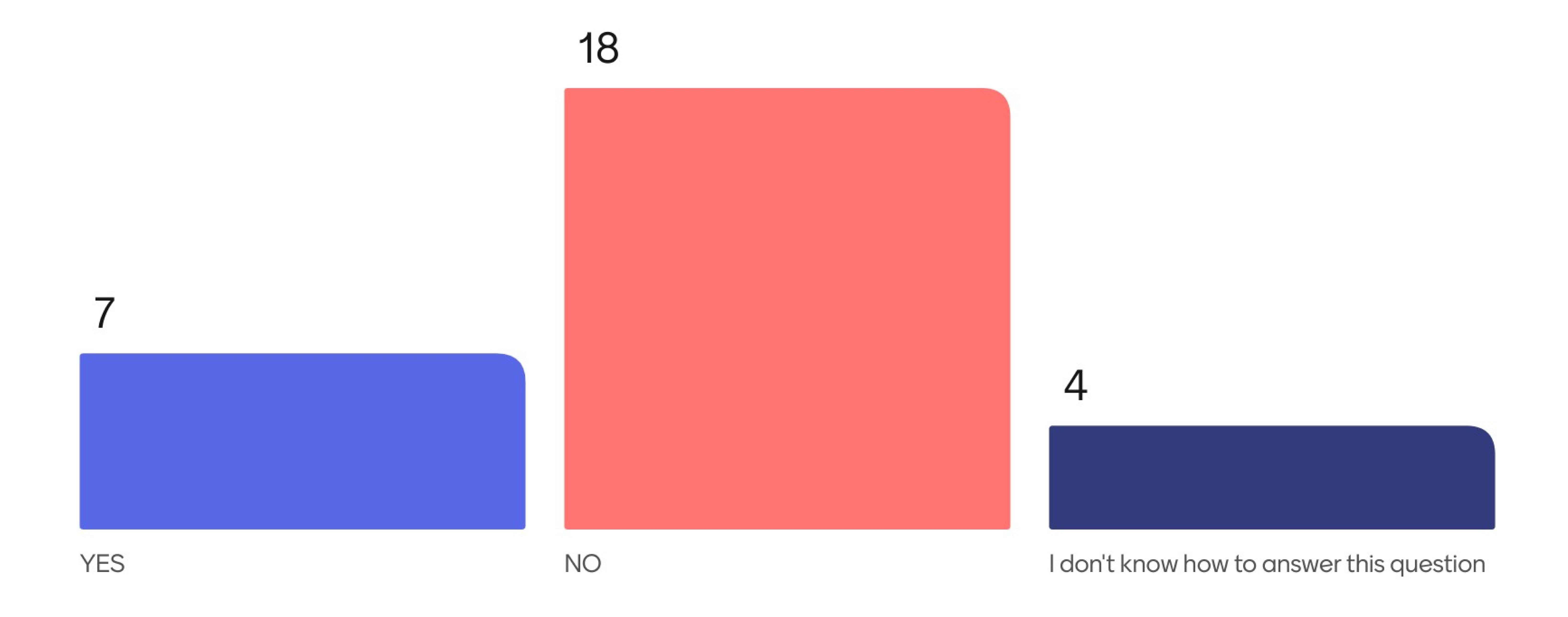
Back to Work Movement?

- Percentages don't support theory of significant movement away from remote work
- BUT some large organizations (e.g. Amazon, Apple, Citigroup, Tesla, Boeing) and jurisdictions (Federal Government, Portland OR, other?) are seeking to drive change
- Why? Culture, collaboration/teamwork, team energy, justifying capital costs
- *Ulterior motives?* Get people to quit, test motivation/commitment, leadership who just doesn't support idea
- *Unforeseen consequences?* In Fall 2022, foot traffic in central business districts had recovered BUT only 60% of prepandemic levels in cities with 1.5 million or more employees. Residential and commercial values stagnated in urban centers (while spiking in suburbs (Zillow US home price index rose 40% in exurban, 32% in suburban, 18% in high-density areas, and 9% in city centers)



What's Next? Why? How?

Since 2023, has your organization required remote work eligible employees to return to the office?





The Future of Work: How can a fully in-person policy be successful?

Doing the same thing over-and-over again and expecting different results?





Ideas for a successful fully in-person policy:

Woo employees back to office with:

- On-site perks that ease personal life stressors like cooking and childcare.
- Provide outdoor spaces: terraces, rooftops, meeting areas, deck/patio for breaks.
- · Reimagine physical spaces: communal areas, wellness rooms, family friendly zones.
- Family days and community service activities.





The Future of Work: What do employees want?

- 32% prefer to work fully remotely
- 41% prefer a hybrid work set up
- 52% of men and 60% of women would rather quit than return to the office full time.
- 69% of men and 80% of women consider remote work one of the most important factors when searching for new employment opportunities.

Quantum Workplace.com/future-of-work/remote-work-statistic





Do generations view remote work differently?

Generation	Desire for Remote Work	% in Workplace Now	% Increasing/Decreasing
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	32%	15%	Decreasing Rapidly*
Gen X (1965-1980)	49%	31%	Decreasing Slightly
Millennials (1981-1996)	84%	36% (75% by 2030)	Increasing
Gen Z (1996-2012)	74%	18%	Increasing

^{*10,000} reaching retirement age and retiring every day; 4.1 million annually 2024-2027.

FlexJobs.com





What do Millennials Want?

- 84% want full-time remote opportunities.
- 35% would leave their job for full-time remote work.
- 91% report being more productive.
- 84% want better work-life balance/integration
- · 82% expressed higher loyalty to an employer with a remote work program.

Is a generation more likely to use technology for collaboration & communication.





Are we asking the right question?

Should we be asking whether to offer remote work, or how to overcome the challenges to offer effective remote work?







What do you see as benefits of remote work of any kind?

73 responses





Benefits of Remote Work

- Increased productivity: focus on work without distractions. (97% federal workers)
- Increased candidate pool
- Employee Retention (35% reduction in quit rates)
- Reduced Absenteeism (12%)

- Flexibility and Work Life Integration (no commute)
- Lower stress levels (82%) and Increased Morale (80%)
- Environmental
- Cost Savings for employers and employees.





What are challenges of remote work as an employer or employee?

83 responses





Challenges of Remote Work

- Meaningful communication: fewer spontaneous conversations, feeling disconnected.
- Collaboration, engagement, innovation and strong organizational work culture.
- External questions: customers and City Council.

- Productivity, performance management and career development.
- Accessibility: to public, boss and coworkers.
- Unaddressed conflict.
- Fairness concerns from employees who are unable to work remotely.





The Future of Remote Work: Is a structured hybrid model the answer?



What is a structured hybrid model?

- Most popular: 43% to 54% of employers offer a structured hybrid model of remote work.
- Combines in-office and remote work with pre-determined guidelines: retaining the benefits of each.
- Examples of guidelines: specific days or minimum number of days in the office. (3 days = 66% and 2 days = 23%), fixed schedule for days in office/remote, clear expectations for availability when remote, location of remote work, definition of who is eligible to work remotely.





Implementing an effective remote work program

- Internal Challenges

Develop a clear and fair structure.

Provide the tools and equipment necessary for job.

Maintain the benefits and address the challenges.

Create clear expectations and communicate.

Monitor and Adjust.





Implementing an effective remote work program

- External Challenges

Communicate expectations and opportunities.

Create buy-in from elected leaders and stakeholders.

Create, measure and report performance metrics.

Monitor and Adjust.





ANY FINAL QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?







Thank You

The City of Ridgefield, Washington