

**To:** Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Rob Publow, Manager of Planning  
**Subject:** **Hens and Bees Pilot Program - Outcome**

**Date:** February 20, 2024

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### Recommendation(s)

That the options for permitting hens and bees within the City of Mission's Urban Growth Boundary be considered based on the findings of the Hens and Bees Pilot Program, and that one of the following options be selected for implementation. The preferred option is 1, to maintain the current restriction within the Zoning Bylaw:

1. Continue to restrict the use as per the existing Zoning Bylaw; or
2. Revise the Zoning Bylaw to allow hens as a permitted use within the Urban Growth Boundary; or
3. Revise the Zoning Bylaw to allow hens and bees as permitted uses within the Urban Growth Boundary.

### Purpose

To present the outcomes of the Hens and Bees Pilot Program (the Program) and to request direction on permitting hens and bees on properties within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

### Background

A number of delegations to Council over the last decade have requested changes to the City's bylaws and policies to allow the keeping of hens and bees within urban designated areas in Mission. Currently, this use is limited to suburban and rural designated areas. The Program was conceived to assess both the benefits and challenges of allowing hens and bees within urban designated areas, specifically within the UGB.

A report was initially presented to Council on June 21, 2021, introducing the Program. It outlined the Program's framework which included the issuance of 12-month Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) for the keeping of hens or bees on a property within the UGB. It was recommended that the number of hens be limited to six and that the number of bee hives be limited to two plus a nucleus hive. This report is included as **Attachment A**.

Other regulations were also prescribed including fencing regulations, minimum lot size requirements, hours for tending the animals, etc. The applicants were expected to maintain their sites in accordance with the Good Neighbour Bylaw 5524-2016. The Inspection Services Division was involved, and bylaw officers performed site inspections for all applicants registered with the Program.

The initial intake of applicants to the Program was considered on October 18, 2021, and consisted of three applications being approved for backyard hens. A second intake took place on June 20, 2022, and nine more applications were approved for backyard hens. In total, 12 applicants agreed to participate in the program. All applicants were interested in keeping hens,

with no applications received expressing interest in the keeping of bees. This second report is included as **Attachment B**.

Of the 12 applicants, five did not complete the Program; leaving seven participating applicants. At the end of the Program, feedback from the neighbours and participants was requested and collected.

## **Discussion and Analysis**

### Bees

No applications were received expressing interest in keeping bees, and so staff do not have any findings to present on this topic. Staff recommend maintaining the restriction on bee keeping within the UGB as per the existing Zoning Bylaw as no new information was obtained through the program.

### Hens

The following is a summary of the twelve applications that were received.

#### *P2021-075 – Initial Intake*

<b>TP21-003</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	7803 Tavernier Terrace
Applicant	Terry & Jocelyn Fabretti
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.
Participant Comments	No comment provided.

<b>TP21-004</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	32724 Cherry Avenue
Applicant	Stephen Grummisch
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.
Participant Comments	No comment provided.

<b>TP21-005</b>	Did not complete the pilot program
Address	8483 Cade Barr Street
Applicant	Katharine McIvor

#### *P2022-018 – Second Intake*

<b>TP22-001</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	33789 3 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue
Applicant	Patrick Doyle & Stephanie Quissy
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.

Participant Comments	No comment provided.
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<b>TP22-002</b>	Did not complete the pilot program
Address	31809 Silverdale Avenue
Applicant	Anastassia & Daniel Peterson

<b>TP22-003</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	34278 Jasper Avenue
Applicant	Andy & Carolynn Reimer
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.
Participant Comments	Pilot program has been enjoyable and would like it to continue. Full comments are provided within <b>Attachment C</b> .

<b>TP22-004</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	7430 Dunsmuir Street
Applicant	Ashley Bremner (Cullen)
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.
Participant Comments	Pilot program has been enjoyable and would like it to continue. Full comments are provided within <b>Attachment C</b> .

<b>TP22-005</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	33329 Heather Avenue
Applicant	Raymond Selinger
Complaints/Concerns	No complaints were received within the time period of the pilot program.
Participant Comments	No comment provided.

<b>TP22-006</b>	Completed pilot program
Address	33528 Copper Place
Applicant	Franz Muermann
Complaints/Concerns	2 complaints were received which resulted in property inspection by Bylaw Enforcement staff. Issues resolved.
Participant Comments	Pilot program has been enjoyable and would like it to continue. Full comments are provided within <b>Attachment C</b> .

<b>TP22-007</b>	Did not complete the pilot program
Address	33554 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
Applicant	Chad & Tamara Umlah

<b>TP22-008</b>	Did not complete the pilot program
Address	8041 Philbert Street
Applicant	Vivian Teske & Justin Brown

<b>TP22-009</b>	Did not complete the pilot program
Address	7535 Murray Street
Applicant	Will Jessie C. Dias

### Public Feedback

At the end of the program, a survey was sent out to the applicants of the Program, as well as their neighbouring properties, to collect feedback of their experience with backyard hens. Staff received a total of 11 responses, with seven responders in favour of backyard hens and four against them. The responses are collected in **Attachment C**.

Of the seven responders in favour of hens, three have been identified as Program participants. The participants noted having had a positive experience keeping chickens in their backyards, found them to be helpful with gardening, and enjoyed the eggs they provided. Similarly, the neighbours in favor of hens noted having had a positive experience with chickens in the neighbourhood and enjoyed receiving free eggs from some of the participants.

The four responders against backyard hens were all neighbours of a participant. Their concerns with urban chickens included attraction of other wildlife (racoons, rodents, bears), noise, smell, spread of avian influenza to other animals, devaluing of property, and a cause of poor relations with neighbours.

### **Referrals**

Bylaw Enforcement Division: Two complaints were received (on the same property) and resolved. No further action was required. No concerns with the program continuing.

FVRD Animal Control: FVRD Animal Control received no complaints about any of the properties that participated in the program.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **Communication**

Notice of TUPs were issued to all owners and occupiers of properties within a radius of 10 m (30 ft) of the subject sites. Feedback on the program was collected from the same group of owners and occupiers in January 2024.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The Hens and Bees Pilot Program has come to an end and Staff are seeking direction on how to proceed. Three options have been presented for Council's consideration:

1. Continue to restrict the use as per the existing Zoning Bylaw; or
2. Revise the Zoning Bylaw to allow hens as a permitted use within the Urban Growth Boundary; or
3. Revise the Zoning Bylaw to allow hens and bees as permitted uses within the Urban Growth Boundary.

Depending on the option selected by Council, staff may need to update Zoning Bylaw 5949-2020 as necessary. If it is decided to permit bees and/or hens within the Urban Growth Boundary there may be an increase in bylaw complaints and as a result there may be a need for additional bylaw enforcement capacity in the future.

**Report Prepared by:** Hardeep Atwal, Planner 1 and Jay Hazzard, Planner 2

**Reviewed by:** Rob Publow, Manager of Planning

**Approved for Inclusion:** Mike Younie, Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment(s)**

Attachment A: TUP Report 1 – June 21, 2021

Attachment B: TUP Report 2 – June 20, 2022

Attachment C: Program Feedback