



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA – City Manager

DATE OF MEETING: May 11, 2026

ITEM TITLE: 55.05 Livestock Request - Rory Ratchford

BACKGROUND:

Staff responded to a code complaint at 502 27th St. SE (South of Hwy 20), and found chickens present on the property. Mrs. Ratchford has been informed by the City Manager and the Code Official that chickens are not allowed in town. Mrs. Ratchford has been informed that she needs to remove the chickens, and subsequently came to speak with the Council to determine whether there is any way to keep them as a discussion topic during the May 4, 2026, Work Session.

DISCUSSION:

Under Chapter 55.05 of the City code, it is unlawful for a person to keep livestock within the City except by written consent of the Council or except in compliance with the City's zoning regulations. Because chickens are classified as livestock, accommodating this request requires the Council to grant formal written consent. We must carefully consider how this impacts our overall policy regarding code enforcement and urban agriculture. It is essential that we evaluate whether granting this exception aligns with our broader strategic goals and how it may set a precedent for future livestock-related requests.

RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **promoting and encouraging community involvement and engagement**. This item helps achieve that vision by providing a clear, transparent process for our residents to engage directly with the City Council to discuss ordinances and seek collaborative resolutions.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

There are no direct costs or budgeted expenses associated with this request. Any staff time devoted to code enforcement and processing this request is absorbed within our existing general operations budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is presenting this request for City Council review, discussion, and final direction, without a formal recommendation for approval or denial.