

## Resolution

**Agenda Number:** 22.2

**Date:** September 10, 2020

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**Moved by** Councillor Fonseca

**Seconded by** Councillor Dasko

Whereas the Region of Peel and the City of Mississauga have increasingly been hearing concerns from residents of rodent issues, specifically a significant increase in the rat population, in neighbourhoods, on private property, in public parks and on public property, around construction sites and on the street;

And whereas, the Region of Peel, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton and Town of Caledon are growing urban centres with steady projected increases in population growth and development;

And whereas, the Region of Peel, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton and Town of Caledon, through respective regional and municipal infrastructure plans, have approved ongoing residential, commercial and industrial infrastructure projects to address state of good repair, resident and employment capacity, community and neighbourhood building;

And whereas, the urban landscape creates an environment for rats to thrive by providing an ample supply of food, water and shelter; rats have the capacity to burrow underground and live in common public and private spaces, garbage bins, and unmaintained buildings, can squeeze through cracks in foundations, walls, floors and windows;

And whereas, rats can quickly increase in numbers because they are fast breeders and are quick to adapt to the urban environment creating challenges in finding appropriate mitigation strategies;

And whereas, the City of Mississauga Applewood Hills and Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres communities have and are experiencing a significant amount of flooding of public and private property;

And whereas, the City of Mississauga, Region of Peel, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and Credit Valley Conservation Authority have and continue to implement measures to address creek, storm water and sewer water flood management in the Applewood Hills and Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres communities and in communities throughout the Region of Peel;

And whereas, the City of Mississauga Applewood Hills, Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres communities have and are experiencing a significant increase in rat sightings on their private properties, in their back and front yards, sightings of burrowing into their home foundations and backyard retaining walls, as well as seeing rats on neighbourhood streets and in public spaces in the community;

And whereas, other cities in the world have modernized strategies to tackle rodent, specifically rat populations, as parallel to increased urbanization;

And whereas, many urban and growing urban cities and regions in Ontario, including City of Toronto, City of Ottawa, Niagara Falls, City of Windsor, City of Oshawa, St. Catharines, and Durham Region have supported strategies to support residents and businesses with rodent, and specifically rat population, including City and Region wide, as well as local neighbourhood/community strategies, including but not limited to funding for rodent control and rebate programs for residents;

And whereas, rats are typically nocturnal animals, however through the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been increased day rat sightings, submitted photos and videos of rat infestation as well as anecdotal other reports of changed behaviour in the urban rat population;

And whereas, history shows that addressing rodent and rat population in urbanized areas is a shared issue, where everyone plays a role in controlling the issue and an integrated and interdepartmental approach to rodent control has seen the greatest success;

And whereas, the Province of Ontario has approved the Region of Peel moving to Stage 3 of the COVID-19 recovery plan and committed to supporting Ontario municipalities and regions through the COVID-19 recovery;

And whereas, the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel Councils have supported municipal and regional COVID-19 recovery plans, noting how pivotal it is to ensure that the vibrancy, health and safety of our residents, businesses and properties are upheld and to support our communities to be resilient, and to “build back better”;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Region of Peel develop a residential rodent control rebate program to assist residential property owners who are experiencing rodent infestation to hire pest control companies to address the immediate need in the Applewood Hills, Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres communities and other communities in the Region of Peel and City of Mississauga that have reported and documented rat infestation, and work with and support the local communities through a local rat prevention strategy including but not limited to an enhanced education campaign to residents and businesses, and control and prevention strategies on both public and private property;

And further, that the Region of Peel work with the Applewood Hills, Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres communities to monitor the effectiveness of the rebate program and local rat prevention strategy to help inform a Region and Local Municipality Wide Interdepartmental Rat Mitigation, Control and Prevention Plan;

And further, that the Region of Peel retain an industry expert rodentologist to collaborate with staff from the Region of Peel, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton and Town of Caledon through an interdepartmental approach of Region of Peel Public Health, Public Works, City and Region Planning, City Transportation and Works, Parks, Animal Services and By-law to investigate rat populations and infestation and, based on findings, report to Regional Council with a rat mitigation, control and prevention plan that includes strategies on both public and private property and funding implementations on the following:

- a. Develop a mechanism to track rat infestation complaints;
- b. Develop a baseline rat and rodent population in the Region, in the local Municipalities and in specific Neighbourhood Areas with reported rat infestation complaints;
- c. Current work being undertaken by the Region and the City of Mississauga and various departments to incorporate preventative rat mitigation strategies, and, where gaps and opportunities exist, consider the following, but not limited to, interdepartmental strategies to implement appropriate control measures:
  - i. Place bait/traps on all Peel construction sites in the Applewood Hills, Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres neighbourhoods.
  - ii. Place bait/traps on all active Peel construction sites.
  - iii. For future Peel construction sites place bait/traps before and after construction to monitor potential changes.
  - iv. Peel adopt a process that when “retiring” any watermain infrastructure that it be sealed or grouted.
  - v. Implement Peel Waste Management controls and inspections on current and future Peel construction projects.
  - vi. Peel Waste Management to continue to monitor waste collection in Applewood Hills, Applewood Heights and Applewood Acres, including multi-residential and commercial properties and, for future, monitor in other identified neighbourhoods reporting rat infestation.
  - vii. Peel Public Health staff continue to respond and inspect complaints regarding rats and work with City of Mississauga Property Standards staff as required to streamline the process including designating a liaison officer and conducting joint inspections wherever possible.
  - viii. Peel Public Health to provide recommendations that rodent control be incorporated into construction plans when commenting on EAs (provincial, regional and municipal).

- d. Develop a mechanism to track rodent, specifically rat infestation, complaints to coordinate the tracking of rodent related request for help through each department;
- e. Develop a plan to implement proactive baiting during infrastructure construction projects, including, but not limited to:
  - i. Rat control measures implemented 6 months to a year prior to construction starting.
  - ii. Rat control monitoring program upon construction completion.
- f. Develop a plan to include specific rat prevention practices in regular parks maintenance and specific rat prevention practices;
- g. Modernize and or enhance existing public health and by-law programs and tools to address rodent problems on private property;
- h. Incorporate inspections for rats into the inspections of abandoned buildings and issue orders to the owners to remedy, at a neutral cost, any infestations if evidence is found;
- i. That the various City and Regional departments review and report back to Regional Council on proactive baiting, waste management controls, and site inspection cleanliness in relation to:
  - i. Issuing of demolition permits
  - ii. Development applications-
  - iii. Building permits-

And further, that Region of Peel staff report back to a future meeting of Regional Council with recommendations on how such a program could be administered, detailing any financial impacts and what monitoring could be put in place to assess its effectiveness.

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Regional Chair