

Report to Council

Report Title:	Staff Response to Backyard Chickens		
Prepared By:	Lisa MacDonald, Animal Control/By-Law Enforcement Officer, and Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO		
Department:	By-Law Enforcement		
Date:	August 13, 2024		
Report Number:	BL2024-09	File Number:	C11BY
Attachments:	Letter from Adam Leveille		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number BL2024-09 - Staff Response to Backyard Chickens, prepared by Lisa MacDonald, Animal Control/By-Law Enforcement Officer, and Dieter Weltz, Building and Planning Manager/CBO for information purposes and maintains the current zoning restrictions.

Report:

Background:

Council received correspondence from Adam Leveille requesting a regulatory framework to permit the keeping of backyard chickens in urban areas, accompanied by a proposed by-law for consideration.

Currently, the Municipality of Brockton does not have a by-Law specifically regulating livestock in villages, hamlets or more specifically the former Town of Walkerton. While the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law defines permitted uses within specific zones, the keeping of livestock is not listed as a permitted use within urban areas of Brockton. Therefore, the keeping of livestock is prohibited in urban areas.

Analysis:

Municipal staff have assessed the implications of permitting livestock in urban areas and determined that several significant challenges and concerns are associated with this request. As a result of the concerns listed below, staff strongly advise against the keeping of livestock in urban areas.

Zoning

A zoning amendment would be required to permit an agriculture use in a residential zone. Staff would like to highlight the precedent that would be established by allowing one type of livestock, which could lead to unintended requests for other types of livestock. Additionally, there are multiple scales of residential

properties with varying lot sizes e.g. houses, semi-detached, duplex or apartments which would require further evaluation of zones, minimum lot size and setbacks.

Administration

The implementation of a Backyard Chicken By-Law, licensing program and enforcement framework would be required to ensure that residents comply with regulations. However, this would necessitate additional staff time and resources. A licencing fee would be recommended to effectively support, and cover expenses related to the licensing program.

Site Conditions

The maintenance and the general practice of raising livestock poses substantial concerns for municipal staff. The following are a few concerns that staff has outlined:

- Health hazards
- Retired or sick hens
- Maintenance
- Disposal of manure and other debris
- Housing of chickens/ free range
- Selling of eggs

Wildlife

Municipal staff receive numerous complaints regarding wildlife primarily, raccoons, foxes and coyotes in the urban areas of Brockton. However, staff lack the necessary resources and capacity to handle wildlife, therefore redirect inquiries to the Ministry of Natural Resources who can effectively educate residents and deal with these matters. If the keeping of livestock were permitted in urban areas, it will likely increase the presence of wildlife and generate additional complaints and redirecting even more calls to external agencies.

In conclusion, if Council is considering allowing livestock in urban areas, staff recommends the following:

1. Consult with surrounding municipalities to gather insights on their experiences, successes and challenges in permitting urban livestock.
2. Engage with Brockton residents through a survey to determine their interest in and options on keeping livestock in urban areas.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | Yes |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

Reviewed By:

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:

Lisa MacDonald, Animal Control/By-Law Enforcement Officer



Dieter Wetz, Building and Planning Manager

Reviewed By:

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer