

July 2, 2024

RE: Developing a Rat Reduction Plan for Toronto

Dear Chair and Members of Infrastructure & Environment Committee,

People in our communities have contacted us with their concerns about rats in local neighbourhoods. Large rat populations have become an increasing challenge for a number of complex reasons. This is a multifaceted problem that requires collaboration across City divisions. We're proposing that an upstream prevention and action-focused plan is needed if we want to reduce the number of rats and their impacts on households and businesses in our local communities.

Many other jurisdictions have tackled this issue before, like the Region of Peel's Rat Prevention programs, Alberta's Rat Control Plan, New York City's Rat Mitigation Zones, Ottawa's Rat Mitigation Working Group, Washington, DC's Rodent Control Program, and Chicago's Bureau of Rodent Control. There is an opportunity to learn from other cities who are experiencing the same local challenges we face and are implementing proven solutions to make a difference.

As climate change, construction site management, infrastructure state-of-good-repair, solid waste management practices, property maintenance and many other factors accelerate the presence of rats in our neighbourhoods, we believe it's time for Toronto to take this step. With this purpose, we can leverage ongoing work and initiate new actions across City divisions to reduce rats and keep our neighbourhoods cleaner and healthier.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. City Council direct the City Manager, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, Engineer & Executive Director of Engineering and Construction Services, Executive Director of Municipal Licensing and Standards, General Manager of Solid Waste Management Services, General Manager of Toronto Water, Chief Building Official & Executive Director of Toronto Building and other relevant divisions, to report back to Infrastructure & Environment Committee in the third quarter of 2025 with an interdivisional action plan for the reduction of rats in Toronto, including strategies to address contributing environmental factors and the impacts of rats on local neighbourhoods in line with an integrated pest management approach.
2. City Council direct the City Manager to consult with other North American jurisdictions on their approach to the reduction of rats when developing the strategy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Bravo".

Councillor Alejandra Bravo
Ward 9, Davenport

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amber Morley".

Deputy Mayor Amber Morley
Ward 3, Etobicoke–Lakeshore