

June 30, 2021

Economic and Community Development Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Request for Review of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349, Animals Regarding Exemption for Reptilia Facility at 245 Queens Quay West

Background

Harbourfront Centre is currently in discussions with a prospective tenant, Reptilia, for the north building located at 245 Queens Quay West, and has asked that I bring this matter forward on their behalf, as a member of the Harbourfront Centre Board and local Councillor representing the central waterfront.

Reptilia is a reptile zoo and visitation centre with established locations in Whitby and Vaughan. The proposed tenant would provide the waterfront with another key tourist attraction complementing the CN Tower, Toronto Islands and the Aquarium, when post-COVID-19 tourism returns.

Reptilia's proposed program includes animals that fall under the Prohibited Animals list in City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349, Animals. City staff can determine if a site-specific exemption for this site is appropriate through a review process that includes evaluation of accreditations, standards of care, and area health and safety issues. The By-law has a number of exempted sites, including the Toronto Zoo, Riverdale Farm, and Ripley's Aquarium of Canada, which received an exemption in 2017.

Recommendation

1. The Economic and Community Development Committee request the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, to report by the end of the fourth quarter of 2021 on the proposed Reptilia facility at 245 Queens Quay West, including the following:
 - a. a recommendation on whether or not to include the facility under the Prohibited Animals exceptions in Section 349-4 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 349, Animals;
 - b. the specific prohibited animal species that would be permitted, if City Council grants the exception; and
 - c. health and safety considerations for staff and the public, including but not limited to, access to antivenin and consultation with local hospitals.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joe Cressy
Chair, Board of Health
Ward 10, Spadina-Fort York