



City Council Staff Report

Subject: Kennel Ordinance Amendments / Zoning Ordinance Amendment, ZOA2025-0002, and Environmental, ENV2026-0007

Date: May 12, 2026

Submitted By: Bennett Smithhart, Senior Planner
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Department: Community Development

Recommendation:

Conduct a Public Hearing and Consider the Following Actions:

- A. Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocklin Approving a Notice of Exemption (Kennel Ordinance Amendments / ENV2026-0007).
- B. Introduce, Waive the Full Reading and Read by Title Only, an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Rocklin Amending Rocklin Municipal Code Section 17.64.070 - Kennels (Kennel Ordinance / ZOA2025-0002).

Background:

As the entitlement request includes a legislative action which requires approval of an ordinance, a two-meeting process is required.

May 12, 2026 – First reading of ordinance and final action on resolution:

- A. Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocklin Approving a Notice of Exemption (Kennel Ordinance Amendments / ENV2026-0007).
- B. Introduce, Waive the Full Reading and Read by Title Only, an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Rocklin Amending Rocklin Municipal Code Section 17.64.070 - Kennels (Kennel Ordinance / ZOA2025-0002).

May 26, 2026 – Final action for ordinance:

- A. Adopt an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Rocklin amending Rocklin Municipal Code Section 17.64.070 - Kennels (Kennel Ordinance / ZOA2025-0002).

Proposal:

The proposal is an amendment of the Rocklin Municipal Code (RMC) to modify Section 17.64.070 – Kennels, to make kennels subject to the review and approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), to apply application and operational requirements, and to include an advance noticing requirement for kennels with outdoor dog enclosures.

Proponent:

The proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment was initiated by the City of Rocklin.

Location:

The proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment would apply to commercial and industrial zones within the city, excluding the Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) zone.

Summary of Planning Commission Hearing and Action:

On April 21, 2026, the Planning Commission (Commission) reviewed the proposed project. The Commission asked clarifying questions regarding the proposed modifications, including how future kennel operations would mitigate noise impacts under outdoor operational scenarios. One member of the public expressed concern that the text changes could result in unsatisfactory kennel operations enforcement. Staff responded by summarizing the additional enforcement measures included in the update, as well as existing City processes such as current provisions in the RMC that allow for a revocation procedure for a CUP, and the ability for a Code Enforcement process that would address potential public nuisances. The Commission then closed the public hearing and proceeded to deliberation, during which it inquired further about mitigation of noise from indoor-only operations and noted that the proposed modifications improved the ordinance, expressing overall support for the changes, and subsequently voted 4-0, with one member absent, to recommend approval to the City Council.

Background:

On October 24, 2017, the City of Rocklin adopted an amendment to the Rocklin Municipal Code to regulate the operation of kennels within City limits (ZOA2017-0005). The amendment aligned Title 6 – Animals, with Title 17 – Zoning, by specifying that kennels are permitted only as allowed under zoning regulations. As part of this 2017 amendment, definitions for “kennels” and “veterinary clinics” in Title 17 were revised for clarity. Chapter 17.64 – Special and Prohibited Uses was also updated to reaffirm that kennels used for the breeding and raising of animals for sale remain a prohibited use. In addition, Section 17.64.070 – Kennels was introduced to outline where boarding kennels may be located, the permit process, and operational requirements applicable to all kennels. The ordinance amendment allowed boarding kennels to operate in all commercial and industrial zoning districts within the City, provided they obtain an Administrative Kennel Permit issued by the Economic and Community Development Director. Continued operation is subject to ongoing compliance with defined operational standards.

In 2025, staff initiated a zoning ordinance amendment to revise the kennel ordinance, with the goal of updating operational standards, ensuring consistency with standard kennel practices, and aligning local regulations with best practices in the industry to foster more efficient and compliant kennel operations in Rocklin.

On May 20, 2025, the Commission reviewed the originally proposed amendment. Following staff’s presentation, the Commission had questions and discussed the proposed development standards for outdoor dog enclosures and the public interest that led to the amendment. Following staff’s responses to the Commission, the item was opened up for public comment and there were no speakers. The Commission then voted 5–0 to recommend approval to the City Council.

On August 12, 2025, the City Council reviewed the originally proposed amendment and asked clarifying questions regarding existing private kennel operations in Rocklin, including whether any complaints have been received and the potential compatibility of such uses with nearby sensitive uses, such as office tenants, who may be affected by dog barking during business hours. During deliberation, the City Council discussed concerns related to if neighboring tenants and property owners being aware of potential outdoor kennel operations. As a result, the City Council directed staff to evaluate options to address City Council's comments.

Subsequent Revisions after City Council Hearing:

To address concerns brought up during the August 12, 2025 City Council meeting, staff modified the Ordinance to include an advanced public noticing requirement when staff receives an application for a kennel with an outdoor dog enclosure. The notice will be sent out when all of a project's details have been fully submitted. The notice will provide adjacent addresses and property owners with the opportunity to comment on the proposed kennel operation during the initial City review of the request for a kennel. The noticing allows the owners and/or occupants of any adjacent building within 300 feet of the subject property to be aware of the proposed use, and it provides them with an earlier opportunity to comment and bring to staff's attention if sensitive uses or other concerns exist.

Staff recommends including the additional amended text below as a requirement:

17.64.070 B.5. (Application Submittal) In addition to the standard noticing requirements, any kennel application that includes an outdoor enclosure shall require an early notice to be mailed to surrounding properties. The early notice constitutes the final administrative action prior to the City's determination that an application submittal is complete. The notice shall be provided to all property owners of record and to mailing addresses within 300 feet of the subject property, advising that an application has been received, providing a summary of the application, and the location where project documents can be reviewed. This notice shall be mailed no fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the Planning Commission hearing.

Staff will notify the applicant of any correspondence received and they will be provided an opportunity to respond to or address any potential concerns. If needed, staff may require a memo prepared by a qualified professional, if not prepared already, to provide potential mitigation measures if unique sensitive uses (e.g., library, counseling center, testing facility) are identified near the proposed kennel location.

Summary of the Proposed Changes:

The RMC currently allows for kennel operations that are restricted to indoor spaces only, with these operations subject to approval through an administrative permit process. Staff has recognized that allowing for outdoor dog enclosures would provide local kennel operations with greater flexibility and enhance the quality of the stay at the kennel for the dogs, as they would be able to enjoy outdoor time. In response, the proposed kennel ordinance amendment would permit both indoor operations and those with indoor and outdoor enclosures, contingent upon the submission of specific requirements such as design plans, operational details, descriptions of surrounding businesses, noise studies, as well as advanced noticing

requirements for outdoor kennel operations. The proposed kennel ordinance amendment would also change the approval process for all kennel types from requiring an Administrative Kennel Permit to requiring a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approved by the Planning Commission. This shift ensures more enforceable operational standards and a comprehensive evaluation of zoning, safety, and community impact factors before a kennel may operate.

Conclusion:

The approval of the proposed kennel ordinance amendment would allow for kennels with outdoor dog enclosures to be situated in specific commercial and industrial areas, subject to certain conditions and development standards, advanced noticing requirements, and approval of a CUP. These conditions would include the establishment of a buffer zone to minimize the impact on neighboring properties and locational criteria for proximity to particular roadways. Additionally, the ordinance would require the submission of a noise study to assess potential disturbances, as well as detailed outdoor dog enclosure design plans that outline the layout and aesthetics of the outdoor enclosures. These measures are intended to ensure that the kennels are responsibly integrated into their surroundings, balancing the needs of the animals with the potential concerns of the local community.

Existing indoor-only kennels that were previously approved under an administrative permit are allowed to continue operating as legal non-conforming uses, provided they remain in compliance with all applicable regulations, zoning codes, and operational standards as set forth in the kennel ordinance. Any modifications, expansions, or changes to the use of such kennels shall be subject to review and approval in accordance with current zoning and land use regulations.

Recommendation:

The Planning Commission and staff recommend that the City Council approve a Notice of Exemption and adopt an ordinance amending Rocklin Municipal Code Section 17.64.070 - Kennels.

Environmental Analysis:

The proposed text amendments to Section 17.64.070 are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15061(b)(3), as the activity is not expected to result in a direct physical change, nor is it reasonably foreseeable to cause an indirect physical change to the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution - Notice of Exemption](#)
2. [Ordinance - Kennel Ordinance Amendments](#)
3. [Rocklin Municipal Code Section 17.64.070 redlined](#)