Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury directs Staff to amend zoning and animal control by-laws to permit backyard hens in residential zones in accordance with Option __ as outlined in the report entitled "Backyard Hens", from the General Manager of Corporate Services, presented at the City Council meeting on December 11, 2018.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan / Health Impact Assessment

Experiences in other communities would indicated a generally positive impact to the quality of life. The Official Plan, as well as the Earth Care Action Plan and Greater Sudbury Food Charter would support the practice of raising backyard hens as a valuable practice supporting sustainability, food security and food equity.

Report Summary

On September 25, 2018, Council received a report entitled “Backyard Hens”, from the General Manager of Corporate Services. The report was prompted by resolution CC2018-239 as presented by Councillor McIntosh and Councillor Kirwan. This report was deferred by Council in order to allow Staff the opportunity to complete community engagement. The report updates Council on the results of community engagement and informs on risks and potential mitigation strategies to regulate backyard hens in residential zones.

Financial Implications

If Council chooses option 1, a business case will be prepared for consideration within the 2019 budget deliberations.
If Council chooses option 2, a one (1) year pilot project can be completed within the Council approved operating budget.
**Purpose**

On August 14, 2018, a motion was passed directing staff to prepare a report for Council’s consideration to provide options/recommendations with regard to allowing back yard hens across Greater Sudbury. Resolution CC2018-239, as presented by Councillor McIntosh and Councillor Kirwan, and carried by Council read as follows;

WHEREAS in 2004, the City of Greater Sudbury and the Sudbury and District Board of Health adopted the Greater Sudbury Food Charter which specifically endorses programs that relate to population health and wellness, community development, investment in the regional food system and the development of a sustainable food system;

AND WHEREAS Council, as part of the Phase 1 amendment of the Official Plan review, approved Local Food System policy objectives at Section 6.1 c. which includes strengthening and expanding the local food system, including removing barriers to local food systems where feasible; AND WHEREAS Council has directed staff to assist with the implementation of the Greater Sudbury Food Strategy, which outlines the actions required to make our community’s food system more equitable, vibrant and sustainable, through existing resources allocated to the Earth Care Sudbury Program;

AND WHEREAS one of the Greater Sudbury Food Strategy Recommendations’ goals is to increase household food production within Greater Sudbury by evaluating options for updating city by-laws to reduce barriers for home-based food raising (homesteading) activities;

AND WHEREAS current by-laws only permit domestic fowl/poultry on lands situated within agricultural and rural zones;

AND WHEREAS at the June 26th, 2018 Council meeting, a petition was submitted with a significant number of signatures, requesting an update of existing by-laws in order to allow back yard hens in Greater Sudbury;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Greater Sudbury direct staff to prepare a report for Council’s consideration at its September 25th, 2018 meeting, to include options/recommendations with regard to allowing back yard hens across Greater Sudbury, beyond the agricultural and rural zones.

**Background**

In response to resolution CC2018-239, on September 25, 2018, Council received a report entitled “Backyard Hens”, from the General Manager of Corporate Services. The report was prompted by a petition received by Council on June 26, 2018, where signatures of approximately 500 residents confirmed their support to have “Council update the existing bylaws to allow backyard hens in the City of Greater Sudbury”. This report was deferred by Council in order to allow Staff the opportunity to complete community engagement.

Community engagement took place between November 2, and November 15, 2018. To provide feedback and opinion, residents had the ability to complete a survey (online or paper) on backyard hens,
or visit one of nine in person “Chicken Chat” conversations at selected locations across Greater Sudbury. Residents were asked to provide their opinion on whether the City of Greater Sudbury should expand provisions to allow backyard hens in residential areas.

This report will inform Council on the participation rates and results of community engagement and will recommend regulations for backyard hens in residential zones. Staff will inform on risks and potential mitigation strategies that may be implemented through bylaw amendments and process creation in order to allow backyard hens in residentially zoned properties. Staff will illustrate the relationship between the current service level and the anticipated impact if the service expands, and identify impacts to resource allocations and budgets.

Analysis

Owning urban hens has become commonplace in a number of Ontario municipalities. Numerous municipalities have debated the issue in recent years, with communities expanding their bylaws and licensing process in order to allow residents to possess backyard hens in residential zones. It is common that municipalities mitigate these through regulation within their animal control bylaw.

Providing the opportunity for residents to rear egg-laying hens allows community members to participate in a sustainable and equitable food system. Residents that participate will have access to fresh and healthy food and will have more control over what they consume, resulting in increases in household food production and food skills within our community. The Earth Care Action Plan, the Greater Sudbury Food Charter and the Official Plan illustrate the City of Greater Sudbury’s active support for a more sustainable and equitable food system.

Currently, “Livestock”, the keeping of poultry (and other farm animals) is not be permitted on any lot less than 1.0 hectare in area and where zoned "A", Agricultural, "RU", Rural, "M4", Mining Industrial and "M5", Extractive Industrial zones. Within the City of Greater Sudbury, there are 3,924 parcels of land that are larger than 1 hectare and are zoned appropriately (see attached zoning map) where residents are permitted to have livestock on their property.

Public Engagement

An electronic survey and place holder map was available to residents online at “Over to You” (https://overtoyou.greatersudbury.ca/) for thirteen (13) days between November 02 and November 15, with hard copies available at Libraries and Citizen Service Centers. Nine in person “Chicken Chats” were offered to the community at a variety of locations during the week of November 5-9, 2018. The availability of the survey and in person meetings were advertised through a variety of platforms, including the use of the City of Greater Sudbury website, social media and on an electronic billboard at Bell Park.

In total, 131 residents attended the in person community engagement sessions held across the community. The highest attendance was registered in Capreol (60 visitors) and the South End of
Sudbury (20 visitors). Staff received fourteen (14) handwritten comments over the course of the in-person sessions, which were divided equally amongst supporters (7) and detractors (7) of backyard hens. Staff received four (4) emails from residents who wanted to further express their opposition to the possibility of hens being permitted on residential properties.

A total of 3,207 (3,189 English, 18 French) surveys were completed during the public engagement. Results of the survey confirmed that approximately 63% of respondents are in favour, and 34% are not in favour of the City of Greater Sudbury allowing backyard hens in residential areas.

Of the 3,207 residents that took the survey, 48% (1,552 responses) cited nuisance/predatory animals as a concern with allowing backyard hens in residential areas. An equal percentage also had concerns for odour. Concerns for noise was indicated by 38% of residents that took the survey. A total of 688 residents indicated they had no concerns.

If Council moves to permit backyard hens in residential areas, 74% of residents that completed the survey would like to see the City of Greater Sudbury regulate the number of hens permitted on a property. Further, 60% of respondents would like to see the City regulate set backs, while 57% would like to see minimum lot sizes. In consideration for any inspection or permitting process, 51% would like to see the City implement an inspection process for initial set up and approval and 46% would prefer a permit and application process.

A total of 35% of survey responses indicated that residents would prefer the maximum amount of hens permitted on a residential property to be between 1 and 5. Alternatively, 26% indicated a preference of owning 5-10 hens. Overall, there was a total of 49% of residents that would not want to be notified if their neighbor owned hens; and 43% would want to be notified.

**Public Health**

In addition to a December 2017 evidence brief titled “Reducing health risks associated with backyard chickens”, Public Health Sudbury & Districts (PHSD) provided staff with an evidenced based brief that confirmed there are risks and benefits associated with keeping and maintaining hens in backyards. The document suggests that risks may be reduced through evidence informed risk mitigation strategies that include education, regulatory and economic elements.

Public Health Sudbury identified risks that include infectious disease, handling of chicken waste and deceased birds, predatory animals and pests, noise and odour. Mitigation strategies listed refer to proper education of residents, regulation and evaluation by the City of Greater Sudbury.

Should City Council proceed, Public Health Sudbury & Districts recommends a pilot project. If Council opts to allow for backyard chickens in residential areas, further suggestion was that a licensing/registration process be implemented. There is a belief that a licensing/registration regime would allow for:

- Single point of contact with bird owners, which supports the sharing of educational material.
- Trace-back to flock owners, should an event occur requiring immediate contact with flock owners e.g. highly pathogenic virus.
- City planners to avoid high-density pockets of birds.
- City assessment and risk mitigation related to Source Water Protection.

It is further recommended that any amended by-laws:

- Prohibit chicks and roosters.
- Limit the number of hens.
- Provide specifications regarding coop construction, waste management, and food storage.

PHSD has recommended a pilot project and pointed to the UrbanHensTO Pilot Program as a model to consider in order to ensure risks are considered, mitigated and evaluated. The City of Toronto pilot program runs from March 2, 2018 to March 2, 2021 and allows residents to own hens in four specific wards across the City. This pilot project requires the registration of hens with the municipality and further regulate the number of hens, set backs, and coop/run requirements.

**Consideration for Bears**

Discussion with Staff from Kitchener, Caledon, Guelph and Kingston indicated there was no additional need for discussion/consideration/consultation about nuisance bears. This is especially concerning given the fact that MNRF has confirmed that “Sudbury has the most reported bear sightings in Ontario”.

With the highest reported in 2016 and 2017, bear sightings were relatively high in 2018, and would be higher compared to other municipalities. For the six-month period ending October 31, 2018, via their dedicated “bear hotline”, the Greater Sudbury Police Service Received 185 calls about nuisance bears, while residents reported 346 bear sightings via the Report-a-Bear City of Greater Sudbury website.

The MNRF confirmed that it is common occurrence to have bears going after chickens. “*It usually starts with the feed and progresses to predation of the birds when they return looking for more. Further, being low on the food chain, chickens can be an attractant for any number of four-legged or avian predators and once a predator is aware of the food source, they will often return looking for more*”.

MNRF recommended the installation of electric fencing around any chicken enclosures/coops in order to minimize potential conflicts with bears. MNRF confirmed that chicken feed should be stored indoors or in a secure building. When constructing or placing a chicken enclosure on a property, MNRF cautioned that residents should try to keep them away from woodlots or potential travel corridors for wildlife. Finally, to dispose of any deadstock properly.

**Source Water Protection**

The Greater Sudbury Source Water Protection Plan protects current and future sources of municipal drinking water. It identifies potential risks to drinking water supply and contains policies to ensure that drinking water remains safe. The Sudbury Source Protection Plan (SPP) was developed by a multi-
stakeholder Source Protection Committee (SPC) made up of nine members and a Chair, representing municipal, industry, and public interests. The source water protection plan currently affects City processes such as planning approvals and building code permits.

The Sudbury SPC provided recommendations to Staff support the mitigation of identified risks to drinking water in order to allow chickens on residential properties. Furthermore, an assessment was undertaken in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). It was determined that chickens on residential properties are captured in policy Ag1EF-EO which reads in part:

The City of Greater Sudbury shall create and deliver an education and outreach program to all of the vulnerable areas where the following threats could be significant:

- Application to land and storage of agricultural source material;

The education and outreach program may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Descriptions of the threat activities and why they pose a risk to drinking water;
- Source Protection Plan content related to the above threats to inform residents of the new restrictions in effect and the location of the vulnerable areas

The following conditions were recommended by the SPC to be included in the By-law, to protect municipal drinking water sources:

1) Backyard chicken coops must be registered in order to track locations and number of chickens in vulnerable areas, and;

2) The chicken coop must have a roof in order to reduce the likelihood that chicken waste could discharge into the immediate environment and travel to surface or groundwater sources, and;

3) The coop should have an impermeable floor or catchment to reduce the likelihood that chicken waste could discharge into the immediate environment and travel to surface or groundwater sources, and;

4) Waste produced from the coop should be removed from the structure and surrounding area on a regular basis and be stored in a waterproof, leak proof container. The container should be emptied regularly and the waste must be disposed of in accordance with Municipal By-laws, and;

5) Coops should be located 1.0 m away from any lot line and not within 3.0 m of any drainage ditch, swale or other channel that could transport waste from the coop to surface or groundwater sources and;

6) A functioning and approved backflow prevention device should be installed on water connections used to hose down the chicken coops in order to protect the drinking water systems from contamination.
**Municipal Comparisons**

A review of other municipalities has confirmed that municipalities such as Kitchener, Guelph, Kingston and Caledon have made recommendations to allow for backyard hens in additional zones.

Specific feedback about the service level impact varies among those that permit hens. Municipalities that have a requirement for permit and inspection, see an associated impact on staff to facilitate the process. When the program started in Kitchener, they reported a larger influx of applications, now reporting that 1-2 residents make application per week. Given the size of the department in Kitchener, where they have eight dedicated Property Standards Officers and five Noise Officers that are on the road 24/7, the service level has been augmented into current staffing levels and has been spread over the department. Kitchener noted they receive minimal complaints about backyard hens. Feedback from Guelph, (no permit- complaint based) noted they receive a few complaints per week about backyard hens specific to irresponsible pet ownership (disease, size of pen, general mess) and that there is a negative impact on other by-law enforcement activities.

**Regulatory Model**

Aligning with municipal best practice and public opinion, Staff recommend specific regulations be added to the Animal Care and Control Bylaw to mitigate risks and manage complaints from neighboring properties.

Should Council elect to permit backyard hens on residential properties, amendments to the Animal Care and Control Bylaw 2017-22 shall be made to reflect the following principles:

**General Requirements**

- Maximum of one (1) Coop and Run per lot
- Annual Permit/Inspection Process- fee to align with kennels- $50
- Owner(s) of hens must reside on the property where hens are kept
- Coops and runs are only permitted in the rear yard
- Limit on the number of hens- 4
- Roosters are not permitted
- Hens must be a minimum of 4 months old
- Hens must be maintained in an enclosed run when not in coop
- Hens must be kept in the coop between 9pm and 7am
- Sale of eggs is not permitted
- Home slaughter prohibited
- Disposal of deceased hens shall be through a veterinarian or an OMAFRA approved disposal facility

**Set Back Requirements**

- 3.0 m from any side or abutting rear lot line
- 15 m from any school, business or church
- 3.0 m from any ditch or swale

**Coop/Run Requirements**

- The coop and run shall be maintained in good repair and in a clean and sanitary condition, being kept free of obnoxious odours, substances and vermin
- Coops shall be constructed in durable material that provides shelter from inclement weather and be adequately ventilated
- Coop floor shall be constructed from a material that is resistant to moisture and mold, allows for heat retention in the cold and effectively excludes rodents, vermin and predatory animals
- Coop and run shall be completely enclosed to ensure hens are contained within at all times
- Coops shall be cleaned regularly, with a deep clean 2x per year- including the disinfecting of toughs, perches and nests
- Feed shall be stored in a rodent proof container and secured in doors at all times
- Feeders and water containers shall be provided, cleaned regularly and disinfected
- Manure and droppings shall be forthwith cleaned up per day and disposed of in accordance with municipal bylaw(s)

If consideration will be given to permitting the keeping of hens in the Animal Care and Control By-law, the Zoning By-law would require a minor amendment to reflect the below draft wording

**4.17 LIVESTOCK**

*Livestock shall not be permitted on any lot less than 1.0 hectare in area. Buildings housing livestock and manure handling facilities are subject to the Special Setback Provisions in Section 4.37.1 of this By-law.*

*a) Notwithstanding the above, chickens shall be permitted in conformity with the City of Greater Sudbury By-law for the Control and Regulation of Dogs, Cats and Other Animals.*

**Service Level Impact**

A review of other municipalities has confirmed regulatory models that allow for the keeping of backyard flocks within residential zones. There will be an associated impact on the current service level offered by the Bylaw department when considering a petition received by the City of Greater Sudbury suggested that there are currently over 250 backyard flocks within the City of Greater Sudbury and public consultation confirmed that, if permitted, 1,200 residents would choose to own backyard hens.

A permit process will have an impact on both administrative and enforcement resources of the Department. The administrative process will require approximately half to one (1) hour for Licensing Staff to allow for receipt of an application, review of zoning and site plan and to enter information into a database. Once the application is processed, an on-site inspection is assigned to a Bylaw Officer complete. Dependent on the physical location of the property in the City of Greater Sudbury, time is required to attend the location and further to confirm/measure set back requirements, review and
confirm coop and run dimensions and to review regulatory requirements of the bylaw to ensure nuisance and risk are addressed. Photos are taken of all areas of the coop/run. Once complete, this information is entered into a database, and without violations, a permit would be printed.

Assuming the City of Greater Sudbury will see an increase in the participation in urban farming with backyard hens, with public engagement confirming 1,082 residents who were clearly opposed to backyard hens, it is reasonable to assume that complaints will be received in regards to irresponsible pet ownership. Where there is currently a resource draw to respond to complaints about domestic pet owners in the City of Greater Sudbury, a similar impact would be anticipated for backyard hens in order to provide education and enforcement in specific to hens, coops and runs. To illustrate a comparable, the City of Greater Sudbury received 2,141 complaints for Animal Control between November 2017 and November 2018, which is an average of approximately six (6) cases per day.

Currently, approved budgeted Officer resources are approximately 22,745 hours annually. With 8,278 cases (average of 23 per day) received in the past rolling 12-months (November 20, 2017 to November 20, 2018), an Officer has approximately 2.75 hours to complete each case. The department is operating extremely efficiently when considering that this time allotment includes consideration for travel to and from the case location, time for inspection and time required for administrative work that also includes the preparation and attendance for court matters.

An addition to the current volume of cases, without an associated increase in employee resources, would result in a negative impact on the current service level. To address this, if the service is expanded to include the regulation of backyard hens, Staff recommend the addition of one (1) dedicated FTE (Junior Bylaw Officer-Group 10/4) and associated operating costs (vehicle, fuel, uniforms, and employee equipment). The cost of the service level enhancement would be approximately $94,000 annually.

**Conclusion and Options**

In response to resolution CC2018-239, on September 25, 2018, Council received a report entitled “Backyard Hens”, from the General Manager of Corporate Services. This report was deferred by Council in order to allow Staff to complete public consultation. With the option of a survey or in person “Chicken Chat”, Community engagement took place between November 2, 2018, and November 15, 2018.

A total of 3,207 surveys were completed during this public engagement, with an additional 131 residents attending an in person meeting. The results of the survey confirmed that approximately 63% of respondents are in favour, and 34% are not in favour of the City of Greater Sudbury allowing backyard hens in residential areas. Survey responses confirmed that there are concerns for nuisance/predatory animals, odour and noise. To mitigate these concerns, residents voiced their desire for a system that allowed for backyard hens in residential areas with regulations for the number of hens, set backs to neighbors, minimum lot size and an inspection process for initial set up and approval.

Partners in Health and Enforcement from Public Health Sudbury and District and the MNRF have provided feedback about identified risks for illness and nuisance while making recommendations should Council opt to expand the current allowances for hens.
City Staff have made recommendations for amendments to the Animal Control Bylaw with process in place to support concerns for Source Protection Water areas. Implementing these recommendations will be a service level increase in the Bylaw Department, and without adequate resource allocation will result in a negative service level impact for other Bylaw matters already addressed by the department.

**Option #1**- Allow backyard hens generally in residential zones, subject to a permitting and inspection process and requirements as amended in the Animal Care and Control Bylaw. Staff are directed to amend Zoning and Animal Control Bylaws to allow hens in residential zones with specific bylaw regulations and specifics for a permitting process. This additional service level will result in an annual increase of approximately $94,000 to the departmental operating budget. If option one (1) is selected, Staff will be directed to prepare a business case for consideration within the 2019 budget deliberations.

**Option #2**- As a pilot project, with a maximum of 20 registered participants, allow backyard hens generally in residential zones, subject to a permitting process and requirements as amended in the Animal Care and Control Bylaw. Staff are directed to amend Zoning and Animal Control Bylaws to allow hens in residential zones with specific bylaw regulations and specifics for a permitting process. This additional service level will be absorbed within approved departmental operating budgets. Staff will be directed to return to Council with an update and recommendations no later than December 2019.

**References**

Drinking Water Source Protection-

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing- Zoning Bylaw Information-
http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1758.aspx

Biosecurity Recommendations- OMAFRA-
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/poultry/facts/12-039.htm

Cuddling live chickens can make you sick- Public Health Ontario

Sudbury’s Nuisance Bear Problem Gets Help from the Province
ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

Backyard Hen Survey

VISITORS 3320  CONTRIBUTORS 2687  CONTRIBUTIONS 3189

Are you in favour of the City of Greater Sudbury allowing backyard hens in residential areas?

![Bar chart showing the results of the survey question on favoring backyard hens.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question options</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do you feel is the maximum number of hens that a resident should be allowed to keep?

![Pie chart showing the results of the survey question on the maximum number of hens.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question options</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hens should be determined by lot size</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No limit</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional question (1992 responses, 1197 skipped)
If any, what are your primary concerns with the City allowing backyard hens in residential zone (check all that apply)?

- Noise
- Odour
- Illness/Disease
- Visual esthetics/appearance
- Safety
- Nuisance/Predatory animals (bears, racoons, etc)
- Other
- None

Optional question (3189 responses, 0 skipped)

What is the current zoning of your property?

- Residential (2846, 89.2%)
- Agricultural (215, 6.7%)
- Rural (52, 1.6%)
- Unsure (76, 2.4%)

Question options

(3189 responses, 0 skipped)
If your neighbour wanted to have hens, would you want to be notified?

**Question options**
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Optional question (3134 responses, 55 skipped)

If the City were to allow backyard hens, would you want the City to (select all that apply):

**Question options**
- Regulate the number of hens
- Set minimum lot size to keep backyard hens
- Establish setbacks (distance coop must be set back from property line) from neighbours
- Implement permit and application process
- Establish inspection process for initial set up and approval
- No regulations
- Other

Optional question (3189 responses, 0 skipped)
Are you a resident of Greater Sudbury?

- Yes: 3143 (98.6%)
- No: 46 (1.4%)

If permitted, would you choose to own backyard hens?

- Yes: 1192
- No: 1375
- Unsure: 608

Question options

Optional question (3189 responses, 0 skipped)
ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

Sondage sur la garde de poules dans les arrière-cours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISITORS</th>
<th>19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTRIBUTORS</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRIBUTIONS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Étes-vous d’accord que la Ville du Grand Sudbury permette d’élever des poules dans les arrière-cours des zones résidentielles...

![Pie chart showing 6 (33.3%) and 12 (66.7%) responses]

**Question options**

- Oui
- Non

(18 responses, 0 skipped)

Si vous avez répondu « oui » à la question 1, selon vous, quel est le nombre maximal de poules qu’un résident devrait avoir...

![Pie chart showing 3 (25.0%), 5 (41.7%) and 4 (33.3%) responses]

**Question options**

- 1-5
- 5-10
- Le nombre devrait être déterminé par la taille du lot.

Optional question (12 responses, 6 skipped)
Le cas échéant, quelles sont vos principales préoccupations concernant l’autorisation par la Ville des poules dans les arri...
Si votre voisin voulait élever des poules, aimeriez-vous qu’on vous en informe?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Réponses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oui</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incertain</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Si la Ville autorisait les poules dans les arrière-cours, voudriez-vous que la Ville (sélectionner tous les éléments qui s’...
À toi la parole Grand Sudbury: Summary Report for 02 November 2018 to 16 November 2018

Habitez-vous au Grand Sudbury?

18 réponses, 0 ignorées

Si les poules sont autorisées, voudrez-vous en avoir dans votre arrière-cour?

18 réponses, 0 ignorées

Question options
- Oui
- Non
- Incertain

Optional question (18 responses, 0 skipped)
November 16, 2018

VIA EMAIL

City of Greater Sudbury
Brendan Adair, Manager of Security and By-Law Services
Email: Brendan.Adair@greatersudbury.ca

Dear Mr. Adair:

Re: Public Health considerations regarding backyard chickens

This letter and enclosure are intended to provide public health information in support of municipal deliberations regarding potential amendments to existing by-laws to allow for backyard hens beyond the agricultural and rural zones of the City of Greater Sudbury.

Public Health Sudbury & Districts recognizes that there are risks and benefits associated with keeping and maintaining hens in backyards. Evidence indicates that risks may be reduced through evidence informed risk mitigation strategies that include education, regulatory and economic elements. Benefits, risks, and risk mitigation strategies are further outlined with the enclosure.

Should City Council approve moving forward with changes related to backyard hen by-laws, Public Health Sudbury & Districts recommends a pilot project, similar to the UrbanHensTO Pilot Program, where risks are considered, mitigated and evaluated. Should City Council proceed, Public Health Sudbury & Districts would value the opportunity to work with the City to provide support in the identification and mitigation of risks, education and overall evaluation.

Should City Council proceed, Public Health Sudbury & Districts recommends that a licensing/registration process be implemented as this would allow for:

- Single point of contact with bird owners which supports the sharing of educational material.
- Trace-back to flock owners, should an event occur requiring immediate contact with flock owners e.g. highly pathogenic virus.
City planners to avoid high density pockets of birds.
City assessment and risk mitigation related to Source Water Protection.

It is further recommended that any amended by-laws:
• Prohibit chicks and roosters.
• Limit the number of hens.
• Provide specifications regarding coop construction, waste management, and food storage.

Should you have any questions or need further information please contact Holly Browne, Manager, Environmental Health at ext. 246, browneh@phsd.ca or Bridget King, Registered Dietician, Health Promotion at ext. 288, kingb@phsd.ca.

Yours Truly,

Stacey Laforest
Director, Environmental Health

And

Sandra Laclé
Director, Health Promotion

SL/SL:ja

Encl:
Backyard Hens – City of Greater Sudbury

cc. Dr. Penny Sutcliffe, Medical Officer of Health
Public Health Sudbury & Districts recognizes that there are risks and benefits associated with keeping and maintaining hens in backyards. Evidence indicates that risks may be reduced through evidence informed risk mitigation strategies that include education, regulatory and economic elements.

Benefits
Health and Wellbeing
- Evidence suggests that backyard hens may enhance neighbourhoods through a heightened sense of community.
- Hens are people friendly, social, intelligent, and affectionate, they can provide companionship and may contribute to improved mental health.

Food Literacy and a Sustainable, Resilient, and Healthy Food System
- Backyard hens provide the opportunity for individuals to interact with their natural environment and learn about the food system. Learning about the food system is an essential component of supporting a sustainable food system. The connection to our food supply that backyard hens support is important because it enhances food literacy (Food Literacy, 2018). At a population level a loss of food literacy has been identified as an impediment to healthy eating behaviours (LDCP, 2013).
- Provide owners the opportunity to learn about responsible animal care.
- May allow for personal autonomy and independence regarding food choices.

Nutrition
- Research is inconclusive regarding the nutrient content differences among free-range, organic, or conventionally raised hens. Hens fed an omeg-3 supplement lay eggs that contain omega-3 fats, which could be beneficial, however, more research is needed (Coleman Collins, 2018).

Myths
- Hens address food insecurity – food insecurity is caused by inadequate incomes. Owning backyard hens is expensive (purchasing hens, chicken housing and equipment, feed, and veterinary services, disposal of deceased hens, eggs may still need to be purchased depending on size of household) a cost benefit analysis has not been conducted but it is unlikely hens will positively impact an owner’s income (reduce food insecurity). Food insecurity is addressed through income solutions.
- Hens reduce household waste - Chickens may eat some kitchen scraps but not to the exclusion of other commercially prepared foods; impact on waste reduction likely negligible.

**Risks**

**Infectious Diseases**
- Poultry can carry Salmonella in their intestines or eggs without symptoms of illness which can be transferred onto feathers and surrounding environment.
- Salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis are the most frequent infections reported in relation to backyard chicken and live poultry exposure, however other pathogens have been linked to backyard poultry flocks.
- Transmission of avian influenza from wild birds to backyard chickens and subsequently to humans is a possibility.

**Chicken Waste**
- Fecal waste from poultry contains pathogens which may infect humans or other animals. Improper containment, handling and disposal of this waste can lead to increased illness and cost to the health care system.
- Methods of disposal of diseased and deceased poultry should be examined to ensure that the risk to humans and other animals is minimized.

**Predators and Pests**
- Backyard chickens may attract predators such as foxes, raccoons, coyotes, bears and wolves to urban areas.
- Backyard poultry flocks may have ectoparasites, such as lice, fleas and mites, which can affect humans. This could lead to a need for increased biosecurity.

**Nuisance Factors**
- Noise - Hens usually cluck softly, but will squawk during or shortly after laying an egg, or if frightened. Compared with other common pets, squawking is relatively quiet.
- Odour – Chicken manure and food scraps may create nuisance odours.

**Risk Mitigation**

**Education**
Increased flock owner education and awareness is essential in order to mitigate potential public health risks. Several current resources address issues of infection control, manure disposal, personal hygiene, basic chicken husbandry, food safety, and pest control:
Website: 
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/urbanagbib/poultry.htm

Video – Bird Health Basics – How to Prevent and Detect Disease in Backyard Flocks and Pet Birds
http://inspection.gc.ca/animals/terrestrial-animals/biosecurity/tools/video/eng/1320092234079/1322158553549

Resource Kit - Keeping Your Birds Healthy – Free to order – Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Contains information on:
- Introduction to Biosecurity
- Seven Principles of Biosecurity
- Feed and Water Management
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Introduction to Disinfectants
- Disposal of Bird Mortalities
- Introduction to Disease
- Foreign Animal Disease
- Dealing with Sick Birds
- Integrated Pest Management
- Understanding Antibiotics
- Disease Factsheets on CD
- Weatherproof Restricted Entry Sign
- Visitor Log Book
- Brochures and Posters

Regulation
- A licensing/registration process for backyard hens supports:
  - Single point of contact with bird owners which supports the sharing of educational material.
  - Trace-back to flock owners, should an event occur requiring immediate contact with flock owners e.g. highly pathogenic virus.
  - City planners to avoid high density pockets of birds.
  - City assessment and risk mitigation related to Source Water Protection.

- By-laws should:
  - Prohibit chicks and roosters.
  - Limit the number of hens.
  - Provide specifications on coop construction, waste management, and food storage.
Public Health Sudbury & Districts suggests:
- Free licencing/registration to help ensure that birds are registered and cared for.
- Cost-effective means of disposing of dead or sick birds.

Surveillance
The following activities would be supportive of surveillance efforts:
- Ensure that public health is aware of this potential source of pathogens when investigating relevant disease outbreaks.
- Pest control companies could amend call records to include a field about whether backyard chickens were present at households attended for pest control.
- Public Health Ontario investigation tools for salmonella and campylobacter now include a risk factor of contact with backyard chickens with individual communities listed where backyard chickens are permitted.
- Require owners to report unexplained deaths of backyard chickens to allow for surveillance of potential avian pathogens that could spread to large flocks or possibly transfer to humans.

Evaluation
- If evaluation is introduced, recommend that the following be considered: number of households keeping hens, reasons for keeping hens, any health events in either humans or hens over a defined time period, calls made to inspectors, costs to owners and municipality, complaints by neighbours, and calls to pest control companies from urban backyard poultry owners.
- Mandatory licensing/registration would facilitate access to owners.

Please find below, examples of by-laws from other Ontario municipalities:
- New Market – started as a pilot
- Kingston
- Toronto – pilot underway
- Mattawa
- Kitchener
- Orillia – pilot underway
- Guelph
- Meaford
- Huntsville
- Lake of Bays
- Severn Township
- Niagara Falls
- Trent Hills
- Bracebridge
Resources


Greater Sudbury Food Strategy
Re: Bylaw Backyard Chickens

The Sudbury Source Protection Plan (SPP) was developed by a multi-stakeholder Source Protection Committee (SPC) made up of nine members and a Chair, representing municipal, industry, and public interests. The Plan was implemented in 2015 and contains 45 policies to address significant drinking water threats prescribed by the Clean Water Act, 2006. Multiple policy tools are used to address these threats including but not limited to Prohibition, Risk Management Plans, and Education and Outreach.

The Sudbury SPC reviewed discussions occurring at the City of Greater Sudbury (CGS) regarding the proposed By-law amendment to allow chickens on residential properties. Furthermore, an assessment was undertaken in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). It was determined that chickens on residential properties are captured in policy Ag1EF-EO which reads in part:

*The City of Greater Sudbury shall create and deliver an education and outreach program to all of the vulnerable areas where the following threats could be significant:*

- Application to land and storage of agricultural source material;

*-The education and outreach program may include, but is not limited to, the following:*  
  - Descriptions of the threat activities and why they pose a risk to drinking water;  
  - Source Protection Plan content related to the above threats to inform residents of the new restrictions in effect and the location of the vulnerable areas*

Therefore, the following are conditions recommended by the SPC to be included in the By-law, should it be approved by Council, to protect municipal drinking water sources:

- Backyard chickens coops must be registered in order to track locations and number of chickens in vulnerable areas.
- The chicken coop must have a roof in order to reduce the likelihood that chicken waste could discharge into the immediate environment and travel to surface or groundwater sources.
- The coop should have an impermeable floor or catchment tray to reduce the likelihood that chicken waste could discharge into the immediate environment and travel to surface or groundwater sources.
• Waste produced from the coop should be removed from the structure and surrounding area on a regular basis and be stored in a waterproof, leak proof container. The container should be emptied regularly and the waste must be disposed of in accordance with Municipal By-laws.
• Coops should be located 1.0 m away from any lot line and not within 3.0 m of any drainage ditch, swale or other channel that could transport waste from the coop to surface or groundwater sources.
• A functioning and approved backflow prevention device should be installed on water connections used to hose down the chicken coops in order protect the drinking water system from contamination.

The Sudbury Source Protection Committee will monitor the activity and evaluate if additional measures should be implemented in the Source Protection Plan at a later date.

Sincerely,

Richard Bois
Chair, Sudbury Source Protection Committee

CC: Lin Gibson, Chairperson, Sudbury Source Protection Authority Sudbury
   Source Protection Committee
   Carl Jorgensen, General Manager, Conservation Sudbury
   Madison Keegans, Source Protection Program Manager, Conservation Sudbury