

Please note the following response to Speak to City Council has been submitted at Monday September 15th 2025 2:27 PM with reference number 2025-09-15-016.

- **What would you like to speak to Council about:**
Request for Exemption - Ball Pythons under Animal Keeping Bylaw 232
- **Is this an item scheduled on a current agenda?:**
No
- **Provide as much information as you can about the matter you would like to speak to:**

Dear Councillors and Municipal Enforcement Services,

We are writing to respectfully request consideration for a targeted amendment to Chapter 232 – Animal Keeping Bylaw, specifically to exempt ball pythons (Python regius) from Schedule “A” – Prohibited Animals.

To be clear, we are not asking for the entire by-law to be reviewed or changed, as we understand this could have unintended impacts on other pet owners. Instead, our request is focused solely on a narrow exemption for ball pythons.

Why Ball Pythons Should Be Exempt

Ball pythons are among the most widely kept reptiles in Canada and globally. They are:

Non-venomous, docile, and small – typically 0.9–1.5 m in length, weighing less than the average household cat or small dog.

Easy to care for – they eat pre-killed, frozen rodents (no live feeding required).

Adults typically eat once every 1–2 weeks, making their care predictable and manageable. Supplies and food can be easily purchased online or at local pet stores.

No risk to the environment – ball pythons cannot survive Canadian winters and therefore pose no invasive species threat.

Safe for the community – they have an excellent track record in Canada, with no recorded serious incidents. They are consistently recognized as one of the safest reptiles to own.

Precedent in Other Municipalities

Many Canadian municipalities allow non-venomous snakes up to a certain length:

Toronto: ≤ 3 m

Ottawa: ≤ 2 m

Winnipeg: ≤ 2 m

Marathon: ≤ 2 m

Ball pythons fall well within these limits, averaging only 1–1.5 m. Neighbouring

municipalities such as Neebing, Shuniah, O'Connor, and Greenstone have no restrictions on keeping them.

Educational and Family Value

My 8-year-old daughter has developed an interest in ball pythons. As parents, we support this because of the educational benefits it provides: responsibility, animal care, and respect for living creatures. Allowing families to responsibly own ball pythons gives children in Thunder Bay the same opportunities as families in other Canadian cities.

We respectfully ask Council and Municipal Enforcement Services to consider amending Schedule "A" of Chapter 232 to exempt ball pythons (Python regius). This narrow change would align Thunder Bay with best practices, maintain public safety, and allow responsible families like ours to provide safe and educational pet ownership opportunities.

- **Upload any addition images and/or documents about the matter (upload to 5 files):**
 1. [Municipal Bylaw Excerpts \(Toronto,Ottawa,Winnipeg,Marathon\).pdf \[853.0 KB\]](#)
- **Provide specific actions you would like Council to take:**

We respectfully ask Council and Municipal Enforcement Services to consider amending Schedule "A" of Chapter 232 to exempt ball pythons (Python regius). This narrow change would align Thunder Bay with best practices, maintain public safety, and allow responsible families like ours to provide safe and educational pet ownership opportunities.
- **Have you already been in contact with City staff in regards to the subject matter of your deputation request?**

Yes
- **Who did you speak to in City Administration? What was the outcome?**

We reached out by email to City Council and Adam Carruthers on September 14, 2025, and included excerpts from Municipal Bylaws in Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, and Marathon, along with letters of support from local enthusiasts confirming the safety of ball pythons. We have not yet received any response from Municipal Enforcement Services. However, most Council members did not appear to have concerns with our request. We're hopeful that, with the time provided between our email and the upcoming Council meeting on October 14, 2025, they will have had sufficient opportunity to review the information and will be supportive of our request.
- **Please select the date of the meeting:**

Standing Committee - Tuesday, October 14 2025

- **Please choose**
Ms
- **First name:**
Lisa
- **Last name:**
Parent
- **Email:**
lisaha05@gmail.com
- **Phone:**
(807) 252-4836
- **Please note the names of the presenters that will be attending with you:**
Lyana Parent, Dane Parent, Bobbie Sue Caratti
- **Please indicate how you intend to participate in the meeting.**
In Person