



**TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

MEETING DATE: September 10th, 2019

ORIGINATED BY: Preston Weran, Director of Infrastructure and Property Services

SUBJECT: Urban Hen Program Review and Survey Results

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Blackfalds received a letter from a resident requesting Council's consideration to allow urban hens. The resident also attended the May 14, 2019 Regular Council meeting as a delegation to speak on the subject. Currently, the Town's animal control bylaw does not allow any livestock (hens) in residential areas. Administration has not received any other enquires or solicitation regarding this matter as of late.

There has been an increasing popularity for people wanting to raise hens in an urban environment in many communities across Canada, including those within our region. At the standing committee on July 17th, 2019 discussion of an Urban Hen Program or pilot for the Town of Blackfalds took place. The discussion centered around details such as setbacks from adjacent parcels, notification area and support percentage of notified neighbors in support or against use, number of hens allowed and number of licenses allowed, zones allowing this use, coop specifications, provincial regulations, training required, ability of applicants to maintain conditions and the resourcing required of the Town to plan, implement, monitor and control this new use.

SCC. 11/19

Councillor Svab moved that Standing Committee of Council, through Administration, determine the viability of an Urban Hen Program for the Town of Blackfalds, following through with a public survey and a possible tour of a neighboring Community, and through this determination make recommendation to be advanced through Town Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCUSSION:

Planning & Development has completed a public engagement survey and gathered some information from numerous communities within the region and beyond, see attached info. We have not determined a tour location at this time but would be happy to schedule a visit if Council so wishes.

The survey results indicate that overall 50% of respondents are in favor of a hen program while the other 50% are not in support. Administration notes that this ratio may be different, if the respondents were informed that this program requires tax dollars to enact. If this policy does move forward, we would suggest a public hearing for the Urban Hen Bylaw to ensure public support.

To provide a proving ground for this change, the idea of a pilot program over a period of 1 year, starting in May 2020 to May of 2021 could be done. To justify this change and costs for this new policy across the 4,400 dwellings, we could have the pilot program only move forward if we had at least 22 applicants (0.5%) come forward for pre-application prior to the policy and bylaw revisions. If there isn't enough uptake on the program, we would not move any further with this policy.



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If Council would like to move forward with a Urban Hen Program for 2020, the following points must be considered in detail by the department for Council endorsement prior to the 2020 budget being finalized:

1. Maximum number of Licenses allowed per year;
2. Maximum number of hens per site;
3. Training requirements for applicants;
4. Provincial registration requirements;
5. Notification area and percentage of support;
6. Minimum size of property to allow use;
7. Increased staff resources for communications, control, bylaw revisions, inspections and enforcement of this use under the animal control bylaw;
8. Increased concerns around waste generation and disposal of manure, animal slaughtering, odour and standard of (winter) care of animals;

The issues above provide some insight into what various processes, concerns and challenges that could be in store for our community if introducing an urban hen policy pilot program. If a pilot program, as suggested above, moves forward, we would more than likely use the City of Red Deer's application process form, Bylaw and specifications in the interim.

Therefore, Administration is seeking direction from Council on whether an Urban Hen program is a feasible initiative for our community. If so, more work and engagement is required to progress towards formally moving forward with an Urban Hen Program as a pilot (or program) and properly plan for this service level increase for budget 2020.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Internal and external financial implications to be determined.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

That Council move to accept the Urban Hen Program Review and Survey Results report as information.

ALTERNATIVES:

- A) That Council move forward with an urban hen pilot program for 2020, once Administration finalizes the details and timeframes.
- B) That Council refer this item back to Administration for further information.

Attachments:

- *City of Red Deer Website Info*
- *City of Red Deer Application and Bylaw for Keeping Urban Chickens*
- *City of Edmonton Urban Hens Keeping Procedures and Guidelines*
- *Town of Blackfalds Urban Hens Public Engagement Survey Results*

Approvals:


Acting CAO Sean Barnes


Department Director/Author

From City of Red Deer's Website:

Urban Chicken Licences

A chicken licence is required to keep chickens on your property.



What is an Urban Chicken?

An urban chicken is a hen that is at least 16 weeks of age kept in an urban area within the city of Red Deer.

What do I need to know before I apply for an Urban Chicken Licence?

You must apply for an Urban Chicken Licence and have it approved before you can start keeping chickens on your property. If your application is approved, you must pay a licence fee and renew the licence annually.

Please note:

- Hens only. No roosters are allowed.
- Licences are issued for a specific property and are non-transferable.



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- A maximum of 4 chickens are allowed.
- There is a maximum number of licenses we can issue based on population growth.

Please refer to the Chicken Bylaw found on our [Bylaws](#) page to learn about the rules and regulations.

To Apply:

- Fill out the [Urban Chicken Application \(pdf\)](#)
- If you are not the owner of the property, a Letter of Authorization is required from the registered property owner.
- Bring application and any other required documentation to Inspections and Licensing on the third floor, City Hall, or email it to licensing@reddeer.ca.

More information and resources

For Provincial and Federal information and regulations, please visit:

- [Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development](#)
- [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#)
- [Premises Identification \(PID\)](#)

A local group called CLUCK Red Deer (Canadian Liberated Urban Chicken Klub) is a good place to get more information on how to keep urban chickens. They offer courses, coop tours and information to residents interested in learning more.

Website: <http://cluckreddeer.blogspot.ca/>

Email: cluck.reddeer@gmail.com

CHICKEN LICENSE APPLICATION

Chicken Licenses are effective from January 1 to December 31, and are required to be renewed annually

(Applicant must be 18 years of age or older)

PLEASE PRINT AND COMPLETE THE ENTIRE FORM

Name of Applicant: _____

Complete Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Number Of Chickens At This Location: (Max. 4) _____

Circle One:

Owner

Tenant**

**if tenant, a letter of authorization is required from the registered property owner, along with this application form

Further information regarding other regulations can be obtained by contacting The City Inspections & Licensing Department at 403-342-8182. The granting of this license shall in no way relieve the owner from complying with the requirements of City of Red Deer bylaw 3517/2014, *Chicken Bylaw*, or any other bylaws of the City of Red Deer, or other Provincial or Federal Statutes or Regulations in force.

I acknowledge that I am required to apply for a Premises Identification Number through Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

I certify that I will abide by all regulations after I have received my License, knowing that failure to comply may result in cancellation of the Chicken License.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Any personal information on this form is collected under the authority of section 33 (c) the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act for the purpose of issuing chicken licenses, and for monitoring and animal control purposes. If you have any questions about the collection, use and protection of this information please contact the Inspections & Licensing Department at (403) 342-8190, 4914 – 48 Avenue, Red Deer.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date: YYYY/MM/DD	Account No.
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BYLAW NO. 3517/2014

BEING A BYLAW OF THE CITY OF RED DEER, IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, TO REGULATE THE KEEPING OF CHICKENS IN URBAN AREAS

WHEREAS pursuant to section 7 of the *Municipal Government Act* the council of a municipality may pass bylaws for municipal purposes respecting: the safety, health and welfare of people and the protection of people and property; wild and domestic animals, and activities in relation to them; and the enforcement of bylaws; and

WHEREAS pursuant to section 8 of the *Municipal Government Act* the council of a municipality may, in a bylaw, regulate or prohibit and to provide for a system of licences, permits and approvals.

NOW THEREFORE, COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RED DEER, IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. This bylaw may be called the “Chicken Bylaw”.
2. For the purposes of this bylaw:
 - (a) “**Chicken License**” means a license issued by the City Manager pursuant to this Bylaw authorizing the license holder to keep Urban Chickens on a specific property within an Urban Area;
 - (b) “**Coop**” means a fully enclosed weather proof structure and attached Outdoor Enclosure used for the keeping of Urban Chickens, that is no larger than 10 m² in floor area, and no more than 2.4m in height;
 - (c) “**Hen**” means a domesticated female chicken;
 - (d) “**Municipal Tag**” means a document alleging an offence issued pursuant to the authority of a Bylaw of the City;
 - (e) “**Outdoor Enclosure**” means a securely enclosed, roofed outdoor area attached to and forming part of a Coop having a bare earth or vegetated floor for Urban Chickens to roam;
 - (f) “**Peace Officer**” has the same meaning as in the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*;
 - (g) “**Rooster**” means a domesticated male chicken;

- (h) “**Urban Chicken**” means a Hen that is at least 16 weeks of age;
- (i) “**Violation Ticket**” has the same meaning as in the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*;
- (j) “**Urban Area**” means lands located within the City on which agricultural operations, including but not limited to the keeping of livestock are neither a permitted or discretionary use under the City’s Land Use Bylaw.

Purpose

- 3. The purpose of this bylaw is to regulate and control the keeping of chickens within Urban Areas.

Prohibitions

- 4. In an Urban Area, no person shall:
 - (a) keep a Rooster;
 - (b) keep a Hen, other than an Urban Chicken for which a valid Chicken License has been issued.

Chicken License

- 5. A person may apply to keep no more than (4) Urban Chickens by:
 - (a) submitting a completed application, on the form approved by the City Manager, and
 - (b) paying a licence fee of \$28.00.
- 6. The City Manager may not issue or renew a Chicken License unless satisfied that:
 - (a) the applicant is the owner of the property on which the Urban Chickens will be kept, or that the owner of the property has provided written consent to the application;
 - (b) the land use districting of the property on which the Urban Chickens will be kept allows the placement of a Coop for the keeping of Urban Chickens;

- (c) the applicant resides on the property on which the Urban Chickens will be kept;
 - (d) the applicable fee has been paid; and
 - (e) all required information has been provided.
7. ¹The maximum number of Chicken Licenses that may be issued shall be one Chicken License per one thousand (1000) persons based on the population of the City of Red Deer as determined in the most recent municipal census.
8. The City Manager may refuse to grant or renew a Chicken License for the following reasons:
- (a) the applicant or license holder does not or no longer meets the requirements of this bylaw for a Chicken License;
 - (b) the applicant or license holder:
 - i. furnishes false information or misrepresents any fact or circumstance to the City Manager or a Peace Officer;
 - ii. has, in the opinion of the City Manager based on reasonable grounds, contravened this bylaw whether or not the contravention has been prosecuted;
 - iii. fails to pay a fine imposed by a court for a contravention of this Bylaw or any other applicable Bylaw related to the keeping of Urban Chickens;
 - iv. fails to pay any fee required by this or any applicable Bylaw; or
 - (c) in the opinion of the City Manager based on reasonable grounds it is in the public interest to do so.

¹ 3517/A-2017

9. If the City Manager refuses to grant or renew a Chicken License, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Red Deer Appeal & Review Board, in accordance with the procedures set out in the City of Red Deer Appeal Boards Bylaw.
10. A Chicken License is valid only for the period January 1 to December 31 in the year for which it is issued.
11. A Chicken License is not transferable from one person to another or from one property to another.
12. A person to whom a Chicken License has been issued shall produce the license at the demand of the City Manager or a Peace Officer.

Keeping of Urban Chickens

13. A person who keeps Urban Chickens must:
 - (a) provide each Hen with at least 0.37 m² of interior floor area, and at least 0.92 m² of Outdoor Enclosure, within the Coop;
 - (b) provide and maintain, in the Coop, at least one nest box per coop and one perch per Hen, that is at least 15 cm long;
 - (c) keep each Hen in the Coop at all times;
 - (d) provide each Hen with food, water, shelter, light, ventilation, care, and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, dust-bathing, and roosting, all sufficient to maintain the Hen in good health;
 - (e) maintain the Coop in good repair and sanitary condition, and free from vermin and noxious or offensive smells and substances;
 - (f) construct and maintain the Coop to prevent any rodent from harbouring underneath or within it or within its walls, and to prevent entrance by any other animal;
 - (g) keep a food container and water container in the Coop;
 - (h) keep the Coop secured from sunset to sunrise;

- (i) remove leftover feed, trash, and manure in a timely manner;
- (j) store feed within a fully enclosed container;
- (k) and manure within a fully enclosed container, and store no more than 3 cubic feet of manure at a time;
- (l) remove all other manure not used for composting or fertilizing and dispose of same in accordance with City bylaws;
- (m) follow biosecurity procedures recommended by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to reduce potential for disease outbreak; and
- (n) keep Hens for personal use only.

14. No person who keeps Urban Chickens shall:

- (a) sell eggs, manure, meat, or other products derived from Hens;
- (b) slaughter a Hen on the property;
- (c) dispose of a Hen except by delivering it to a farm, abattoir, veterinarian, or other operation that is lawfully permitted to dispose of Hens; and
- (d) keep a Hen in a cage, kennel, or any shelter other than a Coop.

Offence and Penalties

15. A person who contravenes any provision of this Bylaw is guilty of an offence.

16. A person who is guilty of an offence is liable to a fine in an amount not less than \$100.00.

17. Without restricting the generality of section 16, the fine amount established for use on Municipal Tags and for Violation Tickets if a voluntary payment option is offered is \$150.00.

Municipal Tag

18. A Peace Officer is authorized and empowered to issue a Municipal Tag to any person who the Peace Officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe has contravened any provision of this Bylaw.

19. A Municipal Tag may be issued to such person:

- (a) either personally; or
- (b) by mailing a copy to such person at his or her last known post office address.

20. The Municipal Tag shall be in a form approved by the City Manager and shall state:

- (a) the name of the Person;
- (b) the offence;
- (c) the specified penalty established by this Bylaw for the offence;
- (d) that the penalty shall be paid within 14 days of the issuance of the Municipal Tag; and
- (e) any other information as may be required by the City Manager.

Payment in Lieu of Prosecution

21. Where a Municipal Tag is issued pursuant to this Bylaw, the person to whom the Municipal Tag is issued may, in lieu of being prosecuted for the offence, pay to the City the penalty specified within the time period indicated on the Municipal Tag.

Violation Ticket

22. If a Municipal Tag has been issued and if the specified penalty has not been paid within the prescribed time, then a Peace Officer is authorized and empowered to issue a Violation Ticket pursuant to the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*.

23. Despite section 22, a Peace Officer is authorized and empowered to issue a Violation Ticket to any person who the Peace Officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe has contravened any provision of this Bylaw.

24. If a Violation Ticket is issued in respect of an offence, the Violation Ticket may:

- (a) specify the fine amount established by this Bylaw for the offence; or
- (b) require a person to appear in court without the alternative of making a voluntary payment.

Voluntary Payment

25. A person who commits an offence may

- (c) if a Violation Ticket is issued in respect of the offence; and
- (d) if the Violation Ticket specifies the fine amount established by this Bylaw for the offence;

make a voluntary payment by submitting to a Clerk of the Provincial Court, on or before the initial appearance date indicated on the Violation Ticket, the specified penalty set out on the Violation Ticket.

Obstruction

26. No Person shall obstruct or hinder any person in the exercise or performance of the person's powers pursuant to this Bylaw.

Powers of City Manager

27. Without restricting any other power, duty or function granted by this Bylaw, the City Manager may:

- (a) carry out any inspections to determine compliance with this Bylaw;
- (b) take any steps or carry out any actions required to enforce this Bylaw;
- (c) take any steps or carry out any actions required to remedy a contravention of this Bylaw;
- (d) establish forms for the purposes of this Bylaw; and
- (e) delegate any powers, duties or functions under this Bylaw to a City employee.

General

28. Nothing in this Bylaw relieves a person from complying with any Federal or Provincial law or regulation, other City Bylaw, or any requirement of any lawful permit, order or licence.

Severability

29. Every provision of this Bylaw is independent of all other provisions and if any provision of this Bylaw is declared invalid for any reason by a Court of competent jurisdiction, all other provisions of this Bylaw shall remain valid and enforceable.

Enactment

30. This Bylaw shall come into force and effect when it has received third reading and has been duly signed.

READ A FIRST TIME IN OPEN COUNCIL this 23 day of June 2014.

READ A SECOND TIME IN OPEN COUNCIL this 7 day of July 2014.

READ A THIRD TIME IN OPEN COUNCIL this 7 day of July 2014.

AND SIGNED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK this 7 day of July 2014.

“Tara Veer”

“Frieda McDougall”

MAYOR

CITY CLERK

URBAN HEN KEEPING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

These procedures and guidelines establish the regulatory framework for the keeping of urban hens within the City of Edmonton limits, and provide guidance for the selection of appropriate sites, the application processes and enforcement procedures to ensure successful urban hen keeping. In the development of these procedures and guidelines, the City of Edmonton reviewed best practices, communication plans, outcomes, and mitigation strategies of other municipalities who have made allowances for urban hen keeping. Zoning Bylaw requirements, potential health concerns, and provincial legislations were also carefully considered.

1

SITE REQUIREMENTS FOR HEN COOP AND RUN

- Coops may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secured. Some properties, due to the smaller size of a backyard or other situational factors, may not be deemed suitable for urban hen keeping through the application process.
- Coop sites should take into consideration backyard locations that would minimize impact to adjacent neighbours (away from bedroom windows, furthest point from building, etc).
- An approved site may house only one coop and run, and they must be in compliance with *Zoning Bylaw 12800*. All coops are reviewed against the *Zoning Bylaw 12800* and require Development Permits unless they meet the specific criteria for exemption under Section 12.2. Consultation with a Development Officer/ Planner is recommended before purchasing or installing an accessory structure. Standard setback requirements are outlined in the *Zoning Bylaw*. The *Zoning Bylaw* requires that an accessory structure be located:
 - a minimum of 0.9m from a side property line,
 - a minimum of 18.0m from a front property line,
 - a minimum of 0.6m from the rear property line, and,
 - a minimum of 0.9m from any other buildings on the site.

2

NUMBER OF HENS AND COOP SIZE

- Approved sites must keep a minimum of three hens and shall not exceed six hens per site. **Roosters are not permitted.** Hen Breed and numbers shall be indicated through the application process. Young hens (also called pullets) shall not be younger than 16 weeks old.
- A minimum of 0.37 square meters per hen is required for the coop, along with a minimum of 0.93 square meters per hen of for the run
- All coops must contain sufficient perch locations, have adequate ventilation, and be weather and predator proof.
- All hens must remain in the coop or an enclosed run unless directly supervised where they must then stay on the Licensed property.

3

NUISANCE CONDITIONS

- The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent negative impacts, including but not limited to: attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise.

4

STANDARD OF CARE

- Hen sites shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices, maintain hens in such a condition so as to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues. Hens require appropriate food, liquid (unfrozen) water, shelter, light, warmth, ventilation, veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, pecking, dust-bathing and roosting, in order to be comfortable and healthy.
- Animal Control must be notified immediately of any disease or welfare issues that arise that may affect the public and the steps taken to rectify the situation.
- In the winter months, runs are required to be wrapped. Runs can be wrapped with a hard material like corrugated plastic or a soft material like polyethylene film (poly wrap) or a tarp. Adequate ventilation in the run and coop area is important to reduce moisture and mitigate the conditions that contribute to frostbite. Pre-made coops and runs may need to be modified to ensure proper ventilation and insulation.

5

WASTE & DISPOSAL

- Manure must be removed, discarded, and/or properly composted to prevent nuisance orders.
- There is to be no on-site slaughter or euthanizing of hens within City limits. Removal methods include (but are not limited to) humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocation to a farm, or taking hens to a licensed abattoir. Deceased birds should be double-bagged and placed for garbage collection or taken to a veterinarian for disposal. All changes to flock size must be reported to Animal Control as a Licence requirement.

6

TRAINING & MENTOR

- The Licensee(s) must have completed an accepted urban hen keeping course. It is also recommended that for the first year each site have support and assistance from a recognized mentor. These conditions must be met, or reasonable steps towards meeting the requirement must be made prior to a permanent Urban Hen Keeping Licence being issued. The Licensee shall provide proof of completion of a training course recognized by Animal Control as comprehensive and specific to the Alberta climate. Licensees will be required to take a competency test before the end of their first year.

7

INSPECTIONS

- The Licensee(s) shall make themselves and the coops available for inspection on reasonable request from Animal Control Peace Officers.
- An initial inspection of the coop and site will be conducted prior to final site approval and the licence being granted by the City of Edmonton. Hens can be obtained after approval.

8

REGISTRATION

- The Licensee must comply with all Provincial regulations around the keeping of hens. The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number. The PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations in case of potential disease outbreak. The Province will maintain communication with site owners should any information or incidents occur that would require site owners to take action.
- Neighbour notification process will be completed and letters submitted back to the City as part of the application submission.

9

ENFORCEMENT

- Poultry keeping is enforced under Section 27 of the *Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw 13145*.
- Animal Control Peace Officers will respond to all complaints and initiate investigations when warranted. When enforcement or other animal husbandry issues arise, City administration will work with hen keepers, neighbours, and other external stakeholders to ensure they are addressed and resolved in a timely manner. Failing to comply with the terms and conditions of an Urban Hen Keeping Licence may result in a fine of \$100, or a licence being revoked. Keeping hens without a licence will result in a \$500 fine.
- Egg production is for self-consumption. No sale of eggs is permitted.
- All public complaints shall be directed through 311; this reporting approach is consistent with the City of Edmonton bylaw complaint process.

Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: Urban Hen Survey close Jul 11 - Aug 30

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

Sep 03, 2019 2:12:22 PM

Are you a resident of Blackfalds?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	317	96.3%
No	10	3.0%
No Responses	2	<1%
Total	329	100%

Do you own or rent your property?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Own	297	90.2%
Rent	30	9.1%
No Responses	2	<1%
Total	329	100%

Are you interested in the Urban Hen Program???

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	165	50.1%
No	162	49.2%
No Responses	2	<1%
Total	329	100%

How many hens should be allowed on a lot?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
4	93	28.2%
6	59	17.9%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

What is the maximum size of coop and hen yard?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
100 sq. ft.	29	8.8%
120 sq. ft.	56	17.0%
160 sq. ft.	67	20.3%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

How many total Urban Hen licenses should be issued per year?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
8	12	3.6%
10	16	4.8%
12	124	37.6%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

What should be the minimum size of lot required?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
4000 sq. ft.	126	38.2%
5000 sq. ft.	21	6.3%
No Responses	182	55.3%
Total	329	100%

What percentage of the neighbors within 150m radius should be required to approve the program on your lot?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
50%	108	32.8%
75%	27	8.2%
100%	17	5.1%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

Should this be a pilot program for a 2 year period?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes	114	34.6%
No	38	11.5%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

Should a license be revoked if there are any complaints regarding smell, well being of hens, predators becoming more prevalent due to the hens/sale of the eggs?

	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Immediately	24	7.2%
After a warning	128	38.9%
No Responses	177	53.7%
Total	329	100%

Comments? Let us know your thoughts on the Urban Hen Program.

167 Response(s)

Constant Contact Survey Results

Survey Name: Urban Hen Survey close Jul 11 - Aug 30

Response Status: Partial & Completed

Filter: None

Sep 03, 2019 2:12:22 PM

Comments? Let us know your thoughts on the Urban Hen Program. - Responses

Answer	Respondent
chickens are not pets	Anonymous
Do not wish for this programme to be implemented.	Anonymous
I don't think that this should be allowed here. Livestock needs to be kept on an acreage or farm. Thank you.	Anonymous
I previously had a neighbour in Blackfalds who had chickens. They were noisy. They were pets. It was ridiculous. They disappeared not long after I had the town look into it. I have some neighbours now who might inclined to set up with hens. They are nuisance neighbours as it is and dont want livestock in my area.	Anonymous
This is a program we have been looking forward to for years! Neighbour approval can be a tricky thing and can jeopardize the program. If looking for information of similar programs with neighbour approval look at beekeeping in St. Albert.	Anonymous
Opposed to the urban hen program.	Anonymous
If people want chickens let them buy rural properties, in town people dont look after thier dogs & cats as is	Anonymous
Absolutely not. It smells. No need for that in a small town	Anonymous
Too much noise in my area as it is.	Anonymous
They should remain on a farm or an acreage.	Anonymous
No chickens! My dog would go crazy every time she goes in the yard making my property useless.	Anonymous
Unfortunately, I don't think the survey is fair. I had to put no because there wasn't enough explanation on what the rules would be. I would be in favor if it was managed correctly and with strict bylaws the way Lacombe does. But because the survey is a yes or no, I had to put no. Very disappointed in the choice of survey.	Anonymous
I do not support urban chickens in Blackfalds.	Anonymous
There are enough people complaining about the noise from dogs, do we really need to add hens to the list.	Anonymous
I don't think approval from neighbors is necessary. I dont have a say in whether my neighbors are allowed to get dogs that bark constantly. I know people with hens and they are less of a nuisance than many normal pets. And they eat ticks and insects. Putting the hens in the coop at night will keep predators at bay.	Anonymous
Please dont allow this. Want hens move to the country.... noise and smell and people actually upkeeping will be huge issues. Bylaw isnt available 24/7 as it is to enforce the rules in town now.....	Anonymous

Honestly I think the potential for abuse of the rules is to great to make this a viable project within the town of Blackfalds. Our lots are too small and too close together. Even allowing 4 hens would create tremendous potential for noise and air pollution if the owners aren't meticulous about the care of their flock.	Anonymous
This would be wonderful for our town!	Anonymous
Not sure this is a good idea for this community when they cant even regulate there other bylaws like fences and speed limits	Anonymous
Don't want hens in town anywhere near me!!!!!! Please don't approve.	Anonymous
Being raised on a farm, I understand that hens are more work than people think. Neighbours have a hard enough time keeping their yards mowed and tidy as it is I cannot imagine adding chickens to the mix.	Anonymous
I don't think hens or other livestock animals should be allowed to be kept in urban areas. While I understand, hens are quieter than roosters, I would be concerned on the impact of my dogs. I own a hunting breed with a strong prey drive. My concern is that my dogs will bark more and try to escape my yard.	Anonymous
Follow up in regards to the warning given should be done within a week to ensure proper maintenance & that a difference is being made. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> An inspector should check out the property in question before allowing them to receive a UH license. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Certain rules should be stipulated regarding over-wintering the hens to ensure their well-being.	Anonymous
I am totally against this. The noise and the mess no thank you.	Anonymous
I think this is an excellent idea... in Red Deer I have many friends that have done this and found it rewarding ...making more of a connection to where our food comes from is vital especially in city and town environments where many children have not had the opportunity to see where their food comes from	Anonymous
If I wanted farm animals around me, I'd move out of town. Although I hear it has been successful in other urban areas, I have zero desire to own chickens in town, and dont want them in the next backyard.	Anonymous
From what I have heard, many of these animals die because people don't tend to them properly. Just like all the poor dogs and cats in this town you see mistreated.	Anonymous
NO NO NO. I would not want to live next door to stinky chickens! Neighbor once had dog and never picked up poop in their yard I can easily see people neglecting the maintenance of yard (ie "feces"removal). Chickens belong on the farm! Too many people get chickens for the novelty without the knowledge of avian health and upkeep	Anonymous
NOT interested in the coop revival ~· definitely don't want it living next door!	Anonymous
I'd suggest having a course that residents interested in the urban hen program must take before being allowed to get a permit.	Anonymous

To each their own. The smell sucks though	Anonymous
I think trying this for 2 years would be a great start. I have owned hens in the past and would love to be able to have some again in town. They are amazing animals and so fun to watch. You could always request applicants have previous experience with hens to ensure people are qualified and have knowledge on how to care for them.	Anonymous
I would also like to see educational courses offered before a license is provided.	Anonymous
Don't think it's a good idea.	Anonymous
I have nothing against the Urban Hen Program. I vote Yes. I'm not interested in raising any myself, but I'm not bothered if others do.	Anonymous
I've often said to friends and family that it would be a great way to supplement normal groceries and decrease the need for factory farming. Home grown eggs have much more health benefits as well. I love this town and this will make me love it and be even more proud of our community.	Anonymous
I think this can be a wonderful way to increase sustainability as a community. As well as give those interested a chance to reconnect to where our food is coming from. With the right guidelines this can be a beautiful success.	Anonymous
What an excellent program! A wonderful experience for young families to be able to raise their own food!	Anonymous
I think if someone wants to own hens, they should be allowed. I also dont think there should be a cap on how many licenses are given in a year	Anonymous
I think anyone who wants them should be allowed them. In yard chicken coops would be cleaner and quieter than most dogs.	Anonymous
I do not think it is a good idea.	Anonymous
Absolutely letâ€¦do it! Hens are not loud animals; certainly not louder than dogs! And they are actually very clean and helpful creatures!	Anonymous
One of the reasons I decided to reside in Blackfalds is due to the very great bylaws about being a great pet owner. Unfortunately the hen program sometimes gets out of hand and is a cause for disturbance in nice quiet neighbourhoods. I know they have their place on farms, and I love farm fresh eggs, but that my opinion on where they should stay.	Anonymous
Please DO NOT ALLOW chickens in Blackfalds.	Anonymous
I think people should be able to eat healthy and know where their food sources come from.	Anonymous
Growing up on a farm, I know firsthand the odor that comes with coops and I do not care to experience that while trying to enjoy our backyard. There are already enough issues with people who can't maintain their current yards or those who let their cats roam freely - Urban Hens are going to be a draw for domestic and wildlife alike.	Anonymous
I personally raise chickens, outside of the city on a farm. In town It will be nothing but a problem. People already get upset over a cat being out of its yard, imagine chickens on the loose. NOt to mention, poultry attracts insects, and predators. While this sounds exciting to people, many won't upkeep the cleanliness of their coop.	Anonymous

I strongly support this & would also urge the Blackfalds Town Council to consider an Urban Beekeeper Program similar to Lacombe's - that I would be first in line for as my son has already completed his Beekeeping Green Certificate through ELCHS	Anonymous
People cant look after their cats & dogs, if they Want hens they should buy rural property	Anonymous
I have many reservations about allowing hen houses in town. I would not want to be a neighbor to a hen house.	Anonymous
People are irresponsible with pets and likely will be with hens. I don't see the need to allow this, it will create more work for the town and benefit very few people.	Anonymous
We had chicken on an acreage that we rented and it helped our kids learn responsibility and gave them a chance to make money selling the eggs. We also enjoyed the fresh eggs	Anonymous
If I wanted to live on a farm, I would have bought one. I live in an urban place so I didn't have to deal with livestock and other farm animals. Do you not remember the chicken place where the protective services is at now. Granted it was an intensive operation, but there are smells and noise associated with a smaller operation. No!	Anonymous
If their not cleaned properly it won't be pleasant smell!	Anonymous
I really feel that hens belong in the country not in an urban area. I do not want to have to go out in my yard and have to have the smell from unkempt animals or to listen to them.	Anonymous
If you want chickens live in the country. If you don't live in the country than buy farm fresh eggs...	Anonymous
Having chickens would be amazing!	Anonymous
I am not in support of getting any type of livestock in an urban setting. There may be rules and bylaws set in place for hens, but with the record of bylaw enforcement not enforcing current bylaws how can we expect them to enforce more?	Anonymous
When adults can learn to properly care for their dogs and cats without allowing them to roam freely should the town consider allowing an urban hen option.	Anonymous
What are the rules gonna be?	Anonymous
I believe they will draw rodents	Anonymous
Even a few number of hens produce smells...seriously we r not on farms...if u wzn't this lifestuke live in approuate areas..n lets kot firget tyat tge numher allowed is never followed ...having tgses aninald around attract other animal& n roadants	Anonymous
We need better enforcement of bylaws. People already have hens illegally and even a goat. People do not care about bylaws unless they are enforced. I'm araid the hens would lead to problems with neighbors if not cared for properly.	Anonymous
Chickens do not belong in the city/town. They are noisy and smell. Besides that there is already people in town with chickens. Town people it's a free for all. That one the bylaw is passed it anyone and everything goes. There is already soooooo much complaining about noise,dogs, cats, and lawn neglect. This would be just another thing on the list.	Anonymous

I personally don't know where I stand with the program. I am torn, part of me doesn't feel it is my business. However, I don't know what sort of mess or noise this creates and I think that with the homes being so close together in Blackfalds I wouldn't want to hear chickens endlessly from neighbouring homes.	Anonymous
This would have to be well regulated. Unlike the snow removal regulations which are cited but rarely enforced, this can't be as casually monitored since there are living animals at risk. Regular inspections would have to be mandatory.	Anonymous
Hens should never be allowed to roam and should be in their enclosed area at all times. I do believe they should be able to see the eggs. Many buy eggs that aren't inspected. It's a buyers beware. Also, they should need to have an inspection at least once a year or more if needed. dead chicken needs to be disposed by a vet by law	Anonymous
I think it is a good idea and letâ individuals be more self sufficient especially in this economy. Chickens are also a natural form of pest control. People just need to make sure they keep the coops clean as to avoid the foul smell associated with chickens.	Anonymous
Bylaws must be in place and enforced	Anonymous
I am interested in having chickens.	Anonymous
This is a great idea! Would be great full for the eggs as our family goes through a doz. every couple days.	Anonymous
Interested to know how many people who are thinking of owning hens understand how much attention they require?	Anonymous
Although Iâ not personally interested in having hens, the concept is interesting. Iâ happy that our town is progressive enough to consider this and I have no objections to this idea.	Anonymous
I am against chickens coming into town. They are noisy and stink and can attract rodents. Chickens are for farms.	Anonymous
Strongly against. Chickens do not belong in town	Anonymous
This is a waste of the town's time and money to implement a program for such few people. Chickens require a lot of work. What happens if a kid gets sick from playing in the coop? What about mice coming in because chickens can attract them? Chickens do not belong in town.	Anonymous
If the town decides to allow Urban Chicken farms I will go out and buy a deep fryer!!!!	Anonymous
Chicken manure stinks and they can be very noisy. How would the town enforce proper care and cleanup of chicken pens and houses? They have no place in town.	Anonymous
I would not want hens next door	Anonymous
I don't think the neighbors of the people with hens will appreciate the noise or smell. There is no way to eliminate either of those problems.	Anonymous
My family and I live in an urban setting to GET AWAY from rural living: hens, which will also likely include roosters, will be noisy when we are needing quiet (ie: morning crowing), they will attract predators to our residential areas (putting children and domesticated pets at risk), and they emanate a stench with their excrement.	Anonymous
I don't want to be forced to live near farm animals.â They stink, they're noisy, and they'll attract predators to our community.	Anonymous

I'm not for it at all.	Anonymous
Do not want them in town	Anonymous
none	Anonymous
They are dirty, stink and noisy. Don't feel like waking up to the sound of roosters at 4am. Lots of land around Blackfalds to have them outside of town.	Anonymous
I think more than 12 licenses should be considered... Blackfalds isn't small. Could even go up to 30?	Anonymous
Chickens belong on a farm not in a town!	Anonymous
I think it is a great program that would allow residence to teach their children a little of farm life. □ As well as provide eggs for a household and a compost type resource as chickens can eat food scraps.	Anonymous
Hens are noisy dirty, and people really do not take proper care of them. They should be raised on farms not in town.	Anonymous
They are noisy, dirty, and if not taken care of they can catch disease, and most people think they are cute when they are little and lose interest as they get older. Chickens were meant to be raised on a farm. I don't see why they are set in town.	Anonymous
All people are asking by having urban hens is unwanted animal guests	Anonymous
I grew up on a farm and wet chickens smell, not to mention their droppings and their pen bedding. Chickens molt once a year. I wouldn't want feathers blowing into my yard. What happens when the owners no longer want them, and the fad gets old. Feral chickens come to mind, as they can't expect that there will be someone to buy them.	Anonymous
Urban Hygiene is a very real concern, with feral cats unleashed dogs the quality of our urban environment is degraded. This is a town not a farm, the two should never be confused. Chickens are not just an individual home owners concern, they are a neighbour hood concern. Manure, feathers and wet bedding does not make a clean town.	Anonymous
This small town does not need this	Anonymous
if revoking a license after a warning give them so many days to clean it up or fix the problem. I can remember my dad raising pigeons for the meat. People pay good money for squawb and it is not hard to keep the cage clean if built right and to keep predators away either if done right. He did this in town and on the farm with no complaints	Anonymous
I love this idea!! I think that we should be allowed to have non laying in with the laying chickens, to a max of 50% of the coop.	Anonymous
Not interested in urban hens as there are plenty of local options for people to get chicken and eggs. I grew up on a farm and personally don't want to smell/hear chickens when we're in our backyard or early in the morning. There are more than enough irresponsible pet owners in town without adding chickens to the list.	Anonymous
There's already a big enough problem with loose dogs. I don't think adding loud, smelly birds is going to help. If this is to go through, I would like to see strict policies/procedures and/or courses on how to properly care for and confine the chickens.	Anonymous

With this program there will need to be some solid rules/by-laws in place to make it favorable for all town of Blackfalds residence. Unfortunately there is little to no enforcement to the by-laws already in town. I don't see adding more beneficial to anyone.	Anonymous
Don't let there be chickens in town	Anonymous
Poop will stink if left. Which it will be	Anonymous
Too much time and effort has been spent on this	Anonymous
I think this is meant to be only in the country. I would not be happy if I had that scent in or around my house.	Anonymous
I don't support backyard chickens. Too much opportunity for noise and smell. They can be done well but if not it is unpleasant for neighbors.	Anonymous
Non domesticated animals should be kept to rural areas.	Anonymous
I do not want a bunch of stinky chickens and hens near my house or the noise associated with them. If you want chickens live in the country.	Anonymous
If people want hens, let them purchase in the rural. People loose cats & dogs running around and shitting on other peoples property is enough	Anonymous
I'm very pleased you are considering this program, many communities have had great success with urban hens.	Anonymous
Chickens smell, chickens belong on a farm or acreage! Not a fan of this idea AT ALL!	Anonymous
Please DO NOT bring farm animals into town.	Anonymous
Move to country. Leave our town clean and quiet	Anonymous
Please no. I really don't want to hear chickens and roosters in the middle of the day and night. Dogs and trains and loud mufflers are enough. Please don't pass a bylaw allowing back yard chickens!!	Anonymous
I do not want our town to smell like a barn yard. A lot of people don't take care of the pets they are allowed to have, we do not need to add to the problems.	Anonymous
No license fees No limits on amount of people allowed to keep them No permission from neighbors should be required	Anonymous
I think the noise and the smell would be bothersome. Not to mention that my dogs would go crazy if there were hens/chickens on the other side of the fence. That would also contribute to the noise.	Anonymous
Concerned about noise (unlike dogs that are barking or cats that are meowing, a homeowner cannot move a hen into their home when it is being noisy or disruptive). Also concerned about smell. I think the program would cause a lot of disputes and tension among neighbours	Anonymous
Town has enough dogs barking through out the neighbourhoods. Hens really? This can not and will not be a good thing	Anonymous
Although I don't want to participate, I'm interested in the idea. If there are people who want to follow all of the rules in order to have hens, then I think they should be allowed to. I would want to be sure that the rules and bylaws are strict enough, that if there are any issues, they will be dealt with quickly and to the full extent.	Anonymous
I do not support having hens in town.	Anonymous

A part of the licensing should include training or a course on how to care for the hens as most urban dwellers do not know how and these animals may suffer	Anonymous
More than 12 licenses should be allowed	Anonymous
Get with the times. Urban hens are in major cities as well as smaller ones like red deer and Lacombe. Your not reinventing the wheel here, your allowing people to produce their own food.	Anonymous
The smell nd noise are not meant to be in town.	Anonymous
Anyone seeking a permit or license to have urban hens should first be required to demonstrate they have the knowledge and skills to raise hens. There is much more to it than just thinking "how nice it would be to have ones' own birds"	Anonymous
I don't mind people having hens in their yard...I am afraid of the stink when people don't clean them...they won't pick up their dog poop...so I am afraid after the novelty wears off they will stop cleaning the coops as well	Anonymous
I think this is a fabulous idea, fresh food, learning experience, and it us working well in other communities. I cannot imagine that a chicken is louder than the neighborhood dogs or the seasonal frogs and geese. Everyone should be encouraged to grow what they can at home!	Anonymous
Chickens & hens are noisy, stinky and belong on rural properties, not in suburban/urban areas. I don't want to be forced to live beside neighbours with "farm animals". I don't live on a farm.□ I definitely would file complaints with the town council, RCMP and any other body/group that I could to get rid of hens in my immediate neighbourhood.	Anonymous
I meant to tick the now box. I don't think we have the square footage for any hens. The noise and the smell would be dreadful for the neighbors. I am totally against it.	Anonymous
Mobile coops should be used, not permanent ones. Proper cleaning of coops should be monitored to reduce any chance of odours	Anonymous
Don't do it	Anonymous
I am 100% against this, this will only drive down resale, the smell of chickens is gross and I donâsupport this at all.	Anonymous
Chicken coops create a mess, stink, and unnecessary noise. Lots are not big enough in town for farm animals.	Anonymous
Donâwant a hen place next door to me	Anonymous
I do not believe hens should be allowed in urban areas. I previously lived in a rural subdivision that allowed hens. The coops were not kept clean and the smell in the summer was too strong to enjoy being outside near the house.They are farm animals not urban .	Anonymous
They belong on a farm	Anonymous
There should be no minimum on the amount of licenses issued each year. If people are only allowed a small amount of hens then they shouldn't smell so the only thing that should revoke a license is the mistreatment of the birds.	Anonymous
Other places already have this in place and it's working well .	Anonymous
These questions are very leading and restrictive. Open forums should be held to see what hen owners would agree to facilitating with regards to rules and regulations.	Anonymous

The smell and sound we are way too close to one another we do not have big enough lots to support farm animals	Anonymous
I think chickens are smelly animals. Not only do they smell but they will bring down the resale price of your home and your neighbors. Chickens do not belong in town.	Anonymous
i just want this to pass so the people who whine about not wanting it on facebook don't get their way lol	Anonymous
son had chickens in Red Deer and no problems arose from that.☐ have no problem with people having chickens in town just no roosters.	Anonymous
This is a great idea! Great organic food source for those willing to work for it...natural bug control...FAR easier to contain and quiet than a cat or a dog.	Anonymous
I think itâs very worth while program to consider	Anonymous
If you would like to raise farm animals, please move to a rural area.	Anonymous
I am all for others to use the program !!	Anonymous
Just request the pen kept off neighboring fence by a couple feet. I can see a lot of already trained and settled dogs getting fence aggression, leading to unnecessary noise.	Anonymous
In this economy I think families should be allowed to explore any and every avenue to save money when feeding their families healthy food. As long as itâs not disturbing anyone itâs great. Also its a great educational tool and provides quality family time. My grandkids love collecting eggs and learning about chicken life.	Anonymous
I think it is a neat idea, it needs a close eye on it though. Mostly concerned with unkempt coops, not good for the chickens or neighbours.	Anonymous
This is a terrible idea. I don't want to hear or smell anyone's chickens. Yes I have kept chickens before, they should not be in a city setting. With the amount of cats at large in this community it will be a disaster. Before you even think of putting money into a pilot project look at other communities failed attempts. Waste of our money.	Anonymous
Chickens need to stay on farms.	Anonymous
This is awesome!	Anonymous
No thank you.☐ Neighbours can't even cut their grass, replace shingles, or cut down dead black knot infested trees.	Anonymous
I would be concerned about smell, & hope a bylaw would properly address that. Also of concern would be what hen owners do with them over winter and what precautions would be required to ensure rodents didnât move into the coops and subsequently encouraged into the neighbourhood during the cold months.	Anonymous
Against Urban Hen Program, the yards are too small, the noise and smell is not very welcoming. If you look at most yards in Blackfalds they are over run by uncut grass and the clover and other weeds. If residents can keep on their yards now, they certainly won't be able to keep up the mess the chickens will make.	Anonymous
please do not allow chickens in town....	Anonymous
I may rent but have lived here for 14 years. If I wanted to wake up to barnyard noises at 5am like I did as a kid, Iâd live on a farm. Also, the smell is hideous. Please donât allow this	Anonymous

Chickens are a stinky animal. Taste great but they smell. Also with all the stray cats around we will have to listen to people whine about the potential massacre of their chickens. I do not support the urban hen project	Anonymous
There are plenty of rural properties for people who want hens.	Anonymous
I grew up on a mixed farm (18 years) so I know from personal experience that Chickens have, by far, the most pungent of manures. The last thing I want is to smell that inside city limits.	Anonymous
Possibly noisy, and very likely smelly. I don't think it's necessary in residential areas. I hope if it does get approved, that they would have to get approval from neighbors first.	Anonymous
I don't believe we should have hens in town.	Anonymous
There should not be a limit on the amount of licenses issued. If people are willing to pay for a license to have chickens, they are more likely to be respectful of neighbors and what not. <input type="checkbox"/> Red deer and Lacombe have both been successful for chickens and bees. Blackfalds should be leading like these two cities instead of following many years later.	Anonymous
I'm looking to move to town from nearby a nearby rural location. Being able to bring chickens to town is a major deciding factor.	Anonymous
Not in town	Anonymous
The town had the common sense to ban chickens in their urban area and should do the me with hens.	Anonymous