



September 8, 2026 City Council Meeting

Title

Consider a request to amend the Zoning Ordinance related to Poultry Hatcheries – Planning Commission and Adam Fletcher, Community Development

Summary

Zoning Ordinance Sections	Amend Sections 10-3-24 and 10-3-96
Purpose	To add a new term and definition for “poultry hatchery” and to add poultry hatcheries as a by-right use in the M-1, General Industrial District
Applicant	City of Harrisonburg
Planning Commission	August 12, 2026 (Public Hearing)
City Council	September 8, 2026 (First Reading/Public Hearing) Anticipated September 22, 2026 (Second Reading)

Recommendation

Option 1. Staff and Planning Commission (6-0) recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance amendments.

Context & Analysis

In February 2026, City Council approved Zoning Ordinance (ZO) amendments that established definitions for “meat processing and storage facility” and “poultry processing and storage facility.” The amendments also added poultry processing and storage facility as a by right use in the M-1, General Industrial District, and added meat processing and storage facility as a use allowed only by special use permit (SUP) in the same district.

The amendment created the opportunity for someone to be able to establish a new meat processing and storage facility with the approval of a SUP while also creating a pathway for a nonconforming meat processing facility to become conforming through the same process. Staff worked with the applicant to develop the new definitions in a way that distinguished poultry processing from other types of meat processing, consistent with the long-standing interpretation of the ZO that poultry processing in the M-1 district is allowed by right. When drafting the amendments, staff did not

address standalone poultry hatcheries and unintentionally made poultry hatcheries a nonconforming use, as they were outside the scope of the previous application.

After becoming aware of this issue, staff began work on a new amendment to codify the long-standing interpretation that a poultry hatchery is also a by right use in the M-1 district and provide a definition for poultry hatcheries. This amendment will clarify that poultry hatcheries are allowed by-right in the M-1 district. Staff worked with the Virginia Poultry Federation to identify three operational hatcheries within City limits; which are all located within the M-1 District:

- George's Hatchery: 410 Stone Spring Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
- George's Hatchery: 1620 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801
- Cargill Hatchery: 1724 Country Club Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Copies of the drafted amendment and definition were shared with the President of the Virginia Poultry Federation, Hobey Bauhan. No concerns were raised regarding the proposed changes.

Staff recommends approval of the ZO amendments.

Options

1. Approve the Zoning Ordinance amendments.
2. Approve the Zoning Ordinance amendments with modifications.
3. Deny the Zoning Ordinance amendments.

Attachments

1. Extract from Planning Commission
2. Current Ordinance Reflecting Recommended Amendments
3. Locations of existing hatcheries according to Virginia Poultry Federation