



118 Central Avenue North, New Prague, MN 56071
phone: 952-758-4401 fax: 952-758-1149

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CC: JOSHUA M. TETZLAFF, CITY ADMINISTRATOR
FROM: KEN ONDICH, PLANNING / COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON POSSIBLE ZONING / CITY CODE AMENDMENTS FOR KEEPING OF BACKYARD CHICKENS
DATE: MARCH 27, 2025

Planning Commission Summary

At the Planning Commission meeting on March 26, 2025, a concept review report was discussed regarding the keeping of backyard chickens. In summary, the report contained some historical information about the last time the topic was discussed in 2016 in which the ordinances were strengthened to not allow the keeping of backyard chickens, noted that New Prague is the only City in Scott County that does not allow backyard chickens, benefits and drawbacks of keeping backyard chickens and finally asked for direction from the Planning Commission regarding the topic.

The Planning Commission did open a public hearing with one resident, Brian Paulson, providing comment that he felt the possible coop size seemed small and that keeping chickens is not financially beneficial but it is to be self sufficient and to teach kids, but that he personally can't keep chickens as it's a daily commitment to keep them even though he has property south of town where both of his neighbors keep chickens. He also added that with rules in place it would prevent issues and to consider allowing chickens in heated garages and only charging a one-time fee versus an annual fee.

A motion was made and seconded to draft an ordinance and hold a public hearing at the April Planning Commission meeting. The motion ultimately did not pass as the vote was 2-2 (Pike, Meyer voting for and Ryan and Gengel voting against).

Based on the vote, staff is not planning to continue to work on this matter further unless otherwise directed by the City Council.

Recommendation

City Council to provide direction to staff on whether to continue to work towards drafting an ordinance regarding the keeping of backyard chickens.



118 Central Avenue North, New Prague, MN 56071
phone: 952-758-4401 fax: 952-758-1149

MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KEN ONDICH – PLANNING / COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
KYRA CHAPMAN – PLANNER

SUBJECT: CONCEPT REVIEW OF ZONING / CITY CODE AMENDMENT ON BACKYARD CHICKENS

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2025

Background

Recently staff have received several inquiries about the keeping of backyard chickens. This topic is likely at least a partial result of the national rising cost of eggs. Under City Code § 90.13, non-domesticated animals and farm animals, which include chickens, are prohibited in City limits. Although the City has never allowed chickens within City limits, the topic was last revisited in 2016, when the council ultimately decided to create clear language banning backyard chickens and other farm animals. The reason for this legislative choice was due to several nuisance complaints from neighbors regarding smell, sound, and concern for the spreading of avian diseases relating to a couple of locations of illegal backyard chickens within city limits. At the time, the complaints were mainly spurred from circumstances in which neighbors did not frequently maintain and clean their chicken coops.

At the February 3rd, 2025, council meeting, the city council directed staff to compile research and revisit the topic of backyard chickens due to growing resident interest. Staff have discovered that several nearby communities allow chickens such as Belle Plaine, Jordan, Elko New Market, Savage, Prior Lake, and Shakopee. Whereas other communities such as Lonsdale prohibit chickens, (however, according to a recent news article, Lonsdale is drafting ordinance language to allow chickens despite the Planning Commission's majority vote in opposition of backyard chickens). Attached to this memo are their codes verbatim for reference.

Of the communities researched that allow chickens, some common ordinance requirements were as follows:

- Must follow Minnesota State Statue 343 – Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Chickens are allowed in certain districts (agricultural and or residential)
- A maximum number of chickens allowed (Ex. 4-6 chickens).
- Roosters are prohibited
- Chickens may not be slaughtered or used for fighting. Chicken products cannot be sold but individuals may allow them for personal use
- Grain/food must be kept indoors in a rodent proof container
- Chickens cannot be kept in garages or inside the home

- Coops must be kept clean and sanitary, removing feces, urine, and food on a regular basis. Keeping of chickens shall not result in a nuisance
- Chickens are not allowed to run at large
- One coop and one run are allowed per property. Minimum size coop/size run requirements per number of chickens. (Ex. Enclosed coop must have a minimum size of 4 sq ft per animal and shall not exceed 40 sq ft total).
 - Must be a certain distance away from the principal structure and adjacent residential dwelling units (Ex. 25'-50')
 - Chicken coop only allowed in the rear yard. Height requirements of the coop (Ex. 6'-10')
 - Coop must be screened from view with a solid fence or landscaped buffer (minimum height requirements)

A memo from the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) also provided general requirements that cities may impose if they allow chickens within city limits. (LMC also has sample ordinances.) Common requirements found in city ordinances include:

- Allowing only hens (as opposed to roosters)
- Limiting the number of hens
- Requiring coops or runs be in sanitary and humane condition
- Chickens must be in a contained and controlled manner
- Coops must be kept a certain distance from structures and property lines

Compiled Research

Positives/Benefits:

Backyard chickens allow owners to produce their own eggs rather than going to the grocery store, providing owners with more autonomy over their food production. Ultimately, owners will have access to fresh eggs and thus no concerns about unhealthy additives. Fresh eggs usually have less saturated fats and bad cholesterol than eggs found in grocery stores.

Chickens start producing eggs from 6 months old to 5-10 years of age. Egg production peaks within the first two years of their life and within a typical week, they lay about six eggs. First time backyard chicken owners will likely see high egg production early on. Families may find joy in raising chickens, much like people do with other pets and find them entertaining to watch. Furthermore, it's a great opportunity for families to educate their children on responsibility and agricultural practices.

Breeds vary in temperament, egg production, size, weather resilience, maintenance, and food consumption, giving owners more flexibility and choices on what works for them. Similarly, owners could own endangered or rare chicken breeds, preserving genetic diversity in poultry. Although chicken diet typically includes grains and insects, they also consume leftover vegetables and fruit, which is a more sustainable way to reduce household food waste rather than adding more food waste to our landfills. Speaking of waste, their feces are rich in nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, making it a great fertilizer for gardens.

According to an article from the League of Minnesota Cities, the City of Monticello adopted an ordinance to allow chickens due to high community interest. The City of Dayton and Monticello have few to no issues since chickens have been allowed. Monticello specifically drafted their ordinance to prevent potential complaints. To receive a chicken permit, Monticello requires detailed coop plans, information on the breed/number of chickens, signatures of approval from abutting neighbors, and inspections from an animal control officer.

Negatives/Drawbacks:

According to the University of Minnesota, the most common issues with backyard chickens are related to odor, noise, pests, and the transmission of diseases. The CDC states that diseases transferred from chickens to humans include salmonella, campylobacter, avian influenza, histoplasmosis, E.coli, and Chlamydia. Diseases such as salmonella and campylobacter are first found in a chicken's stomach and then their feces. Individuals may become ill when cleaning coops or collecting eggs. The CDC finds that most people "with salmonella handled chicks or ducklings. Of those individuals, 45 percent were children". Older adults and young children, or those with weakened immune systems are more susceptible to these diseases. Prevention of the above diseases requires appropriate wear, handling/storing/cooking eggs, thorough hand washing, weekly coop cleaning and veterinarian appointments when poultry is sick.

Odor can be pungent when feces cumulate, especially without frequent coop cleanings and warm weather. Odor, feces, and food may also attract pests such as flies, mice, foxes, and racoons if the coop is not clean and if food is not stored correctly. In terms of noise, chickens make soft tone vocalizations, but some individuals may find this a nuisance. Hens typically make more noise when they lay eggs in the morning or when they are startled.

Although many people may find backyard chickens gratifying, there is a significant time commitment for caring for backyard chickens. There is significant time spent on daily feeding, watering, and egg collection and weekly or monthly coop cleaning. Backyard chickens may not be a good idea if an individual has a limited amount of time or commitment.

An article from the New York Times found that despite the rising costs of eggs, raising your own chickens will not be cheaper than grocery store eggs and will involve a lot more upkeep. There are several upfront costs such as purchasing chickens, infrastructure (coop), feeders, waterers, and heaters as well as reoccurring expenses like bedding, food, water, cleaning materials, and medical supplies. Having fewer chickens will decrease startup costs but less chickens will result in less egg production. Not to mention, hens usually produce an egg every 24-26 hours but sometimes they may not produce an egg each day especially as they are past their prime egg laying age, it's the winter season, and there are reduced daylight hours. To break even on operating costs, an individual would require 20-30 chickens in their prime productive egg laying years.

Alliant Credit Union calculated costs for backyard chickens and estimated the following expenses: coop \$300-\$500, \$3-\$5 per chick, \$20-\$50 per an egg laying hen, \$20-\$50 for feed per month, \$25-\$100 per medical visit, and \$10 for associated monthly expenses (repairs, woodchips, bedding, etc.). Alliant Credit Union anticipates that the start-up cost will be about \$590 and \$25 per month, not including medical bills.

Summary

This research is not to be presented to decide on specific language but is presented as background information. The information presented is given to help the Planning Commission decide whether or not backyard chickens should be allowed in city limits. If there is an inclination to consider allowing backyard chickens, staff would prepare an ordinance with performance standards for consideration and a public hearing at a future Planning Commission meeting. Ultimately, the City Council would need to approve both a zoning ordinance amendment and City Code amendment to allow backyard chickens.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission discuss the keeping of backyard chickens and provide staff direction on if an ordinance amendment should be prepared to allow them. No formal hearing is required for this

Other Cities' Ordinances on Backyard Chickens

Belle Plaine – 800.18 Chickens

Subd. 1. The intent of this section is to permit, but limit, the keeping of chickens as an egg source in a clean and sanitary manner which is not a nuisance to or detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.

Subd. 2. The keeping of up to six (6) chickens for personal use at single or two family residences zoned R-1 Low Density Single Family Residential District, R-2 Low Density Single Family Residential District, or R-3 Medium Density One and Two Family Residential is permitted subject to conditions of Subd. 3 – Subd. 6.

Subd. 3. Permit Required. A permit is required for keeping of chickens.

a. The permit application shall be on a form provided by the City and accompanied by a one-time fee specified in the annual fee schedule.

b. The application shall include:

1. A site plan illustrating:

i. The location and size of the proposed coop and run.

ii. Proposed setbacks from the coop and run to property lines and residential dwellings, including those on abutting lots.

iii. Proposed coop and run materials.

iv. Proposed run height.

2. Consent of the property owner for keeping of chickens.

3. A written statement that the applicant shall at all times keep chickens in accordance with all conditions prescribed by the City and that failure to obey such conditions shall constitute a violation of the provisions of this Section and shall be grounds for denial of a permit application or revocation of an existing permit.

4. Other information required by the City necessary to process the permit.

c. The City may inspect the premises for which a permit has been applied or granted in order to ensure compliance with this Section. If the City is not able to obtain the occupant's consent to inspect the property, a permit may not be granted or, if issued, may be immediately revoked.

d. The City may revoke any permit issued under this Section if the permit holder fails or refuses to comply with the requirements of the Section or any state or local law governing the cruelty to animals or the keeping of animals. Any person whose permit is revoked shall within ten (10) days humanely dispose of all chickens owned, kept, or harbored at the subject property. Any person whose permit is revoked shall completely remove required coop and run within thirty (30) days.

e. Persons no longer intending to keep chickens on a subject property shall notify the City in writing and remove required coop and run.

Subd. 4. Standard of Care.

a. Keepers of chickens shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices and maintain hens in such a condition so as to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues.

b. Keepers of chickens shall provide appropriate food, liquid (unfrozen) water, shelter, light, warmth, ventilation, veterinarian care, and opportunities for essential behaviors such as scratching, pecking, dust-bathing, and roosting.

c. Chickens shall be kept in a humane manner that complies with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 343.

d. Animal health authorities shall be notified immediately of any disease issues that arise and may affect the public.

Subd. 5. General Standards for Keeping of Chickens.

a. Keeping of roosters is not permitted.

b. Raising of chickens for breeding or fighting purposes is prohibited.

c. Slaughtering of hens, including for culling purposes, is not permitted within the City limits. Authorized removal methods include humane euthanasia by a veterinarian or relocation out of the City limits.

d. Keeping of chickens in a residence, porch, or attached garage is not permitted.

e. Keeping of chickens is for personal use. The sale of chickens or any chicken byproduct, including eggs, on or from the subject property is not allowed.

f. All grain and food shall be stored indoors in a rodent proof container.

g. All premises on which chickens are kept or maintained shall be kept clean from filth, garbage, and any substances which attract rodents. The coop and its surrounding area shall be cleaned frequently to control odor.

h. Waste materials including manure, litter, and feed shall not accumulate in a way that causes an unsanitary condition or causes odors to be detectible from another property. Waste shall be disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner. Piling waste materials on the subject property is prohibited.

i. Deceased chickens shall be removed as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after death and shall be disposed of by double bagging and placing in the garbage or taking to a veterinarian for disposal.

J. Chickens shall be properly protected from the weather and predators in a coop and have access to the outdoors in a run or exercise yard, consistent with Subd. 6.

Subd. 6. Coop and Run Standards.

- a. One coop and one run or exercise yard is allowed per parcel. The coop and run must be accessory to an existing residential dwelling on the same parcel.
- b. The coop and run shall be located in the rear yard of the parcel and setback a minimum of:
 - 1. Ten (10) feet from any property line.
 - 2. Twenty-five (25) feet from any residential dwelling on an adjacent parcel.
- c. A coop must provide at least one (1) square foot of area for each hen but shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in total area.
- d. Coops shall be fully insulated and draft free.
- e. Coops shall be elevated a minimum of 12 inches and a maximum of 24 inches above grade to ensure circulation beneath the coop.
- f. Coops shall employ exterior building materials that are similar in type and quality to those employed on the principal structure and meet standards for accessory structures contained in Chapter 1104 of the City Code.
- g. Runs shall be attached to the coop and completely enclosed.
- h. A chicken run cannot exceed ten (10) square feet per chicken and the fencing cannot exceed six (6) feet in height.
- i. A chicken run shall be comprised of accepted residential fence materials identified in Chapter 1107.02 of the City Code, except that runs may be enclosed wood or woven wire materials provided the run is fully screened at all times from adjacent properties.
- J. Runs may allow chickens to contact the ground.
- k. Runs must be fully enclosed or have a protective overhead netting to keep the chickens separated from other animals.

Elko New Market – 6-4-5-1: Keeping of Backyard Chickens

A. Purpose: It is the purpose and intent of this section to permit, but strictly limit, the keeping of backyard chickens as an egg source in a clean and sanitary manner which is not a nuisance to or detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the city of Elko New Market.

B. Keeping Of Backyard Chickens Allowed: A person may keep up to four (4) backyard chickens on property zoned R-1 suburban single-family residential as provided for in section [11-25A-3](#) of this code and R-2 urban (small lot) single-family residential as provided for in section [11-25B-3](#) of this code provided that:

1. The owner of the backyard chickens resides in a detached dwelling located upon the parcel at which the backyard chickens are kept.

2. The owner of the subject parcel obtains a backyard chicken permit from the city, issued in compliance with this section.

C. Permit Required: A permit is required for the keeping of backyard chickens.

1. Those desiring to keep backyard chickens shall file a written application with the city clerk on a form provided by the city and pay an application fee.

2. Application materials provided to first time applicants (by the city) shall include an educational pamphlet concerning the raising of backyard chickens in residential areas of the city. Such educational pamphlet shall be in a form approved by the city. Prior to permit issuance, applicants shall acknowledge, in writing, that they have read such pamphlet.

3. The application shall include the following:

- a. The breed and number of chickens to be maintained on the premises.

- b. A written statement that the applicant shall, at all times, keep the backyard chickens in accordance with all of the conditions prescribed by the city and that failure to obey such conditions shall constitute a violation of the provisions of this chapter and will be grounds for cancellation of the permit.

- c. A legal description of the real property upon which it is desired to keep the chickens and evidence of title to the property.

- d. Consent of the property owner for the keeping of chickens.

- e. A site plan of the property showing the location and size of the proposed chicken coop and run, setbacks from the chicken coop to property lines and surrounding buildings (including houses and buildings on adjacent lots), and the location, style, and height of fencing proposed to contain the chickens in a run or exercise area. Portable coops and cages are allowed, but portable locations shall be illustrated with the site plan.

- f. The required permit fee in accordance with the city's adopted fee schedule.

- g. Other information as may be required by the city clerk necessary to process the permit.

- h. The city clerk and/or designee shall process the application.

4. All initial permits shall expire on December 31 of the following year after their issuance unless sooner revoked. Renewal permits shall expire on December 31 of the second year following their issuance unless sooner revoked.

5. The city, upon written notice, may revoke a permit for failure to comply with provisions of this section or any of the permit's conditions.

6. The city may inspect the premises for which a permit has been granted in order to ensure compliance with this section. If the city is not able to obtain the occupant's consent to enter the property, it may seek an administrative search warrant or revoke the permit.

7. The city may revoke any permit issued under this section if the permit holder fails or refuses to comply with the requirements of this section or any state or local law governing the cruelty to animals or the keeping of animals. Any person whose permit is revoked shall have the right to appeal the revocation according to the process provided under section [4-1-11](#) of this code.

8. Any person whose permit for the keeping of backyard chickens is revoked or who fails to renew a permit shall, within ten (10) days thereafter, humanely dispose of all chickens owned, kept or harbored by such person on the subject property.

D. General Standards For The Keeping Of Backyard Chickens:

1. The keeping of roosters is prohibited under this section.

2. Backyard chickens shall not be raised or kept for the purpose of fighting.

3. Backyard chickens shall not be kept in a dwelling, garage or accessory structure other than those meeting the requirements of an enclosed coop.

4. All backyard chickens shall have access to an enclosed coop meeting the following minimum standards:

a. The enclosed coop may not occupy a front or side yard.

b. A maximum of one coop per lot shall be permitted.

c. The enclosed coop shall have a minimum size of four (4) square feet per chicken and shall not exceed a maximum of forty (40) square feet in total area.

d. The enclosed coop shall be set back a minimum of twenty five feet (25') from the principal structure, at least ten feet (10') from all property lines and shall not encroach upon utility easements.

e. The enclosed coop shall not exceed ten feet (10') in height.

f. The enclosed coop shall be the same or similar in color to the principal structure on the lot.

g. Enclosed coops shall be compatible with the principal building on the lot. Under no circumstances shall sheet metal, corrugated metal, asbestos, iron, plain concrete block (whether painted or color integrated or not) be deemed acceptable as major exterior wall materials.

"Compatible" means that the exterior appearance of the coop (accessory building) is not at variance with the principal building from an aesthetic and architectural standpoint as to cause:

(1) A difference to a degree to cause incongruity.

(2) A depreciation of neighborhood values or adjacent property values.

(3) A nuisance which may have characteristics related to noise, dust, odors, glare, and unsightly building exterior.

h. The enclosed coop shall be built to protect the backyard chickens from extreme heat or cold.

i. The enclosed coop shall be at all times maintained in a good condition.

j. The enclosed coop shall comply with all applicable building code requirements.

5. All backyard chickens shall have access to a run meeting the following minimum standards:

a. The run shall be attached to and provided access to the coop.

b. The run shall be set back a minimum of twenty five feet (25') from the principal structure, at least ten feet (10') from all property lines and shall not encroach upon utility easements.

c. A maximum of one run per lot shall be permitted.

d. The run shall have a maximum size of twenty (20) square feet per chicken.

e. The run shall be fully enclosed and covered with durable materials. Structural components of the run shall be consistent with coop materials.

f. Fencing materials used as run components shall be consistent with fence requirements imposed in residential zoning districts as provided in this code.

g. The run shall be maintained in a good condition at all times.

6. The following minimum sanitation standards shall be observed at all times:

a. The slaughtering of backyard chickens on the property is prohibited.

b. No chicken or chicken byproducts shall be sold upon the subject property.

c. All premises on which backyard chickens are kept or maintained shall be kept clean from filth, garbage, and any substances which attract rodents. The coop and its surrounding area shall be cleaned frequently to control odor. Manure shall not be allowed to accumulate in a way that causes an unsanitary condition or causes odors to be detectible from another property. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the removal of backyard chickens from the premises and/or revocation of the backyard chicken permit.

d. All grain and food stored for backyard chickens shall be kept indoors in a rodentproof container.

e. Backyard chickens shall be kept in such a manner which does not constitute a nuisance as provided for in chapter 5, article B of this title.

f. Persons no longer intending to keep backyard chickens on the subject property shall notify the city in writing and remove the enclosed coop and run.

g. The enclosed coop and run shall be removed from the property upon permit expiration and/or permit revocation at the property owner's expense. (Ord. 130, 4-28-2016, eff. 6-1-2016)

Jordan – 92.31 Keeping, Transporting and Treatment of All Animals

It is unlawful for any person to keep or harbor any animal, not in transit, except:

(F) Keeping of backyard chickens.

(1) *Purpose.* It is recognized that the ability to cultivate one's own food is a sustainable activity that can also be a rewarding past time. It is further recognized that the keeping of backyard chickens, if left unregulated, may interfere with the residential character of certain neighborhoods. Therefore, it is the purpose and intent of this section to permit, but strictly limit, the keeping of backyard chickens for egg and meat sources in a clean and sanitary manner that is not a nuisance to or detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

(2) *Keeping of backyard chickens allowed.* A person may keep up to 6 backyard chickens on a residential property in the city

(a) The keeper of the backyard chickens resides in a detached dwelling at the parcel at which the backyard chickens are kept;

(b) The subject parcel is a minimum of 10,000 square feet; and

(c) The owner of the subject parcel obtains a backyard chicken permit from the city, issued in compliance with division (F)(3) of this section.

(3) *Permit required.* A permit is required for the keeping of backyard chickens.

(a) Those desiring to keep backyard chickens shall file a written application with the City Administrator on a form provided by the city and pay an application fee. Fees to be charged for the permit to keep backyard chickens shall be set by City Council on the fee schedule.

(b) The application shall include:

1. The breed and number of chickens to be maintained on the premises;

2. Written statements that the applicant will at all times keep the backyard chickens in accordance with all of the conditions prescribed by the City Administrator, or modifications thereof, and that failure to obey such conditions will constitute a violation of the provisions of this chapter and will be grounds for cancellation of the permit;

3. Such other and further information as may be required by the City Administrator; and

4. The required flat fee of \$20.

(c) The City Administrator and/or designee shall process the application.

(d) All initial permits will expire on December 31 of the following year after their issuance unless sooner revoked. Renewal permits shall expire on December 31 of the second year following their issuance unless sooner revoked.

(e) The city, upon written notice, may revoke a permit for failure to comply with provisions of this section or any of the permit's conditions.

(f) The city may inspect the premises for which a permit has been granted in order to ensure compliance with this section. If the city is not able to obtain the occupant's consent to enter the property, it may seek an administrative search warrant or revoke the permit.

(4) *General standards and limitations for the keeping of backyard chickens.*

(a) The keeping of roosters as a backyard chicken is prohibited.

(b) Backyard chickens shall not be raised or kept for the purpose of fighting.

(c) Backyard chickens shall not be kept in a dwelling, garage, or accessory structure other than those meeting the requirements of an enclosed coop.

(d) All backyard chickens must have access to an enclosed coop meeting the following minimum standards:

1. The enclosed coop may not occupy a front or side yard.

2. The enclosed coop must have a minimum size of 4 square feet per animal and shall not exceed a maximum of 40 square feet in total area.

3. The enclosed coop shall be setback a minimum of 25 feet from any principal structure on the subject parcel and any property line. The enclosed coop shall not exceed 10 feet in height.

4. The enclosed coop shall have a roof type and pitch that is similar to the principal structure on the lot.

5. The enclosed coop shall be similar in color to the principal structure on the lot.

6. The enclosed coop shall employ exterior building materials that are similar in type and quality to those employed on the principal structure.

7. The enclosed coop shall be constructed of permanent residential dwelling building materials. Coop components that are not designed or intended for use as permanent residential dwelling building materials, including but not limited to, garage doors, tires, pallets, employment of interior residential structural components on the exterior (drywall, particle board, plywood), sheet metal, fiberglass panels, plastics, corrosive metal, household items (appliance, fixtures, furniture), canvas, flimsy materials, tarps, non-permanent items (cages, portable kennels), wire panels, and the like are prohibited.

8. The floor of the enclosed coop shall be comprised of impervious surface such as vinyl, tile, concrete, or treated wood.

9. The enclosed coop must be built to protect the backyard chickens from extreme heat or cold.

10. The enclosed coop shall be at all times maintained in a good condition.

11. The enclosed coop shall meet all applicable building, electrical, HVAC, plumbing, and fire code requirements.

(e) All backyard chickens shall have access to a run meeting the following minimum standards:

1. The run shall be a fully-enclosed and covered area attached to a coop where backyard chickens can roam unsupervised.

2. The run shall adhere to setbacks required for enclosed coops to which they are attached.

3. The enclosed run shall be well drained so there is no accumulation of moisture.

4. Run components shall feature fencing materials approved for use in residential districts as provided for in [Chapter 154](#) of the city code.

5. Run components not designed or intended for use as fence material, including, but not limited to, garage doors, tires, pallets, sheet metal, ribbed steel, metal siding, corrosive metal, solid (i.e. more than 90% opaque) metal, galvanized ribbed steel, household items (appliances, fixtures, furniture), makeshift or flimsy materials (plastic, paper, twine, rope, tin, webbing), farm animal fencing (barbed wire, chicken wire, high tensile, electric wire, woven wire, or other livestock fencing), canvas, tarps, non-exterior grade residential construction materials, and the like are prohibited.

6. Landscaping shall be employed on the perimeter of the run to shield view of the run from adjacent properties.

7. The run shall be at all times maintained in a good condition.

(f) The following minimum sanitation standards shall be observed at all times:

1. Slaughtering of backyard chickens on the property is prohibited.

2. Leg banding of all backyard chickens is required. The band must identify the owner, the owner's address, and the owner's telephone number.

3. No chicken or chicken byproducts shall be sold in residential districts.

4. All premises on which backyard chickens are kept or maintained shall be kept clean from filth, garbage, and any substances which attract rodents. The coop and its surrounding area must be cleaned frequently enough to control odor. Manure shall not be allowed to accumulate in

a way that causes an unsanitary condition or causes odors detectible on another property. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the City Administrator and/or enforcement officer removing backyard chickens from the premises or revoking the backyard chicken permit.

5. All grain and food stored for backyard chickens shall be kept indoors in a rodent proof container.

6. Backyard chickens shall not be kept in such a manner as to constitute a nuisance as provided for under [Chapter 90](#) of this code.

7. Persons no longer intending to keep backyard chickens on the subject property shall notify the city in writing and remove the enclosed coop and run.

8. The enclosed coop and run shall be removed from the property upon permit expiration and/or permit revocation.

Lonsdale – 90.01 Prohibited Types of Animals

A) *Prohibited animals.* No person shall keep, maintain or harbor within the city any of the following animals:

- (1) Any animal or species prohibited by state or federal law;
- (2) Any non-domesticated animal or species, including but not limited to the following:
 - (a) Any skunk, whether captured in the wild, domestically raised, de-scented or not de-scented, vaccinated against rabies or not vaccinated against rabies;
 - (b) Any large cat of the family Felidae such as lions, tigers, jaguars, leopards, cougars and ocelot, except commonly accepted domesticated house cats;
 - (c) Any member of the family Canidae, such as wolves, foxes, coyotes, dingoes and jackals, except domesticated dogs;
 - (d) Any crossbreed such as the crossbreeds between dogs and coyotes or dogs and wolves, but does not include crossbreed domesticated animals;
 - (e) Any poisonous pit viper such as rattlesnake, coral snake, water moccasin or cobra;
 - (f) Any raccoon;
 - (g) Any ferret; and
 - (h) Any other animal which is not listed explicitly above, but which can be reasonably defined by the terms of this subchapter, including bears and badgers.
- (3) Any poultry, including but not limited to, chickens, ducks, geese and turkeys; or
- (4) Any hoofed animal, including but not limited to, sheep, pigs, goats, cattle, horses, camels, llama, alpaca, deer, moose, caribou and bison.

(B) *Keeping of honeybees.* No person shall keep, maintain or allowed to be kept in any hive or other facility for the housing of honeybees without a beekeeping license. Beekeeping licenses shall be regulated by city policy and best practices.

(C) *Animals in transit.* Prohibited animals may be temporarily allowed within the city for a maximum of 72 hours while in route to another destination. If such animals in transit need to spend more than 72 hours within the city, the person responsible for the animals may seek a permit from the city for an extended stay.

(D) *Animals associated with special events.* Prohibited animals may be temporarily allowed within the city if such animals are part of a show, entertainment, or similar event permitted under this code. Such animals may be allowed within the city from one day before the event to one day after the event.

(E) *Nonconforming animals.* Any animals prohibited by divisions (A) and (B) above which have been regularly housed or kept within the city at the time this section is adopted, may be continued according to the following regulations:

(1) Any nonconforming animal that dies may be replaced with a similar animal, if replaced within 180 days. If a nonconforming animal is not replaced within 180 days, all future animals on the property must be conforming. Any nonconforming animal that is removed from the property for a period of more than 180 days may not be replaced, and all future animals on the property must be conforming; and

(2) The expansion or addition of more nonconforming animals to the property is prohibited.

Prior Lake City Code Regulations on Chickens

In the TC, R-1, R-2 and R-3 zoning districts, no farm animals shall be kept on any parcel, except that four chickens or two colonies of bees may be kept on an R-1 parcel if kept in compliance with the applicable regulations set forth in subsection (c)(4) of this section.

- (c)(4) explains that In the A and R-S zoning districts, farm animals may be kept on a parcel that is ten acres or more in size only as follows: Poultry, fowl, birds (including, but not limited to, chickens) and similar. Twenty-five birds such as, but not limited to, chickens are allowed for the first ten contiguous acres and 25 additional birds are allowed for each additional contiguous acre.
- Conditions for keeping chickens (sec. 7-23.): no roosters permitted. Raising of chickens for breeding is prohibited. Chickens must be in a confined coop, run or exercise yard. Chickens shall not be kept inside of a dwelling except for brooding. Chickens shall be properly protected from weather and predators in a coop and access to outdoors in a run or exercise yard. The coop, run and exercise yard shall meet the requirements:
 - One coop, run and exercise yard allowed per parcel with a principal residence occupied by the owner of the chickens.
 - Each coop, run and exercise yard shall be located in the rear yard of the parcel.

- Each coop, run and exercise yard shall be set back a minimum of 50 feet from any residential structure on an adjacent parcel and a minimum of ten feet from any parcel line. Each coop, run or exercise yard must be screened from view with a solid fence or landscaped buffer with a minimum height of five feet. No part of a coop, run or exercise yard shall be located within 15 feet of any lake, pond, river, creek, stream or wetland.
- A coop can be no larger than 25 square feet and cannot exceed six feet in height. A coop shall be elevated a minimum of 12 inches and maximum of 24 inches to ensure circulation beneath the coop. The coop shall contain a solid roof, and construction shall be done in a workmanlike manner utilizing durable materials that offer adequate insulation, ventilation and protection from all natural weather elements, predators, rodents and other pests.
- No run or exercise yard can exceed 40 square feet and cannot exceed six feet in height. A run or exercise yard may be enclosed with wood or woven wire materials and may allow chickens to contact the ground. Each run and exercise yard must have a protective overhead netting to keep the chickens separated from other animals.
- Coops, runs and exercise yards shall be maintained in a reasonably clean and sanitary condition, including the timely removal of feces, urine, and food scraps. Chicken owners shall not allow odors associated with the chickens to emit outside the boundary of the parcel.
- Each coop, run and exercise yard must comply with all applicable building and zoning codes and regulations.
- Chickens shall not be slaughtered on the parcel or elsewhere within the city other than a commercial establishment that employs a butcher.
- Deceased chickens shall be removed as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours after death and shall be disposed of in a manner consistent with [chapter 5](#), article IV.

Chickens shall be kept in a humane manner that complies with Minn. Stat.s ch. 343 and owners shall prevent nuisance conditions by ensuring the following conditions are met:

- a) Chicken grains and feed must be stored in rodentproof containers.
- b) No chicken may be kept or raised in a manner as to cause injury or annoyance to persons on other property in the vicinity by reason of noise, odor or filth.
- c) Chickens shall not be allowed to run at large. Any chicken running at large may be impounded by the city and, after being impounded for three days or more without being reclaimed by the owner, may be destroyed or sold. A person reclaiming an impounded chicken must pay the costs of impounding and keeping the same.

Savage – 91.04 Farm Animals

The keeping of chickens shall be allowed subject to the following standards identified in Section (A) through (D) below.

- A. No more than 4 hen chickens are allowed on any parcel of land in the City. The raising of chickens for breeding purposes is prohibited.
- B. Every person who owns, controls, keeps, maintains or harbors hen chickens must keep them confined on the premises at all times in a chicken coop or chicken run. Chickens over the age of 4 weeks shall not be kept inside of a dwelling or garage.
- C. Chickens shall be properly protected from weather and predators in a shelter or coop and have access to the outdoors in an enclosure or fenced area. The shelter and/or enclosure shall meet the following requirements:
 - 1. Any chicken coop or chicken run must comply with all applicable building and zoning codes and regulations
 - 2. No chicken coop or run shall be constructed on any parcel of land prior to construction of the principal building
 - 3. A chicken coop or run cannot be located in the front or side yard
 - 4. A chicken coop or run must be setback at least 50 feet from any existing residential structure on an adjacent lot and at least 10 feet from the property line
 - 5. A chicken coop or run must be screened from view with a solid fence or landscaped buffer with a minimum height of 4 feet
 - 6. A chicken coop can be no larger than 10 square feet per chicken and cannot exceed 6 feet in height. A chicken run cannot exceed 20 square feet per chicken and the fencing cannot exceed 6 feet in height. A chicken run may be enclosed with wood or woven wire materials, and may allow chickens to contract the ground. A chicken run must have a protective overhead netting to keep the chickens separated from other animals.
 - 7. A chicken coop must be elevated a minimum of 12 inches and a maximum of 24 inches to ensure circulation beneath the coop
- D. Owners shall care for chickens in a humane manner and shall prevent nuisance conditions by ensuring the following conditions are met:
 - 1. Chicken grains and feed must be stored in rodent proof containers
 - 2. No chicken may be kept or raised in a manner as to cause injury or annoyance to persons on other property in the vicinity by reason of noise, odor or filth
 - 3. Any chicken running at large may be impounded by the City and after being impounded for three days or more without being reclaimed by the owner, may be destroyed or sold. A person reclaiming an impounded chicken must pay the cost of impounding and keeping the same.

Shakopee – 130.04 other Animals – Hen Chickens

- 1. No more than 5 hen chickens are allowed on any parcel of land in the city.
- 2. Every person who owns, controls, keeps, maintains, or harbors hen chickens must keep them confined on the premises at all times in a chicken coop or chicken run. Hen chickens are not allowed in any part of a house or garage.

3. Any chicken coop or chicken run must comply with all applicable building and zoning codes and regulations.
4. No chicken coop or run shall be constructed on any parcel of land before construction of the principal building.
5. A chicken coop or run cannot be located in the front or side yard.
6. A chicken coop or run must be setback at least 50 feet from any residential structure on any adjacent lot and at least 10 feet from the property line.
7. A chicken coop or run must be screened from view with a solid fence or landscaped buffer with a minimum height of 4 feet.
8. A chicken coop can be no larger than 10 square feet per chicken and cannot exceed 6 feet in height. A chicken run cannot exceed 20 square feet per chicken and the fencing cannot exceed 6 feet in height. A chicken run may be enclosed with wood or woven wire materials, and may allow chickens to contact the ground. A chicken run must have a protective overhead netting to keep the chickens separated from other animals.
9. A chicken coop must be elevated a minimum of 12 inches and a maximum of 24 inches above grade to ensure circulation beneath the coop.
10. Chicken grains and feed must be stored in rodent-proof containers.
11. No chicken may be kept or raised in a manner as to cause injury or annoyance to persons on other property in the vicinity by reason of noise, odor, or filth.
12. Any chicken running at large may be impounded by the city and, after being impounded for 3 days or more without being reclaimed by the owner, may be destroyed or sold. A person reclaiming any impounded chicken must pay the cost of impounding and keeping the same.

Concept Review of Zoning/City Code Amendment on Backyard Chickens



MARCH 26, 2025

1

Background

- ▶ Staff have received several inquiries on the keepings of chickens recently
- ▶ Currently the City Code 90.13 prohibits non-domesticated animals and farm animals (chickens) within City limits.
- ▶ The City never allowed chickens in city limits but created clear language prohibiting chickens in 2016
 - ▶ This decision was made due to several nuisance complaints from neighbors regarding smell, sound, and concern of spreading avian diseases. Complaints mainly stemmed from situations in which neighbors did not clean their chicken coops.
 - ▶ On Feb 3rd, 2025, City Council directed staff to revisit the topic of backyard chickens
- ▶ Other communities allow backyard chickens: Belle Plaine, Jordan, Elko New Market, Savage, Prior Lake, and Shakopee
- ▶ Lonsdale currently prohibits chickens but is drafting an ordinance to allow them despite the Planning Commission's majority vote in opposition

2

Common Ordinance Requirements

- ▶ As background, some general ordinances typically found in cities allowing backyard chickens include:
 - ▶ Follow Minnesota State Statute 343 – Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
 - ▶ Maximum number of chickens allowed (4-6). Roosters prohibited.
 - ▶ Chickens not allowed to run at large.
 - ▶ Minimum size coop/size run per number of chicken. Coop/run setback from the principal structure and adjacent residential units/property lines. Height of the coop.
 - ▶ Chickens cannot be slaughtered or used for fighting. Chicken products cannot be sold but may be allowed for personal use.
 - ▶ Coop only allowed in the rear yard (6'-10')
 - ▶ Coops must be kept clean and sanitary, removing feces, urine, and food on a regular basis.

3

Positives/Benefits of Backyard Chickens

- ▶ Owners can produce their own eggs → more autonomy over their food production
- ▶ Fresh eggs do not have unhealthy additives and have less saturated fats and bad cholesterol found in grocery store eggs
- ▶ People could own different kinds of endangered or rare breeds, preserving genetic diversity in poultry
- ▶ Hens start producing eggs at 6 months old to 5-10 years. Peak egg production in first 1-2 years. Owners will see high egg production early on
- ▶ Backyard chickens are a great opportunity to teach children about agricultural practices
- ▶ Backyard chickens can eat leftover vegetables and fruit, which is a more sustainable way to reduce household food waste than disposing food into our landfills
- ▶ City of Monticello and Dayton, MN have not had issues with backyard chickens since they allowed chickens. To prevent neighbor complaints, Monticello requires backyard chicken permits which require detailed coop plans, breed/number of chickens and signature of approval from abutting neighbors, and inspections from an animal control officer.

4

Negatives/Drawbacks of Backyard Chickens

- ▶ Chickens can transfer diseases such as salmonella, campylobacter, avian influenza, histoplasmosis, E.coli, and Chlamydia. Diseases such as salmonella and campylobacter are found in chicken feces and stomachs, therefore, individuals can become ill from cleaning coops or collecting eggs
- ▶ Odor from feces or food can become pungent especially in warm weather and lack of frequent cleanings. Odor from feces and food may attract pests like flies, mice, foxes, and racoons
- ▶ Startup expenses of backyard chickens can be costly such as purchasing a coop, run, feeders, waterers, heaters, medical supplies, cleaning materials, bedding, etc.
 - ▶ According to Alliant Credit Union, start-ups costs can be \$590 or higher and \$25 per month, not including vet bills.
 - ▶ To break even on operating costs, an individual would require 20-30 chickens in their prime productive egg laying years
- ▶ Chickens don't always lay eggs everyday especially after their peak laying age (1-2 years old), during the winter season, and less daylight hours

5

Next Steps

- ▶ The research presented today is to be used as background information and not to create specific ordinance language.
- ▶ Planning Commission must decide whether or not to allow backyard chickens in city limits.
- ▶ A public hearing is not required for this agenda item.
- ▶ If the Planning Commission recommends an ordinance amendment, a draft ordinance will be prepared at the next Planning Commission meeting

6