Name: Cody Brown
Address: 4110 Brookside Drive
57702
Meeting: City Council
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item
Agenda Item: Urban Hens
Comment:
I am in support of the proposed ordinance for urban hens. I plan on attending in person tomorrow to voice the reasons why.

Thank you for your consideration!
Name: Jackie Kriebel
Address: 1935 38th St. Apt. 5 Rapid City SD 57702
Meeting: Legal and Finance
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item
Agenda Item: Hen Ordinance
Comment:
I am very much for the proposed hen ordinance. Such a great way to have healthy eggs at your reach.
Name: Tom Whillock
Address: 3321 Hall Street
RC, SD 57701
Meeting: City Council
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item
Agenda Item:
Comment:

Please allow hens in RC. I want fresh eggs from my neighbors. This is so basic. Please say yes. Thank you.
Name: Priscilla Potts
Address: 3211 Hall St
Rapid City SD 57702
Meeting: City Council
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item
Agenda Item: Back yard hens
Comment:
Would love to have backyard hens approved.
I really support the idea of being able to have hens in city limits. I think being able to be more sustainable is really important, and this is a great step in that direction!
I am in favor of backyard Hens.
Name: Chantelle Williamson
Address: 226 East Texas Street
Meeting: City Council
Comment Type: General Public Commnet
Agenda Item: Urban Hens
Comment:
I support allowing urban hens
Name: Maja Cromwell
Address: 1709 Tepee St.
Rapid City, SD 57702
Meeting: Legal and Finance
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item
Agenda Item:
Comment:
I support a new ordinance for backyard hens.
Hello Council Members.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the proposed Urban Hens Ordinance.

I am writing in full support of the Urban Hens Ordinance. There are many reasons I support this and the well thought-out criteria outlined.
Good morning,

I am contacting your office to express our grave concern as in city limits home owners on the topic of Chickens in city limits Darla Drew Lerdal is bringing to the Legal and Finance Committee meeting today at 1230pm. The topic of allowing chickens (hens x 4 per private single family resident). Allowing this would pose an extreme nuisance, code violations related to the below code enforcement regulations. Please, please as a local homeowner, we are begging this Committee to deny any such deviation to these regulations and/or considerations in changing what is in place. Individuals wishing to own chickens have a multitude of county/rural options if they so wish. The current codes I am citing are as follows;

**6.08.020 Keeping of fowl or livestock near dwellings.**

A. The maintenance of coops, structures or enclosures and the keeping therein of chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys or other fowl, except as provided herein, and the keeping of cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, swine or goats within 150 feet of any building or structure occupied by, or intended to be occupied by, human beings as a residence, within the city, is unlawful and a public nuisance, except as set forth in this section.

B. 1. The regulations in subsection A. of this section shall not apply to the residence upon the lot where the animals are kept, housed or maintained.

2. Nothing in this title shall be construed as a limitation or restriction of normal agricultural activities on any land zoned as a general agricultural district as set forth in Title 17 of this code.

3. The keeping of animals as set forth in subsection A. of this section shall require a parcel or lot size of not less than 3 acres.

**8.16.010 Designated–Prohibited.**

A. No person or persons, owner, occupant or person in charge of any structure, building, or lot (all as defined in Chapter 17.04 of the Rapid City Municipal Code) or premises, shall create, maintain or commit, or permit to be created, maintained or committed, any public nuisance as defined in subsection B. of this section, or as enumerated in subsection C. of this section.

B. Within the meaning of this section, a public nuisance consists in doing an act without lawful authority, or omitting to perform a duty, within the corporate limits of the city, or within 1 mile of the corporate limits of the city not within another municipality, or in any public grounds, or parks belonging to the city, which act or omission either:

1. Annoys, injures or endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of others;
2. Offends contemporary community moral standards;

4. In any way renders other persons insecure in life, or in the use of property and which affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon the individuals may be unequal.

7. Vegetables or vegetable matters emitting noxious odors. All vegetables, vegetable matters, or other articles that emit or cause an offensive, noxious or disagreeable smell or odor; and any compost pile which is of such a nature as to spread or harbor disease, emit unpleasant odors or harmful gas, or attract rodents, vermin or other disease carrying pests, animals or insects, except that the presence of earthworms in a compost pile shall not constitute a nuisance;

Thank you for your support in denying this recommendation any change to these codes. Thank you for your time and consideration in supporting all city homeowners that have chosen to live in the community without farm animals present.

Respectfully,

Marvin & Kelly Renner
Name: Jeffrey Frink
Address: 916 ridgeview ct
Rapid city SD 57701
Meeting: Legal and Finance
Comment Type: General Public Comment
Agenda Item: Backyard hens

Comment:

Please vote yes to get the backyard hens on the agenda items for a vote. I know that there has been negative comments on social media regarding this but as most know the squeaky wheel gets the grease. There are many in support of this and other cities have been doing this for years. I noticed a lot of the negative comments were geared to smell, noise, small lot sizes etc. this will not be a problem if people keep them within the bounds of the rules. If anything, consider requiring larger lots for example over one acre. Currently I believe that you can own them on more than 3 acres. Reduce that to one acre and it would be a great compromise.
Name: Betty Backus  
Address: 3505 Cypress Ct; Rapid City SSD 57701  
Meeting: Legal and Finance  
Comment Type: Public Comment Agenda Item  
Agenda Item: Backyard Hens  
Comment:  
I am not in favor of changing city ordinances to allow backyard hens in the city of Rapid City. I am primarily concerned for the potential risk of injury to people and pets. Predators will be drawn to the homes that are keeping backyard hens. There isn't any ordinance that can keep predators such as skunks, coyotes, mountain lions, snakes, racoons, mice, etc from roaming our neighborhoods in search of any easy meal. It is also known that backyard flocks have caused diseases such as salmonella and coccidiosis to be transmitted to humans.
Mayor Allender and City Council members,

I am writing regarding the Backyard Chicken request, a request that council has denied twice in the last 5-10 years. The fact that this issue is again before the council is frustrating. It is also frustrating to know that while backyard chickens are not a permitted use under current city ordinances, several individuals continue the activity illegally.

However, the reality of the situation is that council has directed staff to study the request. While the request comes from a small minority of taxpayers ALL taxpayers will shoulder the full financial burden of the program while deriving no benefit whatsoever. As such, I feel council must make every effort to identify all costs associated with the program, balance those costs against the benefit to ALL taxpayers and disclose their financial findings and decisions to the citizens BEFORE amending the ordinance. Below are a some, but by no means all, of the costs I believe the City will encounter with the requested program.

- **New stand alone Facility.** Has a determination been made on the size, cost and location of the required stand alone facility and has a funding source been identified for the facility. At the September 1, 2020 Coffee with Planners, Vicki Fisher stated that the Humane Society has specified that a stand alone facility is required should the program be implemented as abandoned/surrendered hens cannot be housed with dogs/cats for health reasons.
- **On-going costs for new facility.** Has a determination been made regarding the ongoing maintenance costs for the new stand alone facility and has a funding source been identified for this ongoing cost.
- **Humane Society staffing.** Has a determination been made on increased staffing needs to support the program and has a funding source been identified to meet that need.
- **Housing costs.** Has a determination been made regarding the ongoing costs to house and feed abandoned/surrendered chickens and has a funding source been identified to meet that need.
- **Disposition of surrendered hens.** When hens are abandoned/surrendered to the Humane Society, how long will they be held before being euthanized as this will impact costs to the Society for staff, feed, bedding, cleaning and waste disposal. How will abandoned/surrendered hens be euthanized, and how will the remains be disposed. According to a google search, laying hens are productive for 2+- years but will live for 8+- years. As the identified purpose of the requested program is to provide eggs one would assume program participants will be relinquishing the non-productive hens on an annual basis.
- **Public Health impacts.** What steps will the City take to ensure the health of the chickens, city dogs/cats and the general public. Chickens carry parasites such as lice and are prone to worms. However, the most concerning chicken related health issue is salmonella. In 2020 the United States experienced an outbreak of salmonella which the CDC traced to urban chicken populations (information from the CDC site regarding this outbreak is attached). The outbreak was first reported in May and expanded across the country with South Dakota showing its
first infections in the June 24 report, one month after the outbreak began. CDC web site: https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/backyardpoultry-05-20/index.html

- **Wildlife.** Chickens are known to attract rodents and wildlife such as skunks and raccoons. Currently the Humane Society does not remove wildlife leaving the homeowner to hire services to eradicate a problem animal – another financial cost to the taxpayer.

- **Liability issues.** As damages awarded are ultimately a taxpayer cost, what is the City’s liability exposure should the use be approved or not approved but allowed to continue illegally. It is not unreasonable to assume that individuals may seek to recover losses resulting from: damages due to an adverse impact to property values; damages resulting from wildlife and their removal; and/or, damages from illness stemming from the use.

- **Enforcement.** Should the use be approved what enforcement procedures will be put in place to ensure that the new ordinance is being adhered to and what measures will be taken to correct non-compliant uses.

- **Program impact on City budget.** Should the use be approved, council must decide how the cost of the program (immediate and ongoing) is to be funded – increase taxes or shift funding within the existing budget – BEFORE amending the ordinance. Should council elect to shift funding from current programs, council should identified the impacted programs and disclose their reasoning for the funding reduction BEFORE amending the ordinance.

I believe the City’s main priority is the protection of the public health and the provision of essential services such as fire, police, ambulance, water, sewer, transportation infrastructure, planning and recreational opportunities. It would be financially irresponsible to redirect funding from any of the essential services to support a program that benefits only a very small minority of the population. Should the Council elect to implement the Backyard Chicken program I would encourage a fee structure that results in a self-supporting program for ALL program costs, immediate and ongoing. City taxpayers should not be required to financially support a backyard hobby program.

For those that know me, you know I retired in 2015 after working for the city for 25 years with 20 of those years spent in the Planning Department. While working in Planning county residents would inquire into extending city water services to their rural subdivision and developers would purchase cheap county land, annex that land into city limits, and secure a taxpayer funded loan to extend city water/sewer services to that cheap property thereby increasing its value and now we have city residents wanting the city to permit backyard chickens, a rural use. In life there is no “one size fits all”; the city must prioritize the needs of the all the citizens and only consider a “want” such as this if it does not adversely impact the funding required to support the prioritized needs and is a “want” that will benefit the majority of the citizens.

I ask the Council to deny the backyard chicken request and to encourage those individuals serious about raising chickens to relocate to a rural property where the activity is a permitted use. I also ask that when this use is denied for the third time, that
Council direct Code Enforcement to actively identify and remove all chickens from inside city limits.

Thank you for your time and consideration
Sharlene Mitchell
Outbreaks of *Salmonella* Infections Linked to Backyard Poultry

**Investigation Notice**

Posted July 29, 2020 at 6:00 PM ET

CDC and public health officials in 48 states are investigating 15 multistate outbreaks of *Salmonella* infections linked to contact with poultry in backyard flocks, such as chicks and ducklings. The number of illnesses reported this year exceeds the number reported at the same time of the year in previous outbreaks linked to backyard flocks. Stay healthy around your backyard flock by washing your hands, keeping your birds outside your house, and supervising young children around your flock.

Latest Outbreak Information

At A Glance
- **Reported Cases:** 938
- **States:** 48
- **Hospitalizations:** 151
- **Death:** 1

- Since the last update on June 24, 2020, 473 more ill people were added to this investigation.
- As of July 28, 2020, 938 people infected with one of the outbreak strains of *Salmonella* have been reported from 48 states.
  - 151 people (33% of those with information available) have been hospitalized.
  - One death in Oklahoma has been reported.
  - 28% of ill people are children younger than 5 years of age.
- **Epidemiologic and laboratory evidence** shows that contact with backyard poultry (such as chicks and ducklings) is the likely source of these outbreaks.
  - In interviews with 409 ill people, 303 (74%) reported contact with chicks and ducklings.
  - People reported obtaining chicks and ducklings from several sources, including agricultural stores, websites, and hatcheries.
  - Testing of backyard poultry and their environments (such as backyard coops) in Kentucky and Oregon found three of the outbreak strains.

Advice to Backyard Flock Owners

You can get sick with a *Salmonella* infection from touching backyard poultry or their environment. Backyard poultry can carry *Salmonella* bacteria even if they look healthy and clean and show no signs of illness. Follow these tips to stay healthy with your backyard flock:

**Wash your hands.**
- Always wash your hands with soap and water right after touching backyard poultry, their eggs, or anything in the area where they live and roam.
- Adults should supervise handwashing by young children.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

**Be safe around poultry.**
- Don’t kiss backyard poultry or snuggle them and then touch your face or mouth.
- Don’t let backyard poultry inside the house, especially in areas where food or drink is prepared, served, or stored.
Set aside a pair of shoes to wear while taking care of poultry and keep those shoes outside of the house.

Don’t eat or drink where poultry live or roam.

Stay outdoors when cleaning any equipment or materials used to raise or care for poultry, such as cages and containers for feed or water.

**Supervise kids around poultry.**

- Always supervise children around poultry and while they wash their hands.
- Children younger than 5 years of age shouldn’t handle or touch chicks, ducklings, or other poultry. Young children are more likely to get sick from germs like *Salmonella*.

**Handle eggs safely.**

- Collect eggs often. Eggs that sit in the nest can become dirty or break.
- Throw away cracked eggs. Germs on the shell can more easily enter the egg though a cracked shell.
- Eggs with dirt and debris can be cleaned carefully with fine sandpaper, a brush, or a cloth.
- Don’t wash warm, fresh eggs because colder water can pull germs into the egg.
- Refrigerate eggs after collection to maintain freshness and slow germ growth.
- Cook eggs until both the yolk and white are firm. Egg dishes should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F (71°C) or hotter. Raw and undercooked eggs may contain *Salmonella* bacteria that can make you sick.

For a complete list of recommendations, visit the [Healthy Pets, Healthy People website section on backyard poultry](https://www.healthy-pets-healthy-people.hhs.gov/backyard-poultry).

*Advice to Stores That Sell or Display Poultry*

- Source poultry from hatcheries that have adopted the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) [best management practices to mitigate *Salmonella* contamination](https://www.fda.gov/food/preventing-foodborne-illness/salmonella-prevention-primarily-focuses-preventing-human-infections) and those which voluntarily participate in the USDA’s National Poultry Improvement Plan (USDA-NPIP) [U.S. *Salmonella* Monitored Program](https://www.fda.gov/food/preventing-foodborne-illness/salmonella-monitored-program).
- Provide health information to owners and potential buyers of poultry before purchase (see sample flyer below). This should include information about the risk of getting a *Salmonella* infection from contact with poultry.
  - A [flyer](https://www.fda.gov/food/preventing-foodborne-illness/salmonella-prevention-primarily-focuses-preventing-human-infections) describing the risk of *Salmonella* infections from contact with poultry and prevention recommendations is available.
- Place health information in clear view where poultry are displayed.
- Provide handwashing stations or hand sanitizer next to poultry display areas and tell customers to wash hands right after leaving these areas.
- Display poultry out of reach of customers, especially children, so customers cannot easily touch poultry.
- Clean and sanitize the areas where poultry are displayed between shipments of new poultry. Be sure to remove debris first so that the disinfectant is applied to a surface that is generally clean. Apply the disinfectant on the surface for the proper contact time listed on the disinfectant label.
- More information on displaying animals in public settings is in the [2017 Compendium of Measures to Prevent Disease Associated with Animals in Public Settings](https://www.fda.gov/food/preventing-foodborne-illness/salmonella-prevention-primarily-focuses-preventing-human-infections).

*Advice to Mail-Order Hatcheries*

- Mail-order hatcheries should provide health-related information to owners and potential purchasers before they buy any poultry (see example below). This should include information about preventing *Salmonella* infections from contact with poultry.
  - A [flyer](https://www.fda.gov/food/preventing-foodborne-illness/salmonella-prevention-primarily-focuses-preventing-human-infections) describing the risk of *Salmonella* infections from contact with poultry and prevention recommendations is available.
• Mail-order hatcheries should develop interventions to help prevent contamination and infection of poultry with *Salmonella*:
• Mail-order hatcheries should participate in the voluntary USDA-NPIP [U.S. *Salmonella* Monitored Program](https://www.canr.msu.edu/extension/psp/), in which mail-order hatcheries certify their flocks are monitored for *Salmonella* bacteria that may cause illness in humans. The intent of this program is to reduce the incidence of *Salmonella* in day-old poultry in the hatchery and give the poultry industry a better opportunity to reduce the incidence of *Salmonella* in their products.

### Symptoms of *Salmonella* Infection

• Most people infected with *Salmonella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps 6 hours to 6 days after being exposed to the bacteria.
• The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days, and most people recover without treatment.
• In some people, the illness may be so severe that the patient needs to be hospitalized. *Salmonella* infection may spread from the intestines to the bloodstream and then to other places in the body.
• Children younger than 5 years of age, adults 65 and older, and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have a severe illness.
• For more information, see [Symptoms of *Salmonella* Infection](https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/symptoms.html).

### Investigation Details

**July 29, 2020**
Since the last update on June 24, 2020, 473 more ill people and four additional *Salmonella* serotypes (Braenderup, Muenchen, Thompson, and Typhimurium) were added to this investigation.

As of July 28, 2020, a total of 938 people infected with one of the outbreak strains of *Salmonella* have been reported from 48 states. A list of the states and the number of cases in each is on the [map of reported cases](https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/outbreaks.html).

Illnesses started on dates from **January 14, 2020, to July 14, 2020**. Ill people range in age from less than 1 year to 94 years, with a median age of 32. Fifty-six percent are female. Of 461 people with information available, 151 (33%) have been hospitalized. One death in Oklahoma has been reported.

If antibiotics are needed, some infections related to these outbreaks may be difficult to treat with some commonly recommended antibiotics and may require a different antibiotic choice. Whole genome sequencing performed on *Salmonella* bacteria isolated from 597 ill people predicted antibiotic resistance to one or more of the following antibiotics: amoxicillin-clavulanic acid (1.4%), ampicillin (4.0%), cefoxitin (1.4%), ceftriaxone (1.4%), chloramphenicol (0.8%), ciprofloxacin (0.1%), fosfomycin (2.8%), gentamicin (1.2%), kanamycin (0.4%), streptomycin (63.4%), sulfisoxazole (4.4%), tetracycline (63.5%), and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole (2.6%). There was no antibiotic resistance predicted for 249 (29.4%) isolates. Testing of 10 outbreak isolates using standard antibiotic susceptibility testing by CDC’s [National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS)](https://www.cdc.gov/narms) laboratory confirmed these results (fosfomycin and kanamycin were not tested by this method).

### Investigation of the Outbreaks

**Epidemiologic and laboratory evidence** shows that contact with poultry (such as chicks and ducklings) in backyard flocks is the likely source of these outbreaks.

In interviews, ill people answered questions about animal contact in the week before they became ill. Of 409 people interviewed, 303 (74%) reported contact with chicks and ducklings before becoming ill.
Testing of backyard poultry and their environments (such as backyard coops) in Kentucky and Oregon found three of the outbreak strains.
Ill people reported buying poultry from many sources, including agricultural stores, websites, and hatcheries. No single store chain or hatchery accounts for all of the illnesses.
Regardless of where backyard poultry are purchased, they can carry *Salmonella* germs that can make people sick. Backyard poultry owners should always follow steps to stay healthy around their flocks.
This investigation is ongoing, and CDC will provide updates when more information becomes available.
Vicki

I attended the Coffee with Planners Session this week and appreciate the opportunity to make comments concerning urban chickens. I submit the following comments on the subject for your review. I have raised chickens years ago.

1. I do not support urban chickens in Rapid City.
2. I propose the following design elements.
   A. At least a 50 foot setback from all property lines.
   B. Some type of odor abatement should be required.
   C. Semi-annual inspection of chicken’s well being and hutch condition.
   D. Owner must obtain a permit and pay all fees.
   E. Program should be self supporting from fees paid by those with permits.
   F. Building permit will be required for utility placement required to support a chicken hutch. Chickens need light and heat in winter months to enable the laying of eggs.
   G. Hutch design will be approved by city. No tarps allowed for roofs.
   H. Water runoff abatement plan and procedures to prevent pollution of storm water/ground water contamination is required.
3. My concerns for urban chickens within the city.
   A. Odor
   B. Noise
   C. Wildlife attraction such as skunks, raccoons, snakes, and rodents.
   D. Diseases that chickens carry.
   E. Polluted water runoff.

This is the third time (I believe) to allow urban chickens. This appears to be an attempt to satisfy a very small segment of the population in Rapid City. I have surveyed some of my neighbors, none support urban chickens. I would suggest
folks wanting to raise chickens move out of the city limits and they can raise pretty much anything they wish to. Some say this is due to the lack of eggs during the COVID problem we all are experiencing. I have not seen any shortage of the availability of eggs during the epidemic in any grocery store in the area.

Thank you for reading my inputs.
Jim Hodgson
923 Cobalt Drive Rapid City

Sent from Mail for Windows 10
CAUTION: This email is from an outside source. Use caution before opening attachments, clicking links or providing confidential information.

Hi Vicki -

Saw the chickens article in the RC Journal on-line today... Always fun!!

Just because... more info is always better to have... most of the time...

Denver has had backyard "food producing animal" rules for a while... since 2011 I believe...

Here's some of the info...

Happy reading!!

Marty Amble
Denver, CO

Now More Than Ever... Corporations are NOT People - and Money is NOT Speech. Go to: www.movetoamend.org

*Attachment
Food Producing Animals (FPA)
Suggested Care Practices and Local Resources
Chickens, Ducks, and Goats

Fowl
Backyard chickens and ducks can be wonderful pets, in addition to providing delicious healthy eggs for their owners. There are a couple of important things that future fowl owners should consider before getting their birds:

- Fowl need regular daily care. If you have a daytime/nighttime setup, they may need to be taken out of their coop every morning and put away every evening (see “Setup for a Flexible Schedule,” below). Their daily needs also include fresh food and water, plus coop/yard cleanup tasks. If you’re going on a vacation, fowl typically should not be brought to another fowl owner’s backyard to be cared for, since mixing flocks can create behavior problems. You will need to plan on finding someone to come by and care for your chickens while you’re away. Neighbors are often a great option for this, and you may also be able to find someone on a local homesteading message board (see “Resources” below).
- Fowl do not lay eggs regularly for the duration of their lives. Chickens only produce eggs consistently for 2-3 years; ducks for about 5 years. Fowl can live to be 8-10 years old. Therefore, fowl owners need to be prepared to either explore retirement options for older birds (see “Retirement Options,” below) or make allowances to keep their older birds as pets. If you’d like to keep your older birds until they pass away from natural causes, start with just 3-4 fowl. After 2-3 years, you can add 2 more young birds, and then 2-3 years later add 2 more. This will allow your older fowl to live out their lives and die of natural causes and you’ll still have consistent egg production within the 8-bird limit laid out in the FPA ordinance.

Permeable Space
The ordinance requires that FPA owners have at least 16 square feet of permeable space per bird. 16 square feet is certainly adequate, but it’s always a good idea to give the birds as much additional space as you can. The fowls’ permeable space (as well as the shelter) must be on the rear 50% of your zone lot.

“Permeable space” means ground or grass (i.e. not concrete). If you are keeping your fowl on bare ground, consider covering their entire living area with straw or pine shavings. This will provide mulch for fowl manure, which helps to reduce smells and keeps the birds from walking through wet manure.

Fencing
If the fowls’ permeable space is an open-air barnyard (as opposed to an enclosed chicken wire run) then you need to provide adequate fencing. Fences that are 3’11” tall are typically adequate to keep fowl contained. Fencing can be made of chicken wire, stock wire, chain link, or any other durable material.

If your fence is not containing your birds, you have a few options. You can make your fence higher (be aware that construction of fences 4’ or higher require a zoning permit in Denver), keep your fowl in an enclosed run, or secure netting over the top of your barnyard. You also have the option of performing wing clipping on your fowl, though this leaves them unable to fly if confronted by a predator.

Be a good neighbor and do not make a common fence with your neighbor one side of your fowl/goat fencing.
Structures
The successful chicken shelter has the following features:
- Provides adequate space for the number of birds
- Is well ventilated
- Minimizes drafts
- Maintains a comfortable temperature
- Protects the chickens from wind and sun
- Keeps out rodents, wild birds, and predatory animals
- Offers plenty of light during the day
- Has adequate roosting space
- Includes clean nests for the hens to lay eggs
- Has sanitary feed and water stations
- Is easy to clean
- Is situated where drainage is good

The structure should be predator-proof and provide protection from rain, snow and wind. Fowl-sized doors (called a pop hole) are recommended. It will be more convenient to clean the shelter if there is a way for humans to access the inside, either through a human sized door, or through hinges on the walls or roof. Be aware that construction of a structure requires a zoning permit and in Denver, except for portable structures not larger than a typical dog house.

For more information contact Denver Zoning by email at zoningreview@denvergov.org or phone 720-865-2984.

The floor of the enclosure may be: 1) solid wood, if the floor is at least 1 foot off the ground to protect from rodents, 2) concrete, or 3) permeable ground, if the soil and slope encourages adequate drainage to dry every time it gets damp from outside weather. If the floor is permeable ground, bury chicken wire or hardware cloth at least 12 inches around the perimeter of the enclosure, to prevent predators from digging in.

Nighttime enclosures should be large enough for fowl to rest comfortably and walk around each other. Plan on four square feet of coop space per bird. For Bantam sized chickens (less than two pounds) two square feet per bird is adequate. Fowl should not sleep on hard wood or concrete. Each coop should have perches and/or bedding of straw or pine shavings. Nest boxes (1 for every 4-5 hens), and automatic food and water stations should be provided.

The well-constructed coop will be well ventilated, but also be insulated to guard against both hot and cold temperatures. Ventilation should be breezy enough to remove excess moisture and prevent respiratory diseases, to which chickens are especially prone, but not drafty during winter. Some chicken breeds are very susceptible to the cold weather, so the coop should not be drafty.

Setup for a Flexible Schedule
If you have a situation in which you can’t reliably be around to let the chickens out of their coop every morning or secure them every evening, you can construct a setup that still allows your animals to be safe from predators. Attaching a large (at least 16 square feet per bird), predator-proof chicken run to a reasonably large predator-proof coop will allow your birds to roam freely inside and outside, while remaining safe. Fowl will wake up in the morning and venture into their run, where they will spend the day. At night they will go into their coop to sleep once the sun goes down. Stable food and water that cannot be knocked over is a critical part of this equation. A hanging feeder and waterer will accomplish this.

Winter Care
While fowl are generally well-equipped to deal with cold daytime temperatures during winter, they often need supplemental heating at night when the temperature drops below about 20°F. You can add a heating lamp or light bulb (the necessary strength depends on the size of the enclosure) to your enclosure during winter months. In addition, fowl with large combs and waddles (like Leghorns) may need to have petroleum jelly applied to their combs and waddles during very cold nights to prevent frostbite.
Food and Water

Chicks should be given a “chick starter” feed until 8 weeks old. Fowl should eat a “growing” feed (which contains extra protein) from 8 weeks until they start laying. At or immediately prior to laying, fowl should be eating a “laying” feed that contains supplemental calcium. Do not allow the drinking water to become dirty, particularly with bird feces, as it can cause diseases.

Fowl can eat most table scraps, but they should not be given green potato peels, dried or undercooked beans, avocado skin or pit, raw eggs or egg shell pieces, raw meat, rhubarb leaves, or nightshade (tomato, pepper, eggplant, potato) plant parts.

While ducks do enjoy having water to play in, providing bathing water is not required when keeping ducks. Be aware that bathing water that is not cleaned regularly can potentially introduce problems, as it may quickly become dirty and the animals might try to drink it.

Veterinary Care

Fowl in Colorado do not require preventative vaccinations in order to remain healthy. If your fowl experiences a minor injury or problem, help can often be found in books or online message boards. For more serious injuries or illnesses, contact a local veterinarian (see “Resources,” below.)

Retirement Options

While many people choose to keep their fowl as pets after they stop laying (see introductory paragraphs, above) some decide to retire non-productive hens. The sustainability groups in the “Online Resources” section below should be able to provide recommendations for places outside of Denver that are willing to take older fowl. Animal Care & Control can also give you the names of local animal sanctuaries. You can advertise your chicken as a pet on public web sites if it is important to you that the animal be kept as a pet and not used for meat. Be sure to specify that in your ad. Slaughtering is allowed in Denver as well as many rural areas surrounding Denver. If you’d like more information about this option, contact the local sustainability groups.

Disposal of Dead Fowl

If one of your fowl dies, there are a few methods of disposal that are recommended:

- Dead animal pick-up can be requested by calling 311. The city will provide this service free of charge.
- You can take your animal to the veterinarian to be disposed of, as you might with a dog or cat.
- Fowl can be buried on your property if they are buried at least 24” down.

Chick Care Tips

Chicks should be provided with an indoor brooder which keeps them secure from predators and provides them with ample room to move around. The larger of a brooder you can provide, the happier and healthier your chicks will be. Many people choose to make a brooder out of large cardboard refrigerator boxes and chicken wire, rather than purchasing one. Your brooder should include an adjustable heat lamp or light bulb (250 watts is recommended for chicks) to maintain a temperature of up to 90 degrees.

Chicks should be given a “chick starter” feed and clean water. Do not feed produce or other table scraps to chicks. Chicks should have their vents (their bottoms) checked daily for pasting. Any dried feces should be removed so that the vent is clear. Chicks should be brooded inside for 6-8 weeks.

When ordering chicks, be sure to purchase females and not “straight run” (which is always a mix of males and females). Even if you order all females, there is still a small chance that you could end up with a rooster.

Dwarf Goats

Backyard dwarf goats can be wonderful pets, in addition to providing healthy milk for their owners. There are a few important things that future goat owners should consider before getting their goats:

- One suggestion is to have two dwarf goats for companionship. One goat raised alone may be stressed and become sick and may be much louder than a goat with a companion. Dogs or other pets are not suitable companions for goats. If you prefer to own just one milking doe, the ordinance does allow the keeping of wethers (neutered male goats), which cost a fraction of the price of a doe.
o Doe goats must be bred in order to produce milk. A dwarf goat’s lactation cycle is about 300 days long. Their gestation is 5 months, and the goat kids need to nurse for 6-8 weeks. Given these timeframes, if you are keeping two doe goats you would need to breed each one every 16 months (or one goat every 8 months) in order to have a steady supply of milk. Before you breed, check on the demand for dwarf goat kids both within and outside of Denver, but understand that you will be responsible for re-homing kids as part of milk production.

o Goat owners who plan to be away have different options, depending on whether or not their goats are currently being milked. Goats that are not being milked can be easily cared for by a neighbor. Goats that are being milked need a qualified pet sitter who is familiar with milking, or to stay with another goat owner who will be able to maintain their milking schedule. Some rural goat breeders outside of Denver will also allow you to board your goats with them, for a small fee.

Permeable Space
The ordinance requires that FPA owners have at least 130 square feet of permeable space per dwarf goat. 130 square feet is certainly adequate, but it’s always a good idea to give the goats as much additional space as you can. The goats’ permeable space (as well as the shelter) must be on the rear 50% of your zone lot.

“Permeable space” means ground or grass (i.e. not concrete). If you are keeping your goats on bare ground, cover their living area with straw. This will provide mulch for goat manure, which helps to reduce smells.

Goats enjoy climbing, so it’s a good idea to provide them with straw bales or other safe, small things to climb on. Keep the climbing materials in the center of the barnyard, away from fences.

Fencing
You must provide fencing adequate to keep your goats contained. Chain link, stock wire, or other sturdy fencing materials would be appropriate. Chicken wire is generally not adequate fencing for goats. Wooden slat fences are not generally recommended, as goats can knock out one of the pieces and get their head caught between the slats. A 3’11” fence is typically adequate to keep dwarf goats contained, provided climbing materials are not set next to the fence.

Structure
The basic requirement for all goat structures is a dry shelter that minimizes drafts. It must be large enough for the dwarf goats to move around freely without coming into contact with another goat. Shelter must provide protection from precipitation, wind, and sun. Be aware that construction of a structure requires a zoning permit in Denver, except for portable structures not larger than a typical dog house. For more information contact Denver Zoning by email at zoningreview@denvergov.org or phone at 720-865-2984.

How you build your structure depends on what you will use it for – is it just shelter for the goats, or will you feed and water them there? Consider how you, the human, will maintain the structure. Is there enough room for you to move around and clean it easily? Do you need a light source if you will be feeding/tending them during the winter? Where will you store hay and grain? Where is the water source? A number of considerations for your goat shelter are for the benefit of the caretaker.

Some areas of Denver contain more large mammal predators than others. If you feel that your dwarf goats would be at risk from large predators, you can provide a predator-proof structure.

Winter Care
Dwarf goats grow a winter coat during winter months, provided they are outside during the fall months. They are generally well-equipped to handle cold weather provided they have a shelter to keep them out of precipitation and drafts. A heat lamp can be placed in the shelter during cold nights.
Food & Water
Goats should eat a diet that consists primarily of hay. Grain should be given sparingly. Be sure that grain is stored securely where the goats cannot reach it, because if they are allowed to gorge on grain it could be fatal. Do not allow the drinking water to become dirty, particularly with goat manure, as it can cause disease.

Goats are omnivores and can eat most plant-based table scraps. Do not feed goats fruit pits, green potato peels, bindweed, white clover, rhubarb leaves, or nightshade (tomato, pepper, eggplant, potato) plant parts. Goats that are milking should not eat onions or garlic.

Veterinary Care
Goats in Colorado benefit from an annual CD-T vaccination. This protects against enterotoxaemia and tetanus, which are problematic for goats but do not transfer to humans. In addition, goats should periodically be given a de-wormer, according to the product instructions. Both herbal and medical de-wormers are available for goat owners to purchase and administer.

See “Resources” below for a list of local goat veterinarians.

Other Goat Care
Goats need to have their hoofs trimmed periodically. The frequency varies but is typically around once every couple of months (depending on the goat). When you purchase your goats, ask your breeder to show you how to trim their hoofs.

It is generally best for goats raised in the city to be disbudded (have their horns removed). Horns can get caught in fencing material, and horns raise the likelihood that goats will injure each other during play. The safest time for a goat to be disbudded is when it is 2-4 weeks old. If the horns have become established, surgery would be required to remove them. Purchasing a mature goat and getting the horns removed is not advisable; it is best to purchase goats that have already been disbudded.

Breeding
Denver’s FPA ordinance does not allow unneutered male goats in the city, even for a brief visit. In order to breed your doe goat, you will need to contact a breeder outside the city and bring your goat there for mating.

Milking
Goats that are milking need to be milked once or twice every day on a fairly consistent schedule in order to maintain milk production. If a goat is not milked regularly, she will “dry up” and her milk production will stop until she has kids again.

Disposal of Dead Goats
If one of your goats dies, there are a few methods of disposal that are recommended:
- Dead animal pick-up can be requested by calling 311. The city will provide this service free of charge.
- You can take your animal to the veterinarian to be disposed of, as you might with a dog or cat.
- Goats can be buried on your property if they are buried at least 24” down.
Resources

Online Resources
- Chicken keeping forum - www.backyardchickens.com – chicken keeping; information
- Goat keeping forum - www.thegoatspot.net – community forum on goat keeping
- Duck keeping – www.duckhobby.com/index.html - information on keeping urban ducks
- Denver Urban Ag Center - http://www.denverurbanhomesteading.com/ - urban agricultural center with activities and information on chickens and goats, including a monthly chicken swap.
- Denver Poultry Meetup - www.meetup.com/DenverBackyardPoultry – local poultry group (with message board)
- Denver Homesteader Meetup - www.meetup.com/Greater-Denver-Urban-Homesteaders – local homesteading group (with message board)
- Backyard Animals - www.sustainablefooddenver.org – information on backyard animals

Books
- Backyard Chickens for Dummies by Kimberly Willis and Rob Ludlow
- Building Chicken Coops by Gail Damerow
- Storey’s Guide to Raising Chickens by Gail Damerow
- Storey’s Guide to Raising Ducks by Dave Holderread
- Storey’s Guide to Raising Goats by Jerome Belanger
- The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Raising Goats by Ellie Winslow
- The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Urban Homesteading by Sundari Kraft
- The Urban Homestead by Erik Knutzen and Kelly Coyne
- Urban Homesteading: Heirloom Skills for Sustainable Living by Rachel Kaplan and Ruby Blume

Local Classes
- Denver Urban Homesteading – www.denverurbanhomesteading.com (chickens and goats)
- Front Range Community College Continuing Education – www.frontrange.edu (chickens and goats)
- Heirloom Gardens – www.eatwhereUlive.com (chickens and goats)

Local Veterinarians
- Chickens or Ducks: Dr. Ted Cohen with University Hills Animal Hospital (Denver) – 303.757.56383
- Chickens or Ducks: Dr. William Guerrara with The Animal Hospital (Broomfield) – 303.466.8888
- Goats: Dr. Leticia German with Front Range Equine and Livestock (Golden) – 970.420.5823
- Goats: Dr. Debra Mayo (Golden) – 303.271.9700

Feed and Farming Stores
- Curve Feed & Supply 6750 West Mississippi Avenue, Lakewood, CO 80226, (303) 934-1249
- Denver Urban Homesteading/Earthdog Denver 370 Kalamath Street, Denver, CO 80204, (303) 534-8700
- Golden Mill 1012 Ford Street, Golden, CO 80401, (303) 279-1151
From: Betty Backus <backusba@rap.midco.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 11:33 AM
To: Fisher Vicki <Vicki.Fisher@rcgov.org>
Subject: CHANGE OF CITY ORDINANCE TO ALLOW CHICKENS IN THE CITY OF RAPID CITY

CAUTION: This email is from an outside source. Use caution before opening attachments, clicking links or providing confidential information.

Dear Ms. Fisher:

Regarding the change of city ordinance to allow chickens in the City of Rapid City I have several concerns which I previously sent in a July 19 email to members of the City Council, the Mayor and the City Attorney. Today I have attached that same email to express my questions and concerns for your consideration as you work to craft a change to the city ordinance.

I know you and other city representatives have probably heard from many city residents who are on both sides of this issue. I hope that you will make time to review my concerns. Thank you very much for your dedication to serving the citizens of Rapid City.

Betty Backus; 3505 Cypress Ct; Rapid City SD 57701  605-545-3950

*Attachment
Dear Mayor and city Council Members:

I am writing in regard to a proposal to change to our city ordinances to allow backyard hens in Rapid City. To the best of my knowledge this issue has been considered previously in March 2011, June 2013 and November 2014. I know in 2014 the Humane Society was not in favor of allowing backyard hens and as Ms. Drew stated, they still do not want to see backyard hens allowed.

During the Legal & Finance Committee Meeting of July 15, 2020 it was mentioned that there are already people who are currently keeping hens in violation of city ordinance. Kevin Wooster’s recent column in the Rapid City Journal noted that he has neighbors who are keeping chickens. Who are these people? Are they some of the people who are now asking that the ordinance be changed?

The proposal that was previously brought forward still leaves many questions for me that I am listing below:

**ORDINANCE TO LICENSE THE KEEPING BACKYARD HENS IN RAPID CITY, SD**

**LICENSE**

Who will administer this program? City code enforcement, the Humane Society or another entity?

Who determines the cost of the license & what department will deposit the license fees or fines?

Will it be an annual license or a one-time license?

I suggest that there should be leg bands required on each hen to be able to identify the owner if chickens escape or are intentionally released. Consider the feral chickens in Key West, Florida – no one is responsible for them and they are a general nuisance.

Will neighbor of the applicant have an opportunity to object if someone applies for a license to keep chickens? Will the applicant be required to give written notice by certified mail to the adjacent property owners/neighbors before they obtain a license? I believe this is a requirement for ‘use on review’.

Will there be a fine for each escaped/released chicken? Will the fine be applicable even if the owner does not want to reclaim their hen?

Will the license be transferable to another person moving into the location of the original licensee?

If the license holder moves to a new location will the license be voided?

**REQUIREMENT TO BE MET Coop & fence requirements**

Will there be specifications regarding coop size, appearance & location in relation to property lines and neighboring homes?

What kinds of building materials will be acceptable? Hopefully scrap lumber, snow fence or other unsightly materials will not be permitted.

Who will determine if a structure is acceptable?

Will a building permit be required?

What is meant by the term ‘setback’?
Food storage in predator proof containers will not eliminate mice and other predators from visiting the area looking for food scattered during the feeding of the chickens.

Requiring a predator proof coop and fence will likely protect the hens but will not keep predators from prowling the area attempting to help themselves to the food, water or hens. Predators such as racoons, skunks, coyotes, fox, mountain lions and others often carry disease such as rabies, distemper and more. They could cause injury to people or their pets when traveling through a neighborhood trying to reach the hens.

Chickens have been known to carry salmonella, bird flu and coccidiosis sometimes infecting people and pets.

Who will determine what conditions are neat and sanitary?

Will there be random inspections to assure compliance with the ordinance or will this be reviewed when a complaint is made?

**REVOCATION**

Will someone who has had a revoked license be able to apply for another license in the future?

**VIOLATIONS**

Who will decide what is a nuisance or violation?

Will a violation result in a fine?

I hope that my questions will be considered as the proposed ordinance change is crafted. Thank you for your service to our community.

Betty Backus; 3505 Cypress Ct   605-545-3950
Thanks for these invites. Not sure how/why I am on them, but appreciate them, regardless.

My tenure on the Mayor’s Beautification was for 20 years and half that time I was the chairman.

I wanted to share some thoughts on “Chicken in the City”.

My father was an early retire from a fortune 500 company in the San Francisco Bay area and decided to return to Rapid City because it was a better place to raise his family, so we “escaped”.

The first year we were here, we rented a home at 210 Franklin, close to the home I was born in in 1946, prior to our move to California. My father was having a new home built “way out West” in Rapid City, what is now S Canyon.

**OK, to the chickens:**

Our family was good friends with Russ Scott family who owned the Sooper Dooper markets here. That was my father business in CA, he was the national sales vice president for Armour & Company, the nation’s largest meat processor. The first Easter here, while at Sooper Dooper a woman working there gave me 13 baby chicks. Not a single one was a rooster… I guess they saved them for other purposes. My father built a chicken coop there in the back yard on Franklin Street, next door to the Potters who owned Motive Parts & Supply. I often came home from Wilson School to find them all running around the neighborhood. Later in life I figured the neighbors were sick of them and their noise and would leave the gate door open. Someone made a comment in the Journal that only roosters made noise; well I can tell you that was NOT the case with my chickens, and the noise was NOT the worst part.

It wasn’t long thereafter that we decided to rid ourselves of their noise, stink, and their constant upkeeping.

If anyone wants chickens in Rapid City it is because: (1) they are clueless as to what that entails, (2) they are deaf, (3) they have no sense of smell, or (4) they could care less about their neighbors.
I was also a part owner in an east river farming operation, one of the largest, and had to sell some of my property to put my two siblings through Gonzaga, St Olaf, MN Law School and graduate school. That farming operation has a contract with the Plankinton Chicken Farm (Tyson?), to sell them corn and in turn the chicken farm spreads the chicken dung on our farm land as fertilizer.

I often hunt pheasants there, and in fact we hosted Browning Arms Company for several years. I have to emphatically say that once the chicken poop is spread on the land it is next to impossible to hunt that land. The stench is absolutely unbearable, AND I MEAN UNBEARABLE. I mean to say it is the worst kind of smell, almost as bad as a pig farm, but darn close.

Once Rapid City permits chickens in Rapid City, that will make it next to impossible to change that decision. I just shake my head wondering what the City Council is thinking, or if they think at all. My opinion is that the Council is business driven, not citizen orientated. I saw that with the Beautification Committee’s research of digital signs, and the Council’s failure to act upon that research... and in fact did nothing until the citizenry complained of all the flashing, moving messages and light pollution.

As my father used to say, when we’d complain about Rapid City when comparing in to San Fran and Mtn View, CA, “A storm sewer is called a ‘dip’ in Rapid City!” We’ve moved beyond that with sewers, but we’re going backwards with chickens.

I’ve probably wasted 30 minutes with my diatribe here, but wonder if any intelligent actions will occur.