

Hutch won't ban pit bulls

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HUTCHINSON, Kansas – City leaders in Hutchinson won't bother passing a proposed pit bull ban, saying their vicious dogs laws already have enough bite.

After Wichita toughened up its laws regarding pit bulls inside city limits, the Hutchinson City Council took a look Tuesday morning at the proposed pit bull ban. But once council members studied the facts, they say they won't pass any laws that target a specific dog breed.



In July, an elderly woman and her dog were attacked by a pit bull in Hutchinson, leading her grandson to ask the council to ban the maligned breed. But after a hearing, members of the council decided they won't change the city's dog laws.

According to statistics provided by Hutch's animal control officer, out of 229 reported dog bites in the city only around a quarter of them were committed by pit bulls.

The city already has a vicious dog ordinance on the books. When a dog attacks someone, a judge at a court hearing takes a look at the evidence and then decides if the dog is vicious and needs to be put down. City leaders feel their current law does enough to protect folks in Hutchinson from dangerous dogs.

"You know, for the most part we felt like that we have the tools in place with our current vicious dog ordinance and our animal control enforcement efforts," said City Manager John Deardorff. "People need to let us know if they do have suspicion or are worried about a situation in their neighborhood."

The council decided it would be unfair to target pit bulls. For example, out of the 229 bites on record in Hutchinson since 2005, 32 were committed by Labradors. That's nearly 15 percent.