

Municipality of Lakeshore – Report to Council

Growth & Sustainability



To: Mayor & Members of Council
From: Rob Sassine, Division Leader – By-law
Date: October 26, 2022
Subject: Rat Abatement Pilot Project

Recommendation

This report is for information.

Background

As the Municipality of Lakeshore has a large agricultural component to it, the opportunity and likelihood of rodents being attracted to our area is high. As such, there is an abundance of potential habitat for rodents to exist within the Municipality's urban areas. Rodents in urban areas are generally seen as an unwelcome nuisance by residents and as such, staff and council members receive complaints regarding their presence.

At the September 13, 2022, Council meeting a Notice of Motion was introduced regarding the control of rodent infestations. The following motion was passed:

That Council direct Administration to develop a business case to assess the value of introducing a Rat Abatement Service, to include proposed levels of service, cost and resourcing required to support delivery.

The By-law Division has been receiving an increased number of complaints from residents regarding the sighting of rats in urban areas of the municipality. After receiving the complaint, a By-law Officer is dispatched to investigate the area to determine if a rodent infestation can be identified. This includes the location of the complaint and neighbouring properties to seek out potential Property Standards or Yard Maintenance issues.

Currently the Municipality has provisions within the Property Standards By-law 23-2018 that states the following:

- 5.17** All vacant lots and every yard shall be kept clean and free from injurious insect's termites, rodents, vermin and other pests and any condition which might result in the harbouring of such pests

- 6.1** Every owner, and every occupant in that part of a non- residential property that he occupies or controls, shall maintain the property free from rodents, vermin and injurious insects.
- 7.1** A dwelling shall at all times be kept free of rodents, vermin and insects and from conditions which may encourage infestation by such pests.

With these provisions in place, it provides staff the authority to ensure that any nesting or burrowing locations on a property are sealed off to lessen the opportunity for the proliferation of the rodents. Should By-law Officers see signs of rodent activity, they may direct the property owner to take steps to mitigate the concerns.

Comments

Municipality of Lakeshore One-Year Pilot Program Approach

Staff recommend a one-year pilot program that would be identical to the process and conditions outlined in Appendix 1. This program would include residents contracting a licensed exterminator to bait the rats. Once the property owner provides confirmation of payment for services, the property owner would be rebated 50% of the cost of services up to \$200 annually.

This would include:

- inspections conducted by By-law Officers,
- acceptance of the terms and conditions by the property owner,
- rebates of 50% of the total bill up to \$200,
- program participation limited to one time annually,
- the program would only include exterior services.

By-law staff would require the assistance of the Finance department to establish a process to review approved enforcement staff documentation and provide rebates to the approved property owner at the completion of the program.

During this pilot program, performance success rates related to complaint numbers and approvals into the program, budget, and staffing compliments will be kept track of and reviewed. After which, a report will be brought to Council to recommend whether the program needs to be revised or extended.

Conclusion

Administration recommends undertaking a one-year pilot rodent control rebate program to assist in controlling rodent infestation in the Municipality of Lakeshore. The amount of \$10,000 is included for consideration in the 2023 Budget.

Others Consulted

All municipalities in Essex County were contacted to determine if they offer any type of Rodent Extermination program.

The Town of Tecumseh's Pilot Rat Abatement Program for Residential Properties provides a rebate to residential property owners to assist with the cost of utilizing a licensed pest control company to assist with removing rats from outside their residential property. Residential property owners who hire the services of ProTrap – Wildlife Control & Pest Management may be eligible for one rebate once per calendar year. The eligible rebate is available for up to a maximum amount of 50% of \$360 and must apply to the exterior property only. Any additional costs of the services performed or any ongoing rat control services beyond the rebate amount is the sole responsibility of the property owner. Tecumseh Town Council has approved \$10,000 for the pilot program.

The City of Windsor offers a Rat Abatement Service which is administered by their Environmental Services staff and is offered to residents free of charge. The City of Windsor spends approximately \$140,000 to bait approximately 1,500 to 1,800 properties annually.

Financial Impacts

A pilot program is expected to cost a total of \$10,000 not including staff time. This amount is proposed to be included in the 2023 budget for Council's consideration.

Proposed Rat Rebate program (budget based on 50 approvals) - \$10,000

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Rat Abatement Pilot Project.docx
Attachments:	- Rat Abatement Pilot Project Appendix.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jan 5, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

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Approved by Justin Rousseau and Truper McBride