REPORT TO COUNCIL
City of Sacramento

3

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
www.CityofSacramento.org

STAFF REPORT
February 15, 2011

Honorable Members of the
Law and Legislation Committee

Title: Report Back: Egg-laying Chickens in the City of Sacramento

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Discussion and policy direction on drafting an ordinance to allow egg-laying chickens in the City of Sacramento.

Contact: Penny Cistaro, Animal Care Services Manager, 808-7433

Presenter: Penny Cistaro, Animal Care Services Manager, 808-7433

Department: General Services

Organization No: 13001121

Description/Analysis

Issue: On October 5, 2010, the Law and Legislation Committee requested staff provide additional information on the health, zoning, and enforcement costs and requirements for discussion and policy direction for an ordinance allowing egg-laying chickens in the City.

Policy Considerations: The primary policy consideration for the Law and Legislation Committee is whether to direct staff to draft an ordinance that would authorize chicken keeping within the city limits. Should the Law and Legislation Committee wish to consider allowing chicken keeping in city limits, key elements of the potential ordinance would include, but not be limited to: zoning and enforcement regulation and requirements.

Committee/Commission Action: On October 5, 2010, the discussion of egg-laying chickens in the City went before the Law and Legislation Committee. The Law and Legislation Committee requested that staff return with more information to determine policy direction.

On November 16, 2010, the Law & Legislation Committee heard a Report Back on this item; however, no action was taken at that time.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Because this report concerns general policy and procedure making, CEQA does not apply per Section 15378(b)(3), which states that continuing administrative or maintenance activities, which are not conducted in conjunction with a project subject to CEQA review, are not considered to be "projects" and are therefore exempt from CEQA.

Sustainability Considerations: None

Rationale for Recommendation: There is no staff recommendation. This report is for the Committee's information and to provide staff with policy direction.

Financial Considerations: No significant change is anticipated if such an ordinance is enacted.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services are being purchased as a result of this report.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Penny Cistaro
Animal Care Services Manager

Approved by: _____
Reina J. Schwartz
Director, Department of General Services

Recommendation Approved:

_____
Gus Vina
Interim City Manager

Table of Contents:

Report Pg 1

Attachments:

1 Background Pg 3

Attachment 1

Background Information

On October 5, 2010, the Law and Legislation Committee requested staff provide additional information on the health, zoning, and enforcement costs and requirements for discussion and policy direction for an ordinance allowing egg-laying chickens in the City. Staff previously presented the issue of allowing egg-laying chickens to the Animal Care Services Advisory Committee (ACSAC) who, while recognizing the value of egg-laying chickens, expressed concern regarding the enforcement of a new ordinance.

Health

Staff has invited the County of Sacramento Public Health Official, Dr. Glennah Trochet, to provide expert testimony on the health topics during the Law and Legislation Committee's February 15th, 2011 meeting.

Zoning Requirements

Due to the variation in lot sizes within the City, staff recommends allowing a maximum of three chickens. Chickens must not be within thirty feet of any neighboring residence.

Furthermore, staff requests policy direction from the Law and Legislation Committee on the following additional elements of a potential ordinance:

- Prohibiting roosters
- Prohibiting slaughtering any chickens
- Enforcement will be complaint driven.
- Requiring proper food storage to deter rodents
- Requiring a coop that is adequate in size for the number of chickens
- Requiring license fees to be paid on an annual basis similar to the current dog and cat license, and requiring the licensee to adhere to the regulations pertaining to the keeping of chickens.

Estimated Current and Future Costs

Implementation Cost

Staff has expended approximately 40 hours on the research and preparation of a Staff Report for the Law & Legislation Committee to consider implementing an ordinance. Staff estimates this cost to be in the range of $4,000.00.

Staff estimates that the cost to develop and implement a permitting process to be in the range of $1,000.00.

Administrative Cost

A permit to have egg laying hens would be incorporated into the current pet licensing program. The annual administrative cost for the program would be the printed materials outlining the rules and regulations pertaining to owning egg laying hens, the permit and staff time to process the permit. Staff estimates that to be approximately $1,500.00.

Enforcement Cost

Staff estimates that the current annual cost for responding to calls related to chickens is about $30,250 based on 550 calls estimated at approximately one hour each at $55.00 per hour. Staff estimates that costs will likely remain in a similar range if an ordinance allowing urban chickens is enacted.

In discussions with other jurisdictions they reported that they have not seen an increase in calls or problems associated with residents owning egg-laying hens.

Potential Revenue

Estimating 300 egg-laying hen licenses are sold at $15 per license per year the revenue collected would be $4,500.