



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Legislative & Clerk Services

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Robert Auger, Director Legislative Services & Clerk

Date to Council: February 27, 2024

Report Number: LCS-2024-04

Subject: Rodent Abatement Program Review

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report LCS-2024-04 entitled “Rodent Abatement Program Review” **be received**;

And that direction **be given** on the preferred option outlined in this report regarding the future of a Town-sponsored Rodent Abatement Program.

Background

Rodents, such as rats and mice, are pests that are found year-round and typically live outdoors and then migrate inside when cool weather approaches. They are found around buildings, in gardens, near garbage containers or composters, and within homes, including in the roof and in drains. While nocturnal animals, rodents will become active during the day if food and water sources are scarce.

In response to concerns regarding the presence of rats within the Town, primarily in residential areas, an informational report, [Corporate Services & Clerks Report No. 27/17 entitled Rodent Control](#), and [Attachment 1](#) to the report was presented at the September 12, 2017 Regular Meeting of Council (RCM) whereat Council approved an enhanced education campaign to assist residents in identifying and protecting their property from rodents and greater property standards of enforcement. The Town also

mandated that refuse be placed in hard sided containers for collection in the urban areas.

Information regarding wildlife control and rodents has been promoted over the years on the Town's social media, in the annual EWSWA Collection Calendar, and as an education tool to residents expressing rodent concerns. Public Information Centres were held in 2018 and 2019 on urban wildlife with representatives from local pest control companies providing information on their services and deterrence methods.

Following direction at the January 26, 2021 RCM, Administration undertook a review of recently approved rodent control subsidies in several Ontario municipalities and [Report CAO-2021-11 Rodent Control Subsidy - Summary of Municipal Programs](#) was presented at the June 22, 2021 Policies & Priorities Committee (PPC). Delegations were also heard detailing residents' experiences with rodents on their respective properties. At the meeting, Administration was directed to draft a framework of potential options for a rodent control subsidy program and funding for Council consideration (PPC-06-21).

[Report CS-2021-32](#), presented options for rodent abatement measures at the November 9, 2021 RCM, with direction for pilot program funding referred to the 2022 budget deliberations. At the November 16, 2021 Special Council Meeting, Council approved funding in the amount of \$10,000 for a Pilot Rodent Abatement Program (Program) for 2022.

The Program implementation details were outlined in [Report LCS-2022-17](#) which proposed to offer a rebate, up to 50% of an established limit per property, to residential property owners to assist with the cost of utilizing a licensed pest control company to assist with removing rats from outside their residential property.

Comments

The Town launched the Program in November 2022 for residential properties, offering a rebate up to 50% of \$360 plus HST to assist residential owners with the cost of utilizing the appointed pest control company in removing rats from outside the residential property.

Once in receipt of a completed 'Residential Rat Control Rebate Program Intake Form' identifying the location of rat sightings on the property and suspected origin of the rat(s), a pest control technician from the appointed licensed pest control company attends the property to inspect where the rodents are originating from and other notable attributing concerns. Subject to identifying rat burrows and/or evidence of rat activity, the pest control technician lays regulated bait station blocks (a tamper-resistant container designed to hold block bait on a rod that rodents gnaw) in strategic locations on the property, conducts follow-up inspections and removes the bait stations at the end of the contract timeframe (12-month commitment).

To qualify for the rebate at the end of the contract timeframe, the property owner is responsible for remitting evidence to the Town detailing the pest control company has been paid in full. The appointed pest control company also submits a report to Administration outlining the work/measures undertaken and the results of their efforts at each respective property, together with the fees charged to the property owner.

The following summarizes the participation and refunds issued since the launch of the Program in November 2022:

No. of Property Owners who applied to Program*	No. of Property Owners who utilized Program	Amount of funding spent as at December 31, 2023	Location of participating properties
33	22	\$4,474.80	Ward 1 – 7 Ward 2 – 9 Ward 3 – 4 Ward 4 - 2

*Property Owners who applied but did not participate in the Program, as upon further assessment it was determined the Program was not warranted.

Over the course of the pilot Program, information has been shared and promoted on the Town's website, social media and media releases. However, as indicated in the above-referenced chart, resident uptake has not been as significant as initially expected and approximately \$5,525.20 remain from the initial \$10,000 allocation.

Some interest has been expressed from property owners who completed an initial term and are desirous of partaking in a further term to continue rodent mitigation, as well as new participants. At this writing, 5 participants are enrolled in the Program (2024).

Based on experience thus far, administration and enforcement of the Program requires a modest time commitment from both Community Safety and Legislative Services staff with tracking, invoicing and general Program inquiries undertaken by the Planning Services Clerk as part of Bylaw enforcement. The contracted pest control company provides monthly reporting on actions taken at participating properties.

Options

After completing and evaluating the initial pilot year, the following options in respect of a Town-sponsored rodent abatement program are provided for consideration:

1. Utilize the remainder of the funding allocation in 2024 or until the remaining funding allocation is exhausted, whichever comes first, offering a rebate up to

50% of \$360 plus HST to assist residential owners with the cost of utilizing the appointed pest control company in removing rats from outside the residential property. Regardless of funds remaining, the Program would be discontinued as at December 31, 2024.

2. Discontinue the Program, effective immediately and no longer accept new applications. Property owners currently enrolled in the Program would still qualify for the rebate once completing the Program requirements and contract timeframe.
3. Maintain the current Program beyond 2024 with the same funding allocation in the amount of \$10,000. If this option is preferred, the funding allocation would be referred to the 2025 Budget deliberations.

Consultations

Community Safety

Financial Implications

Funding for the Pilot Program has been provided in the Animal Control Budget (2620) in the amount of \$10,000 under Contract Services, funded from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve.

The remaining balance, of the initial funding allocation, in the approximate amount of \$5,525.20 has been carried forward into the 2024 budget.

Should Council wish to continue the Program beyond 2024, it is recommended that the same funding allocation of \$10,000 be referred to the 2025 Budget deliberations as an increase to the general tax levy and not funded from reserves.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2023-2026 Strategic Priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

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:

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Deputy Clerk – Clerks Services & Policy Advisor

Reviewed by:

Wade Bondy
Director Community Safety & Fire Chief

Reviewed by:

Tom Kitsos, CPA, CMA, BComm
Director Financial Services & Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed by:

Robert Auger, LL.B.
Director Legislative Services & Clerk

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
None	None