



TITLE

Accessory Animal Husbandry and Livestock Keeping Regulations Zoning Code Amendment

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of American Canyon recommending the City Council amend American Canyon Municipal Code Sections 19.05.090, 19.05.100, 19.10.040, and 19.31.020 to remove the prohibition on swine, limit livestock keeping to the Residential Estate (RE) Zoning district, and remove obsolete General Plan policy references.

CONTACT

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BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

Project Description

The proposed Zoning Code Amendment would revise four sections of the American Canyon Municipal Code related to animal husbandry and livestock keeping. The amendment removes language that currently excludes swine from:

1. The definition of Animal Husbandry in ACMC Section 19.05.090; and
2. The amendment would allow swine to be kept wherever animal husbandry or livestock keeping is otherwise permitted under the zoning code, subject to all existing animal keeping standards, lot size requirements, setbacks, and nuisance regulations.

The amendment also provides that animal husbandry and livestock keeping is permitted as an accessory use only in the Residential Estate (RE) zoning district.

Background

The Residential Estate (RE) zoning district currently permits animal husbandry. Properties within the RE district include areas such as Watson Lane, Holcomb Lane, and certain vacant parcels north of Eucalyptus Drive. A variety of large animals are allowed, however, swine are specifically excluded from both the animal husbandry classification and livestock keeping provisions.

The proposed zoning code amendment would allow swine (pigs) within the Animal Husbandry and Livestock Keeping regulations. This amendment is appropriate because Animal Keeping Standards

have extensive requirements to ensure compatibility with animal keeping activities and neighboring properties. For this reason, there is no compelling reason to continue with a prohibition on on swine (pigs) in locations where large animals are permitted in American Canyon.

Animal husbandry, where animals are kept for commercial purposes, is a rural activity. The code amendment removes commercial animal raising from the suburban and urban zoning districts, and retains it in Residential Estate, which requires a minimum one acre lot size. It is proposed to be deleted from the remaining suburban residential zoning districts (i.e.: Rural Residential Hillside (RRH), Rural Residential (RR), Residential Single Family (RS), Residential Medium Density (RM), and Residential High Density (RH) zoning districts).

One final change proposed is to amend the Residential Use list to delete references to policies in the former General Plan. Removing these references is necessary to maintain consistency between the Zoning Code and General Plan.

A copy of redline changes to the municipal code are included in Attachment 2. Each change proposed is discussed in detail below:

Proposed Zoning Code Amendments

1. Animal Husbandry Definition (ACMC 19.05.090) and Livestock Keeping Definition (ACMC 19.05.100)

Existing Code and Proposed Change

The Animal Husbandry classification includes activities such as grazing, ranching, dairy farming, poultry raising, and the raising of fur-bearing animals, but specifically excludes the raising of swine. The amendment would remove the prohibition of swine as shown in strikeout text below:

Animal husbandry: raising of animals or production of animal products, such as eggs or dairy products, on an agricultural or commercial basis. This classification includes grazing, ranching, dairy farming, poultry raising, the raising of fur-bearing animals, and the sale and storage of materials produced on-site, but ~~excludes the raising of swine,~~ feed lots, stockyards, slaughterhouses, dead animal rendering and wild animal keeping.

The amendment to Livestock Keeping definition would remove the prohibition of swine as shown in strikeout text below:

Livestock keeping: the keeping of large animals for personal purposes, including equines, bovines, sheep and goats, ~~but excluding swine,~~ in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 19.31, Animal Keeping Regulations.

Staff Analysis

The proposed Animal Husbandry amendment recognizes swine as a form of livestock consistent with other agricultural activities already permitted within appropriate zoning districts. Staff is aware of instances where swine have been raised in a manner compatible with surrounding residential and agricultural uses. Furthermore, existing Animal Keeping Standards require property owners to prevent nuisances associated with noise, odors, insects, and vermin. These standards provide safeguards that address the primary concerns commonly associated with swine husbandry.

2. Livestock Keeping Standards (ACMC 19.31.020(B)(2))

Existing Code and Proposed Change

The code allows the keeping of equines, bovines, sheep, and goats for personal purposes where livestock keeping is permitted but specifically excludes swine. The proposed change would delete the prohibition of swine from the list of permitted livestock as shown in strikeout text below:

(B) Permitted Animals.

(2) Livestock. Large animals, including equines, bovines, sheep, and goats , but excluding swine, may be kept for personal purposes where "livestock keeping" is permitted as an accessory use in each underlying zoning district.

Staff Analysis

The code already requires a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet for livestock keeping. (Section 19.31.020.) In addition, all animal keeping activities are subject to maintenance, sanitation, setback, and nuisance control standards. Staff finds that these regulations provide adequate safeguards regardless of the species of livestock being kept. Because swine can be regulated under the same operational standards applied to other livestock, staff does not identify a compelling land-use basis for maintaining a categorical prohibition on swine.

3. Amendment to ACMC Section 19.10.040 Allowable Use Table

Existing Code and Proposed Change.

The existing code allows livestock keeping in several residential zoning districts, including Rural Residential Hillside (RRH), Residential Estate (RE), Rural Residential (RR), Residential Single Family (RS) and Medium Density Residential (RM). The amendment would allow livestock keeping only in the Residential Estate (RE) zoning district. Furthermore, the zoning code would delete cross references to General Plan policies from the former General Plan as described below:

Amend ACMC Section 19.10.040 to:

- Permit livestock keeping as an accessory use only in the Residential Estate (RE) zoning district;
- Clarify where animal husbandry is permitted;
- Continue recognition of legally established nonconforming uses as provided by the Municipal Code; and
- Remove obsolete General Plan policy references.

Staff Analysis

The Residential Estate (RE) zoning district has a 1-acre minimum lot size which is the largest of all residential single family zoning districts. Because all other residential zoning districts are more urban in nature with smaller lots, they are not as well suited to animal husbandry as the Residential Estate (RE) zoning districts.

Striking out obsolete General Plan policy references is needed to ensure consistency between the zoning code and general plan.

Existing Regulatory Safeguards

ACMC Section 19.31.020, referred to as "Animal Keeping Standards" provides standards for owning and keeping animals of any size or purpose. The proposed amendment does not change these performance standards. The following requirements would continue to apply:

Property Maintenance

- Animal facilities, enclosures, and pasture areas must be maintained free of litter, garbage, and manure accumulations.
- Premises must be kept in a neat and sanitary condition.

Nuisance Prevention

- Animal owners must take reasonable measures to prevent excessive noise, odors, flies, vermin, and other nuisances from negatively affecting adjacent properties.
- The City may initiate enforcement actions if nuisance conditions occur.

Minimum Lot Size

- Livestock keeping, which refers to animals kept for personal (not commercial) purposes requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet, with at least 75 percent of the site accessible and usable for the animals.

Setbacks

- Animal enclosures, barns, corrals, pens, and related facilities must comply with zoning setbacks and separation requirements from structures used for human occupancy.
- Violation of animal keeping standards are subject to enforcement and penalties under Chapter 19.02 of the Municipal Code.

Consistency with the General Plan

The proposed amendment is consistent with General Plan policies supporting agricultural uses within areas designated and zoned for such activities. The amendment does not expand locations where livestock keeping is permitted; rather, it modifies the types of livestock that may be kept in areas where livestock keeping is already allowed. Existing performance standards ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

If the Planning Commission recommends the ordinance amendment, it will be advanced to the City Council on August 18, 2026.

COUNCIL PRIORITY PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Community and Sense of Place: "Build on the strength of our local community to develop a clear 'sense of place' and establish our unique identity."

FISCAL IMPACT

Not applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed amendment is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it can be seen with certainty that the amendment will not have a significant effect on the environment. The amendment does not authorize new development and retains all existing operational standards governing animal keeping.

The proposed amendments do not authorize new development, increase development density, expand the geographic area where livestock keeping or animal husbandry is allowed, or eliminate existing operational standards applicable to animal keeping. Rather, the amendments remove the prohibition on swine within existing use classifications, reduce and clarify where livestock keeping and animal husbandry are permitted, and retain all existing standards governing lot size, setbacks, maintenance, sanitation, nuisance prevention, and code enforcement. Accordingly, the amendments will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and are exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). The proposed amendments are also exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15305 (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations) because they constitute minor modifications to land use regulations and do not change land use designations, density, or development intensity.

COMMUNICATION

Level 0: No Further Public Communication Needed

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [PC Resolution Animal Keeping Zoning](#)
2. [Redline Amendments to Accessory Use Zoning Code Amendment](#)