



City of Jurupa Valley

Staff Report

DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2026

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: ROD BUTLER, CITY MANAGER

BY: JOE PEREZ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER / COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

**PROPOSED UPDATES TO ANIMAL-KEEPING, EQUESTRIAN, AND
AGRICULTURAL STANDARDS**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council receive and file the report and provide policy direction on the proposed amendments to the City's equestrian lifestyle protection overlay, animal-keeping, equestrian, and agricultural regulations.

BACKGROUND

Animal-keeping, equestrian and agricultural regulations in Jurupa Valley have evolved incrementally over many years and are currently dispersed across multiple zoning districts, general provisions, and related code sections. Similar animals are often regulated differently depending on zoning classification, lot size, or permit type. In addition, sanitation, enforcement, and animal-care standards are located in separate chapters, making the regulations difficult for residents to navigate and challenging for the City to administer consistently.

As part of the ELPO update process, public outreach has included community meetings and interviews held on July 29, 2025, August 19, 2025, and September 23, 2025. During community outreach associated with the Equestrian Lifestyle Protection Overlay (ELPO) and related policy discussions, residents repeatedly expressed concerns regarding the complexity and inconsistency of the existing regulations. Common themes included difficulty understanding what is allowed, concern about inadvertent violations, and limited flexibility to accommodate established rural and equestrian practices. The City Council also expressed interest in strengthening ELPO implementation while improving clarity and enforceability.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study session is to present a set of policy concepts and regulatory approaches for City Council and community discussion. These concepts are being developed in coordination with the Equestrian Lifestyle Protection Overlay (ELPO) and are intended to reinforce the City's commitment to preserving equestrian uses while modernizing and clarifying animal-keeping standards. These concepts also address long-standing concerns with the City's existing animal-keeping regulations and to explore options for improving clarity, fairness, flexibility, and compatibility with Jurupa Valley's rural and equestrian character.

No formal action is being considered at this meeting. Direction provided by the City Council will inform whether, and how, staff should proceed in regard to the preparation of future Zoning Code amendments.

1. Consolidating Animal-Keeping Standards

Community members frequently noted that animal-keeping rules are currently scattered throughout the Municipal Code, making it difficult to determine what applies to a specific property.

A core concept presented for consideration is consolidating animal-keeping standards into an easy-to-find framework that applies consistently wherever animals are allowed. This solution would respond to concerns about confusion and inconsistent interpretation.

2. Providing Flexibility for Mixed Animal Keeping

A central theme expressed during community workshops was that existing animal-keeping standards are often too rigid, particularly for properties that keep a mixture of animals. Residents explained that fixed numerical limits by animal type can unintentionally restrict reasonable combinations of horses, livestock, poultry, and other farm animals, even when the overall use of the property remains consistent with rural or equestrian expectations.

To address this concern, one concept presented for consideration is the use of an Animal Unit (AU) framework to provide clearer guidance for mixed animal keeping. Rather than regulating each animal type in isolation, an AU-based approach evaluates different species using a consistent metric that reflects their relative scale and care needs. This would allow different animal types to be combined in a predictable way while maintaining defined limits.

Under this concept, animal-keeping capacity would be expressed as a maximum number of Animal Units per acre, rather than separate caps for each species. For example, a one-acre property with a 10 AU cap could accommodate a variety of animal combinations—such as several horses together



with goats, poultry, and other small farm animals—as long as the combined Animal Units do not exceed the maximum allowed. A property owner could choose fewer large animals, more small animals, or a balanced mix, based on how the property is actually used. See Table 1 – Example of Animal Unit Allowances (10 AU per acre).

Table 1 – Example: Animal Unit Allowances (10 AU per acre)

(Illustrative for discussion purposes only)

Animal Type	Animal Unit (AU) Factor
Horse / Large Livestock (horse, cattle, donkey, mule)	1.0 AU each
Sheep / Goat	0.1 AU each
Miniature Pig	0.5 AU each
Full-Size Pig / Swine	1.0 AU each
Poultry / Small Fowl (hens, ducks, quail, etc.)**	0.04 AU each
Small Animals (rabbits, chinchillas, guinea pigs, frogs and similar)	0.05 AU each
Bee Colonies	0.25 AU per hive

The concept also allows the maximum Animal Units to scale proportionally with lot size. For example, a 1.5-acre property would have a higher allowance than a one-acre property, resulting in a total capacity of approximately 15 Animal Units. This proportional approach provides clarity and predictability for larger parcels while maintaining consistent standards across different lot sizes.

Importantly, this concept is intended to increase flexibility and overall animal allowances compared to the existing code, not reduce them. By establishing a clear method for evaluating mixed animal combinations, the City could allow more animals overall than are currently permitted, while still maintaining reasonable limits, compatibility with surrounding properties, and enforceable standards.

3. Changes to the Number of Animals Allowed per Acre

Table 2 – Example of Changes to Animal Allowances (Per Acre) summarizes how the potential changes discussed at this study session would increase the number of animals allowed per acre compared to the City’s current regulations. These examples are provided to help the public understand what could change if the City moves forward with updating its animal-keeping standards.



These changes are intended to replace older, more restrictive limits with allowances that better reflect rural and equestrian property use, while still requiring compliance with setbacks, sanitation, and other standards.

Table 2 – Example: Changes to Animal Allowances (Per Acre)

(Illustrative for discussion purposes only)

Animal Type	Typical Existing Allowance	Example New Allowance	What This Means
Horses / Large Livestock	2 horses per acre	Up to 8 horses per acre	Allows realistic equestrian use of one-acre parcels
Sheep / Goats	2–4 per acre (varies by zone)	Up to 10 per acre	Greater flexibility for small livestock
Poultry (hens, ducks, etc.)	4–50 depending on zone	Up to 20 per acre	Consistent standard across certain zones
Mini pigs	Often unclear or not allowed	Up to 5 per acre	Clearly defined allowance
Full-size pigs / swine	Very limited	Up to 2 per acre	Clarifies small-scale keeping
Bee hives	Not clearly addressed	Up to 4 hives per acre	Explicitly allowed citywide
Mixed animal keeping	Not clearly addressed	Clearly allow	Residents can keep combinations of animals

4. Clarifying How Offspring Are Counted

Residents involved in breeding, youth projects, and small-scale agriculture noted confusion regarding whether and when offspring count toward animal limits. A concept presented for consideration is clearly defining animal maturity standards so that only mature animals count toward numerical allowances.

This clarification would reflect common agricultural practices and address fairness concerns, while also improving consistency during inspections and enforcement. Table 3 – Animal Maturity Ages provides an example.



Table 3 – Example: Animal Maturity Ages

(Illustrative for discussion purposes only)

Classification	Age of maturity
Birds and poultry	Six (6) months
Crowing fowl (roosters)	Three (3) months
Cattle	Eighteen (18) months
Goats	Nine (9) months
Sheep	Nine (9) months
Pigs	Eight (8) months
Horses and other equines	Twenty-four (24) months
Dogs and Cats	Four (4) months
Other small farm animals	Six (6) months

5. Updating Setbacks for Animal Structures

Community members also expressed concern that existing setback requirements for barns, corrals, and coops are often too restrictive and not tailored to structure type. In many cases, the same setback applies to a large barn and a small coop, making compliance difficult on smaller or irregularly shaped parcels.

One concept presented is updating setback standards to better reflect the type and scale of the structure. For example:

- Large animal structures such as barns or corrals could be allowed closer to side and rear property lines than under current standards, while still maintaining appropriate separation from neighboring homes.
- Small structures such as poultry coops or goat shelters could have reduced setbacks, recognizing their lower impact.
- Manure storage or compost areas could retain greater separation distances to protect public health.

This approach is intended to improve usability of properties while maintaining neighbor compatibility. Table 4 provides examples of what the adjusted setbacks might look like.



Table 4 – Example: Changes to Setbacks for Animal Structures

(Illustrative for discussion purposes only)

Urban & Small-Lot Residential Areas (e.g., R-1, R-2, R-3, R-T-R)

Structure Type	Typical Existing Setback*	Example New Setback
Large animal structures (barns, stables, corrals)	30–50 ft (varies by zone)	10 ft side/rear 50 ft from adjacent dwellings
Small animal structures (goats, sheep, mini pigs)	30–50 ft	5 ft side/rear 25 ft from adjacent dwellings
Poultry coops / small hutches	30–50 ft	5 ft side/rear 35 ft from adjacent dwellings
Manure storage / compost areas	Often unclear or inconsistent	10–15 ft side/rear 50 ft from adjacent dwellings

Rural, Agricultural & Large-Lot Areas (e.g., R-R, R-A, R-D, A-1, A-P, W-2, N-A)

Structure Type	Typical Existing Setback*	Example New Setback
Large animal structures (barns, stables, corrals)	50–100 ft	20 ft side/rear 100 ft from adjacent dwellings
Small animal structures (goats, sheep, mini pigs)	50–100 ft	10 ft side/rear 35 ft from adjacent dwellings



Structure Type	Typical Existing Setback*	Example New Setback
Poultry coops / small hutches	50–100 ft	10 ft side/rear 50 ft from adjacent dwellings
Manure storage / compost areas	Often unclear or inconsistent	20–25 ft side/rear 100 ft from adjacent dwellings

* Existing setbacks vary greatly by zoning district and code section and are shown here as typical ranges for comparison.

6. Allowing Limited Flexibility Through a Minor Animal Permit

Another concern raised by the community was the lack of flexibility when site conditions make strict compliance impractical. Under the existing code, deviations from development standards require a variance or setback adjustment. Additionally, there is often no ability to increase the number of animals if it is listed as a use.

A concept presented is the use of a ministerial Minor Animal Permit (MAP) to allow limited, case-by-case flexibility. For example, a MAP could allow:

- A modest increase in the number of animals beyond the baseline allowance.
- A small adjustment to a setback where a property’s shape or existing development makes strict compliance difficult.
- An alternative layout that improves drainage, sanitation, or animal welfare.

This permit concept would rely on clear criteria and require conformance with best management practices for approval.

7. Recognizing Small-Scale Rural Activities

Community members repeatedly noted uncertainty about activities such as selling eggs, honey, or produce, providing riding lessons, or hosting youth agricultural programs. These activities are common on rural and equestrian properties but are not clearly addressed in the existing code.

One concept presented is explicitly recognizing small-scale, non-commercial rural activities. For example:



- Allowing on-site sale of eggs, honey, or produce generated on the property at a limited scale.
- Allowing a limited number of riding lessons or animal-related classes.
- Allowing 4-H and FFA projects without triggering commercial regulations.

Clear thresholds would distinguish these activities from higher-intensity commercial operations.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND COUNCIL GUIDANCE

City Council and community input is needed on whether these example-based concepts appropriately address concerns raised during prior workshops, particularly regarding rigidity, mixed animal keeping, setbacks, and clarity. Specifically, feedback on each of the following seven topics discussed in this report:

1. Consolidating Animal Keeping Standards
2. Providing Flexibility for Mixed Animal Keeping
3. Changes to the Number of Animals Allowed per Acre
4. Clarifying How Offspring Are Counted
5. Updating Setbacks for Animal Structures
6. Allowing Limited Flexibility Through a Minor Animal Permit
7. Recognizing Small-Scale Rural Activities

NEXT STEPS

Following the City Council workshop and community discussion, City Council direction will be used to refine the concepts presented, including consolidation of standards, animal allowances, setbacks, flexibility mechanisms, and related compatibility standards. These refinements would also inform how the Equestrian Lifestyle Protection Overlay (ELPO) is implemented and applied, ensuring that updated regulations better support equestrian uses while improving clarity and consistency across affected areas.

Once policy direction is confirmed, the City will prepare a request for City Council initiation of a General Plan and Zoning Code Amendment to update animal-keeping, equestrian and agricultural regulations.

After City Council initiation of the amendments, the Community Development Department would draft an Ordinance to implement the selected concepts for Planning Commission and City Council consideration. In parallel, the City would conduct environmental review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate whether the proposed changes may



result in any potential environmental impacts and to determine the appropriate level of CEQA documentation.

Upon completion of CEQA review, the proposed Ordinance will be brought forward for public hearings before the Planning Commission and followed by City Council. These hearings will provide additional opportunities for public input prior to any final action by City Council.

NOTICING REQUIREMENTS

City Council workshop does not require published notice or a public hearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

This item is not a project under CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), the common sense exemption, because the activity involves only information gathering and community input and therefore has no potential to cause a significant environmental effect

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Costs associated with this project were included in FY 2025 – 26 budget for Community Development.

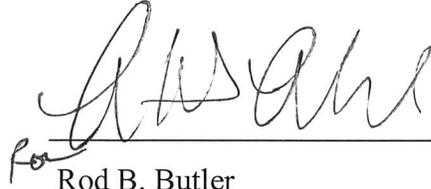


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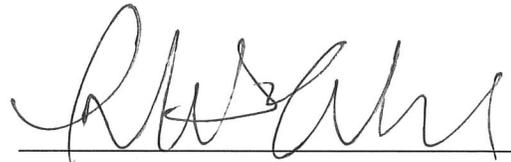
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