



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** June 22, 2020
From: Cecilia Achiam **File:** 12-8000-01/2020-Vol
 General Manager, Community Safety 01
Re: **Options for a Residential Backyard Chicken Program**

Staff Recommendation

That "Option 2: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and properties outside of the ALR with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m²" as outlined in the staff report titled "Options for a Residential Backyard Chicken Program" from the General Manager, Community Safety, dated June 22, 2020, be approved.

Cecilia Achiam
 General Manager, Community Safety
 (604-276-4122)

Att. 4

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Building Approvals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

At the July 8, 2019 Council meeting, Council made the following referral:

“That staff study the viability of the current rules regarding chickens in backyards on properties within the Agricultural Land Reserve and properties outside the Agricultural Land Reserve.”

Following a discussion at the May 19, 2020 General Purposes Committee regarding the keeping of backyard chickens in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), Council made the following two referrals:

“That the staff report titled “Proposed Bylaw Amendment To Allow Backyard Chickens On Properties Within The Agricultural Land Reserve”, dated April 22, 2020, from the General Manager, Community Safety, be referred back to staff to examine the following:

- (1) building and fencing requirements;*
- (2) the maximum number of chickens; and*
- (3) other related requirements;*

for backyard chickens in Agricultural Land Reserve lots, and report back.”;

and

“That staff investigate allowing backyard chickens in single-family residential properties, including the maximum number of chickens, lot size requirements and other related requirements, and report back.”

This report addresses the two referrals made on May 19, 2020 and provides available options for Council to allow the keeping of backyard chickens in Richmond.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

Environmentally conscious decision-making that demonstrates leadership in implementing innovative, sustainable practices and supports the City's unique biodiversity and island ecology.

2.3 Increase emphasis on local food systems, urban agriculture and organic farming.

Analysis

Current Provisions for the Keeping of Backyard Chickens

Previously, there was a general prohibition of poultry under the Animal, Bird & Beekeeping Regulation Bylaw No. 7137, which was adopted on July 24, 2000. On October 15, 2002, Council adopted a Bylaw Amendment 7424 that allowed for the keeping of backyard chickens in the City for properties that have a parcel size greater than 2,000 square metres (m²), or 21,529 square feet (sf). The Animal, Bird & Beekeeping Regulation Bylaw No. 7137 has since been repealed and replaced with the current Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932 (Animal Control Bylaw) effective June 15, 2005. The provision for backyard chickens has been carried over and unchanged since the amendment in 2002. Currently, the keeping of backyard chickens in Richmond is permitted given that the properties (within and outside of the ALR) meet the minimum parcel size requirement.

Two existing Council policy objectives provide further context for the recent referral to examine the feasibility of an urban backyard chicken program in Richmond. One of the objectives identified in the Richmond Official Community Plan (OCP) Section 7.2 “Promote Urban Agriculture and Advance Food Security” is “to support and increase the range of urban agriculture (e.g. community gardening) and strengthen the food system beyond production.” One of the policies identified in the OCP is “to explore the keeping of small animals (e.g. poultry and bees) on a limited basis on small agricultural parcels, in consultation with the AAC [now the Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC)], ALC [Agricultural Land Commission] and Vancouver Coastal Health”¹.

Furthermore, at the July 11, 2016, Council meeting², Council endorsed the “Richmond Food Charter” which sets out the City’s commitment to support urban agriculture, strengthening the local food system, increasing access to affordable and healthy food and promoting environmentally sustainable practices related to food production, distribution and disposal.

Residential Backyard Chickens Programs in Metro Vancouver

In an effort to situate Richmond’s policy objectives within the broader Lower Mainland context, staff have completed an environmental scan of municipalities that allowed backyard chickens programs (Attachment 1). Of the 16 municipalities researched, 11 allow the keeping of backyard chickens in residential zones (outside of the ALR) and six municipalities have a designated backyard chicken program and accompanying bylaws to permit backyard chickens in residential zones.

Staff have contacted the City of Vancouver, the City of Surrey and the District of North Vancouver, which have implemented a registration/licensing regime to permit keeping of backyard chickens in their communities. The City of Vancouver and City of Surrey implemented a one-time registration requirement for the keeping of chickens, while the District of North Vancouver has implemented an annual licensing model. The City of Vancouver started their

¹ Richmond Official Community Plan 2041, Chapter 7.2.1, Policies (e), page 7-10
https://www.richmond.ca/__shared/assets/OCP_9000_agriculture34171.pdf

² https://www.richmond.ca/cityhall/council/agendas/council/2016/071116_minutes.htm

program in 2010 (operated for 10 years) and reported approximately 340 registrations; the City of Surrey started in 2016 (four years) and reported approximately 130 registrations; and the District of North Vancouver started in 2017 (three years) and reported approximately 20 licenses.

The three municipalities have advised that although there was some initial resistance from the community, the backyard chicken program has not resulted in an increase in significant public concern such as odour and noise complaints, abandonment or disease.

Risks Factors of Having Backyard Chickens in Residential Zones

There are risks associated with having chickens in residential zones. The main risks are abandonment, unhygienic housing conditions, increased noise, and attraction of pests (mice, rats) and predatory animals (raccoons, coyotes, dogs, cats).

The three municipalities (Vancouver, Surrey and District of North Vancouver) recommended that a separate backyard chicken bylaw be implemented as it would provide clarity on permitted activities, the requirements for keeping hens and available enforcement powers for compliance. A backyard chicken bylaw would also be instrumental in establishing rules to mitigate the risks of keeping chickens in residential zones.

The general consensus from the three municipalities is that owners of backyard chickens are responsible caretakers and they provide proper living conditions, adequate coop structure and humane treatment for their hens. In fact, the City of Vancouver noted a decrease in complaints regarding backyard chickens after the program and bylaws were in place. The three municipalities advised that they have not experienced any on-going issues regarding abandonment, unhygienic housing conditions, increased noise, increased pests and predatory animals affecting the backyard chicken program. A detailed risk analysis and feedback from Vancouver, Surrey and the District of North Vancouver is provided in Attachment 2.

Based on the risk analysis and the experiences of the three municipalities, the risk of negative impacts of a backyard chicken program, if complemented with a bylaw, is low.

Available Options to Allow Backyard Chickens in Richmond

There are three options available for allowing backyard chickens in Richmond:

- Option 1:** Status-quo, where the keeping of backyard chickens is permitted on properties with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m².
- Option 2:** Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and properties outside of the ALR with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m².
- Option 3:** Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and establish a Residential Backyard Chicken Program for single detached family residential zones.

Option 1: Status-quo, where the keeping of backyard chickens is permitted on properties with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m² (Not Recommended)

As outlined in the earlier section on “Current Provision for the Keeping Backyard Chickens”, the keeping of backyard chickens is permitted, under the status-quo, as long as the property has a parcel size greater than 2,000 m², or 21,529 sf. This requirement is outlined in the Animal Control Bylaw and applies to all properties in Richmond inclusive of the ALR. However, raising poultry on the ALR, regardless of parcel size, is a permitted use and is a “farm operation” defined under the provincial *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*.

The current prohibition of backyard chickens on ALR properties due to parcel size is inconsistent with the *Local Government Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*. Therefore, “Option 1: Status-quo, where the keeping of backyard chickens is permitted on properties with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m²” is not a viable option.

Option 2: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and properties outside of the ALR with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m² (Recommended)

“Option 2: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and properties outside of the ALR with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m²” is recommended. This recommendation is consistent with the staff report titled “Proposed Bylaw Amendment to Allow Backyard Chickens on Properties within the Agricultural Land Reserve”, provided at the May 19, 2020 General Purposes Committee.

Option 2 will amend the Animal Control Bylaw to provide an exclusion for parcels located within the ALR, so it is consistent with the *Local Government Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*. This amendment will allow the keeping of backyard chickens for all parcels within the ALR which will permit an additional 278 properties (zoned AG) to be able to keep backyard chickens. Bylaw provisions for having farm animals, farm structures and conducting farm operations are already part of the Richmond Zoning Bylaw No. 8500 and provided in the Provincial *Agricultural Land Reserve Regulation*.

For detached single family in residential zones outside of the ALR, Option 2 would permit backyard chickens with parcel size at or greater than 2,000 m².

This option supports the Richmond OCP Section 7.2 and the Richmond Food Charter, and brings the Animal Control Bylaw into alignment with other Provincial Legislation. Additional provisions can be introduced in the Animal Control Bylaw to limit the number of chickens outside of the ALR. From staff’s research, the number of backyard chickens permitted outside of the ALR ranges from two to 12 should Council wish to limit the number of backyard chickens in residential zones outside of the ALR.

Option 3: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and establish a Residential Backyard Chicken Program for single detached family residential zones (Not Recommended)

Option 3 would allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all properties within the ALR and establish a Residential Backyard Chicken Program (RBCP) to promote urban agriculture and

enhance food security. This option fully supports the Richmond OCP Section 7.2 and the Richmond Food Charter.

Should Council choose this option, having a stand-alone backyard chicken program and bylaw (and associated licensing requirement) is a best practice because it provides clarity on backyard chicken rules, establishes expectations to owners and provides enforcement powers for compliance. Under this option, the Animal Control Bylaw would be amended to allow backyard chickens on all parcels within the ALR and a new Residential Backyard Chicken Bylaw would be introduced to allow the keeping of backyard chickens on single detached family residential zones in the City. A prospective RBCP bylaw provisions is provided in Attachment 3.

The concept of the RBCP would permit only hens over four months and prohibit all other types of poultry such as roosters, ducks, geese, etc. Residents on detached single family lots would be limited to a minimum of two and a prospective maximum of four hens. As well, there would be no parcel size requirement and the allowable zones would exclude multi-unit properties such as duplexes, townhouses and condos. The minimum number of hens is required to ensure the humane treatment of hens, as research indicates that hens are social animals and require companionship.

The guideline for the maximum number of hens is in line with neighbouring municipalities with no parcel size restrictions (City of Vancouver), and is based on the risk analysis in Attachment 2. While other municipalities have adopted a higher maximum limit of hens for their backyard chicken program, those same municipalities have also limited the program to larger parcel size properties (i.e. lots larger than 6,000 sq. ft). As such, the four hens limit with no parcel size requirement balances the opportunity for owners to keep backyard hens and minimizes the risks of keeping chickens in urban areas.

Based on the risk analysis and the experiences gathered from the City of Vancouver, the City of Surrey and the District of North Vancouver, the risk of negative impacts to the community is low if a RBCP is supported by a comprehensive bylaw and enforcement regime. In addition, for Option 3, it would be prudent that the RBCP and the prospective bylaw provisions (Attachment 3) be forwarded for community consultation with the residents of Richmond, Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee, Vancouver Coastal Health, Regional Animal Protection Society, and other stakeholders interested in the issue.

Based on the positive feedback from other municipalities' backyard chicken programs and the ability to control risks with a Residential Backyard Chicken Bylaw, and with this option fully supporting the Richmond OCP Section 7.2 and the Richmond Food Charter, "Option 3: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and establish a Residential Backyard Chicken Program for single detached family residential zones" is a viable option.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Having backyard chickens in an urban residential setting can be a polarizing topic with varying viewpoints. Other municipalities that have adopted a backyard chicken program indicated that there were initial concerns and resistance from the community. This report responds to the Council's referrals made in the General Purposes Committee on May 19, 2020 and provided available options as directed by Council to allow backyard chickens in single detached family zones in Richmond. There is an opportunity to better align the existing the Animal Control Bylaw for keeping backyard chickens in the ALR with the *Local Government Act* and the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*. In order to bring the Animal Control Bylaw into alignment with Provincial Legislation, "Option 2: Allow the keeping of backyard chickens on all ALR properties and properties outside of the ALR with a parcel size of no less than 2,000 m²" is recommended.



Douglas Liu
Program Manager, Business and Operational Analysis
(604-276-4004)

DL:dl

- Att. 1: Environmental Scan of Backyard Chicken Regulations
- 2: Risk Analysis of Backyard Chicken in Residential Zones
- 3: Prospective Residential Backyard Chicken Program and Bylaw Provisions
- 4: Prospective Minimum Hen Enclosure Floor Area and Setbacks

Attachment 1

Environmental Scan of Backyard Chicken Programs

Municipality	Backyard Chicken Program/Bylaw	Number of Chickens	Additional Rules	Minimum Parcel Size	Allowed Zone	Setbacks	Coop Required	Fencing Required	Fees
Richmond (current)	No	Animal Control Bylaw	Permitted with minimum parcel size	2,000 sq. m (21,529 sq. ft.)	Various	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
(Richmond Prospective RBCP)	Prospective RBCP	Minimum 2 to maximum 4 hens	No other fowl or livestock; no slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months; annual license; register with BC Premises ID	No	Single detached residential zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$50 annual licensing fee
Vancouver	Yes	Maximum 4 hens	No other fowl or livestock; no slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months.	No	Single and multi-family residential zones (RA-, RS-, RT-, RM-, FM-, FSD-)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
North Vancouver (City)	Yes	Maximum 8 hens	No other fowl or livestock; no slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months.	557 sq. m (6,000 sq. ft.)	Single-family zones (OCP-R1)	No	Yes	Yes	No
North Vancouver (District)	Yes	Minimum 2 to maximum 6 hens	No other fowl or livestock; no slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months. Must hold a license.	No	Single-family zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	\$52 annual licensing fee
Victoria	Yes, Animal Control Bylaw	Maximum 15 hens or other poultry (Chickens, ducks, geese)	No slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months.	No	Residential zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Delta	Zoning Bylaw	Maximum 12 chickens for properties 2,000 sq. m in size. An additional 12 chickens per 2,000 sq. m for larger properties - Max 24 chickens for 4,000 sq. m properties	For properties that abut agricultural land - maximum 4 chickens are permitted	2,000 sq. m or (21,529 sq. ft.)	Single-family zones (RS2 and RS3) or land abutting AG land.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Surrey	Yes	Maximum 12 heads of poultry per 1 acre (4,046 sq. m), on lots greater than 1 Acre but less than 5 Acres. Maximum 4 hens per lot, on lots greater than 7,200 sq. ft.	No other fowl or livestock; no slaughtering on property; no sale of by-products; no roosters or chicks under 4 months. Requires BC Premises ID	669 sq. m (7,200 sq. ft.)	Single-family zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
New Westminster	Yes	Up to 8 poultry (includes chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, pigeons, pheasants)	Increases of 1 poultry for each 750 sq. ft. up to a site of 0.5 acre provided it does not exceed 50 on a site.	557 sq. m (6,000 sq. ft.)	Single-family zones	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Attachment 1 (Cont.)

Municipality	Backyard Chicken Program/Bylaw	Number of Chickens	Additional Rules	Minimum Parcel Size	Allowed Zone	Setbacks	Coop Required	Fencing Required	Fees
Abbotsford	No	Not applicable			Agricultural zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Burnaby	No	Not applicable			Agricultural zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coquitlam	No	Not applicable		4,000 sq. m (1 ac.)	Agricultural and RS-2 (suburban) Residential Zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pitt Meadows	No	Not applicable		4,000 sq. m (1 ac.)	RR (Rural Residential); RS (large lot residential); AG (agricultural zones)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Port Coquitlam	No	Not applicable	Backyard chicken allowed for household consumption only	4,000 sq. m (1 ac.)	RS3 Zones and Agriculture Zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Port Moody	No	Not applicable				N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Langley (Township)	No	Not applicable			Agricultural zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Langley (City)	No	Not applicable			Agricultural zones	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Risks Analysis of Backyard Chickens in Residential Zones

Risk of Abandonment

According to the BC SPCA, hens have a life expectancy of five to eleven years, and their productive egg-laying diminishes significantly after the first year³. Hens may also stop laying eggs before they reach the end of their lives. The humane treatment of hens must be respected and bylaws need to be in place to prevent and mitigate the risks of owners abandoning them.

Municipalities with backyard chicken programs indicated that they have not experienced a problem of owners abandoning their hens. There are chickens that were turned into their respective animal shelters, but they tend to originate from chicken processing facilities or through stray capture. The overall number of chickens that were turned into the shelter was relatively low. The City of Vancouver reported an annual average of six chickens and City of Surrey reported an annual average of 10 chickens being turned-in to their animal shelter over the last three years.

Most hen owners generally view their chickens as pets even after their egg-laying diminishes. Nonetheless, owners also have the option to have the hen processed on a farm or be euthanized by a veterinarian.

The risk of abandonment can be mitigated or prevented with the following bylaw measures:

1. Limiting the number of hens, which will lessen the impact of abandonment;
2. Adopt an annual licensing fee, which will serve as a responsible ownership tool to ensure owners are committed on the responsibility of keeping hens;
3. Only permit hens older than four months, which will reduce the chance that owners mistakenly obtaining a rooster (not permitted under any surveyed municipalities) or obtaining chicks for their cuteness;
4. Prohibit the slaughtering of hen on premise, which will prevent the inhumane treatment of hens. Hens nearing end of life must be managed by a veterinarian similar to dogs and cats;
5. Provide information and resources on the City's website, which will provide prospective owners the necessary resources for decision making; and
6. Recommend to potential owners to stagger the keeping of hens, which will provide a consistent egg supply during ownership.

Risk of Unhygienic Housing Conditions

The care of backyard chickens requires daily maintenance and upkeep to ensure hygiene and odor control. To ensure good health, hens require the following: shelter, food, water, adequate space, protection from environmental conditions, adequate ventilation, and day light. Hens are social creatures and require the opportunity to socialize and room for scratching (foraging by

³ <https://spca.bc.ca/news/backyard-chickens/>

scrapping the ground with their claws), roosting (resting on a stick or branch), and dustbathing (thrashing around in the dirt to clean feathers and remove parasites)⁴.

Chicken coops must be properly maintained by the owner by regularly cleaning waste and manure to remove foul odors. Municipalities with a backyard chicken program have advised that odor has not been a concern. Generally chicken owners are responsible pet owners and living conditions were properly maintained. The chicken by-product and manure could be used as compost on the property and excess waste could be recycled at any one of the Metro Vancouver recycling facilities that accepts chicken manure.

Communicable Diseases

Diseases such as avian flu are a common concern for urban chickens. The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) indicates that poultry flocks in Canada are usually free of avian influenza viruses. However, sometimes domesticated birds can become infected with these viruses through direct and indirect contact with infected waterfowl, other infected poultry, or through contact with surfaces that have been contaminated with a virus⁵.

The three municipalities surveyed indicated they did not experienced an outbreak of avian flu related to the backyard chickens. They have also indicated that the risk of avian flu is low due to the limited of number of hens and their sparse location. The City of Vancouver published an extensive research on avian flu risks on backyard chickens and concluded that “keeping backyard chickens, with the proper regulations, should pose minimal risks to public health”⁶.

The provincial Ministry of Agriculture has a “Premises ID” registration and traceability system that allows Canada’s livestock and poultry industries, and individuals, to quickly respond in the event of an animal disease outbreak. A Premises ID also provide resources for non-disease emergencies that threaten livestock, such as floods, forest fires, or environmental contamination events. Only one municipality, City of Surrey, has implemented a requirement for a Premises ID. During the permit process, the City of Surrey requires that an owner must first register for a Premises ID as part of their backyard chicken application. Furthermore, it is a best practice to require owners to register their properties in the Premises ID as a requirement for keeping of backyard chickens so that these properties could be tracked and owners notified in the event of a disease outbreak.

The risk of unhygienic housing conditions can be mitigated or prevented with the following bylaw measures:

1. Limiting the number of hens, which will lessen the impact of hygiene concerns;
2. Establish a minimum coop size and coop requirements, which will allow each hen to have sufficient space for natural behaviours;
3. Adopt the BC Premises ID registration as a condition of licensing, which will enable contact tracing in the event of a disease outbreak;

⁴ <https://council.vancouver.ca/20100408/documents/penv3.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/avian-influenza>

⁶ Page 8-10; Appendix H: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20100408/documents/penv3.pdf>

4. Prohibit the slaughtering of chickens on premise, which will eliminate exposure to blood and other bodily fluids to prevent spread of diseases;
5. Prohibit the sale of by products including eggs, meat, manure, and feathers from backyard chickens, which will limit disease transmission; and
6. Impose fines for the failure to keep chickens in sanitary living conditions that are free from excessive manure and waste.

Risk of Increased Noise

Noise is a common concern with backyard chickens. In Richmond, there were 13 complaints over the last three years (2016 to 2019) regarding chickens on residential properties. The majority of these complaints were noise related due to the keeping of roosters. Although hens also make noise throughout the day, their clucks are very subdued compared to roosters, and generally do not cause a disturbance. Some breeds of hens may sing an “egg song”⁷ when they are in the process of laying eggs. The “egg song” would be the loudest noise that hens make in their normal behavior and normally occurs in the morning, or when they are about to lay an egg inside the coop nest, which also lessens noise impacts. The “egg song” may be a cause for concern; however, the singing is momentary (approximately 2 to 5 minutes) and stops shortly after the hen finishes laying an egg. Some hens may sing louder than others and it is also possible the singing would decrease, or even cease, as the hen matures. The noise level of an “egg song” is less than that of a dog barking. Municipalities with a backyard chicken program have indicated that noise is not a serious concern and complaints are minimal.

The existing Noise Regulation Bylaw No. 8856 (Noise Bylaw) specified the limits for residential zone to be between 55 to 65 decibels for day and 45 to 55 decibels for night. The City of Pleasanton, California, noted noise readings of a “squawking” chicken at 63 decibels at two feet away, and would not register the noise at nine feet away. For comparison, the average human conversation registers at about 60 decibels and a barking dog can be as loud as 100 decibels⁸. The keeping of backyard chickens generally falls within these decibel limits and are consistent with the Noise Bylaw. There are also other provisions in the City’s Noise Bylaw to enforce excessive noise for any animals, including backyard chickens.

The risk of increased noise can be mitigated or prevented with the following bylaw measures:

1. Prohibit roosters in residential zones, which will eliminate the rooster crow;
2. Limiting the number of hens, which will lessen the noise generated;
3. Establish requirements for an enclosed coop, which will reduce the noise when hens are laying eggs;
4. Establish coop setbacks, which will provide distancing to nearby residences;
5. Recommend that owners to insulate the coop, which will further reduce the noise and also provide proper protection during inclement weather;
6. Recommend to potential owners to stagger the keeping of hens, which will lessen the noise; and

⁷ Sounds like repeated “clucking” or “cackling”.

⁸ Page 10-11: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20100408/documents/penv3.pdf>

7. Require that hens be kept inside their coop at night, which will reduce potential noise impacts at night.

Risk of Increased Pests and Predatory Animals

Backyard chickens can attract unwanted pests such as rodents seeking chicken feed, or larger animals, such as raccoons, dogs, cats, foxes, skunks and coyotes. Municipalities with a backyard chicken program have a coop enclosure and fencing requirements that effectively prevents pests and predators. There are no reports of issues that owners are not following coop and fencing requirements. As well, it is in the owner's best interest to adequately secure their coop to ensure that their investment in time, feed, and care for the hens are rewarded (with fresh eggs to their families rather than a free meal eaten by pests and predators).

The risk of increased pests and predatory animals can be mitigated or prevented with the following bylaw measures:

1. Limiting the number of hens, which will reduce the attraction of pests and predators;
2. Establish enclosed coop and fencing requirements, which will protect the hens from pests, predators, and prevent escapes;
3. Provide guidance to owners to store chicken feed in a secured container and provide food/water for the hens inside the coop, which will eliminate a potential food source for pests and predators;
4. Require that hens be kept in their coops from sunset to sunrise, which will protect the hens from predators and reduce noise throughout the night; and
5. Recommend that owners retrieve the eggs daily, which will eliminate a potential food for pests and predators.

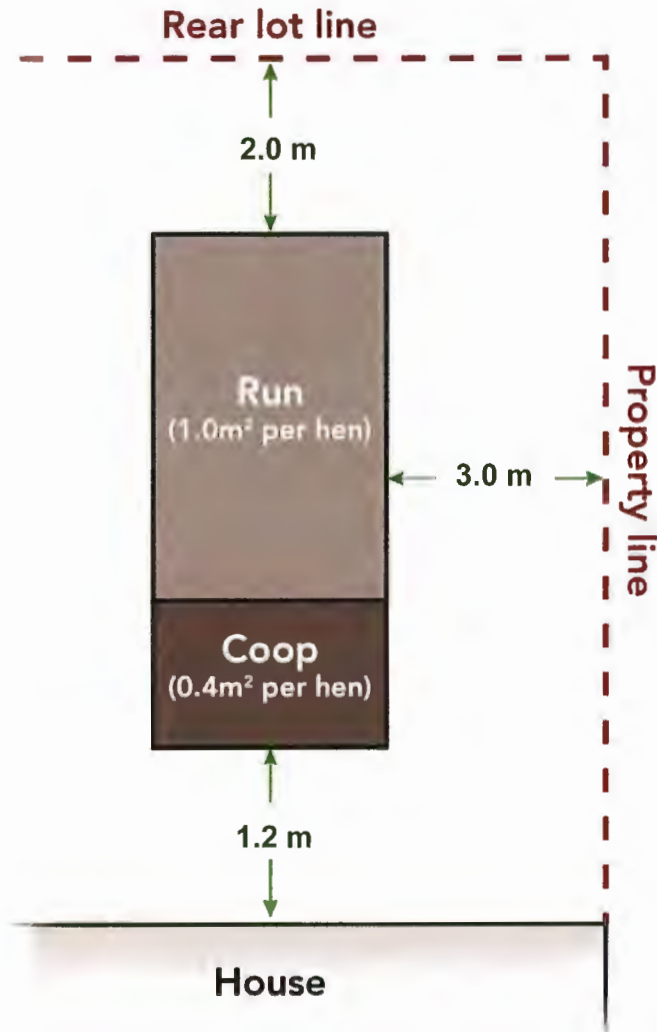
Prospective Residential Backyard Chicken Program and Bylaw Provisions

Based on the best practices from other municipalities, Table 1 outlines the prospective bylaw provisions for a RBCP in Richmond.

Table 1: Prospective Bylaw Provisions for a Residential Backyard Chicken Program	
Definition of “Backyard Chicken”	Hen (female chicken) that is four months or older. Exclusion for rooster, chicks, or any other poultry species.
Allowable zones	All standard and site-specific zones that permits single detached housing. For example: RS1/A-H, J-K, RS2/A-H, J-K. Exact zoning to be determined based on consultation and stakeholder input.
Parcel Size	No minimum parcel size.
Number of Hens	Minimum two hens and maximum of four hens per parcel.
Hen Enclosure and Run	<p>Minimum coop floor area per hen: 0.4 m² per hen (4.3 sf) Maximum coop floor area per hen: 5.0 m² per hen (53.8 sf) Maximum total coop floor area: 9.2 m² total (100 sf)</p> <p>Hen enclosure requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one nest box • Inclined roof built with waterproof material (no tarp) • Wooden or concrete floor of at least 0.3 metres above grade • Minimum one perch at least 0.25 metres in length • Minimum run of 1.0 m² (10.7 sf) of vegetation or bare earth per hen • Maximum height of 1.8 metres • Maximum one hen enclosure per property • Rear yard only <p>Building permit is not required if the hen enclosure is within the specified limits.</p>
Hen Enclosure Fencing and Setbacks	<p>Coop and run must be surrounded with appropriate fencing designed to prevent escape of hens and provides protection from pests and predators.</p> <p>Setbacks for hen enclosure (Illustrated in Attachment 4):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rear Lot Line: 2 metres 2. Side Property Line: 3 metres 3. House: 1.2 metres

Table 1: Prospective Bylaw Provisions for a Residential Backyard Chicken Program	
Basic Care	Hens must be provided with food, water, shelter, adequate light and ventilation, veterinary care, and opportunities to scratch, dust-bathe, and roost.
Pest and Hygiene	Hen enclosures must be kept in good repair and in sanitary condition. Construction of hen enclosure must prevent access by other animals. Food and water must be kept in coop at night. Manure and waste must be removed in a timely manner so it does not produce foul odor.
Prohibitions Prohibitions (Cont.)	The following will be prohibited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping hens in the front or side yard. • Slaughtering hens on premise. • Sales of eggs, manure, feathers or other products. • Keeping of roosters or any other poultry species other than hen (female chicken). • Keeping of chickens younger than four months. • Keep hens in a cage, other than for transport. • Dispose manure in municipal sewage, garbage or green bin. • Dispose chicken carcasses in municipal garbage. • Burying a chicken on premise.
Licensing and Fees	Annual licensing (similar to dog licenses) fee of \$50 per property per year (for maximum of four hens), prescribed under the Consolidated Fees Bylaw No. 8636. Property owners to register BC “Premises ID” as a requirement for licensing.
Inspection	Inspection for new builds. Inspection not required for renewals.
Violation	Impose fines, under the Notice of Bylaw Violation Dispute Adjudication No. 8122.

Prospective Minimum Hen Enclosure Floor Area and Setbacks



Sample prefabricated chicken coop that is available from retailers:



6483312

CNCL - 259