

The Keeping of Animals

In the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Planning and Development Department
March 30, 2021

Keeping of Animals

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With the recent adoption of a pilot program for the keeping of hens, it's important to clarify where all variety of animals are currently allowed within the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB). The [Land Use Bylaw No. 99/059](#) (LUB) contains these requirements. In short, no livestock, fowl, or fur-bearing animals, other than domestic pets, shall be permitted in any residential districts (Section 76.7 of the LUB), but certain exceptions to this rule exist, thus providing opportunities to keep animals subject to specific requirements. Those opportunities are as follows:

- 1) **Opportunity #1:** Section 76.7 states that Sapræe Creek, Conklin, Janvier, and Anzac are allowed to have horses, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas and other similar animals **if kept as pets and/or for personal enjoyment**. Horses have some restrictions (maximum number and property size). Pets must be licensed by the Municipality through Bylaw Services.
- 2) **Opportunity #2:** Obtain a development permit for the "Intensive Agriculture" or "Extensive Agriculture" land use. Both Intensive and Extensive Agriculture allow a variety of animals to be kept, but Extensive Agriculture is not available in any residential districts so will not be the focus of this opportunity.

Intensive Agriculture, on the other hand, allows animals to be kept in certain residential areas in accordance with Section 91A of the LUB (which lists the types and number of animals allowed). The LUB also requires this land use to occur on properties of sufficient size (4.08 to 32.38 hectares or approximately 10 to 80 acres). Five (5) land use districts allow for Intensive Agriculture; however, only four (4) land use districts permit animals as part of it (denoted in bold below):

- a. Small Holdings (animals other than domestic pets are prohibited in accordance with Section 76.7 of the LUB)
- b. Country Residential**
- c. Suburban Estate Residential (only east of Spruce Valley Drive)**
- d. Urban Expansion**
- e. Rural District**

The LUB's Section 76.8 makes a unique exception for Janvier and Conklin, where Intensive Agriculture may be allowed on residential properties at the Discretion of the Development Authority. As residential properties in Janvier and Conklin are designated Hamlet Residential, those properties may apply for Intensive Agriculture development permits to keep animals, despite Intensive Agriculture not being a use listed in the district.

- 3) **Opportunity #3:** Obtain one (1) of fifty (50) licenses to keep up to four (4) hens under the [Bylaw No. 21/006 to Regulate the Keeping of Hens](#), which is a pilot program in effect for the next two (2) years. This program amended the LUB and introduced a new section (76.11) that allows the keeping of hens throughout the municipality despite Section 76.7 (including within the flood hazard area).

Summary of How and Where Animals are Permitted to be Kept in the Municipality

The opportunities to keep animals throughout the RMWB are summarized in the table below. This information is as of March 30, 2021, and is based on the Land Use Bylaw 99/059 currently in effect and the land use districts currently available in each community.

Community	Opportunities to Keep Animals		
	Allowed without a Development Permit	Allowed via Development Permit	Allowed via Hen Bylaw
Urban Service Area	Not available through Section 76.7.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Urban Expansion .	Obtain a license to keep up to 4 hens, subject to the Bylaw to Regulate the Keeping of Hens .
Fort Fitzgerald	Not available through Section 76.7.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Rural District .	
Fort Chipewyan	Not available through Section 76.7.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Country Residential or Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Urban Expansion .	
Fort McKay	Not available through Section 76.7.	Not available as no appropriate land use districts exist.	
Draper	Not available through Section 76.7.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Country Residential .	
Saprae Creek Estates	Horses, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas and other similar animals if kept as pets . Up to 3 horses may be kept if fully fenced, and on properties greater than .809 ha .	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Suburban Estate Residential located east of Spruce Valley Drive .	

Community	Opportunities to Keep Animals		
	Allowed without a Development Permit	Allowed via Development Permit	Allowed via Hen Bylaw
Gregoire Lake Estates	Not available through Section 76.7.	Not available. Properties are currently designated Country Residential but are too small.	Obtain a license to keep up to 4 hens, subject to the Bylaw to Regulate the Keeping of Hens.
Anzac	Horses, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas and other similar animals if kept as pets . Up to 3 horses may be kept if fully fenced, and on properties greater than .809 ha.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Urban Expansion.	
Janvier	Horses, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas and other similar animals if kept as pets . Up to 3 horses may be kept if fully fenced, and on properties greater than .809 ha.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Hamlet Residential or Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Urban Expansion.	
Conklin	Horses, donkeys, goats, llamas, alpacas and other similar animals if kept as pets . Up to 3 horses may be kept if fully fenced, and on properties greater than .809 ha.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive Agriculture on lands designated Hamlet Residential or Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Urban Expansion.	
Remainder of the Rural Service Area	Not applicable as Rural District is not a residential district.	Obtain a development permit for Intensive or Extensive Agriculture on lands designated Rural District.	

Regulations for Intensive Agriculture

Any proposal for Intensive Agriculture must meet the following general regulations contained in Section 91A of the Land Use Bylaw, in addition to any requirements in the land use districts. However, since Intensive Agriculture is a Discretionary Use, an application may be refused even if it meets the Land Use Bylaw requirements, particularly if there is potential for adverse impacts. Importantly, this section lays out the **type and number of animals allowed**, based on property size.

91A. Additional Provisions: Intensive Agriculture

- (a) *The keeping of birds and animals, including livestock, shall be limited to one animal unit per acre (0.404 ha). For the purposes of this section, “one animal or bird unit” means:*

Type of Animal	# of Animals = 1 unit
<i>Horse, donkey, mule, cattle, buffalo, hog or steer (over 1 year old)</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Colts or calves up to one year old, sheep, goats, ewes</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Deer, Elk</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Llamas, alpacas, adult ostriches</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Ducks, geese, turkeys or other fowl, rabbits, chinchillas, adult emus, young ostriches</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Young emus</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Mink</i>	<i>77</i>

- (b) *Adequate fencing and/or buffering shall be constructed to the satisfaction of the Development Authority to ensure the on-site confinement of animals and to reduce the impact of noise or visual presence on surrounding properties.*
- (c) *Adequate measures to provide for the disposal of animal wastes shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Development Authority and the Regional Health Authority.*