AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

Monday, April 13, 2026
6:30 p.m.

This meeting will be conducted as a virtual meeting, and in person, at: 7500 West 29th Avenue, Municipal Building, Council Chambers.

City Council members and City staff members will be physically present at the Municipal building for this meeting. The public may participate in these ways:

1. Attend the meeting in person at City Hall. Use the appropriate roster to sign up to speak upon arrival.
2. Provide comment in advance at www.wheatridgespeaks.org (comment by noon on April 13, 2026)
3. Virtually attend and participate in the meeting through a device or phone:

   Click here to pre-register and provide public comment by Zoom (You must preregister before 5:00 p.m. on April 13, 2026)

4. View the meeting live or later at www.wheatridgespeaks.org, Channel 8, or YouTube Live at https://www.ci.wheatridge.co.us/view

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Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to participate in all public meetings sponsored by the City of Wheat Ridge. The City will upon request, provide auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities, including qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in Braille, and other ways of making communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments. To request auxiliary aid, service for effective communication, or document in a different format, please use this form or contact ADA Coordinator, (Kelly McLaughlin at ada@ci.wheatridge.co.us or 303-235-2885) as soon as possible, preferably 7 days before the activity or event.

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- City Council Meeting Minutes, March 23, 2026
- Special Study Session Notes, March 23, 2026

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

PROCLAMATIONS AND CEREMONIES

- Proclamation – Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Proclamation – Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- Oath of Office – Sr. Deputy City Clerk, Onorina Maloney
- Oath of Office – Deputy City Clerk, Lucy Spalenka

PUBLICS' RIGHT TO SPEAK

a. Public may speak on any matter not on the agenda for a maximum of 3 minutes under Publics' Right to Speak. Please speak up to be heard when directed by the mayor.

b. Members of the Public who wish to speak on a Public Hearing item or Decision, Resolution, or Motion may speak when directed by the mayor at the conclusion of the staff report for that specific agenda item.

c. Members of the Public may comment on any agenda item in writing by noon on the day of the meeting at www.WheatRidgeSpeaks.org. Comments made on Wheat Ridge Speaks are considered part of the public record.

CONSENT AGENDA

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

1. Council Bill No. 07-2026 – an ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge municipal code concerning animal welfare and regulation for the same time
2. Council Bill No. 08-2026 – an ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning vehicles and traffic by adding a new Section 13-7, concerning the violation of vehicle registration requirements to allow for the citation of vehicle registration violations into municipal court

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

3. Council Bill No. 09-2026 – an ordinance approving the rezoning for property located at 3338 Depew Street from Residential-Three (R-3) to Residential-One C (R-1C)

DECISIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND MOTIONS

None

CITY MANAGER'S MATTERS

CITY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS

ELECTED OFFICIALS' MATTERS

ADJOURN TO SPECIAL STUDY SESSION

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
Monday, March 23, 2026

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, with Councilmembers, City staff, and members of the public participating either in person at the Municipal Building (7500 W. 29th Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado) or virtually.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Stites called the regular City Council meeting to order on March 23, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those present stood, if able, and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Councilmembers Present: Rachel Hultin, Dan Larson, Kathleen Martell, Scott Ohm, Mike Okada, Patrick Quinn, Jenny Snell, and Susan Wood.
Absent: None
A quorum was established.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

City Manager Patrick Goff, City Attorney Gerald Dahl (via Zoom), Community Development Director Lauren Mikulak, and Senior Deputy City Clerk Onorina Maloney.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council approved the City Council Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2026, and March 9, 2026; the Special Study Session Notes of February 23, 2026, and March 9, 2026; and the Study Session Notes of March 2, 2026. Mayor Pro Tem Hultin noted that the City

Council Meeting Minutes from February 23, 2026, for boards and commissions appointments needed corrections to the recorded motions and seconds for each district; she indicated she would follow up with the City Clerk via email. No other corrections were noted, and the minutes were approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

PROCLAMATIONS AND CEREMONIES

1. Proclamation – National Donate Life Month

Mayor Stites proclaimed April 2026 as National Donate Life Month, joined by Cassie Hertert (Donor Alliance) and Jane Dvorak (Transplant Games). The proclamation noted Colorado's nearly 900,000 registered donors and the impact of donation (up to 8 lives saved, 75 healed per donor) and recognized the Denver Transplant Games (June 18–23, 2026).

Hertert thanked the City, and cited Colorado's 57% donor registry rate, which is above the 44% national average, and invited Council to an April 1 flag raising at Wheat Ridge High School.

Dvorak stated that Denver would host the Transplant Games for the first time, expecting 10,000–12,000 participants from 43 teams, and emphasized the event's focus on celebrating life and organ donation.

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO SPEAK

In person

Megan Snow – Wheat Ridge Resident- spoke about the personal impact of organ and tissue donation. She shared that her father received a lifesaving liver transplant in 1999, giving him 17 additional years, and that he later donated his corneas upon his passing. Snow also recognized Councilmember Jenny Snell for donating a kidney to a friend in 2017, highlighting how one choice can transform another life. She expressed gratitude for the city's recognition of Donate Life Month.

Via Zoom:

No speakers registered.

Wheat Ridge Speaks:

Item

Public's Right to Speak

Kelly M. Blynn

Comment received: Mar 23, 2026 at 11:00am

My name is Kelly Blynn, I'm part of the Wheat Ridge ATATs (Active Transportation Advisory Team) and live in Wheat Ridge. I know the IGA regarding 26th Ave is not open for public comment, but did want to share a couple of comments for that resurfacing project, since the city is desiring to take a more holistic approach to resurfacing to make multimodal improvements where possible. First of all, the ATATs have received comments from a few members who ride on Pierce and 26th regularly about the intersection between those two streets. Restriping was completed a year or two ago, which may have inadvertently made the intersection more dangerous for bikers. While it's great that the bike lane going northbound on Pierce south of 26th now goes all the way to the stop bar, it then drops bikers with no lane on the north side now needing to merge in the middle of the intersection, which is pretty dangerous. At the same time, there is a buffer for some reason between the thru and left-turn lanes on southbound Pierce, which it appears could be reapportioned to a bike lane for northbound Pierce. Although southbound Pierce would continue to lack a dedicated bike lane all the way to the intersection, that direction is going downhill so merging with motorists is slightly less dangerous. While this issue may have more to do with Pierce, we know the city will be looking at Pierce as part of the 2J projects, so did want to raise it in case there's an opportunity to address this as part of this project. Second, 26th is a very wide right of way and seems like a great opportunity to consider options to add buffering to make this street more accessible for more riders of different ages and abilities. Thanks for your time and attention!

Item

Public's Right to Speak

Brianna (last name not provided)

Comment Received: Mar 23, 2026, at 10:32am

I'm writing about the Wilmore-Davis Elementary School property as a resident of Bel-Aire in Wheat Ridge. As others have mentioned in writing and at the previous City Council meeting, I agree that I would love to see that property become a park that the community can continue to enjoy. It doesn't have to be a full dog park, but having a

space dedicated to dogs would be nice. Ideally, there could be a "high-energy play" and "low-energy play" section like at the Berkley Lake Park dog park. I would not recommend having a small and large dog section as community members tend to get very upset if those aren't adhered to and most of the time small and large dogs can play very well together. Even if this property does not have some space dedicated to a dog park, having a park for the community to enjoy would be so nice since it has already been a value add to have the space available for us today. Ideally the building could become an extension of the Makerspace or Active Adult Center. I would strongly discourage the property to be sold to developers since the space will likely become townhomes, which the city of Wheat Ridge already has many of. And, when the owners of the townhomes put them up for sale, they are not selling and stay on the market for a very long time. The owners usually having to decrease the asking price. This indicates there isn't a lot of appetite for townhomes these days.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Resolution No. 17-2026 – a resolution amending the 2026 General Fund budget to reflect the approval of a supplemental budget appropriation in the amount of $228,237 to accept a grant from the Colorado State Internet Portal Authority

b. Resolution No. 18-2026 – a resolution approving an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Wheat Ridge and the City of Lakewood providing for resurfacing of 26th Avenue between Wadsworth Boulevard and Pierce Street

Councilmember Snell read the titles of Items 1a and 1b into the record.

Motion: Councilmember Snell moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 1a and 1b
Second: Councilmember Ohm
Vote: 8 ayes; 0 nays**.**
Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

2. Council Bill No. 05-2026 – an ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws supporting compliance with state legislation regarding housing supportive code amendments to remain eligible for state funding opportunities

ISSUE:

The item under consideration is to amend Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws to update the review process for qualifying affordable housing projects and to update accessory dwelling unit (ADU) setback requirements for some zone districts to

ensure compliance with state regulations, to remain eligible for state funding opportunities.

Councilmember Martell read the title and issue into the record.

Mayor Stites opened the public hearing.

Community Development Director Mikulak presented the staff report, noting the update aligns the code with prior Council direction. She explained that the accessory dwelling unit (ADU) change resolves a minor setback discrepancy identified by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). She added that administrative approvals would apply only to proposals already meeting all zoning and development standards, thereby streamlining the review process without altering the underlying requirements.

No members of the public signed up to speak, and no questions were raised from Council. Mayor Stites closed the public hearing.

Motion: Councilmember Martell moved to approve Council Bill No. 05-2026, an ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws supporting compliance with state legislation regarding housing supportive code amendments to remain eligible for state funding opportunities, on second reading, order it published and that it takes effect 15 days after final publication as required by the charter.

Second: Mayor Pro Tem Hultin

Council discussed the positive impact of accessory dwelling units in nearby neighborhoods, noting their use for traveling nurses at Lutheran Hospital and for multigenerational housing. Council indicated the policy was functioning as intended and supported technical updates needed to maintain eligibility for state funding.
Vote: 8 ayes; 0 nays**.**
Motion carried.

3. Council Bill No. 06-2026 – an ordinance approving the sale of city-owned real property and in connection therewith, authorizing execution of a purchase and sale agreement

ISSUE:

The purpose of this action is to request City Council approval for the sale of approximately 0.31 acres of City-owned real property located at 3805 Wadsworth Boulevard to HCA-HealthONE LLC for a purchase price of $422,500. Approval of this ordinance will also authorize the execution of a Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA) and associated closing documents.

Councilmember Ohm read the title and issue into the record.

Mayor Stites opened the public hearing.

City Manager Goff reported that the City intends to sell a 0.31-acre remnant parcel at the northwest corner of 38th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard, originally acquired in 2020 for the Wadsworth improvement project and now identified as excess property. Staff noted that the City Charter requires a three-quarters vote of the full Council to approve real property sales by ordinance. The proposed sale to HCA HealthONE is part of a broader plan to develop a Health Park at the site, with closing contingent on their securing agreements with two additional property owners.

Council requested that representatives from HCA HealthONE outline their plans. Representatives described a proposed destination health park including a 14,000-square-foot freestanding emergency department along Wadsworth Blvd., acquisition of the Reese's Dental and former Midas properties, and redevelopment of the Wilmore Shopping Center into medical office space. Council discussed the status of negotiations with other property owners, and representatives reported they were in the final stages of negotiations with all remaining parties

Mayor Stites closed the public hearing.

Motion: Councilmember Ohm moved to approve Council Bill No. 06-2026, an ordinance approving the sale of City-owned real property and in connection therewith, authorizing execution of a purchase and sale agreement, and that it take effect 15 days after final publication as required by the charter.
Second: Councilmember Snell
Vote: 8 ayes; 0 nays**.**
Motion carried.

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

4. Council Bill No. 07-2026 – an ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge Municipal Code concerning animal welfare regulations for the same

ISSUE:

Several sections of the City's animal code are outdated, inconsistent, confusing, or do not reflect current needs or practices. As such, Staff propose several amendments to the Wheat Ridge Animal and Land Use Code for City Council's consideration.

Mayor Pro Tem Hultin read the title and issue into the record.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Hultin moved to approve Council Bill No. 07-2026, an ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning animal welfare and regulations for the same, order it published, public hearing set for Monday, April 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., as a virtual meeting and in City Council Chambers, 7500 West 29th Avenue, and that it takes effect fifteen (15) days after final publication as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter.
Second: Councilmember Ohm
Vote: 8 ayes; 0 nays**.**
Motion carried.

5. Council Bill No. 08-2026 – an ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning vehicles and traffic by adding a new Section 13-7, concerning the violation of vehicle registration requirements to allow for the citation of vehicle registration violations into municipal court

ISSUE:

Colorado House Bill 25-1112 empowers local authorities in Colorado to enforce vehicle registration laws, enabling them to issue penalties for unregistered vehicles within their jurisdictions. This ordinance was modeled to incorporate elements of the new law for enforcement within the City.

Councilmember Larson read the title and issue into the record.

Motion: Councilmember Larson moved to approve Council Bill No. 08-2026, an ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws, concerning vehicles and traffic, by adding a new Section 13-7, concerning the violation of vehicle registration requirements, to allow for the citation of vehicle registration violations into municipal court, order it published, public hearing set for Monday April 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., as a virtual meeting and in City Council Chambers, 7500 West 29th Avenue, and that it takes effect upon adoption, as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter.
Second: Councilmember Wood
Vote: 8 ayes; 0 nays**.**
Motion carried.

DECISIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND MOTIONS

No matters were presented.

CITY MANAGER'S MATTERS

City Manager Goff reported no matters for the evening but noted that the City Attorney was available on Zoom due to a home emergency preventing his physical attendance.

CITY ATTORNEY'S MATTERS

No matters were presented.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' MATTERS

Councilmember Okada encouraged residents to complete the city survey, noting it takes approximately 17 minutes. He reported on meetings with Representative Pettersen, Senator Hickenlooper, and Senator Bennet during the National League of Cities (NLC) conference in Washington, DC. Okada added that he and other members were reviewing potential amendments to Council Bill 07-2026 to support local businesses and ensure clear communication with staff regarding any language changes.

Councilmember Larson requested a study session item regarding an issue facing the Wheat Ridge Historical Society, and Councilmember Okada seconded. Councilmember Larson reported on his testimony for House Bill 1071 and requested that the City's traffic management staff review left-turn signal timing, including at 44th Avenue and Kipling Street. He also noted recent St. Patrick's Day events at Clancy's and the Active Adult Center**.**

Councilmember Wood reflected on the importance of federal legislation to local governments, emphasizing the impact such legislation has on communities. She appreciated the collaborative nature and learning opportunities provided by interactions with fellow attendees at the DC conference.

Councilmember Quinn echoed positive sentiments about the Washington, DC conference and recognized Councilmember Snell's life-saving kidney donation, expressing admiration for her gift.

Councilmember Martell also appreciated the conference, noting the recurring theme that "local governments deliver." She mentioned upcoming community events on April 1, including the Clear Creek Makerspace's second birthday and the opening of Happiness Gardens.

Councilmember Snell acknowledged the positive impact of having a council composed of caring, empathetic, and kind individuals. She invited everyone to join her family team for the annual Donor Dash 5K run/walk event in July 2026, celebrating organ and tissue donation. She announced that district office hours would move to Anne's Pie Café on April 7.

Councilmember Ohm expressed concern about early Stage One water restrictions announced by Denver Water on March twenty-fifth and encouraged residents to prioritize watering trees over lawns. He noted his intention to replace Kentucky

bluegrass with drought-tolerant alternatives. He also highlighted the upcoming redbud season in districts two and four.

Mayor Pro Tem Hultin thanked Councilmember Snell for her organ donation and noted her own family's experience with kidney donation. She raised safety concerns about students crossing near Stevens Elementary School and emphasized the need for increased driver awareness. She reflected on the Washington, D.C. conference's focus on civility and noted ongoing discussions with the Mayor about maintaining civil expectations. She also expressed appreciation for the youth counselors at the conference and affirmed her commitment to developing a youth council in Wheat Ridge.

Mayor Stites announced his April 1 visit to Everitt Middle School to speak to a civics class. He commented on the recent active transportation State of the City event hosted by Colorado Plus and reported on the March 23 Coffee with the Mayor at the Active Adult Center. He announced the next Coffee with the Mayor on May 9 at the new Starbucks on 38th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard. He also thanked Congresswoman Pettersen for her engagement during meetings in Washington, D.C.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Stites adjourned the March 23, 2026, Regular Council Meeting at 7:17 p.m.

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Rachel Hultin, Mayor Pro Tem

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Onorina Z. Maloney, Senior Deputy City Clerk

NOTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL STUDY SESSION
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO

Hybrid Meeting
Monday, March 23, 2026

The Special Study Session was held both in person and virtually in a hybrid format at 7500 West 29th Avenue, Municipal Building, Council Chambers. Councilmembers and City staff were present in the Council Chambers. Members of the public were able to observe and participate either in person or virtually.

CALL TO ORDER

The March 23, 2026, Special Study Session was called to order by Mayor Stites at 7:17 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Councilmembers present: Rachel Hultin, Dan Larson, Kathleen Martell, Scott Ohm, Mike Okada, Patrick Quinn, Jenny Snell, and Susan Wood.

Absent: None

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

City Manager Patrick Goff, Parks and Recreation Director Karen O'Donnell, Forestry and Open Space Supervisor Jim Roemmelt, and Senior Deputy City Clerk Onorina Maloney.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

In person:
None

Via Zoom:

None

Wheat Ridge Speaks:
None

1. URBAN TREE CANOPY IN WHEAT RIDGE

City Manager Patrick Goff opened the session, noting Wheat Ridge's long-standing Tree City USA status and introducing the discussion on the City's urban tree canopy, current challenges, and preservation programs.

Parks and Recreation Director Karen O'Donnell introduced Jim Roemmelt, Forestry and Open Space Supervisor, and a certified arborist with 15 years of experience. Roemmelt emphasized that urban trees are critical infrastructure, providing benefits such as reducing urban heat, improving air quality, managing stormwater, increasing property values, and supporting community health. Wheat Ridge has maintained Tree City USA status for 48 years, requiring a tree board, a community tree ordinance, a minimum of $2 per capita forestry spending (the City currently invests approximately $12 per capita), and an annual Arbor Day celebration.

The City manages 8,391 trees in parks and rights-of-way, with 19 percent canopy coverage, comparable to the Denver metro average of 20 percent. Roemmelt reviewed the 30-20-10 species diversity guideline, noting Siberian elm slightly exceeds recommended limits (11–12 percent) but still provides ecological benefits.

Key challenges include:

- Pests: emerald ash borer (~500 trees treated annually); Ips beetle (~90–100 spruce and pine trees treated annually).
- Diseases: fire blight; Thyronectria canker on honey locusts along 38th Avenue; Cytospora canker on spruces.
- Right-of-way issues: aging trees (80–100 years), drought stress, winter salt impacts, and establishment needs for new trees.

In 2025, the forestry team planted 396 trees, pruned 206, removed 25, and treated 450 for pests. Programs include hazardous tree grants (57 applicants, 35 awards, $32,000 total), annual tree sale (90 trees sold), branch drop-offs (~30 cubic yards mulch), memorial tree plantings, and tree stewardship volunteer program (6 volunteers for 2026).

Major grants: ~$700,000 from the USDA in 2024 (paused in 2025, continuing through 2028) and ~$400,000 from the Colorado State Forest Service in 2025. Funds support tree planting, inventory software, youth corps projects, tools, and staff time.

Equipment improvements since 2020—including a bucket truck (65-foot boom), a stump grinder, and a mini skid steer—have reduced contractor costs by ~$200,000 annually while maintaining $45,000 for large tree work.

The forestry team includes Technician David Lemper and Assistants Jared Avalos and Raymond Picasso.

Annual Arbor Day events include the planting of 30–50 trees, provide community education, and promote environmental stewardship with partners such as the Rotary Club and schools. The 2026 event will be held east of Bass Lake; participants should meet at Prospect Park at 8:00 a.m.

Council Discussion:

- Memorial tree program**:** Funding of up to $125 is available through the Wheat Ridge Memorial Foundation; applicants cover remaining costs; 5–15 applications annually; plaques are not installed due to maintenance concerns.
- Hazardous tree grants: The City covers 50% of costs, up to $1,500 for removals, $1,000 for pruning, and $500 for treatments.
- Utility coordination**:** The City does not work in Xcel Energy easements; homeowners coordinate directly with the utility provider.
- Tree of Heaven**:** Tree of Heaven is removed from City parks; eligible for hazardous tree grant program as a noxious species.
- Grant eligibility**:** Homeowners, businesses, short-term rentals, HOAs; one tree per property per year.
- Pampas grass management: Handled by the horticulture division under Roemmelt's supervision.

The discussion highlighted the importance of species diversity, proper tree placement to avoid utility conflicts, and ongoing maintenance for the aging tree canopy. Councilmembers expressed appreciation for the comprehensive program and the forestry team's efforts in maintaining Wheat Ridge's tree heritage.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Stites adjourned the Special Study Session of March 23, 2026, at 7:56 p.m.

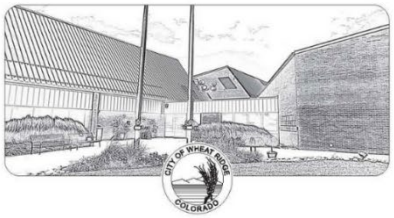
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Rachel Hultin, Mayor Pro Tem

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Onorina Z. Maloney, Senior Deputy City Clerk

WHEAT RIDGE, CO



EST. 1969

PROCLAMATION
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH
April 2026

WHEREAS, every child deserves to grow up in a safe, nurturing environment, free from harm and fear. Every responsible person will agree that even one abused child is too many; and

WHEREAS, the month of April has been designated nationally as Child Abuse Prevention Month. We encourage all community members to join in renewing our commitment to learning what we can do to promote the safety and well-being of children; and

WHEREAS, Wheat Ridge has dedicated individuals and organizations who work daily to counter the problem of child abuse and to help parents obtain assistance they need; and

WHEREAS, our community is stronger when all community members become aware of child abuse prevention and become involved in supporting parents to raise their children in a safe and nurturing environment; and

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention programs succeed because of partnerships among families, social service agencies, schools, religious and civic organizations, law enforcement agencies and the business community; and

WHEREAS, Ralston House Child Advocacy Center works with law enforcement, child protective services, district attorney's offices in the 1st and 17th Judicial Districts, and the community to provide a safe place to investigate child abuse and provide victim services for children who have been physically or sexually abused or witnessed violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I, Korey Stites, Mayor of the City of Wheat Ridge and the Wheat Ridge City Council, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2026, to be:

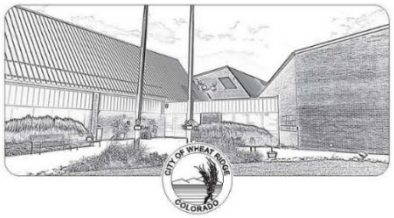
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, on this 13th day of April 2026.

Korey Stites, Mayor

Janeece Hoppe, City Clerk

WHEAT RIDGE, CO



EST. 1969

PROCLAMATION
SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH - APRIL 2026
COLORADO DENIM DAY - APRIL 29, 2026

WHEREAS, every day, women, men, and children across Colorado suffer the pain and trauma of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, sexual violence affects individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this crime occurs far too frequently, goes unreported far too often, and leaves long-lasting physical and emotional scars; and

WHEREAS, during National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we recommit ourselves not only to lifting the veil of secrecy and shame surrounding sexual violence, but also to raise awareness and expanding support for victims; and

WHEREAS, at the state level, we must work to provide necessary resources to victims of every circumstance, including medical and mental health services, relocation and housing assistance, and advocacy during the criminal justice process; and

WHEREAS, PorchLight Family Justice Center provides comprehensive legal, emotional and critical supportive services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, abuse of at-risk individuals, elder abuse, and human trafficking.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I, Korey Stites, Mayor of the City of Wheat Ridge and the Wheat Ridge City Council, do hereby declare the month of April 2026, as

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

and further recognize April 29, 2026, as Colorado Denim Day, encouraging Wheat Ridge residents to wear denim to show their support for the victims of sexual assault and highlight this issue in our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, on this 13th day of April 2026.

Korey Stites, Mayor

Janeece Hoppe, City Clerk

ITEM NUMBER: 1
DATE: April 13, 2026

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

COUNCIL BILL NO. 07-2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WHEAT RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE AND REGULATIONS FOR THE SAME

☒PUBLIC HEARING
☐BIDS/MOTIONS
☐RESOLUTIONS

☐ORDINANCES FOR 1st READING
☒ORDINANCES FOR 2nd READING

QUASI-JUDICIAL ☐YES ☒NO

ISSUE:

Several sections of the City's animal code are outdated, inconsistent, confusing, or do not reflect current needs or practices. As such, Staff propose several amendments to the Wheat Ridge Animal and Land Use Code for City Council's consideration.

PRIOR ACTION:

- June 2, 2025: the City Council held a Study Session to review several proposed amendments to the City's animal code, aimed at clarifying language, aligning with best practices, and keeping pace with peer cities. Council discussed many of these items and directed staff to return with the remaining amendments and additional considerations.
- September 15, 2025: Council reconvened to address those outstanding issues. This ordinance reflects the guidance provided by Council at both meetings.
- February 19, 2026: Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed changes to Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning the keeping of small animals by a vote of 5 to 0 on February 19, 2026.
- City Council approved this ordinance on first reading on March 23, 2026. A motion was made by Councilmember Hultin and seconded by Councilmember Ohm and approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

No impact.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Wheat Ridge's Municipal Code defines the manner and method by which animals may be kept within the community and it establishes regulations to safeguard residents and public safety. As such, Council Bill No. 07-2026 makes the following changes to Chapter 2: Administration, Chapter 4: Animals, and Chapter 26: Zoning and Development of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws.

Chapter 2

Section 2-80: Purpose, scope

This section reflects the addition of procedural language as well as the inclusion of Chapter 4: Animals to the administrative scope of the article.

Chapter 4

Section 4-1: Vicious Animal, Dangerous Dog, and Aggressive Dog Definitions:

Currently, the animal code includes definitions for vicious animals, aggressive dogs, and dangerous dogs. This amendment consolidates those categories into aggressive animals and dangerous animals to improve clarity and ensure consistent treatment across different animal species.

Section 4-8: Animal at Large

Currently, the "animal at large" provisions apply only to dogs. This amendment extends these regulations to all animals, excluding domestic housecats, and clarifies that animals remaining on their owner's property are not considered at large.

Section 4-8: Off-Leash Dog Park Regulations

Currently, violations of off-leash dog park regulations are treated as criminal offenses. This amendment deletes the relevant clause in Chapter 4, allowing such violations to be addressed solely as civil offenses. This amendment also provides clarity to allow all off-leash regulations to live entirely within Chapter 17: Parks and Recreation.

Section 4-10: Owners Required to Report Bites

Currently, the City of Wheat Ridge does not require animal owners to report when their animal bites a person. This amendment requires that bites breaking the skin be reported to the City within 48 hours, aligning with best practices for rabies control.

Section 4-10: Rabies Quarantine Vaccinations

Animals that bite a person are required to be placed under quarantine for ten days to monitor for signs of rabies. However, the code does not currently prohibit an owner from obtaining a rabies vaccination for an animal during the quarantine period. This amendment establishes such a prohibition, as vaccination during quarantine could interfere with the rabies evaluation process.

Section 4-10: Rabies Outbreak Powers

Currently, in the event of a rabies outbreak, the Mayor is authorized to impose strict regulations on animals within the City limits. This authority has never been exercised in practice. This ordinance amends the code to remove this provision, so that any emergency declarations or regulatory actions related to rabies would instead follow the City's standard health and safety emergency procedures, which defer to county public health officials.

Section 4-11: Unsafe Transport of Animals

The code is amended to define transporting an animal in a motor vehicle or trailer without appropriate safety restraints, sufficient to prevent the animal from falling or jumping from a moving vehicle in a public place, as a form of animal cruelty.

Section 4-11: Animals Exposed to Extreme Temperatures in Vehicles

Currently, the code does not explicitly prohibit leaving animals unattended in vehicles without adequate ventilation or in extreme temperatures. Although City law enforcement may address such situations under state law, this amendment establishes the conduct as a form of animal cruelty under the City's code and authorizes law enforcement to immediately enter and inspect the vehicle to rescue an endangered animal.

Section 4-14: Reptiles, Amphibians, and Insects in the City of Wheat Ridge

Currently, Section 4-14(d) prohibits the keeping of amphibians, reptiles, and insects. This amendment revises the section to allow the keeping of such animals under specified conditions.

Section 4-14: Endangered Species

The code currently prohibits the ownership of exotic or wild animals. This amendment allows endangered or threatened species listed under state, federal, or international law to be kept within the City of Wheat Ridge, provided they are cared for by a properly licensed entity.

Section 4-14: Chief's Exemption Process

The Chief of Police may grant exemptions to the exotic or wild animal provisions on a 12-month basis. This amendment clarifies the expectations and procedures for this process and authorizes the Chief to approve, approve with conditions, or deny exemption requests.

Section 4-14: Swine in the City of Wheat Ridge

Swine are currently permitted in the City of Wheat Ridge under both the animal code and the land-use code. This amendment revises the animal code to prohibit the keeping of swine. A separate ordinance addresses swine regulations within the land-use code.

Section 4-17: Dangerous Animal Defenses

The defenses available for dangerous dogs, including defense of an owner or provocation, were expanded to apply to all animals.

Section 4-17: Childproof Structures for Dangerous Dogs

A presiding judge of the City of Wheat Ridge Municipal Court may allow a dog, meeting the definition of a dangerous animal, to be kept within the City of Wheat Ridge, provided the dog is maintained in a secured enclosure. This amendment clarifies that such enclosures must be childproof.

Section 4-17: Transfer of Dangerous Dogs

Currently, a dog meeting the definition of a dangerous animal may be transferred only to a family member. This amendment revises the code to allow transfers solely to responsible caretakers, as evaluated by the City's Community Service Officers, regardless of the relationship between the transferring parties.

Section 4-17/4-18: Possession of Dangerous and Aggressive Dogs

Currently, the code allows dogs, meeting the definition of a dangerous or aggressive animal, to be kept within the City of Wheat Ridge, provided the owner complies with certain conditions specified by a presiding judge of the City of Wheat Ridge Municipal Court. This amendment clarifies the section without making any substantive changes.

Section 4-31: Licensing Authority

The code was amended to authorize staff to establish approved licensing administrators. The code previously required a Mile Hi rabies tag, which existed at one time but is no longer in use.

Section 4-33: Childproof Structures for Guard Dogs
The code was amended to require that enclosures for guard dogs be childproof.

Section 4-33: Guard Dog Cease and Desist Orders
The code was amended to authorize the City's law enforcement to issue a cease-and-desist order to an entity using a guard dog when such use poses a danger to the public. Any such order would be subject to the administrative hearing appeals process.

Section 4-34: Kennel Licenses
The City currently issues kennel licenses. This amendment establishes that, as a condition of the license, the City's law enforcement may inspect the facility at any time if there is reasonable cause to suspect a danger to the animals.

Section 4-52: Hearings Required for the Disposal of Animals
Current practice at the City of Wheat Ridge and the Foothills Animal Shelter is that no animal may be sold, donated, or euthanized without a signed order from a judge, except in cases where the animal is ill, severely injured, or experiencing extreme pain. This amendment codifies that existing practice.

Section 4-52: Court Ordered Animal Holds
The code establishes that the municipal court is authorized to place a hold on animals suspected of neglect, seized due to cruelty, designated as dangerous or aggressive, or identified as service animals, until the resolution of their case. While this has been standard practice in the City of Wheat Ridge, the authority was previously inferred rather than explicitly granted to the judge.

Chapter 26
Section 26-204: Zone District Use Schedule
This amends the code by replacing the note in the "Table of Uses - Agricultural and Public Facilities" to prohibit the raising or keeping of swine in all zone districts.

Sec. 26-606: Small Animals and Poultry
Section 26-206 of the Code is amended to:

- Establish limits on the number of roosters permitted per property: one rooster is allowed on property under one acre, and up to three roosters are allowed on larger properties. This applies to residential and agricultural zone districts.
- Prohibit the raising or keeping of swine in all zone districts

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

"I move to approve Council Bill No. 07-2026, an ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning animal welfare and regulations for the same and that it takes effect fifteen (15) days after final publication as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter."

Or,

"I move to postpone indefinitely Council Bill No. 07-2026, an ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning animal welfare and regulations for the same, for the following reason(s)."

REPORT PREPARED/REVIEWED BY:

Marianne Schilling, Deputy City Manager
Patrick Goff, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Council Bill No. 07-2026
2. Planning Commission Minutes

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL MEMBER HULTIN
COUNCIL BILL NO. 07
ORDINANCE NO. 1840
Series 2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WHEAT RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE AND REGULATIONS FOR THE SAME

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge (the "City") is a home rule municipality having all powers conferred by Article XX of the Colorado Constitution; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to its home rule authority and C.R.S. § 31-23-101, the City, acting through its City Council (the "Council"), is authorized to adopt ordinances for the protection of the public health, safety or welfare; and

WHEREAS, the Council previously adopted and amended Chapter 4 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws (the "Code") concerning animals; and

WHEREAS, the Council also previously adopted and amended Chapter 26 of the Code which also contains provisions concerning animals; and

WHEREAS, the Council now wishes to further amend Chapters 4 and 26 of the Code concerning the regulation and welfare of animals within the City and provide for administrative enforcement of the same; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge Planning Commission held a public hearing on February 19, 2026, and voted to recommend approval of the Chapter 26 amendments.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO:

Section 1. The following sections of Chapter 4 of the Code are amended as follows:

Sec. 4-1. Definitions.

[…]

~~*Aggressive dog* means any dog that (1) approaches any person, without provocation, in a menacing manner or in an attitude of attack, whether or not an attack actually occurs; (2) inflicts a puncture wound, abrasion, or other wound caused by the dog's teeth upon a person or domestic animal, but the injury does not meet the definition of bodily injury or serious bodily injury; or (3) in an attacking manner encroaches~~

~~over, through, or under a fence onto public property or the private property of another.~~

AGGRESSIVE ANIMAL:

i. **ANIMALS THAT APPROACH ANY PERSON, WITHOUT PROVOCATION, IN A MENACING MANNER OR WITH AN APPARENT ATTITUDE OF ATTACK, WHETHER OR NOT AN ATTACK ACTUALLY OCCURS, INCLUDING ANIMALS THAT ARE NOT ADEQUATELY RESTRAINED WITHIN AN ENCLOSED AREA;**

ii. **ANIMALS THAT, IN AN ATTACKING MANNER, ENCROACH OVER, THROUGH, OR UNDER A FENCE ONTO PUBLIC PROPERTY OR THE PRIVATE PROPERTY OF ANOTHER;**

iii. **ANIMALS THAT INFLICT A PUNCTURE WOUND, ABRASION, OR OTHER INJURY ON A PERSON OR DOMESTIC ANIMAL, BUT THE INJURY DOES NOT MEET THE DEFINITION OF BODILY INJURY OR SERIOUS BODILY INJURY;**

[…]

DANGEROUS ANIMALS:

i. **ANIMALS THAT INFLICT OR CAUSE BODILY INJURY, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY UPON A PERSON, OR DEATH UPON A PERSON OR DOMESTIC ANIMAL;**

ii. **ANIMALS THAT ENGAGE IN OR HAVE BEEN TRAINED FOR ANIMAL FIGHTING;**

iii. **ANIMALS THAT HAVE BEEN DETERMINED BY A COURT OF RECORD WITHIN THE STATE OF COLORADO TO BE A VICIOUS OR DANGEROUS ANIMAL AND FOR WHOM THE OWNER DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY STATE STATUTE, LOCAL ORDINANCE, OR COURT ORDER FOR OWNERSHIP OF SAID ANIMAL.**

[…]

~~*Vicious animal* means an animal, other than a dog, that unprovokedly bites or attacks humans or other animals, or an animal which is not adequately restrained in an enclosed area that approaches any person in an apparent attitude of attack or in a terrorizing or menacing manner.~~

Sec. 4-8. Running at large; off-leash dog parks.

(a) A person who is ~~a dog~~ **AN ANIMAL** owner shall be guilty of ~~dog~~**ANIMAL** at large if such ~~dog~~**ANIMAL** runs at large within the city, **WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSE CATS. ANIMALS PRESENT ON REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE ONWER OR PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ANIMAL SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED AT LARGE.**

(b) . . .

~~(c) The city council may, from time to time, direct the creation, alteration and removal of off-leash dog parks within the city. Off-leash dog parks shall be located on city property and shall be governed by and posted with signs giving notice of the following rules and regulations. It shall be unlawful to violate any provision of this subsection (c). Conviction of any provision of this subsection (c) may also result in a loss of privilege to the owner, handler or subject dog to use the city's off-leash dog parks:~~

~~(1) Off-leash dog parks are open to the public during the same hours the surrounding city property is open to the public.~~

~~(2) All dogs must be under the effective control of their owners or handlers by means of a leash, cord, or chain not to exceed six (6) feet in length when entering and leaving the designated dog park area.~~

~~(3) All dogs must display a current rabies tag affixed to the collar.~~

~~(4) All dogs belonging to city residents must display a current license issued by the licensing administrator as required by section 4-31(c).~~

~~(5) All dogs must be accompanied by a person seventeen (17) years of age or older.~~

~~(6) Dog owners and handlers assume full responsibility for their dogs and minor children within the dog park area.~~

~~(7) Dog owners and handlers must remain within the off-leash dog park area and within sight of their dogs at all times.~~

~~(8) Dog owners and handlers must remove and promptly dispose of any feces deposited within the dog park area by their dogs.~~

~~(9) Dogs may not chase or otherwise harass wildlife.~~

~~(10) The following dogs are not permitted within off-leash dog parks:~~

~~a. Aggressive dogs, as defined by section 4-1.~~

~~b. Female dogs in heat.~~

~~c. Dogs without a current rabies tag affixed to the collar or without a current license issued by the licensing administrator, as applicable.~~

~~d. Dogs under the age of four (4) months.~~

~~e. Dogs exhibiting visible signs of illness or known by the owner or handler to be ill.~~

~~f. Dogs that do not respond to and obey their owners' or handlers' sight or voice commands.~~

Sec. 4-10. Rabies control.

(a) . . .

(b) Any dog, cat or other animal that has bitten any person **CAUSING A WOUND BREAKING THE SKIN** shall be immediately confined for a period of ten (10) days. No animal under confinement shall be released from confinement until such release has been approved by the community service officer. **THE OWNER OF SUCH ANIMAL SHALL FILE, WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT (48) HOURS OF THE INCIDENT, A REPORT OF THAT INCIDENT WITH A COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER], THE REPORT TO CONTAIN DATE/TIME OF BITE, PERSON BITTEN, NAME OF ANIMAL OWNER.**

(c) . . .

(d) . . .

(e) When an animal under quarantine has been diagnosed as being rabid by a license~~s~~**D** veterinarian the veterinarian making such diagnosis shall immediately notify the county public health officer and advise **THEM**~~him~~ of any reports of human contact with such rabid dog [animal]. If any animal under quarantine dies while under observation, the community service officer or ~~his~~ THEIR agents shall immediately take action to obtain a pathological and inoculation examination of the animal. As soon as a diagnosis is made available, the community service officer shall notify the county public health officer of any reports of human contact with the animal. Any animal which has not be**EN** inoculated against rabies and known to have been bitten by a rabid animal shall be humanely destroyed.

(f) . . .

(g) . . .

(h) ~~In case of an outbreak of rabies, constituting an emergency situation, the mayor shall be authorized to impose strict regulations pertaining to animals within the city.~~ **IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL FOR AN OWNER TO PROCURE A RABIES VACCINATION FOR AN ANIMAL UNDER QUARANTINE, UNLESS APPROVED BY THE COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICER IN WRITING**.

Sec. 4-11. Cruelty or inhumane treatment; HARASSMENT.

(a) IT SHALL BE CRUEL OR INHUMANE FOR ANY PERSON TO:

(1) ~~It shall be unlawful for any person to~~ Commit or cause to be committed any act of cruelty, harassment, abandonment, torture, mistreatment or neglect to any animal, or to cause any animal to be wounded, mutilated, strangulated or inhumanely killed.

(2) ~~For purposes of this section, a person commits an act of harassment upon an animal if such person's conduct or actions causes~~ **CAUSE** an animal to behave as if frightened, causes the animal displeasure or pain, or otherwise causes the animal to become likely to injure either itself or other persons or animals, or causes the animal to create a nuisance.

(3) **TRANSPORT AN ANIMAL IN OR ON ANY MOTOR VEHICLE OR TRAILER UNLESS THE ANIMAL IS SAFELY RESTRAINED. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, RESTRAINED IS DEFINED AS ENCLOSED WITHIN A VEHICLE OR TRAILER WITH NO OPENINGS LARGE ENOUGH TO PERMIT THE ANIMAL TO EXIT THE VEHICLE OR TRAILER ON ITS OWN, OR PLACED WITHIN A SECURED CONTAINER, CAGE OR OTHER ENCLOSURE OR RESTRAINING DEVICE SUFFICIENT TO PREVENT THE ANIMAL FROM FALLING FROM, BEING THROWN FROM OR JUMPING FROM THE VEHICLE. AS USED IN THIS SECTION, PUBLIC PLACE IS DEFINED AS ANY PLACE OPEN TO AND GENERALLY USED BY THE PUBLIC, WHETHER PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY OWNED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, STREETS, HIGHWAYS, ALLEYS, PARKING LOTS, SCHOOLS AND COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.**

(4) **LEAVE AN ANIMAL IN AN UNATTENDED VEHICLE WITHOUT ADEQUATE VENTILATION OR IN ANY MANNER WHICH SUBJECTS THE ANIMAL TO EXTREME TEMPERATURES OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ARE DANGEROUS OR DETRIMENTAL TO THE ANIMAL'S HEALTH OR WELFARE.**

a. IF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER OR POLICE OFFICER HAS REASONABLE CAUSE TO BELIEVE THAT THE KEEPING OR MAINTAINING OF ANY ANIMAL IS SO HAZARDOUS, UNSAFE, OR DANGEROUS AS TO REQUIRE IMMEDIATE INSPECTION TO SAFEGUARD THE ANIMAL OR THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY, THE COMMUNITY SERVIE OFFICER OR POLICE OFFICER SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT IMMEDIATELY TO ENTER AND INSPECT THE PROPERTY OR VEHICLE IN OR UPON WHICH THE ANIMAL IS KEPT, AND MAY USE ANY REASONABLE MEANS REQUIRED TO EFFECT SUCH ENTRY AND MAKE SUCH INSPECTION, WHETHER THE PROPERTY OR VEHICLE IS OCCUPIED OR UNOCCUPIED AND WHETHER PERMISSION TO INSPECT HAS BEEN OBTAINED OR NOT. IF THE PROPERTY OR VEHICLE IS OCCUPIED, THE COMMUNITY SERVIE OFFICER OR POLICE OFFICER SHALL FIRST PRESENT PROPER CREDENTIALS TO THE OWNER OR OCCUPANT OF THE PROPERTY OR VEHICLE AND DEMAND ENTRY, EXPLAINING REASONS THEREFOR AND THE PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTION. SUCH ENTRY SHALL BE SOLELY FOR THE

PURPOSE OF ABATING THE VIOLATION AND NO EVIDENCE OBTAINED DURING OR AS A RESULT OF SUCH ENTRY SHALL BE ADMISSIBLE FOR PURPOSES OF PROSECUTION.

(b) Ownership of the animal in question shall not be a justifiable defense for acts or conduct prohibited by this section or for a violation of this section.

(c) An**Y** community service officer or other employee or official of the city may impound an animal or animals pursuant to section 4-52 if the officer, employee or official reasonably believes that such impoundment is necessary for the health or safety of any mistreated animal. The animal owner shall be liable for all expenses arising from such impoundment or any medical treatment for the animal during such impoundment.

Sec. 4-14. Exotic or wild animals.

(a) *Prohibited.* It shall be unlawful for any person to own, possess, harbor, sell, or in any other manner traffic in any exotic or wild animals, that is, any animal that is not a domestic animal, whether it is a native animal of this state or not. **THIS PROHIBITION SHALL NOT APPLY TO THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES LISTED UNDER STATE, FEDERAL, OR INTERNATIONAL LAW AND KEPT BY A LICENSED ENTITY WITHIN THE CITY**.

(b) *Exceptions.* The chief of police may grant exceptions to this section for successive periods of time not to exceed twelve (12) months. **APPLICATIONS FOR AN EXCEPTION MUST BE FILED WITH THE CHIEF OF POLICE ON FORMS MAINTAINED BY THE CHIEF'S OFFICE, ALONG WITH THE APPLICATION FEE SET BY THE CITY COUNCIL FROM TIME TO TIME. THE CHIEF OF POLICE IN THEIR SOLE DISCRETION MAY GRANT, GRANT WITH CONDITIONS OR DENY THE APPLICATION**.

(c)…

(d) *Specific animals enumerated.*

(1) The following animals are domestic animals:

a. Aquarium fishes

b. Psitocine birds, aviary finches, etc, farm birds (ducks, geese, swans, poultry)

c. Domestic rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus)

d. Mongolian gerbil (Meriones unguicularus)

e. Guinea pig (Cavia porceilus)

f. Hamster (Musorcriectus auratus)

g. Domestic laboratory mouse (Mus domesticus)

h. Domestic laboratory rat (Rattus rattus albino strain)

i. Domestic cat (Felis catus)

j. Domestic dog (Canas familiaris)

k. Domestic livestock, including but not limited to: horses, cattle, sheep, goats, mules, donkeys, burros, llamas, honeybees, and swine

l. SWINE AS DOMESTIC ANIMALS ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL ZONE DISTRICTS PER CHAPTER 26 (except potbellied pigs, Sus scrofa vittatus, which is an imported variety of swine and which shall be considered exotic animals).

(2) REPTILES, AMPHIBIANS, AND INSECTS SHALL BE ALLOWED, EXCEPT FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- **a. SPECIES THAT POSSESS VENOM OR TOXINS KNOWN TO CAUSE SERIOUS ILLNESS OR INJURY TO HUMANS.**
- **b. VENOMOUS SNAKES**
- **c. CONSTRICTOR SNAKES CAPABLE OF POSING A PHYSICAL THREAT TO HUMANS OR DOMESTIC ANIMAL INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO: RETICULATED PYTHONS, GREEN ANACONDAS, AND BURMESE PYTHONS**
- **d. ANY ANIMALS THAT HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED AS A DANGEROUS OR HAZARDOUS SPECIES UNDER STATE OR FEDERAL LAW**
- **e. ANY ANIMALS THAT ARE NOT PERMITTED AND/OR REQUIRE A LICENSE FROM COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE TO POSSESS.**
- **f. CROCODILIANS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ALLIGATORS, CAIMANS, AND CROCODILES**

(3) Exotic and wild animals shall consist of every other creature within the animal kingdom.

Sec. 4-17. Unlawful possession of dangerous ANIMAL OR dog.

(a) It is unlawful for a person who is a dog owner to keep, harbor or possess a ~~VICIOUS ANIMAL OR A~~ dangerous dog within the city**. NOTHWITHSTANDING THIS PROHIBITION, A COURT MAY AUTHORIZE THE POSSESSION OF SUCH AN ANIMAL IF THE OWNER COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTIONS 4-17(e) AND 4-17(f), AS WELL AS ANY OTHER CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE COURT**.

(b) An affirmative defense to the violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be:

(1) That, at the time of the attack by the **ANIMAL**~~dangerous dog,~~ which caused injury to or the death of a domestic animal:

a. . . .

b. The domestic animal was biting or otherwise attacking the dangerous **OR VICIOUS** animal or its owner.

(2) That, at the time of the attack ~~by the dangerous dog,~~ which caused injury to a person, the victim of the attack was:

a. Committing or attempting to commit a criminal offense against the ~~dog~~ **ANIMAL** owner, and the attack did not occur on the owner's property; or

b. . . .

c. Tormenting, provoking, abusing or inflicting injury upon the **ANIMAL** ~~dog~~ in such an extreme manner that the attack was a result of the victim's actions.

(c) . . .
(d) . . .
(e) . . .

(1) . . .
(2) . . .
(3) At all times when the dog is at the property of the dog owner, the dog owner shall keep the dog confined except as further allowed by this section. When outdoors, the dog shall be confined in an escape-proof enclosure **WHICH IS ALSO DESIGNED TO PREVENT ACCIDENTAL ENTRY BY ANYONE, INCLUDING CHILDREN**. All structures must be locked with a key or combination lock when the dog is within the structure. Such structure shall have a secure bottom or floor attached to the sides of the pen or the sides of the pen shall be embedded in the ground no less than two (2) feet. All such structures must be adequately lighted and ventilated and kept in a clean and sanitary condition. All structures erected to house such dog must comply with all zoning and building requirements. The community services officer shall inspect the structure to ensure compliance with ~~such~~**THESE** conditions.
(4) . . .
(5) . . .
(6) . . .
(7) . . .
(8) . . .
(9) The dog owner shall not sell or transfer the dog to any person except ~~a member of the dog owner's immediate family OR TO~~ **A RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER** who shall then be deemed the dog owner and subject to all the requirements of this title. For the purposes of this subsection, ~~"immediate family" shall mean the owner's spouse, child, parent, or sibling,~~ **"RESPONISBLE CARETAKER" SHALL MEAN A PERSON APPROVED IN THE REASONABLE JUDGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER.**

[…]

Sec. 4-18. Unlawful possession of aggressive ANIMAL OR dog.

(a) It is unlawful for a person who is a dog owner to keep, harbor or possess an aggressive dog within the city. **NOTWITHSTANDING THIS PROHIBITION, A COURT MAY AUTHORIZE THE POSSESSION OF SUCH AN ANIMAL IF THE OWNER COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTIONS 4-18(C) AND 4-18(D), AS WELL AS ANY OTHER CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE COURT**.

(b) . . .

(c) . . .

(1) The dog owner shall, at the dog owner's expense, have a microchip containing an identification number implanted into the dog and provide such information to the **COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER** section of the wheat ridge police department. The dog owner shall produce the dog for verification by a **COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER** of the microchip implementation. **THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER SECTION OF THE WHEAT RIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT** shall maintain records containing the registration number and name of said dog and name and address of the dog owner. The dog owner shall be responsible for notifying THE **COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER** of any change in the address, ownership, or death of the dog.

(2) . . .

(3) . . .

(4) . . .

(d) . . .

(1) . . .

(2) . . .

(3) The dog owner shall, at the dog owner's expense, have the animal spayed or neutered and shall provide proof to the **COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER** section of the wheat ridge police department that the sterilization has been performed.

(e) . . .

Sec. 4-31. Dog and cat licenses.

(a) **. . .**

(b) **. . .**

(c) Required; described. A license is required for all dogs and cats **FROM THE LICENSING AUTHORITY IDENTIFIED BY, AND IN FORM AND CONTENT APPROVED BY THE LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR**~~.n the city as follows: A valid cat license shall be a current Mile-Hi rabies tag and registration certificate.~~ A valid dog license shall be a dog license issued by the licensing administrator. A cat or dog owner may request an exemption to this requirement if, for medical reasons, his/her cat or dog cannot be vaccinated. In this event, a cat or dog owner must submit an affidavit from a licensed veterinarian stating the reasons why the cat or dog is unable to be vaccinated.

(d) Wearing of tag; availability of certificate. A current and valid ~~Mile-Hi rabies~~ tag shall be worn on a collar or harness by the dog at all times, unless a current and valid tag from the licensing administrator, which requires proof of current rabies vaccination for its issuance, is worn on a collar or harness by the dog at all times. A current and valid registration certificate, as above-described, shall be kept in the possession of the owner of any dog or cat within the city, and such registration certificate or a copy of it shall be produced or producible by

the owner as proof of current registration in the event of loss or the correspondingly numbered tag.

(e) . . .
(f) . . .
~~(g) Obtainment from licensed veterinarian. Mile-Hi rabies tags and registration certificates are only to be issued by and obtained from veterinarians currently licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the state.~~

~~(h) New residents. New residents of the city may be issued a current Mile-Hi rabies tag and registration certificate for their cat or dog by a veterinarian licensed to practice in the state, upon proof of having had the cat or dog vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian.~~

(i) . . .

Sec. 4-33. Guard dogs.

It shall be unlawful for any person to place or maintain guard dogs in any area for the protection of persons or property unless the following conditions are met:

(1) The dogs shall be confined to an enclosed area adequate to ensure they will not escape **AND SO AS TO HAVE SAFEGUARDS IN PLACE THAT PREVENT ACCIDENTAL OR UNINTENTIONAL ENTRY BY ANYONE, INLCUDING CHILDREN**; or
(2) . . .
(3) . . .
(4) . . .
(5) COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO ISSUE A CEASE AND DESIST ORDER IF THEY DETERMINE THAT THE PRESENCE OR CIRCUMSTANCES OF GUARD DOGS POSE A DANGER TO ANY PERSON, PROPERTY, OR ANIMAL. SUCH CEASE AND DESIST ORDER IS SUBJECT TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING APPEALS PROCESS AT CODE SECTION 2-80 et seq.

Sec. 4-34. Kennel licenses.

(a) . . .
(b) . . .
(c) . . .
(d) . . .
(e) . . .
(1) . . .
(2) . . .
(3) . . .
(4) . . .
(5) Community service officers or any agent of the chief of police have the authority to inspect any licensed facility under this section during normal posted business hours, **OR AT ANY TIME IF THERE IS REASONABLE**

CAUSE TO SUSPECT THAT THE OPERATION IS A DANGER TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ANIMAL OR THE PUBLIC.

Sec. 4-52. Custody and disposition of impounded animals.

(a) . . .
(b) . . .
(c) . . .
(d) . . .
(e) ~~. Whenever a community services officer or other employee or agent of the city impounds an animal, such animal shall be impounded in a humane manner for a period of not less than five (5) days following the date of notice to the animal owner of such impoundment pursuant to section 4-53; any animal so impounded which is not claimed within said five-day period may be disposed of by sale, donation or destruction at the sole discretion of the animal shelter.~~ **WHENEVER A COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICER OR OTHER EMPLOYEE OR AGENT OF THE CITY IMPOUNDS AN ANIMAL, SUCH ANIMAL SHALL BE IMPOUNDED IN A HUMANE MANNER FOR A PERIOD OF NOT LESS THAN FIVE (5) DAYS FOLLOWING THE DATE OF NOTICE TO THE ANIMAL OWNER OF SUCH IMPOUNDMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-53. NO ANIMAL SHALL BE DESTROYED, SOLD, OR DONATED UNLESS ORDERED BY A JUDGE AFTER A HEARING, WHICH MAY BE NOTICED AT THE SAME TIME AS THE IMPOUNDMENT NOTICE, PROVIDED THE HEARING OCCURS NO SOONER THAN FIVE (5) DAYS AFTER THE HEARING NOTICE IS GIVEN. EXCEPTIONS APPLY IN CASES WHERE THE ANIMAL IS CRITICALLY ILL OR INJURED, SUFFERING EXTREME PAIN, AND/OR HAS A POOR PROGNOSIS FOR RECOVERY. THE ANIMAL SHELTER SHALL CONSULT WITH A VETERINARIAN AS TO THE DISPOSITION OF INJURED ANIMAL, WHEN THE ANIMAL'S PROGNOSIS CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED BY THE ANIMAL SHELTER WITH REASONABLE CERTAINTY. THE OWNER OF AN IMPOUNDED ANIMAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BOARDING AND IMPOUNDMENT FEES ESTABLISHED BY THE SHELTER. THE CITY, ITS EMPLOYEES, THE ANIMAL SHELTER, AND ANY CONSULTED VETERINARIAN SHALL BE IMMUNE FROM LIABILITY FOR ANY ACTIONS TAKEN PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.**

~~(f) No animal shall be destroyed before the lapse of five (5) days following notice of impoundment pursuant to section 4-53, unless the animal shelter determines that the animal is critically ill or injured, is suffering extreme pain, and/or has a poor prognosis for recovery. The animal shelter shall consult with a veterinarian as to the disposition of injured animals, when the animal's prognosis cannot be ascertained by the animal shelter with reasonable certainty. The owner of any impounded animal shall be responsible for the payment of such boarding and impoundment fees established by the animal shelter. The city and its employees, the animal shelter and its employees, and any veterinarian consulted shall be immune from liability for any actions taken pursuant to this section.~~

~~(g)~~ **(f)** Notwithstanding the foregoing, whenever an animal is impounded by order of the municipal court or other court, the animal shelter shall not sell, donate or destroy such animal unless such action is permitted by a subsequent order of the same court which ordered the initial impoundment. **THE MUNICIPAL COURT IS AUTHORIZED TO ORDER A HOLD ON ANIMALS SUSPECTED OF NEGLECT, AS WELL AS ANY ANIMALS SEIZED OR IMPOUNDED DUE TO CRUELTY, INHUMANE CONDITIONS, DESIGNATION AS A DANGEROUS OR AGGRESSIVE DOG, OR FOR BEING A SERVICE ANIMAL, UNTIL THE RESOLUTION OF THEIR CASE.**

Section 2. Section 2-80 of the Municipal Code is amended to read:

Purpose; scope. The purpose of this article is to encourage prompt compliance with this Code and prompt payment of penalties for violations thereof. This article provides for administrative **PROCEDURES AND** penalties that may be imposed for violation of the following portions of this Code **CHAPTER 4, ARTICLES I AND II ANIMALS**, chapter 5, buildings and building regulations; chapter 9, health; chapter 13, motor vehicles and traffic; chapter 15, nuisances; article X of chapter 11 concerning massage businesses, article XIV of chapter 11 concerning short term rentals; chapter 21, streets and sidewalks; chapter 22, taxation; chapter 24, vegetation; chapter 26, zoning.

Section 3. Section 26-204 (zone district use schedule) of the Code is amended by replacing the note in the "Table of Uses - Agricultural and Public Facilities" as follows:

Uses	*Notes*	*A-1*	*A-2*	*PF*
[…]				
General farming and raising or keeping of stock, bee keeping, poultry or small animals such as rabbits or chinchillas	~~PROHIBITED in A-1: The raising or keeping of swine INCLUDED in A-2: The keeping of swine and/or potbellied pigs, Sus Scrofa Vittatus, except such animals shall not be fed garbage~~ **PROHIBITED IN ALL DISTRICTS: THE RAISING OR KEEPING OF SWINE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF POTBELLIED PIGS, UNDER SECTIONS 26-606 AND 4-14.**	P	P	

Section 2. Section 26-206 of the Code is amended by the addition of new subsections B and G with appropriate re-numbering of the section to read as follows:

Sec. 26-606. - Small animals and poultry.

The private keeping of small animals, such as dwarf goats, rabbits and chinchillas, or poultry, such as chickens, ducks, geese, pheasants or pigeons, shall be subject to the following requirements. This section shall not apply to conforming lots in the A-1 or A-2 districts.

A. Except when in compliance with section 26-605 (large animals), dwarf goats shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) per residential dwelling unit, plus their unweaned offspring and provided no un-neutered male dwarf goats shall be allowed. For each dwarf goat, a minimum of one hundred thirty (130) square feet of permeable lot area shall be provided in the side or rear yard.

B. FOR LOTS THAT ARE UNDER ONE (1) ACRE IN SIZE, ONLY ONE (1) ROOSTER IS PERMITTED IN RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ZONE DISTRICTS. FOR LOTS THAT ARE ONE (1) ACRE IN SIZE OR LARGER, UP TO THREE (3) ROOSTERS ARE PERMITTED IN RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS. ROOSTERS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY OTHER ZONE DISTRICTS.

C. Poultry houses and pigeon coops, or the portions of these and other structures used to house or provide shelter for small animals, shall not exceed four hundred (400) square feet of ground floor area nor twelve (12) feet in height.

D. Hutches for small animals shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet of ground floor area with a maximum of two (2) floors or levels.

E. Maximum ground floor areas for small animals or poultry set forth above may be increased by fifty (50) percent for each acre in addition to the minimum lot size for the zone district.

F. All houses, coops, hutches or portions of these and other structures housing or providing shelter for small animals shall be located other than in a front yard, shall be set back at least fifteen (15) feet from side and rear property lines, and shall be no closer than thirty (30) feet from a residence or other main structure on an adjacent property.

G. THE RAISING OR KEEPING OF SWINE IS PROHIBITED IN ALL ZONE DISTRICTS WITH THE CITY. THIS PROHIBITION SHALL NOT APPLY TO POTBELLIED PIGS WHICH MUST COMPLY WITH SECTION 4-14.

H. The accumulation of animal waste to the extent that such becomes a nuisance to surrounding properties is prohibited, as regulated by chapter 15 of this Code of Laws.

I. The legal, nonconforming keeping of such animals may be continued so long as such keeping of animals remains otherwise lawful; except where such keeping of animals is discontinued for a period of sixty (60) consecutive days or more, then said keeping of animals must conform to the provisions hereof or must cease.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days after final publication, as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter.

INTRODUCED, READ, AND ADOPTED on first reading by a vote of 8 to 0 on this 23rd day of March 2026, ordered published by title in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Wheat Ridge and in full on the City's website, and Public Hearing and consideration on final passage set for April 13, 2026 at 6:30p.m., in the Council Chambers, 7500 West 29th Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

READ, ADOPTED AND ORDERED PUBLISHED on second and final reading by a vote of ___ to ___, this 13th day of April 2026.

SIGNED by the Mayor on this _____ day of _____, 2026.

_____

Korey Stites, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Janeece Hoppe, City Clerk

Approved as to Form

_____

Gerald E. Dahl, City Attorney

First Publication: March 24, 2026
Second Publication: April 14, 2026
Effective Date: April 29, 2026

Published:
Jeffco Transcript and www.ci.wheatridge.co.us

PLANNING COMMISSION
Draft Minutes of Meeting
February 19, 2026

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair DISNEY at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was held in person and virtually, using Zoom video-teleconferencing technology.

1. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Commission Members Present:	Kristine Disney Daniel Graeve Michael Moore Syrma Quinones Anna Sparks
Commission Members Absent:	Krista Holub
Staff Members Present:	Marianne Schilling, Deputy City Manager Jana Easley, Planning Manager Stephanie Stevens, Senior Planner (via Zoom) Scott Cutler, Senior Planner Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by consensus to approve the order of the agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 18, 2025

It was moved by Commissioner SPARKS and seconded by Commissioner MOORE to approve the minutes of December 18, 2025, as written. Motion approved 5-0.

5. PUBLIC FORUM (This is the time for any person to speak on any subject not appearing on the agenda.)

No one wished to speak at this time.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

found Wheat Ridge's can-do and proactive attitude refreshing, making the city appear forward-looking, and he appreciated it.

Commissioner SPARKS stated she would not want the city to miss out on millions of dollars from state grants in the future. If this is what the state wishes, even though it takes away some authority from the commission, and if it makes sense to the state, it makes sense to her.

Vice Chair DISNEY close the public hearing.

It was moved by Commissioner MOORE and seconded by Commissioner QUINONES to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws supporting compliance with state legislation regarding housing supportive code amendments to remain eligible for state funding opportunities.

Commissioner MOORE stated he wanted to thank staff for the presentation and work. He was excited about what's happening at Ridge Road.

Motion carried 5-0.

C. **Case No. ZOA-26-3:** An Ordinance amending the Wheat Ridge Municipal Code to impose zoning limitations on the keeping of small animals.

Vice Chair DISNEY opened the public hearing.

Ms. Schilling gave a short presentation regarding the ordinance.

Public Comment

No one wished to speak at this time.

Commissioner SPARKS asked about the system to help with roosters, similar to the system for barking dogs.

Ms. Schilling explained that they are called "crow collars" and help with noise mitigation as best they can. Community service officers treat roosters similarly to barking dogs, where it's not necessarily always a noise violation but rather an expectation of reasonability regarding what you can expect from crowing or barking.

Commissioner QUINONES asked if there are individuals in residential areas on less than one acre with more than one rooster.

DRAFT

Ms. Schilling responded that the city doesn't currently track this since no permit is required, so they don't have any numbers.

Commissioner QUINONES asked what happens once this ordinance passes.

Ms. Schilling explained that if a property had more than one rooster, it would likely be able to maintain their roosters, but as the roosters pass, they wouldn't be able to replace those roosters.

Vice Chair DISNEY asked how many properties in Wheat Ridge are larger than an acre that would have roosters, noting there can't be many left.

Ms. Easley, referring to a table from the previous agenda item, stated that there is very little agricultural or larger-than-one-acre residential property within the city, so it would be a very small percentage.

Vice Chair DISNEY asked how animal control polices work—whether it's one strike, two strikes, three strikes.

Ms. Schilling explained it's similar to how they police dogs. It would be a longer-term issue that wasn't being mitigated. Sometimes they request folks to bring their roosters indoors for a certain amount of time or wear crow collars, and they ask for support from owners. It depends on how often they're crowing, how loud, and how disruptive. There's no one-size-fits-all solution. Crow collars have proven helpful.

Vice Chair DISNEY asked why roosters are necessary, noting they help breed chickens but questioning why someone would need a rooster.

Commissioner SPARKS offered to answer, having grown up on a chicken farm. She explained that roosters have a large spur on the back of their leg and aggressively protect hens under their control. Many predators want to eat hens and eggs, and they're very clever. Sometimes roosters lead hens up into trees to protect them from ground-dwelling predators.

Commissioner GRAEVE then noted finding one of the more interesting points in the materials: that all surrounding neighboring communities don't allow roosters. He asked what about the city's decision made City Council go a different direction than neighboring communities and actually permit them.

Ms. Schilling clarified that the city has always implicitly allowed roosters through allowing poultry, so that hasn't changed. Now they would be

explicitly allowing roosters for lots of a certain size. She stated that City Council was trying to maintain its urban agricultural roots and felt areas and lots of that size make sense. For City Council, there wasn't any perspective during the conversation where they felt it was worth abandoning roosters completely.

Commissioner MOORE asked whether the city currently has a swine problem or if this is more battening down the hatches.

Ms. Schilling stated she's not aware of an existing swine problem. Ms. Easley added that the city does get inquiries, and the code is somewhat unclear.

Vice Chair DISNEY closed the public hearing.

It was moved by Commissioner GRAEVE and seconded by Commissioner QUINONES to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws concerning the keeping of small animals and making conforming amendments therewith.

Commissioner GRAEVE offered a quick comment, noting that he's known people who have gotten chicks and don't know when they arrive if it will be a hen or a rooster. What if one turns out to be a rooster? Urban folks with chickens then have to do something with the rooster. As someone who embraced the city's urban agriculture reputation many years ago, it's comforting to see this carried forward and the city being bold enough to allow folks to have something on their property that is an element of sustainability and can be beneficial in many ways. He commended this decision by council and the city.

Motion carried 5-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Upcoming Dates

Ms. Easley confirmed there is no meeting on March 5 but possibly on March 19.

B. Project and Development Updates

Ms. Easley provided several updates including that former City Councilor Janeece Hoppe has been newly elected as city clerk, and the city is

DRAFT

ITEM NUMBER: 2
DATE: April 13, 2026

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

COUNCIL BILL NO. 08-2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 13 OF THE WHEAT RIDGE CODE OF LAWS, CONCERNING VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 13-7, CONCERNING THE VIOLATION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS, TO ALLOW FOR THE CITATION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION VIOLATIONS INTO MUNICIPAL COURT

☒PUBLIC HEARING
☐BIDS/MOTIONS
☐RESOLUTIONS

☐ORDINANCES FOR 1st READING
☒ORDINANCES FOR 2nd READING

QUASI-JUDICIAL ☐YES ☒NO

ISSUE:

Colorado House Bill 25-1112 empowers local authorities in Colorado to enforce vehicle registration laws, enabling them to issue penalties for unregistered vehicles within their jurisdictions. This ordinance was modeled to incorporate elements of the new law for enforcement within the City.

PRIOR ACTION:

The City of Wheat Ridge has previously adopted (and amended) the Model Traffic Code for Colorado, 2024 edition, as the Uniform Traffic Code for the City.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading on March 23, 2026. A motion was made by Councilmember Larson and seconded by Councilmember Wood and approved by a vote of 8 to 0.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

BACKGROUND:

Section 42-4-110(1)(b), C.R.S. authorizes Colorado municipalities to adopt by reference a model traffic code embodying the rules of the road and vehicle requirements set forth in Article 4 of Title 42, C.R.S., and such additional local regulations as are provided for in

Section 42-4-111, C.R.S.

HB25-1112 allows vehicle registration violations to be prosecuted in municipal court, when previously all violations were required to be charged as state law violations and prosecuted in a state court. Furthermore, the law provides a "grace period" for drivers found to have improper registration. If the driver's registration has been expired for less than four months at the time of the violation and the driver registers the vehicle before the court date associated with the violation, the municipal judge may dismiss the violation for a $30 dismissal fee. Law enforcement officers are required to notify the driver of this grace period at the time a citation is given.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends the approval of the ordinance.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

"I move to approve Council Bill No. 08-2026, an ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws, concerning vehicles and traffic, by adding a new Section 13-7, concerning the violation of vehicle registration requirements, to allow for the citation of vehicle registration violations into municipal court, and that it takes effect upon adoption, as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter."

Or,

"I move to postpone indefinitely Council Bill No. 08-2025, an ordinance amending Chapter 13 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws, concerning vehicles and traffic, by adding a new Section 13-7, concerning the violation of vehicle registration requirements, to allow for the citation of vehicle registration violations into municipal court, for the following reason(s)."

REPORT PREPARED/REVIEWED BY:

Gerald Dahl, City Attorney
Patrick Goff, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Council Bill No. 08-2025

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL MEMBER LARSON
Council Bill No. 08
Ordinance No. 1841
Series 2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 13 OF THE WHEAT RIDGE CODE OF LAWS CONCERNING VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, BY ADDING A NEW SECTION 13-7, CONCERNING THE VIOLATION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS, TO ALLOW FOR THE CITATION OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION VIOLATIONS INTO MUNICIPAL COURT

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge, Colorado, ("Wheat Ridge" or the "City") is a home rule municipality organized and existing under Article XX, Section 6 of the Colorado Constitution; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to House Bill 25-1112, effective August 6, 2025, municipalities are permitted to enforce violations of unregistered vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Section 42-4-110(1)(b), C.R.S., authorizes Colorado municipalities to adopt by reference a model traffic code embodying the rules of the road and vehicle requirements set forth in Article 4 of Title 42, C.R.S., and such additional local regulations as are provided for in Section 42-4-111, C.R.S.; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge has adopted (and amended) the Model Traffic Code for Colorado, 2024 edition, as the uniform traffic code for the City; and

WHEREAS, Colorado House Bill 25-1112, by its amendment of C.R.S. Section 42-4-110, has authorized Colorado municipalities to enforce state motor vehicle registration violations in their municipal courts; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds, determines, and declares that the enforcement of state vehicle registration laws in the City's Municipal Court will facilitate the enforcement of such laws generally, and will improve the safety and welfare of the citizens of the City.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO:

Section 1. The recitals contained above are incorporated herein by reference and are adopted as findings and determinations of the City Council.

ATTACHMENT 1

Section 2. Section 13-7 of the Code of Laws, currently reserved for future use, is hereby adopted to read as follows:

§ 13-7. **Violation of Registration Provisions of Colorado Statutes.**

(a) It is unlawful to commit any of the following acts:

(1) To operate or permit the operation, upon a public right-of-way, of a motor vehicle or trailer that is not registered pursuant to the requirements of Title 42, Article 3 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended, and does not display the number plates or validation stickers issued for the vehicle or trailer for the current year, except for motor vehicles and trailers owned by a licensed dealer or licensed manufacturer while being held for sale or resale or while operated on the public right-of-way with dealer plates or depot tags authorized pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes § 42-3-116, as amended;

(2) To display or permit to be displayed, to have in possession, or to offer for sale a certificate of title, validation tab or sticker, or registration number plate knowing the same to be fictitious or to have been stolen, cancelled, revoked, suspended, or altered; or

(3) To lend or knowingly permit the use by one not entitled thereto a certificate of title, registration card, or registration number plate issued to the lending or permitting person.

(b) A person who violates paragraph (1) or (3) of subsection (a) of this section commits a class B traffic infraction, as defined by Colorado statutes, and shall be penalized in an amount no greater than the penalty amount allowed by Colorado statutes for such infractions. A person who violates paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of this section commits a class 2 misdemeanor traffic offense, as defined by Colorado statutes, and shall be penalized in an amount no greater than the penalty amount allowed by Colorado statutes for such offenses.

Section 3. Severability, Conflicting Ordinances Repealed. If any section, subsection or clause of this Ordinance shall be deemed to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the remaining sections, subsections and clauses shall

not be affected thereby. All other ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect upon adoption at second reading, as permitted by Section 5.11 of the Charter.

INTRODUCED, READ, AND ADOPTED on first reading by a vote of 8 to 0 on this 23rd day of March 2026, ordered published in full on the City's website as provided by the Home Rule Charter, and Public Hearing and consideration on final passage set for April 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, 7500 West 29th Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

READ, ADOPTED AND ORDERED PUBLISHED on second and final reading by a vote of ___ to ___, this 13th day of April 2026.

SIGNED by the Mayor on this _____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Korey Stites, Mayor

Janeece Hoppe, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Gerald E. Dahl, City Attorney

First Publication: March 24, 2026
Second Publication: April 14, 2026
Effective Date: April 13, 2026

Published:
Jeffco Transcript and www.ci.wheatridge.co.us

ITEM NUMBER: 3
DATE: April 13, 2026

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

COUNCIL BILL NO. 09-2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE REZONING FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 3338 DEPEW STREET FROM RESIDENTIAL-THREE (R-3) TO RESIDENTIAL-ONE C (R-1C)

☐PUBLIC HEARING
☐BIDS/MOTIONS
☐RESOLUTIONS
☒ORDINANCES FOR 1st READING
☐ORDINANCES FOR 2nd READING

QUASI-JUDICIAL ☐YES ☒NO

ISSUE:

The owner of the property at 3338 Depew Street is requesting approval of a zone change from Residential-Three (R-3) to Residential-One C (R-1C). The zone change will result in zoning that encourages investment in the site and will enable the existing land use to become more conforming with the zoning.

PRIOR ACTION:

Planning Commission reviewed this request at a public hearing held on March 19, 2026, and recommended approval. The staff report and a copy of the draft Planning Commission minutes will be provided with the second reading materials.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The proposed ordinance is not expected to have a direct financial impact on the City. Fees in the amount of $1,100 were collected for the review and processing of Case No. WZ-26-01. If the rezoning is approved, the City may benefit from various fees collected depending on how the property is repurposed in the future, such as building permit fees and use tax.

BACKGROUND:

The property is located on the east side of Depew Street between W. 33rd Avenue and W. 35th Avenue. The site is legally described as Lots 19 and 20, Block 8, Columbia Heights, and contains approximately 5,892 square feet (0.135 acres). It is currently developed with a single-unit dwelling and an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), both of which are proposed to be demolished to accommodate construction of a new single

unit home. Surrounding zoning includes Residential-One C (R-1C) to the north, south, and east, and Residential-One (R-1) to the west. Adjacent properties to the north, south, and east are residential in character, while the property to the west is Panorama Park.

Although the existing R-3 zoning permits single-unit detached dwellings, the subject property does not meet the district's minimum lot standards, and the required setbacks are not consistent with those of the surrounding residential properties. Rezoning is therefore necessary to bring the site into conformance and facilitate redevelopment that is compatible with the established neighborhood pattern.

The existing zoning on the subject property and in the neighborhood relate to a legislative zone change from 30 years ago. In September 1996, City Council approved a city-initiated rezoning of properties generally located between W. 32nd Avenue and W. 38th Avenue, and Sheridan Boulevard and Pierce Street. The ordinance specifically exempted existing two-family dwellings from the zone change to avoid creating nonconforming situations. Because 3338 Depew Street has two units (a single-unit dwelling with an accessory dwelling unit), it was identified as an exempt property in the Council's motion.

Now that ADUs are permitted in Wheat Ridge as an accessory use to a single-unit home, the property is more conforming under R-1C than R-3 in regard to its dimensions and land use.

A full analysis of the zone change criteria will be provided in the Planning Division staff report at second reading.

RECOMMENDATION:

The application in this case is for the rezoning of property. This action is quasi-judicial, and as a result, the applicant is entitled to a public hearing on the application.

As Council is aware, rezoning in Wheat Ridge is accomplished by ordinance (Charter Sec. 5.10; Code Section 26-112). Ordinances require two readings, and by Charter, the public hearing takes place on second reading.

First reading in these cases is a procedural action that merely sets the date for the (second reading) public hearing. No testimony is taken on first reading. Because it is important that the applicant and all interested parties have their due process rights to a hearing, the City Attorney advises Council to approve rezoning ordinances on first reading. This merely sets the date for the public hearing, and for this reason, the packet materials provided on first reading are generally limited. The Planning Division staff report and Planning Commission minutes will be included in the City Council packet for the public hearing.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

"I move to approve Council Bill No. 09-2026, an ordinance approving the rezoning of property located at 3338 Depew Street from Residential-Three (R-3) to Residential-One C (R1-C) on first reading, order it published by title in the paper and in full on the City's website as provided by the Home Rule Charter, public hearing set for Monday, May 11, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. as a virtual meeting and in City Council Chambers, and that it take effect 15 days after final publication."

REPORT PREPARED/REVIEWED BY:

Chris Masar, Planner II
Jana Easley, Planning Manager
Lauren Mikulak, Community Development Director
Patrick Goff, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Council Bill No. 09-2026

CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
INTRODUCED BY COUNCIL MEMBER
Council Bill No. 09
Ordinance No. 1842
Series 2026

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE REZONING OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 3338 DEPEW STREET FROM RESIDENTIAL-THREE (R-3) TO RESIDENTIAL-ONE C (R-1C) (CASE NO. WZ-26-01)

WHEREAS, Chapter 26 of the Wheat Ridge Code of Laws establishes procedures for the City's review and approval of requests for land use cases; and

WHEREAS, Betsy Lawton has submitted a land use application for approval of a zone change to the Residential-One C (R-1C) zone district for property located at 3338 Depew Street; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge has adopted a comprehensive plan—City Plan—which specifically calls for the assessment of the zoning map to determine if zoning map updates are needed; and

WHEREAS, a rezoning to R-1C would encourage revitalization of the site and will enable the site and land use to become conforming; and

WHEREAS, the City of Wheat Ridge Planning Commission held a public hearing on March 19, 2026, and recommended approval of rezoning the property to Residential-One C (R-1C).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO:

Section 1. Upon application by the City of Wheat Ridge for approval of a zone change ordinance from Residential-Three (R-3) to Residential-One C (R-1C) for property located at 3338 Depew Street, and pursuant to the findings made based on testimony and evidence presented at a public hearing before the Wheat Ridge City Council, a zone change is approved for the following described land:

LOTS 19 AND 20, BLOCK 8, COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF COLORADO.

Section 2. Vested Property Rights. Approval of this zone change does not create a vested property right. Vested property rights may only arise and accrue pursuant to the provisions of Section 26-121 of the Code of Laws of the City of Wheat Ridge.

ATTACHMENT 1

Section 3. Safety Clause. The City of Wheat Ridge hereby finds, determines, and declares that this ordinance is promulgated under the general police power of the City of Wheat Ridge, that it is promulgated for the health, safety, and welfare of the public and that this ordinance is necessary for the preservation of health and safety and for the protection of public convenience and welfare. The City Council further determines that the ordinance bears a rational relation to the proper legislative object sought to be attained.

Section 4. Severability: Conflicting Ordinance Repealed. If any section, subsection or clause of the ordinance shall be deemed to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the validity of the remaining sections, subsections and clauses shall not be affected thereby. All other ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 5. Recording. This Ordinance shall be filed for record with the office of the Jefferson County Clerk and Recorder.

Section 6. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect 15 days after final publication, as provided by Section 5.11 of the Charter.

INTRODUCED, READ, AND ADOPTED on first reading by a vote of ___ to ___ on this 13th day of April, 2026, ordered published by title in the paper and in full on the City's website as provided by the Home Rule Charter, and Public Hearing and consideration on final passage set for May 11, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, 7500 West 29th Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

READ, ADOPTED AND ORDERED PUBLISHED on second and final reading by a vote of ___ to ___, this 11th day of May 2026.

SIGNED by the Mayor on this _____ day of _____, 2026

ATTEST:

Korey Stites, Mayor

Janeece Hoppe, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Gerald E. Dahl, City Attorney

ATTACHMENT 1

First Publication: April 14, 2026
Second Publication: May 12, 2026
Effective Date: May 27, 2026

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