



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Legislative & Clerk Services

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Laura Moy, Director Legislative Services & Clerk

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Report Number: LCS-2021-35

Subject: Urban Hens Licensing Pilot Program – Final Report

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report LCS-2021-35 entitled “Urban Hens Licensing Pilot Program – Final Report”, **be received**;

And further that in accordance with the Urban Hens Licensing Pilot Program By-law No. 2021-43, all current licenses issued under the two-year Urban Hens Licensing Pilot Program **be terminated** as of March 1, 2022;

And furthermore that all property owners in the urban area **be given notice** to remove their hen coop and run, and to re-home their hens, no later than March 1, 2022, unless ordered to remove earlier.

Background

The two-year Urban Hen Licensing Pilot Program (Pilot Program) was approved under [Report CS-2020-04](#) at the January 28, 2020 Policies and Priorities Committee (PPC) Meeting commencing March 1, 2020.

In accordance with the Pilot Program Terms and Conditions as set out in By-law No. 2020-14 adopted on February 11, 2020, and subsequently amended by By-Law No. 2021-43, the Pilot Program establishes the keeping of hens in the urban areas of the

Town to a limit of six (6) female hens for properties under 10,000 square feet. For properties over 10,000 square feet, an additional hen is permitted per 3,000 square feet up to a maximum of twelve (12) hens.

Owners desirous of keeping urban hens needed to complete the Pilot Program registration form, meet all of the eligibility requirements and submit an annual license fee of \$25.00. An on-site inspection of the property was conducted to assess and ensure compliance with the Terms and Conditions outlined in the Pilot Program by Development Services, prior to issuing a license and identification bands for each hen.

An interim update on the Pilot Program, together with a recommendation to amend the by-law to strengthen enforcement and recovery of costs related to the removal of hens or hen coops/runs for non-compliance, was provided under [Report CS-2021-07](#), and presented at the May 25, 2021 PPC.

The purpose of this report is to provide a final report and recommendation on the two-year Pilot Program.

Comments

Pilot Program Registrations

Since the launch of the Pilot Program on March 1, 2020, thirteen (13) permits have been issued to owners, for the keeping of an overall total of seventy-six (76) urban hens.

Two (2) property owners who obtained permits have elected to withdraw from the Pilot Program, remove the hen coop and run from their respective properties and re-home the urban hens (7 total).

Administration has received complaints with respect to the proper keeping of the hens, their feed and coop, and attractions for rodents for three (3) of the permitted properties (17 registered hens collectively). These property owners were contacted by Administration by telephone and written correspondence to remind them of the Terms and Conditions of the Pilot Program and inspections were carried out by the By-law Enforcement Officer to follow up on compliance. Failure to comply with the provisions of the Pilot Program resulted in these permits being revoked in accordance with the Terms and Conditions. Two of the property owners that had their license revoked voluntarily removed their hen coop/runs and re-homed their hens. The Town provided assistance to the third with the removal and rehoming of hens.

As at this writing, eight (8) permits are active for the keeping of fifty-two (52) urban hens.

Complaints

Concerns and/or complaints regarding the keeping of urban hens are recorded and tracked in Cityworks.

To date, twelve (12) service requests have been recorded in Cityworks regarding urban hens. The service requests are provided in [Appendix 1](#).

The service requests summary appended to this report relate to more than one licensed property and in some instances, relate to the same license/property.

The Development Services Department continues to enforce the provisions consistent with property standards.

Discontinuance of Pilot Program

The Pilot Program was approved for a two-year term commencing March 1, 2020. As previously reported, Administration has continued to evaluate the Pilot Program over the course of this period, including monitoring and tracking concerns and/or complaints regarding the keeping of urban hens.

Significant staff resources were required to oversee the Pilot Program, including administration of the applications, inspection of the hen coops and runs, compliance and enforcement with the Pilot Program Terms and Conditions, responding to inquiries/complaints relating to keeping of urban hens, and the like.

It is recommended that the Pilot Program be discontinued, effective March 1, 2022, and that current licensees terminate at the time, with notice being given to remove hen coops and runs, and to rehome hens to a suitable location on or before March 1, 2022, for all compliant owners. Licenses that have been revoked and orders issued for earlier removal will remain in effect.

Consultations

Development Services

Financial Implications

An annual license fee of \$25.00 per registration form was received to cover the cost to acquire identification bands. Recovery for staffing resources to administer, monitor and enforce the Pilot Program was not factored into the license fee. Over the course of the pilot program, these have been substantial for hen operations that were the subject of complaints.

Expenses incurred, relating to the identification bands, in the approximate amount of \$100.00 for 100 bands were funded from the Animal Control Budget.

The estimated external cost incurred to have a hen coop and run, as well as re-home five (5) chickens as a result of a license that was revoked, and failure by the property owner to do so in accordance with an order that was issued by the Town, is \$475 plus HST. The actual cost incurred by the Town is anticipated to be recovered from the property owner in accordance with the Pilot Program By-law.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that Tecumseh's current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh's plans and priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steward the Town's "continuous improvement" approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the Town's leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

Communications

Not applicable ☒

Website ☐ Social Media ☐ News Release ☐ Local Newspaper ☐

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Christina Hebert, BA (Hons), MA, Dipl. M.A.
Manager Committee & Community Services

Reviewed by:

Chad Jeffery, MA, MCIP, RPP
Manager Planning Services & Local Economic Development

Reviewed by:

Laura Moy, Dipl. M.M.
Director Legislative Services & Clerk

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
1	Cityworks Service Requests Summary