

April 25, 2023

Economic & Community Development Committee Meeting
Via email: ecdc@toronto.ca



RE: EC3.4 UrbanHensTO Backyard Hens Pilot Program -

Dear Committee Members,

Please **amend** and **adopt** the agenda item. Zero Waste Hub Toronto echoes calls to amend this item from both **FoodShare Toronto** and **Toronto Urban Growers**.

In BC after the November 2021 floods, farmers lost up to 25,000 chickens and egg supply was challenged. In Toronto, food supply must be maintained by allowing decentralized local small scale urban hens. Toronto handles people being allowed to own up to 50 pigeons per property already - it can handle 4 hens per property.

Torontonians deserve access to decentralized local eggs: in case of climate emergency, challenged funds, and/or avian flu on industrial overcrowded farms; and on any day decreasing Toronto's embodied emissions, air pollution, heat island effect, and increasing food freshness, public health and people's resiliency.

Decentralized urban hens: provide fresh local eggs for people who choose to consume eggs; promote food security, food sovereignty, and resiliency; reduce egg packaging, transport, and GHG emissions; provide a way for people to avoid industrial/corporate farmed eggs, potential 'price gouging' and/or shortages if any; and help people create healthy plastic-free soil amendment and fertilizer in onsite composting[^] to use to feed and grow healthy soils and save money, among many other benefits.

For local food security, food sovereignty, ResilienceTO, poverty reduction, equity*, TransformTO, packaging waste reduction, and more, please:

- pause UrbanHensTO for one year and/or expand it city wide permanently;
- put emergency measures, and funding, in place for the bylaw to take effect immediately to help decentralize more Ontario hens to more local Toronto people in light of the avian flu;
- subsidize or waive registration fees for people over 18 years of age with an income of less than \$50,000 in line with City of Toronto's pet licensing program;
- mandate support for community chicken projects (on a case by case basis) with permanently adequate funding; and
- explore whether and where community ducks and/or quail may be kept for eggs in Toronto to give equitable access to people who experience food sensitivities to chicken eggs and/or cultural choice for duck and/or quail eggs.

Thank you,

Ms. A. Pope, Coordinator (Volunteer), Toronto, ON M6J 0A8

Zero Waste Hub Toronto (est. 2018) is a grassroots not for profit organization, the founder and organizer of Toronto's first two zero waste fairs (2018 and 2019), and works with established local organizations and green groups to help promote waste reduction education, awareness and opportunities, and create a zero waste future for Toronto.

^ <https://tilthalliance.org/resources/composting-chicken-manure/>.

* Learn more via: [Toronto Urban Growers](#); and, [Lorraine Johnson](#), author and city farmer.