

Dear Honored Leaders of Libertyville,

Chickens have been animal companions of humans for thousands of years. When kept in a residential environment, they are entertaining pets that provide benefits to their caretakers: outstanding pest control (eating ticks, slugs, mosquitoes and small rodents); and eggs that are more nutritious and more humanely raised than those you can buy sold at the supermarket.

Keeping backyard hens is more than just a trend--they are beneficial to their families and communities.

Backyard chickens are beneficial to their community because they:

1. Offer fresh, locally sourced eggs (and can be organic and non-GMO).
2. Help to provide food security for lower-income families.
3. Produce healthier eggs compared to store-bought eggs.
4. Provide gardeners with high-quality fertilizer.
5. Help control insects, small rodents and other pests.
6. Provide natural disposal method for weeds and kitchen scraps—keeping those from the landfill.
7. Are seen as therapeutic for children on the autism spectrum by getting the kids involved in feeding and caring for the chickens.
8. Provide a great way for kids (and adults) to learn about nature, agriculture, and the responsibility of caring for animals.

Backyard chickens will generally get far more humane care than those raised in crowded “factory farms.” Even those rated as “Pasture

Raised” and “Cage Free” cannot compete with the quality of life a backyard hen will receive. Industrial production of eggs has created issues such as pollution from manure, antibiotic resistance and higher risk of a more dangerous strain of bird flu. Keeping a few chickens at home is one way we can each do our part to address these problems.

Some local communities that allow backyard hens are Antioch, Deer Park, Fox Lake, Grayslake, Gurnee, Highland Park, Highwood, Lake Barrington, Lake Bluff, North Barrington, Volo and Wadsworth.

Addressing some common concerns about backyard hens:

1. They're noisy. **Hens will peep and cluck softly throughout the day and are silent all night. They are quieter than the average dog.
2. They smell. **A small flock(4-5 chickens) will create about as much waste as an average dog. If the same waste cleanup requirements applied to dogs are applied to chickens, there will not be a smell.
3. They attract predators. **Similar to small dogs and cats, predators may be attracted to chickens. But this can easily be remedied by the chicken owner. Just like with small dog and cat owners, steps can be easily taken to mitigate the danger of local predators to chickens.
4. You need a rooster for hens to lay eggs. **This is not true. Hens will lay edible eggs regardless of a rooster being present.

We are asking for a change in the ordinances against owning backyard chickens in the city of Libertyville, and adopting a new ordinance that allows citizens in residential zoned and unincorporated areas to own a small backyard flock.

Thank you,