



GEORGINA

Subject: Update on Urban Hens Pilot Project

To: Mayor and Council

From: Mamata Baykar, Deputy Clerk

Date: November 17, 2021

Briefing:

The purpose of this briefing note is to provide Council with an update relating to the Town of Georgina's two-year pilot project regarding permitting the keeping of hens in urban areas ("urban hens"). On Nov. 27, 2019, following the results of the consultation program, Council received Staff Report DS-2019-0140 and approved the recommendation to pass a By-law to enact a 24-month pilot project that essentially would call for applications to a maximum of three licenses per ward, a 100-metre separation distance between licensed homes and that all participants be required to attend a mandatory educational session. By-law 2020-0004 (LI-3) being a By-law to license, govern and regulate the Urban Hens pilot project was passed by Council on January 15, 2019. By-law 2020-0004 (LI-3) was to take effect on April 1, 2020 and run for a 24 month trial period, which will expire on April 1, 2022, unless direction is provided by Council to extend the program.

The pilot project was scheduled to officially start on April 1, 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic, and declaration of emergency, staff had to postpone the commencement of the program. Taking into consideration the restrictions surrounding the declaration of emergency, the Town partnered with the Poultry Industry Council to lead a virtual mandatory educational training workshop for the Pilot Project participants. In total, 42 participants registered for the virtual mandatory educational training workshop, which was conducted on May 4, 2020.

Upon completion of the virtual educational workshop, all participants were invited to submit an application by May 18, 2020. Applicants were also informed that if there were more than three (3) applications received within a ward, a lottery would be conducted to determine the licensees.

Please see below table with number of applications received from each Ward:

Wards	Number of Applications Received
Ward 1	2
Ward 2	1
Ward 3	6
Ward 4	3
Ward 5	0

In total, twelve (12) applications were received, including six (6) applications in Ward 3. On June 10, 2020, Council received a verbal update on the status of licenses pertaining to the Urban Hens Pilot Project and passed a resolution to permit shifting three (3) Urban Hens licenses to Ward 3 to allow all six (6) applicants to accommodate chicken coops on their properties.

The pilot project has been in effect now for almost a year and a half (17 months) and, to date, one (1) complaint has been received by the Town's Municipal Law Enforcement Division concerning odour and failure to maintain a hen coop in clean condition. However, upon inspection, the Bylaw Officer observed that the complaint was unfounded and that the hen coop was found to be in compliance with the requirements of the Bylaw.

Through the review, staff found that there have not been any significant issues with the Urban Hens pilot project so far. Staff will continue analyzing the pilot project and will deliver a report with final recommendations on the Urban Hens pilot project before April 2022, which will be the end date of the pilot program, pending Council's approval.