

Information Item

Date: March 10, 2022

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Aaron King, Assistant City Manager
Chris Murphy, Director of Planning and Development Services

Subject:
Requirements for Keeping Chickens in Winston-Salem and Peer Cities

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: No

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



In response to citizen concerns recently expressed to Council Member MacIntosh regarding keeping chickens on residential property, the Planning and Development Services staff was asked to prepare a memo detailing how Winston-Salem's standards compare to peer cities in North Carolina.

In Winston-Salem, keeping chickens is considered an accessory use to residential development, and is regulated by Section 6-6 of the City Code. Our standards are comparable with our peers in most areas but are notably more stringent in regard to minimum setbacks. The attached table (Requirements for Keeping Chickens in Selected North Carolina Communities) illustrates these standards in greater detail.

Most municipalities require coop and run areas to be set back between ten and fifty feet from adjoining property lines (Raleigh does not require any setbacks from adjacent property). Winston-Salem's current one-hundred-foot setback requirement for chicken coops is more than double the average setback required by our peers. Such setbacks effectively limit the ability to keep chickens in the city on smaller lots