

Dear Mayor Lehman and Members of Council,

I am writing to you in support of further discussion regarding allowing backyard hens in the City of Barrie.

I think that it's important for Council to explore ideas brought before them by residents and to make good decisions for the community-at-large based on fact and experience, not misconceptions or personal opinion. By reopening the issue, you have done just that.

Allowing backyard hens would bring many benefits to our City. They are an excellent source of local food, providing eggs with better nutrition than what we purchase at the store. They are wonderful pets and have personalities just like dogs and cats. They eat kitchen scraps and would reduce the amount of garbage going to landfill. Their waste is a highly desirable compost for any gardener. They teach children about the value of food and where it comes from. They are sustainable. In a rapidly urbanizing community, these are benefits that I believe we should be welcoming.

There are also some challenges that come with backyard hens such as noise, wandering and waste management, but these challenges are not that different from challenges that come with keeping any animal. If you've ever stepped in dog waste, been jumped on by a dog off-leash or heard barking in the middle of the night, you will know what I mean by this. These are challenges I experience in my own neighbourhood on a regular basis, but as a community member, I am patient with my neighbours and respectful of their decision to keep pets.

As representatives of our City, you have much to consider, but I trust that you will consider the issue fairly and with open minds. I look forward to following along as the discussion surrounding backyard hens unfolds.

Sincerely,

Kate Lillie

"The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today".  
- *Franklin D. Roosevelt*