

URBAN CHICKENS - BACKGROUND

Nationally and regionally, interest in raising backyard chickens is growing.

Trend is to have as pets and for egg production.

In Iowa, cities like Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Iowa City, Dubuque, and Ames allow urban chickens.

In September, Council asked staff to prepare an ordinance for consideration.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DRAFT ORDINANCE

- Up to six hens
- Only in residentially zoned areas
- Permit and fee will be required
- Applicant must successfully complete approved class & show documentation
- Must be a single-family dwelling, occupied by the applicant (owner permission required if rental/non-owner)
- Land for permit shall be free of liens/judgments

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DRAFT ORDINANCE

- Chickens not allowed in the front yard
- Shall be kept in an enclosure or fenced
- During non-daylight hours, chickens must be secured within henhouse or chicken tractor
- Henhouse must be minimum of 4 sq. ft. per bird
- Henhouse/tractors shall be 10+ feet from property line and 25+ feet from any principal structure



THE CREATIVE WORLD OF BACKYARD CHICKEN COOPS



(Chicken Tractor)



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DRAFT ORDINANCE

- Enforcement would be “by complaint” and follow nuisance abatement protocol.**
- Permitting Officer (designated by City Administrator).**
- If permit is denied/revoked/suspended, applicant may submit appeal to Council w/in 10 days.**

URBAN CHICKEN ORDINANCE COMPARISON				
	Dubuque	Cedar Rapids	Rock Island	Davenport (Proposed)
Permit Required?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fee	None	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Maximum Hens Allowed	No limit	6	6	6
Setbacks	Accessory building setbacks apply, typically 5'; must be in rear yard.	Must be in rear yard; 10' setback from property lines, at least 25' from any principal structure	Must be in rear yard; 10' setback from property lines, at least 25' from any principal structure	Must be in rear yard; 10' setback from property lines, at least 25' from any principal structure
Misc.	Performance standards apply	Performance standards apply; applicant must take class	Performance standards apply	Performance standards apply
Approx. number of households with chickens currently	Unknown	80-100	No response	
Comments	Relies on public education and enforcement of nuisance regulations. Complaints are infrequent but they do occur.	Biggest challenge is the administration/ and tracking annual permits. Few complaints from neighbors.	No response	

ORDINANCE APPROVAL PROCESS

- Adoption requires three readings**
- If start in December, could be adopted in January**
- Staff would prepare guidelines/steps for applicants**
- Coordinate with volunteer advocates**
- Applicants could have spring chickens**

