

Renton – An Animal Friendly Community  
By Randy Corman, Renton City Council

Renton has always been a city that is friendly to animals. We recognize that animals occupy an esteemed place in many of our households, often being treated as members of the family. They offer a source of amusement, pleasure, and companionship. They provide opportunities for outdoor exercise and socialization. We have some of the lowest animal license fees in King County, we allow dogs in 26 of our 28 parks, and we have our own animal control officers who love animals. They are responsible for inspecting properties to make sure they are suitable for the safe and appropriate care of the animals. We also enjoy a great history of large animal husbandry, dating back to Longacres, which for decades hosted up to 1,500 horses. The greater Renton area has also been home to some great pet, feed and tack stores over the years.

Recently, we heard from our community about their preferences and desires regarding pets and other domestic animals. Many people are intensely passionate about the animals they keep and their right to keep them. On the other hand, people also feel equally strongly about the impact of animals in their neighborhood and their property rights. We decided to review our current code and regulations so that we could be responsive to residents' needs and concerns, anticipate future needs regarding keeping animals and ensure that we protect property rights and our neighborhoods.

I'm happy to share with you that at our last Council meeting, we updated and approved our regulations regarding the keeping of animals in the city of Renton. The new regulations change the definitions so that they are more specific about which animals are permissible, and revise the definitions of small, medium and large domestic animals. The type and number of permissible animals is now based on the lot size required to keep these animals. The new code links the use to the property, and does not prohibit the homeowner from replacing animals.

For instance, homeowners on lots of over 6,000 square feet can now own laying hens, for a supply of eggs. The new law also allows people on larger suburban lots of over 12,500 square feet to keep miniature goats, ducks, geese and sheep. Those with lot sizes of at least one acre can keep potbelly pigs, cows, llamas and horses. The number of animals allowed varies according to the lot size. Historically people could have a total of three dogs and cats. The new law allows one additional dog or cat for homeowners with large sized lots that are over 30,000 square feet.

In addition to providing flexibility and security for Renton residents who love their pets, this new ordinance safeguards the animals, and protects against any detrimental effect to neighboring properties. It also makes it easier for our newly-annexed residents to continue to keep their animals.

For more information please contact Angie Mathias from our staff at 425-430-6576, or visit our website at [rentonwa.gov](http://rentonwa.gov).

Sincerely, Randy Corman