



Staff Report

Report To: Council Meeting
From: Terri Towstiuć, Clerk
Date: 2024-07-18
Subject: Backyard Chicken Survey Results

Recommendation:

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Terri Towstiuć, Clerk Re: Backyard Chicken Survey Results; And

Option 1: That West Elgin Council hereby direct the Clerk to work with all necessary departments to initiate the process to allow residential Backyard chickens, including but not limited to the West Elgin planning and by-law enforcement departments.

Option 2: That West Elgin Council hereby reject the option to allow residential backyard chickens, within the municipality.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the results of the “Backyard Chicken” survey, which ran from mid-June to July 10, 2024.

Attached to this report are the results of the 2024 Backyard chicken survey, for Council’s review, discussion and to assist with decision making.

Also attached to this report, is the report presented to Council on May 23, 2024, which includes comments from building, planning and by-law enforcement, considerations of health & biosecurity, financial implications and policies to consider.

Background:

May 27, 2021: That West Elgin Council hereby direct staff that consideration of residential/backyard chickens be undertaken as part of the review of the Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

March 14, 2024: Whereas egg laying Hens in residential areas can assist in reducing food scraps, produce a natural fertilizer, rid unwanted garden pests, assist with composting and provide fresh, free-range eggs; And Whereas the rising cost of living and food insecurities continues to burden many residents; And Whereas West Elgin initially declined to allow residents the opportunity egg laying hens in residential areas; And Whereas many Ontario municipalities have successfully completed a "Backyard Chicken" Pilot Project, with continuation of the program after program success; Therefore, West Elgin Council hereby direct staff to investigate the

process to allow residents to have egg laying hens in residential areas within the Municipality, and report back at an upcoming meeting of Council.

May 23, 2024: Council received a report from T. Towstiuc, Clerk, regarding options for allowing backyard chickens within residential areas. Currently, the zoning by-law only allows for chickens on properties zoned agricultural. Council directed staff to prepare an online survey and engage residents' participation to determine the potential.

Financial Implications:

Licensing fees for allowing residential/backyard chickens are the only way to recoup the administration and enforcement costs for such a program.

The largest costs would be for administration of a licensing program for inspections, determining lot size, location of accessory buildings and for enforcement of noise and mitigating neighbour disputes. It is likely that By-law Enforcement hours will need to be increased.

Policies/Legislation:

Municipal Act, 2001

Planning Act, 1990

Protection of Livestock and Poultry from Dogs Act, 1990

West Elgin Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2015-36

West Elgin Animal Control By-law 2023-80

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Infrastructure Improvement	Recreation	Economic Development	Community Engagement
<input type="checkbox"/> To improve West Elgin's infrastructure to support long-term growth.	<input type="checkbox"/> To provide recreation and leisure activities to attract and retain residents.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To ensure a strong economy that supports growth and maintains a lower cost of living.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To enhance communication with residents.

Respectfully submitted by,

Terri Towstiuc, Clerk