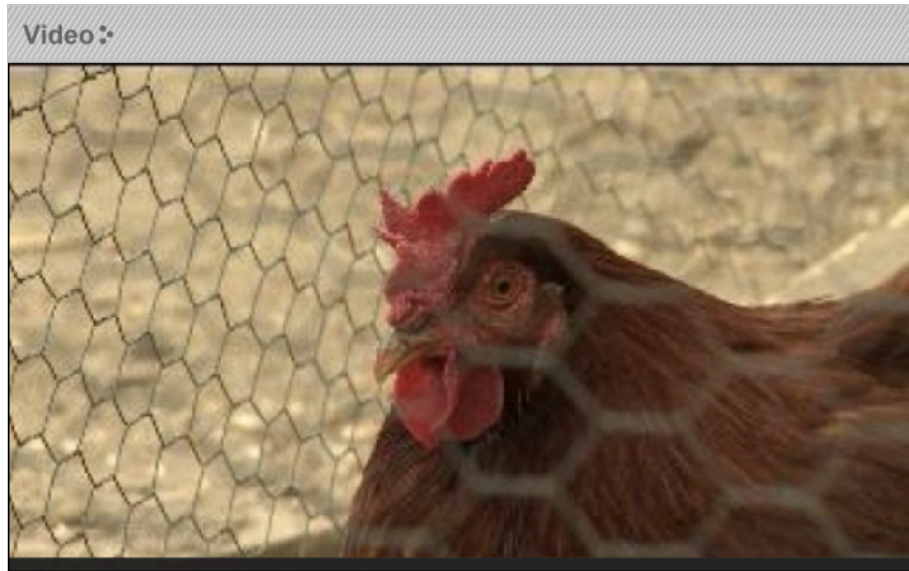


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### Denver considers allowing backyard chickens, ducks and goats

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Denver City Council considers backyard chickens, ducks, and goats  
Tammy Vigil reports. KDVR 9pm, April 6, 2011  
(2:48)

Tammy Vigil  
Reporter  
9:52 p.m. MDT, April 6, 2011

DENVER -- It's a potential city ordinance that has some people's goat.  
The city of Denver is considering a law to make it easier for residents to keep chickens, ducks, and goats in their backyards.  
It's an issue not everyone is happy about.

James Bertini's backyard looks like a misplaced farm, and his pets would have made 'Old MacDonald' proud.

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"We think it's great for people to be able to have chickens in their backyard," says Bertini, a retired attorney-turned-urban chicken farmer.

He owns five chickens and two geese.

Bertini supports a proposed ordinance to allow eight chickens or ducks and two goats on every Denver lot without having to go through what he says is a difficult permit process.

"It costs \$150 for the first year and each year the renewal fee is \$70. In order to get it, one must go through two city agencies, post signs in his or her front yard. In all, it takes several months or longer," he says.

"It could change the ambience of a neighborhood," says Cory-Merrill resident George Mayl.

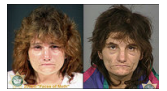
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Mayl says the current rules exist for a reason.

"Chicken and goats, they are farm animals...I live in an urban area. I don't live in a farm area," he says.

Mayl worries the new ordinance removes a process to get neighborhood input.

"There would be no notification. Neighbors would have no say, and anytime you lose your voice that's a very bad thing," says Mayl.

He also says the proposal would allow a chicken coop ten feet from a neighbor's home.

"That's a little too close. Fifteen to 20 feet would be a lot better. Who wants to have that odor and noise?" questions Mayl.

But Bertini says chicken noise is limited and is nothing compared to a dog's bark. He says the same thing goes for the odor.

"People right now are allowed have other animals that are more noisy, more smelly than chickens and they don't have a process to disapprove of those," says Bertini. "We're hopeful this becomes law." That is, without provoking a fight in the hen house.

Mayl also says the ordinance would require each chicken have a living space of one-square foot. He says that is inhumane and that the minimum should be at least four-square feet per chicken.

Supporters say the proposal does not cover roosters, which can be loud.

Denver City Council will debate the issue April 18.

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Sundari\_Kraft at 7:25 PM April 09, 2011

Oh, BA... you are priceless. I wish I could put your essence in a bottle and take it with me wherever I go. I often try to explain that opposition to the Food Producing Animals ordinance is frequently steeped in ignorance, fear, and sometimes racism. But you make the point far better than I ever could! Please, please, please -- come to the public hearing before City Council (Monday, May 16th, 6pm, City & County Building) and share your thoughts with City Council about why we shouldn't allow backyard chickens and goats because of the damn Mexicans. Please!

Sundari\_Kraft at 3:43 PM April 08, 2011

Oh, and Angel -- you're welcome to buy me a farm anytime you'd like. In the meantime, I live in Denver, and I'm keeping my backyard chickens and goats. You can have three 150 pound dogs in your backyard if you want to without any sort of permit whatsoever -- dogs that could easily bite me and give me rabies, dogs that could bark all night without stopping. Honestly, which situation really poses the greatest threat to neighborhood health, safety, and welfare? I'm not saying that we should disallow dogs, but take an honest look at the risks involved with what we already allow in our cities without even thinking about it.

Sundari\_Kraft at 3:39 PM April 08, 2011

@sweet\_p -- Interesting... your claims about an "enforcement nightmare" don't match up with the experiences of animal enforcement officials in other cities that allow chickens/goats as a use by right. As part of the research that went into creating Denver's proposed new ordinance, the Director of Animal Care and Control actually called his counterparts in other cities, and they reported no increased burden in enforcement after allowing Food Producing Animals. In addition, a public policy professor from De Paul University conducted a study of 23 cities across the country that all backyard chickens. You can read the study for yourself, but the last question asked city officials to rate the chicken ordinance overall as being either "positive," "neutral," or "negative" for the city. Every single city answered either "positive" or "neutral." Here's the study: <http://bit.ly/gN1AkW>



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