
FW: Keep backyard chickens (bylaw 4710)

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Date Sat 3/28/2026 6:14 PM
To legislativeservices <legislativeservices@cverd.bc.ca>

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Sent: Friday, March 27, 2026 10:12 PM
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Subject: Keep backyard chickens (bylaw 4710)

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To the CVRD Board of Directors and Electoral Area A Representatives,

I am writing as a concerned resident and family member of property owners in the Malahat area regarding the proposed Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw No. 4710.

This bylaw, as currently drafted, raises serious concerns about overreach into the reasonable use of private rural property and the growing burden placed on residents already struggling with affordability in British Columbia.

In particular, I would like to highlight the following issues:

Restrictions on Backyard Hens

Limiting the number of chickens on rural acreage properties—especially those over 2 acres—directly impacts residents' ability to support themselves with small-scale food production. In a time when food costs are rising dramatically, restricting modest self-sufficiency measures is both unnecessary and harmful.

Regulation of Temporary and Auxiliary Living Arrangements

The increasing restrictions on RVs, trailers, and alternative housing arrangements fail to reflect the current housing reality. Many families rely on these solutions to manage mortgage costs, support extended family, or provide rental income in an unaffordable housing market.

Restrictions on Storage (Sea Cans / Containers)

For rural properties, the use of shipping containers is often practical and necessary. Over-regulating their placement or visibility imposes aesthetic standards that may not reflect rural priorities or realities.

Escalating Financial Penalties

The introduction of fines up to \$50,000 per offence, with daily accumulation, is deeply concerning. Such penalties are disproportionate and could devastate ordinary families over relatively minor infractions.

Affordability and Livelihood Impacts

British Columbia is already one of the least affordable places to live in Canada. Policies that restrict residents from:

producing food

creating small income streams

utilizing their own land flexibly

only further erode the ability of families to remain in their communities.

Broader Concern

There is a growing perception that local governments are moving toward increasingly restrictive control over private land use, without sufficient regard for the realities faced by rural residents.

For many, this raises fundamental concerns about:

property rights

personal autonomy

and the ability to sustain a reasonable standard of living

Residents should not feel that they are losing the ability to responsibly manage and use their own property.

Request for Action

I respectfully request that the CVRD:

Reconsider and revise the proposed limits on backyard hens for larger rural properties

Allow greater flexibility for temporary and alternative housing solutions

Reduce or eliminate excessive financial penalties

Reassess regulations on storage containers to better reflect rural needs

Engage in meaningful consultation with affected residents before adopting this bylaw

Next Steps

If these concerns are not meaningfully addressed, many residents are prepared to:

bring these issues to broader public attention

engage with media and public forums

and continue advocating for fair and reasonable land use policies

This bylaw, in its current form, risks making it increasingly difficult for ordinary families to live, work, and remain in this region, which is the opposite of what we should be aiming for, though increasingly appears to be the intent. How can we think differently? How does this align with claims of "greening" and "sustainability-izing"?

Quite simply, It does not.

I urge you to take these concerns to heart, and to take them seriously and ensure that policy decisions reflect the realities and needs of the communities you represent.

Carley Smith