

Sponsor(s):
Jami Scholl
Dave Rollo

Passed 10-0-0

RESOLUTION 2025-01

TO ADOPT A SCALABLE POULTRY FLOCK-SIZE MODEL

Chicken flocks are a currently allowed use within the City of Bloomington. This resolution allows for the expansion of the existing allowable use to reflect different lot sizes. Household Chicken flocks support UN Sustainability Goals: SDG 2 Zero Hunger, SDG 3 Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG Responsible Consumption and Production by reducing food waste, and SDG 13 Climate Action by cutting food miles and supporting circular systems for food and nutrient cycles.

- WHEREAS, The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by 193 countries including the United States, call for local action to support Zero Hunger (SDG 2), Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12), and Climate Action (SDG 13); and
- WHEREAS, household flocks of hens directly contribute to local food sovereignty, improved household nutrition, and reduced dependency on global supply chains; and
- WHEREAS, eggs from backyard flocks provide an affordable source of protein while composted manure improves local soil health, supporting circular food systems and reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers; and
- WHEREAS, the current code limits households to a fixed flock size (5 hens) without recognition of parcel size, zoning context, or household demand, thus restricting full participation in household-level food production; and
- WHEREAS, expanding urban chicken ordinances to allow scalable flocks based on lot size or zoning density is consistent with peer cities such as Madison, WI; Asheville, NC; and Portland, OR; and

WHEREAS, Bloomington seeks to strengthen neighborhood resilience and equitable access to food-producing infrastructure in all zoning categories, including mobile home parks, low-income areas, and high-renter-density zones.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

SECTION 1. The Commission recommends that the Bloomington Municipal Code Title 20 (Unified Development Ordinance) and Animal Ordinance be amended to allow scalable backyard chicken flocks. The flock size should be proportional to lot area, with the following draft standard for consideration:

Lot Size	Chicken Flock Limit
≤ 5,000 sqft	up to 5 hens
5,001–10,000 sqft	up to 8 hens
10,001–20,000 sqft	up to 12 hens
> 20,000 sqft (or agriculturally-zoned lots)	up to 20 hens, or as approved through site plan

SECTION 2. The Commission further recommends allowance for flocks in mobile home parks and agri-villages.

SECTION 3. The Commission calls on the City to align urban livestock and poultry rules with food resilience and sustainability goals set forth in the Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan, the Peak Oil Task Force Report, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2, 3, 11, 12, and 13).

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this 12th day of August, 2025.

The views expressed here are solely those of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, as approved in their public meetings, and do not necessarily reflect the views, policies, or positions of the City of Bloomington. Only the Office of the Mayor has the authority to issue policy statements on behalf of the Executive Branch of the City of Bloomington.



JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability