



# Commerce City

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## Council Communication

File Number: Pres 23-308

**Agenda Date:** 5/8/2023

**Version:** 1

**Status:** Agenda Ready

**In Control:** City Council

**File Type:** Presentation

### Backyard Chickens

#### **Summary and Background Information:**

Staff has previously investigated the possibility of allowing backyard chickens at the direction of past Councils. In 2016, 2018, and 2020, Staff carried out preliminary work investigating the feasibility of backyard chickens in Commerce City. Based on Council's most recent request, Staff has re-engaged with this issue. The presentation tonight outlines the nature of the work Staff would need to undertake in order to allow backyard chickens in the community.

Currently in Commerce City, chickens are only allowed in areas zoned for agriculture. Allowing chickens in all residential areas would require updates to the animal code, land development code, and possibly the creation of a permitting system. The animal code would have to be amended in order to allow chickens as a domestic animal. Additionally, other updates to the animal code would create more specific regulations as to the number of chickens that may be kept, and how those chickens will be kept. Updates to the land development code would set standards for chickens coops and allow chicken coops as accessory structures in residential areas. If Council desires, Staff may also institute a permitting system for backyard chickens to ensure compliance with the land development and animal codes. While some cities in the area require a permit for backyard chickens, the majority do not.

This presentation is the first step in the process. If Council directs Staff to further pursue allowing backyard chickens, Staff will prepare the updates to the land development and animal codes as outlined, and possibly a permitting system. Staff will then present this work to Council at a subsequent study session for Council review and feedback. After implementing any changes or feedback Council may have, Staff will prepare these updates as ordinances for Council's consideration at a regular meeting.

**Staff Responsible (Department Head):** Sheryl Carstens

**Staff Member Presenting:** John Bourjaily

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Funding Source:** N/A

**Staff Recommendation:** Provide Staff direction to prepare materials for Council

review and input at a study session

**Suggested Motion:**